

Day Four

KNOWING JESUS

- **Large Group**
 - Songs
 - Puppets
 - Opening Time: Seeds
 - *What is New Life?*
 - Memory Verse: Next Word Relay
- **Small Group**
 - Story: Lazarus
 - *Theme: Jesus Offers Us New Life*
 - *John 11*
 - Craft: Verse Poster
 - A memory verse reminder to color and hang up at home
 - Memory Verse Review
- **Large Group**
 - Story review questions
 - Closing Skit: John Talks About Lazarus
 - *God's Free Gift*

For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son that whoever believes in Him will not perish but have eternal life.
John 3:16 (NIV)



Day Four Opening

Pre-Rainbow Express Gathering

You will begin each day by knocking on doors and then playing games to help attract children to your Rainbow Express.

Song Time/Puppets

When it is time to begin your activities, have all the children sit down in a large group. It would be helpful to bring a tarp for them to sit on. When the children are together and seated on the tarp, begin your song time.

The Song Leader will come to the front of the group to lead songs. One or two others may also want to come to the front to help show motions. Be sure to have several songs ready to sing and that everyone in the group knows the songs.

TIP—The Large Group Leader should lead his opening monologue and serve as a sort of “master of ceremonies” to keep each activity flowing smoothly. He should not, however, tell the day’s Bible story. That will go much smoother in the small group time. Children listen more attentively in smaller groups.

During this time you will also have the puppets sing their song(s). Doing the puppet show in between songs can help keep the children’s attention. You are provided with one song for each day. If the children are responding well and enjoy the puppet music, it is okay to perform more than one of the songs and repeat the songs from day to day.

The Opening

Each day the Large Group Leader will welcome the children and provide an introduction to the day’s themes and activities. The more creative and engaging the Large Group leader acts, the more interested and involved the children will be during the large group. Prepare ahead of time by making a fun costume.

The Large Group Leader will come to the front of the group and explain the day’s theme before the children divide into their small groups. What is provided here is a guide for the day’s opening. Do not simply read from this page. Read through the discussion guide repeatedly and be able to lead it from memory. Do not feel that the Large Group Leader has to memorize and recite this page. It is not necessarily intended to serve as a script. Rather, use it as a suggestion to help you know how lead the opening time.

(For today’s opening activity you will need the five pictures included at the end of day four’s packet. Mission Arlington will provide these on regular sized paper for while you are here. You may find it helpful to blow these pictures up to poster board size or create your own. Feel free to create larger versions if you would like.)

Thank you all so much for being here today. This is our last day of Rainbow Express this week. I have really enjoyed being with you all this week. I have liked learning about Jesus with you.

I need you to help me one more time. I have a real mystery to solve. I have lost

something really important to me, and I can't figure out what happened to it. *(Show the picture of a seeds.)* I had some seeds that I really liked. I wanted to make sure that I didn't lose them. I wanted to think of a really safe place to put my seeds.

(Show the picture of the shovel.) I buried my seeds in some soft dirt. I thought they would be safe there. I thought nobody would be able to find them. After a while, I got worried about my seeds. I thought maybe they would get thirsty being buried in that dirt. *(Show the picture of the water can.)* I started pouring water on my seeds every day so that they would not get thirsty. I also didn't want my seeds to get cold. *(Show the picture of the sun.)* I made sure to put them in a place where they would get lots of good sunshine.

Now I have a problem. I went back to visit my seeds the other day, and I can't find them! My seeds are gone. Instead, all I found was this tree. *(Show the picture of the tree.)* I can't figure it out. I buried my seeds in the dirt. I put water on them. I made sure they got lots of sunlight. Now they're gone, and there's a tree there. What do you think happened? *(Let the children tell you what they think. Lead them to explain that the seed grew into the tree.)*

That's amazing! That little seed grew into a great big tree. That seed changed a lot, didn't it? God makes the seeds grow. He gives a seed a whole new life as a tree. God wants to do that for us too. He gives us a new start when we believe in Jesus.

Today we're going to learn about a person that got a new life. Jesus gave him a brand new start. We're going to learn that Jesus wants to give us a new start, too.

