

Session 6

Jesus Raises Lazarus From the Dead

John 11:1-45



Worship Theme:



Jesus has power over death.

Weaving Faith Into Life:



Kids will praise Jesus for his power over death and in their lives.

Session Sequence	What Children Will Do	Supplies
1 Let's Praise God! <i>(up to 25 minutes)</i>	Sing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Power Shuffle" • "I Have Decided to Follow Jesus" • "I Am the Resurrection and the Life" (John 11:25) • "Jesus Loves Me" • "Are You Going to Praise the Lord?" • "Be Strong in the Lord" (Ephesians 6:10) 	KidsOwn Worship Kit: <i>KidsOwn Worship DVD</i> Classroom Supplies: Bible, video equipment

Preschool

Session Sequence	What Children Will Do	Supplies
2 Let's Learn the Point! <i>(up to 25 minutes)</i>	* Lazarus Lives Hear the Bible story about Lazarus.	Classroom Supplies: Bath towel
	Jesus Has Power Play a game about Jesus' power.	Classroom Supplies: Bath towels
	* Jesus Is Amazing Make cookie sculptures and discover a surprise inside.	Classroom Supplies: Sugar-cookie dough, food coloring, paper plates, tray

Elementary

Session Sequence	What Children Will Do	Supplies
2 Let's Learn the Point! <i>(up to 25 minutes)</i>	The Story From Bethany Imagine that they are Lazarus, Mary, Martha, Jesus, and the disciples in the Bible story.	Classroom Supplies: Paper, marker, tape
	Power Over Death Read and discuss other passages of Jesus' power over death.	Classroom Supplies: Bibles, poster board, marker
	* Jesus Rocks Make up their own lyrics to a song.	KidsOwn Worship Kit: <i>KidsOwn Worship DVD</i> Classroom Supplies: Video equipment

Session Sequence	What Children Will Do	Supplies
3 Let's Pray! <i>(up to 10 minutes)</i>	The Offering Offer their gifts to God.	Classroom Supplies: Offering bowls
	Bracelets of Praise Make bracelets as they pray for Jesus' power in their lives.	KidsOwn Worship Kit: <i>KidsOwn Worship DVD</i> Classroom Supplies: Video equipment, craft string, craft beads, resealable plastic bags
	He Has the Power Do a countdown to praise Jesus, and sing a song.	KidsOwn Worship Kit: <i>KidsOwn Worship DVD</i> Classroom Supplies: Video equipment

* Starred activities can be used successfully with preschool and elementary children together. Customize your session to fit your needs. You can separate preschoolers and elementary children for Let's Learn the Point! Or, if you keep the children all together for the entire worship session, we suggest you choose from the starred activities.

Jesus Raises Lazarus From the Dead

John 11:1-45

In the Bible, Lazarus is mentioned only in John 11 and 12. However, his sisters, Mary and Martha, are mentioned many times, and we know that Jesus visited their house frequently during his ministry. In addition, John 11:3 speaks of Lazarus as the one Jesus loved, and John 11:5 indicates that Jesus loved Mary and Martha as well. So we can assume that Lazarus was closer to Jesus than the scarcity of references to him would indicate.

So naturally it seemed odd to the disciples that Jesus chose to do nothing when he heard that Lazarus was sick. But Jesus likely knew that Lazarus was already dead, since he had been dead for four days when Jesus and the disciples arrived in Bethany three days later. And Jesus had other plans. He was going to bring glory to God through this incident. Though the disciples didn't realize it at the time, Jesus predicted the raising of Lazarus when he said in John 11:4, "This sickness will not end in death." It must have seemed contradictory to the disciples when two days later Jesus said Lazarus was dead. But when Jesus said they would then go to Lazarus in Bethany, which was near Jerusalem, even doubting Thomas agreed to go, knowing the Jews in Jerusalem were out to get Jesus. The disciples must have been suspicious that something dramatic was going to happen!

Martha, distraught over Lazarus' death, had trouble fully understanding what Jesus was capable of doing, even though she had great faith in him. Jesus' comment to her in John 11:25 indicates that he was trying to teach her, as well as others who were around, that he was more than a great teacher and healer. Indeed he was in control of life itself. He could bestow eternal life on those who believed in him so that they would never die spiritually. Jesus has power over death!

We don't know exactly why Jesus wept when approaching Lazarus' tomb, knowing that Lazarus was going to be raised. Some have suggested that he may have been agonizing over the unbelief of the crowd. But more likely he was hurting with his friends, feeling the pain that Lazarus' friends and family were experiencing.

The hope that we have in Jesus hinges on belief or unbelief. Notice that after Lazarus was raised, some who were there put their faith in Jesus. But others were determined to cause trouble for Jesus and reported to the Pharisees what Jesus had done. Jesus divides those who believe from those who don't. To alter a popular phrase slightly, "No Jesus, no hope; know Jesus, know hope!"

Devotion for Leaders

Through the miracle of raising Lazarus from death, Jesus showed that he can transform us. He can bring us back from hopelessness and despair. Thank you, Jesus!

Weaving Faith Into Your Life: Have you ever felt as if you were alive but not really living or thriving? Those who have understand the hopelessness of feeling "dead" inside. But Jesus has made it possible for people to find new life and hope, no matter how low they feel. Consider how Jesus' gift of eternal life still changes you, and take a moment to thank him for it.

Why We Worship for Leaders

The Bible tells about a time Jesus had a chance to heal someone close to him—his beloved friend Lazarus. Mary and Martha begged Jesus to come, but he delayed his visit, and Lazarus died. Jesus had something bigger in mind than a simple healing in mind for Lazarus and his family—he wanted to raise Lazarus from the dead! By bringing Lazarus back to life, Jesus showed everyone that he is God’s Son and that he has power over death. This week, tell kids that we worship Jesus because he is so powerful that he can conquer death.

Easy Prep for Leaders

Let’s Praise God!—Make sure your video equipment is ready.

The Story From Bethany—Use large letters to write each of the following words on a separate piece of paper: “Mary and Martha,” “Jesus,” “Lazarus,” and “The Disciples.” Tape one of the four pieces of paper in each corner of the room.

Bracelets of Praise—Cut craft string, ribbon, or yarn into 5-inch lengths. Put craft beads in a few clear, resealable plastic bags. You’ll need one string and five beads for each child.

Preschool Activities—Refer to the preschool pages for preparations.


1 Let’s Praise God!

Play KidsOwn Worship music videos as children arrive. Greet children by name, and say to each one, “I’m so glad you came today.” When everyone has arrived,

Say **Welcome to children’s church, everyone! We’re going to worship Jesus today because he has power over death. Make a fist and raise it in the air to show that Jesus has power.** Demonstrate by raising your fist in the air.

Every time one of us says the word *power* during our worship time today, let’s make a power fist. Demonstrate.

Jesus is strong and mighty, and, best of all, he loves us! Stand and let’s sing “Power Shuffle.”

 Sing “Power Shuffle.”

Ask • **If a friend asked you what’s so great about Jesus, what would you tell your friend?** (Jesus loves everyone; Jesus can do miracles; Jesus died for my sins so I could go to heaven.)

Say **Those are great things! Don’t you think everybody ought to know about Jesus? Let’s decide in our hearts that we’ll follow him and tell others about him.**

 Sing “I Have Decided to Follow Jesus.”

Ask • **What do we mean when we say that Jesus has power** (power

fist) **over death?** (Jesus died and came back to life; because of Jesus, I can live in heaven after I die.)

Say ▶ **Let's read John 11:25 to see what it says about Jesus and power** (power fist). Have a volunteer read the verse.

Ask ▶ • **What does this verse mean?** (Jesus gives us life in heaven; if we believe in Jesus, we'll live with him in heaven.)

Say ▶ **Jesus is saying that he has power** (power fist) **over death. Even though our bodies will die, we'll live in heaven forever if we believe in him. This is what Jesus meant when he said that he is "the resurrection and the life." Jesus has power** (power fist) **over death and sin. That's great news! Let's sing about it!**

▶ Sing "I Am the Resurrection and the Life" (John 11:25).

Say ▶ **We're worshipping Jesus because he has power** (power fist) **over death. Let's praise Jesus because he's strong and he loves us.**

▶ Sing "Jesus Loves Me."

Say ▶ **Think of how you want to worship the Lord right now. You might want to raise your hands or sit quietly and close your eyes. You might want to stand, kneel, move around, dance, or clap your hands.**

Ask someone near you how he or she is going to praise the Lord. Give kids a few moments to talk to one another. **Let's each worship God now as we sing our next song.**

▶ Sing "Are You Going to Praise the Lord?"

Encourage kids to worship God in the way they chose.

Say ▶ **Our worship pleases God. And God deserves worship because he's so good to us. Let's invite Jesus into our hearts. Tell him that you want him to be your friend and your God. Thank him for having power** (power fist) **and strength.**

▶ Sing "Be Strong in the Lord" (Ephesians 6:10).