Memory Verse Activity

When the Large Group Leader finishes his opening time, the Memory Verse Teacher will come to the front to lead the memory verse activity. The large group memory verse activity for day four is "Next Word Relay". Have your poster of the memory verse available. Read through the verse all together several times to practice. Divide the children into two or more teams. Then, split each team in half. Have the two halves face each other in a single file line, about ten feet apart. Have the first person on the team say the first word of the verse. That player then runs across and tags the first player in the line facing them. The first player then runs to the back of that line. The second player then says the next word in the verse, then runs across to tag the player on the opposite line. Keep going until each team has said the whole verse. You may want to bring a stopwatch to time the children and see which team can do it the fastest.

After the Memory Verse teacher finishes, divide the children into small groups to continue.

Day Four Scripture

John 11 (NIV)

Now a man named Lazarus was sick. He was from Bethany, the village of Mary and her sister Martha. This Mary, whose brother Lazarus now lay sick, was the same one who poured perfume on the Lord and wiped his feet with her hair. So the sisters sent word to Jesus, "Lord, the one you love is sick."

When he heard this, Jesus said, "This sickness will not end in death. No, it is for God's glory so that God's Son may be glorified through it." Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus. Yet when he heard that Lazarus was sick, he stayed where he was two more days.

Then he said to his disciples, "Let us go back to Judea."

"But Rabbi," they said, "a short while ago the Jews tried to stone you, and yet you are going back there?"

Jesus answered, "Are there not twelve hours of daylight? A man who walks by day will not stumble, for he sees by this world's light. It is when he walks by night that he stumbles, for he has no light."

After he had said this, he went on to tell them, "Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep; but I am going there to wake him up."

His disciples replied, "Lord, if he sleeps, he will get better." Jesus had been speaking of his death, but his disciples thought he meant natural sleep.

So then he told them plainly, "Lazarus is dead, and for your sake I am glad I was not there, so that you may believe. But let us go to him."

Then Thomas (called Didymus) said to the rest of the disciples, "Let us also go, that we may die with him."

On his arrival, Jesus found that Lazarus had already been in the tomb for four days. Bethany was less than two miles from Jerusalem, and many Jews had come to Martha and Mary to comfort them in the loss of their brother. When Martha heard that Jesus was coming, she went out to meet him, but Mary stayed at home.

"Lord," Martha said to Jesus, "if you had been here, my brother would not have died. But I know that even now God will give you whatever you ask."

Jesus said to her, "Your brother will rise again."

Martha answered, "I know he will rise again in the resurrection at the last day."

Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me will live, even though he dies; and whoever lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe this?"

"Yes, Lord," she told him, "I believe that you are the Christ, the Son of God, who was to come into the world."

And after she had said this, she went back and called her sister Mary aside. "The Teacher is here," she said, "and is asking for you." When Mary heard this, she got up quickly and went to him. Now Jesus had not yet entered the village, but was still at the place where Martha had met him. When the Jews who had been with Mary in the house,

PREPARATION TIP—We have included the scripture today's story is taken from. Before you learn the children's version of the story (next in this packet) you will be using to teach at Rainbow Express, please read through the verses. Pray and ask God to help you understand the scripture and the point He wants you to help the children understand.

comforting her, noticed how quickly she got up and went out, they followed her, supposing she was going to the tomb to mourn there.

When Mary reached the place where Jesus was and saw him, she fell at his feet and said, "Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died."

When Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews who had come along with her also weeping, he was deeply moved in spirit and troubled. "Where have you laid him?" he asked.

"Come and see, Lord," they replied.

Jesus wept.

Then the Jews said, "See how he loved him!"

But some of them said, "Could not he who opened the eyes of the blind man have kept this man from dying?"

Jesus, once more deeply moved, came to the tomb. It was a cave with a stone laid across the entrance. "Take away the stone," he said.

"But, Lord," said Martha, the sister of the dead man, "by this time there is a bad odor, for he has been there four days."

Then Jesus said, "Did I not tell you that if you believed, you would see the glory of God?"

So they took away the stone. Then Jesus looked up and said, "Father, I thank you that you have heard me. I knew that you always hear me, but I said this for the benefit of the people standing here, that they may believe that you sent me."

When he had said this, Jesus called in a loud voice, "Lazarus, come out!" The dead man came out, his hands and feet wrapped with strips of linen, and a cloth around his face.

Jesus said to them, "Take off the grave clothes and let him go."