Pray ▶ **Jesus, we thank you for having power** (power fist) **over death. You are strong and mighty and loving. Thank you for coming to earth to show us the way to heaven. Thank you for choosing us to be your children. Help us tell others about you. In your name, amen.**

2 Let's Learn the Point!

Preschool Activities, pages 77-78

At this time, have the preschool leader invite the preschoolers to go to their own room for this section of activities. Tear out the Preschool Activities page, and give it to the preschool leader. Have the preschool leader bring the preschoolers back to participate in Let's Pray! with the older children. If you prefer to keep all the children together, do the starred (*) activities. They will work well with both elementary and preschool children.

Elementary Activities ***The Story From Bethany***

Have kids count off by fours and go to separate corners of the room.

Say ➤ **On the wall near your group is the name of a character from our Bible story. As you hear the story, pretend you're that person and think about what you would be feeling and thinking.**

Read the following story expressively.

Say ➤ **An amazing story has just unfolded in Bethany, a small town in Judea. It happened at the home of Mary, Martha, and Lazarus, who are friends of Jesus the carpenter. Earlier this week, Lazarus was reported to be seriously ill.**

If you're imagining that you're Lazarus, think about how you felt while you were ill, what symptoms you may have had, what you did while you were sick, and how you might have gotten sick.

Mary and Martha, Lazarus' two sisters, sent an urgent message to Jesus telling him that Lazarus was sick. If you're Mary or Martha, think about your feelings and think about why you sent the message to Jesus. How did you feel about Lazarus' illness? What did you do to care for Lazarus?

When Jesus heard about Lazarus, he was reported to have said, "Lazarus' sickness will not end in death. It will bring glory to God. Men will know that I am the Son of God." Jesus stayed where he was for the next two days and didn't go to Bethany.

If you're Jesus, think about how you felt when you heard that Lazarus was sick. Think about why you decided to wait before you went to Bethany.

Two days later, Jesus was overheard telling his disciples, "Let's go to Bethany and see Lazarus who is sleeping." His disciples objected. Apparently they were afraid that the Jewish leaders who had formerly tried to kill Jesus would try again. "If Lazarus is sleeping," they argued, "he'll get better soon." But Jesus announced, "Lazarus is dead. This is another chance for you to believe in me. Let's go." The disciples thought surely they would all be killed.

Say ➤ **If you're the disciples, think about how you felt about traveling to Bethany. Think about why you'd follow Jesus into a dangerous area. Think about what Jesus might be planning to do.**

When Jesus arrived at Bethany, he was told that Lazarus had been dead for four days. Martha said to Jesus, "Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died. But even now I know that God will give you whatever you ask."

Jesus told her, "Your brother will rise again." Martha thought he meant on the last day. But Jesus said, "I am the resurrection and the life. Those who believe in me, even though they die physically like everyone else, will live again. They will receive eternal life for believing in me."

When Mary learned that Jesus had arrived she ran to him and said, "Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died."

Jesus went to the place where Lazarus was buried. Crowds of people had gathered there. Jesus saw everyone crying because they loved Lazarus. Jesus cried, too. Then Jesus said, "Roll the stone away and open the grave."

Martha said, "Lord, by now the smell will be horrible because he's been dead for so long!" But Jesus insisted.

It took several people to roll the stone away. Jesus was heard talking to God, then in a loud voice, he said, "Lazarus, come out!" The crowd was amazed when the dead man, still wrapped in the cloths he had been buried in, came out of the grave!

Since the incident, many local leaders are considering Jesus dangerous and a threat to society. However, many others believe he is the Son of God.

Now, please form new groups of four. Make sure there's a "Jesus," a "Lazarus," a "disciple," and a "Mary" or "Martha" in each group. Discuss what happened in Bethany, giving each character a chance to say how he or she felt before the miracle and after the miracle.

Help kids form new groups. Then give them three or four minutes to discuss the story.

- Ask**
- **Why did Jesus wait so long before coming to see Lazarus?** (He wanted to be sure people would know that he has power over death; he knew he would bring Lazarus back to life so he didn't need to hurry.)
 - **What were the people thinking about Jesus before he raised Lazarus from the dead?** (They thought he should have come sooner; maybe they thought he didn't care.)

Say Mary, Martha, and especially Lazarus learned that Jesus has power over death. So did the disciples and many others who were in Bethany when Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead. It was an amazing event! I'm sure the people were shocked and amazed by what Jesus did. Many people responded by putting their faith in Jesus because he had remarkable power. Let's learn more about how we should respond to our powerful God.

Jesus Raises Lazarus From the Dead

Session 6

John 11:1-45

Worship Theme:



Jesus has power over death.

Easy Prep for Leaders

Jesus Is Amazing—Obtain prepared sugar-cookie dough, food coloring, and paper plates. Roll the dough into cookie-size balls, and gently poke a hole in each ball with your finger. Squirt a tiny drop of food coloring into each hole, and gently seal the hole without disturbing the liquid. Set the balls on a tray. You'll need one ball for each child.

Using Theo

Consider using Theophilus the FaithRetriever puppet today in these ways:

- Have Theo lead the preschoolers from the main worship area to the preschool room.
- Have Theo tell the Bible story in the "Lazarus Lives" activity.
- See the KidsOwn Worship Kit for a puppet skit written for today's worship session.



* Lazarus Lives

Gather the children in the story area with a bath towel or blanket near you.

Say We're learning today that Jesus has power over death. Remember how we made a power fist every time we said the word *power* during worship today? Let's do that again as I tell you the story about one of Jesus' friends who died. Show me your power fist. Good job!

Jesus had some very special friends. Their names were Martha, Mary, and Lazarus. One day Lazarus became very sick. He went to bed, and Mary and Martha took care of him. I need someone to pretend to be Lazarus and pretend to be sick. Have the volunteer lie on the floor in front of you, surrounded by the children. Cover the volunteer with the towel.

Lazarus' friends knew Jesus had power (power fist), so they sent for him. They asked Jesus to come and make Lazarus better. But Jesus didn't come right away. He said, "This sickness won't end in death. God will be glorified!" That means people would praise God for what happened.

Before Jesus got to Lazarus' house, something sad happened—Lazarus died! Have the volunteer close his or her eyes. Everyone was so

sad! They were disappointed that Jesus didn't come in time to heal him. They cried and cried. Show me how they looked when they were sad and crying. (Pause.)

Some were even angry that Jesus was late. Show me how they looked when they were angry. (Pause.)

The people covered Lazarus and buried him. Pull the towel over the volunteer's face. After four days, Jesus came. Mary and Martha said, "Jesus, if you had been here, Lazarus wouldn't have died!" When Jesus saw everyone crying and how much everyone loved Lazarus, he cried, too. Show me how Jesus looked. (Pause.)

Jesus knew he had power (power fist) over death. So he said, "Your brother will rise again." Jesus prayed to God the Father in heaven. Then he said, "Lazarus, get up!" And Lazarus stood up! Have your volunteer stand up.

Everyone who saw this knew that Jesus had power (power fist) over death. They believed that he was God because only God has power (power fist) over death.

Let's play a game to praise Jesus for having power (power fist) over death.

Preschool Activities

Jesus Has Power

You'll need a bath towel for each child. If your group is large, use blankets or sheets and have several children play underneath each one. Have an adult help them lift the blanket when they jump up.

Give each child a towel.

Say Let's pretend to be Lazarus. Curl up on the floor in a ball, and cover yourself with your towel as if you're buried. I'm going to say some things that show that Jesus has power over death. You'll jump up from under your towel and say, "Jesus has power!"

Choose statements from this list or make up your own. Give children time to jump up and say, "Jesus has power!" after each one.

- Jesus rose from the dead.
- Jesus came back to life.
- Jesus heals us when we're sick.
- Jesus forgives us when we do bad things.
- Jesus makes the sun rise.
- Jesus turns little dry seeds into pretty flowers.
- Jesus loves us.

* Jesus Is Amazing

Have children wash their hands and gather around the table. Give each child a paper plate.

Say Jesus has power over death. He does so many amazing and powerful things because he is God. Jesus let Lazarus die because he knew he had power over death and could make him live again. He did that so people would believe that he is God. Jesus does many other amazing things that show us his power.

Ask • What are some other things Jesus does that show his power?

Give each child a ball of cookie dough.

Say Let's use our dough to worship Jesus in a fun way. Make something special for Jesus with your dough. You could make an animal or a star shape or anything else you think Jesus would like. As you make your shape, tell Jesus that you love him because he has power over death.

Wait while children use their dough and discover the food coloring inside.

Say You found a surprise inside your dough that changed the color from plain white into something special! That's how it is with Jesus. He has power over death, and he makes our lives extra special, just as he did for Lazarus!

ALLERGY ALERT



Be aware that some children have food allergies that can be dangerous. Know your children, and consult with parents about allergies their children may have. Also be sure to read food labels carefully as hidden ingredients can cause allergy-related problems.

Invite the children to eat some of the dough, and remind them that life with Jesus is sweet because he has power over death.

(continued from page 76)

Power Over Death

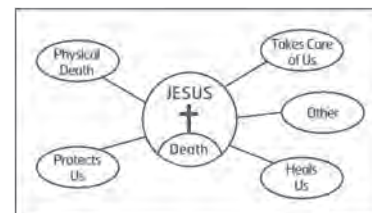
Have the children form three groups (or more if you use more than three Scripture passages).