Day Four Small Group

Small Group Story Time

The text provided here is to serve as a guide for you while you tell the story. Read it through several times and be able to tell it from memory. It is not important to be able to recite this story word-for-word. Your goal is to be able to translate the story as it is written in the Bible (see previous pages) to a level children will understand. Use the wording included here as suggestions to help you make these concepts understood by elementary age children. Feel free to adapt these words to fit well with your own style.

Today's Story: Lazarus

This week we have learned what it means to know Jesus. The first day we learned that Jesus came to help people. The second day we learned that we have to choose to believe in Jesus. Yesterday we learned that Jesus made a way to take away our sins. Today we are going to see that Jesus wants to give us a new life.

Jesus had a friend named Lazarus. Lazarus lived with his two sisters, Mary and Martha. Jesus went many times to visit them, because they were His very good friends. One day, Lazarus became sick. Lazarus was very, very sick. His sisters were worried that he might die. This was before Jesus died on the cross and then came back to life.

Mary and Martha sent a message to Jesus. They told Him that Lazarus was sick. Mary and Martha knew that Jesus had power to make sick people better. They thought Jesus would come to help Lazarus.

When Jesus heard that Lazarus was sick, He told the disciples not to worry. "This won't end with Lazarus dying," Jesus said. "This sickness will end with you seeing how much power God really has." Jesus did not go to Mary, Martha, and Lazarus' house. Instead, He stayed in the town where He was for two more days.

After two days, Jesus told the disciples "Let's go visit Mary, Martha, and Lazarus."

The disciples were confused. "But Jesus, the people that want to kill you live in that town." They did not understand why Jesus wanted to go there. They thought it was too dangerous, especially since Jesus said Lazarus was going to be all right.

"Our friend Lazarus is asleep," Jesus said. "I have to go see him so I can wake him up."

The disciples did not understand what Jesus meant. "If Lazarus is asleep, he will wake up and get better," they said.

Jesus knew that the disciples were confused, so He explained. "When I say Lazarus has fallen asleep, I mean that He is dead. I am glad that you are going to see what happens, because it will help you believe who I am. Now let's go see Lazarus."

When Jesus arrived with the disciples, they found out that Lazarus had already been dead for four days. Many of Lazarus' friends and family were there. They were very sad that Lazarus was dead. They came to try to help Mary and Martha feel better.

These friends told Mary and Martha that Jesus was coming. When Martha heard this, she ran quickly to find Jesus. "Oh Jesus," she cried. "If you had been here, Lazarus would not have died. I know that whatever you say is going to happen, happens."

PREPARATION TIP—When you tell the story use as many interactive elements as you can. You are going to be outside talking to kids with short attention spans. Keep them involved so they will hear the story! Remember that involving the children will help them pay attention. Use hand motions and sound effects. Have your children repeat things back to you. Ask questions.

DO NOT READ TO THE KIDS. TELL THEM THE STORY! Even though you will be telling and not reading the story, have your Bible open to the story in your lap. This will help the children recognize that the story comes from the Bible and is not simply a fairy tale or something we have made up.

Helpers: While the story teller is teaching, sit with the children and be a good example by listening to the story. Watch for children who need special attention.

“Do not be sad,” Jesus told Mary and Martha. “Your brother is going to come back to life.”

Mary and Martha were confused. They did not understand. They did not know that Jesus had the power to bring Lazarus back to life. They thought Jesus meant that Lazarus would live again in Heaven. “Yes, Jesus” Martha said. “We know that Lazarus will be alive again in Heaven.”

Jesus told her “All life comes from me. Everyone that comes from me will get a new life. Even when they die, they will live forever in Heaven. Martha, do you believe this?”

“Yes, Jesus,” Martha said. “I believe that you are the special one, God’s Son, and that you came to this world.”

Martha went back to her house to find Mary. “Jesus is here,” Martha told her sister. “He wants to see you.”

Mary ran out to talk to Jesus. All of Mary and Martha’s friends saw Mary leave. They thought Mary was going to visit Lazarus’ grave. They got up and followed her to Jesus. Mary ran to Jesus. She fell down in front of Jesus, crying and crying. “Jesus,” she said sadly “if you had come, my brother would still be alive.”

Jesus was very sad to see Mary so upset. “Show me where Lazarus’ body is,” Jesus said to Mary’s friends. Jesus cried because his friends were so sad.

Some of Mary’s friends saw Jesus crying. “Jesus loves Mary, Martha, and Lazarus very much,” they said. “You can see how sad He is.” Then they took Jesus to the place where Lazarus was buried.

The body of Lazarus was inside a cave with a big rock for a door. “Move the rock,” Jesus said.

“We can’t do that Jesus,” Martha said. “His body has been in there four days. It will smell very bad.”

“Trust me,” Jesus told the people. “If you believe in me, you will see God’s power.” The people decided to believe Jesus. They moved the big rock and opened the cave.

Jesus looked up to the sky. “God, thank you that you listen to me. I know you always hear me, and I want these people to know too.” Then Jesus looked into the cave. In a very loud voice Jesus yelled “Lazarus, come out of there!”

The people watched to see what would happen. They knew that Lazarus was dead. Could he really walk out of the cave? Suddenly, they could see movement inside the cave. Lazarus stood up! He had come back to life! He walked out of the cave. Everyone was happy to see Lazarus alive again. Most of all, they were happy to see that Jesus really had the power to give new life.

Mary and Martha and all the disciples already knew a lot about Jesus. They knew that Jesus was very special and could do amazing things. In today’s story they had to decide to believe that Jesus could even bring Lazarus back from the dead. Jesus gives us the same choice. He wants to give us new life. He wants to help us and teach us what God wants us to do. He wants to help us in every part of our life. All we have to do is ask Him.

If you want to know how to ask Jesus to be part of your life, just ask us.

Prayer Time

Take this time after the story to pray with the children in your small group. Ask them for things they would like to pray about. Tell God how awesome He is. Ask Him to help you and the children in your small group to listen to God and obey Him. Pray that the children in your group will get to know God and feel the love He has for them.

Craft

While still in your small groups, lead the children in making the craft for the day. The craft time is not only a way to reinforce the lesson, but it also allows time to get to know the children in your small group. During this time, ask them questions about their families, friends, and school. Invest in their lives.

Verse Banner

Supplies:

Crayons, Verse Pages (1 per child)

1. Pass out one page to each child.
2. Have the children color the banner. As they are coloring, have the children practice saying the verse. Go back over the story about how Lazarus received life again from Jesus. Share that we can receive new life when we ask Jesus to come into our hearts.
3. Encourage their children to hang the banner up in their rooms to always help them remember the verse.

Memory Verse Activity

Each day the small group time will include a Memory Verse Activity. The Memory Verse time is one of the most important activities of the day. We want these children to remember God's word and why it is important to them. A list of potential activities is included in the back of this packet. Use a different idea from that list each day to help the children learn the words of the verse and to explain why it applies to their lives. (Some require extra preparation, so be sure to review the list in advance.) The memory verse for this week is

John 3:16—For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son that whoever believes in Him will not perish, but have eternal life.

When all the small groups are beginning to wrap up their memory verse activities, begin to re-gather the groups on the tarp for large group .

Day Four Closing

Closing Time

Each day you will end your Rainbow Express in a large group session. Have all the children return to the tarp where you started. Sometimes the movement from small groups to large group becomes distracting, especially to younger children. If you find your children becoming noisy as you return to your large group, consider singing a few songs to help everybody focus again.

The last thing you will do before games and snacks is to review the memory verse and the day's lesson. Have one person in your group (it can be, but does not necessarily have to be the same person as the large group leader) dress up as John. Many churches or school drama departments have costumes you might be able to borrow. If not, you can make a very simple costume out of fabric or linens. Another possibility is to use a puppet as John.

Have John give a brief re-telling of the day's story in the first person. As John tells the story, have him frequently pause to let the children answer questions and fill in the blanks about the lesson. When you finish reviewing the story, have everybody say the memory verse together one last time.

Game Time/Snacks/Wrap-Up

When you are finished, pray together and be ready to play games until the end of the Rainbow Express program. After the game time, pass out snacks, clean up the area, and walk everyone home. Return to Mission Arlington to turn in your materials and attendance sheet.