Say We learned from the story of Lazarus that Jesus has power over physical death. The Bible also tells us that Jesus has power over spiritual death. People are dead spiritually because of the sin in their lives.

The Bible says that Jesus died for our sins. He took the punishment we deserved. When we believe in Jesus and put our faith in him, Jesus comes to live inside us and makes us spiritually alive. I'm going to assign your group a verse to read. Discuss with the people around you how your verse shows that Jesus has power over death. Be ready to share with the rest of us what you discover.


Assign the following verses or others you choose to show that Jesus has power over death, darkness, and evil. He forgives our sins (1 John 1:9), he protects us from evil (Psalm 91:11), and he meets all our needs (Philippians 4:19).

As children work, draw a large circle in the center of a piece of poster board or blackboard. Add the words shown in the illustration. After a few minutes, have kids read the verses and name ways Jesus triumphs over death. As they share, draw rays out from the center circle and add their ideas to the diagram. See the sample illustration.



Say There are so many ways that Jesus' power over death works in our lives! These are just some of them. As you read your Bible this week, ask the Holy Spirit to help you see other ways he has power. Let's trust Jesus for everything we need because he loves us so much.

* Jesus Rocks

 Have kids form new groups of four or five. Play "Jesus Loves Me" and have kids sing along.

Say What a great song!


We're going to make up a new verse for it. Work with your group to make up a new verse based on the things you've learned today. You can use the poster for ideas if you want. You'll have a few minutes to work, then we'll lead each other in singing our new verses. Here's an example.

Use the following as an example, or make up your own.

**Jesus triumphs over death
For the Bible tells me so.**

**He has power, yes, he does,
Over sickness, over death.**

Give kids about five minutes to work on their songs.

 Play “Jesus Loves Me” in the background as kids work.

Have the groups lead each other in singing the new verses. Have one or two groups wait to sing while the offering is being taken.

3

Let's Pray!

The Offering

Say ➤ **As you give your offering today, we'll have the last of our groups sing their verses to “Jesus Loves Me.” As they sing, put your offering in the bowl, if you brought an offering, and pass the offering bowl to the next person. Thank Jesus for having power over death.**

Take the offering. If preschoolers rejoin the group, have them clap and dance with the music while the offering is taken.

Bracelets of Praise

Give each child a piece of string, and have children tie a knot at one end. If you have preschoolers in this activity, watch them closely to be sure they don't put beads in their mouths.


Say ➤ **At first, the disciples and Mary and Martha thought that Jesus had waited too long to help Lazarus. They thought that once Lazarus had died it was too late for Jesus to help. But they learned an important lesson—Jesus has power over death.**

We can be sure that a God who has the power to raise people from the dead is powerful enough to take care of any problem we face in our lives.

Let's trust Jesus to take care of our problems. When the bag comes to you, quickly choose five beads and pass the bag to the next person. String the beads onto your string and, as you do, name the things you're asking God for or praise him for what he's going to do. For example, you could mention help for a test at school, healing for a sick pet, or thanks for a beautiful day.

Then tie a knot on the other end of your row of beads and tie the bracelet around your wrist. You can help each other with

that part. Let's be quiet and prayerful as we make our bracelets and worship Jesus.


 Play "Are You Going to Praise the Lord?" in the background as children pray and make their bracelets.

Say Use your bracelets to remind you that Jesus has power over death. And Jesus always uses his power to help people, to bring glory to himself, and to help people believe and trust him. He wants us to have faith and trust him for everything. Let's praise and thank Jesus for having power over death.

He Has the Power

Say Jesus always has power over death. Just as Jesus knew what was happening to Lazarus and waited until just the right time to help him, he knows about you and will help you when you ask. Let's close by praising Jesus for having power over death. Touch the beads on your bracelet as we count down from 5 and then say, "Praise you, Jesus, for having power over death." Count down from 5 to 1, and then say, "Praise you, Jesus, for having power over death."

Let's sing "Power Shuffle." While you're singing, praise Jesus in your heart, and tell him that you want to tell everyone in the world about the wonderful, powerful things he has done.

 Sing "Power Shuffle."

Say Let's clap for God because he always takes care of us! Lead the children in praising God with loud clapping.

Pray Jesus, today we celebrate your power over death. There is no one else like you, Jesus. We give you all our praise, all our worship, all our love. We want our lives to give you glory the way Lazarus' life did. Help us to always trust you and your goodness. In your name, amen.