**For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son that whoever believes in Him will not perish but have eternal life.
John 3:16 (NIV)**



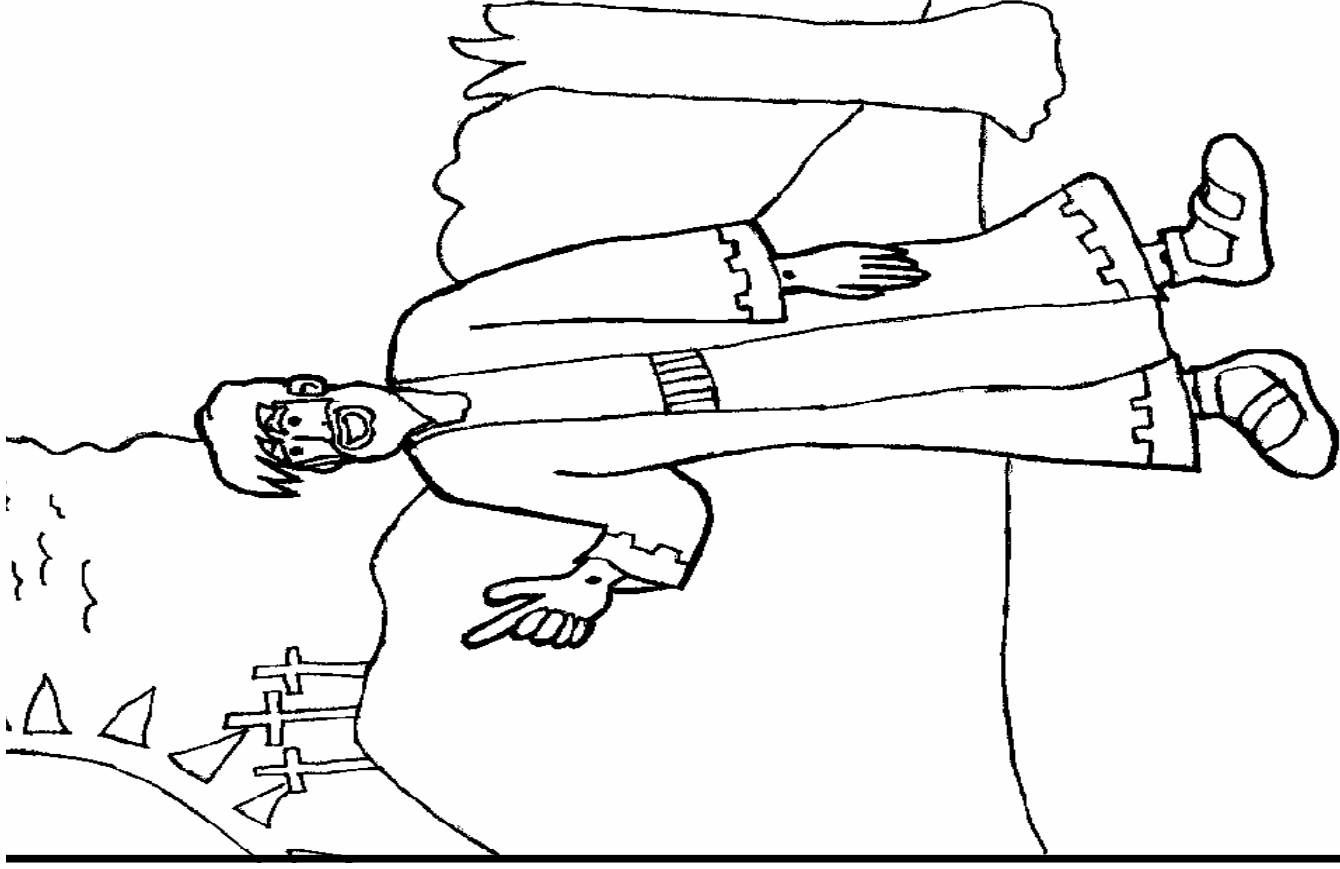
**Porque tanto amó Dios al mundo, que dio a su Hijo unigénito, para que todo el que cree en él no se pierda, sino que tenga vida eterna.
Juan 3:16**



A note on today's craft—the next two pages show what the verse banner will look like in English and in Spanish. They have a slightly “squished” appearance because the real crafts you will be using at Mission Arlington will be printed on slightly wider paper.

**For God so loved
the world that He
gave His one and
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John 3:16 (NIV)



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