

John 11

“I AM The Resurrection and the Life”

Scripture: John 11

Memory Verse: John 11:25 “Jesus said to her, “I AM the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live.”

Lesson Focus: Continuing in our “I AM” series, this section recounts the “grand finale” of Jesus’s public miracles. The purpose stated throughout the chapter is that God would be glorified and people would believe in Him. We will emphasize this as well and challenge the kids to also believe.

Activities and Crafts: Coloring Picture of Lazarus Coming out of the Tomb, Word Search of different terms from lesson, Bring It Home Discussion for 3rd – 5th. Craft for 1st & 2nd: Open Your Heart to Jesus Craft

Starter Activity: Saving the Best for Last

To get things started, ask the kids to share some experiences where they saved the best part for last. Some ideas to get discussion started:

- At a birthday party, did you ever save the biggest present for last?
- Do you eat your veggies first so you can enjoy the rest of the meal? *
- Do you have a dessert where you save your favorite part for the last bite?
- In a running race, do you save enough strength for one last push at the finish line?

Share with the kids some experiences of yours where you saved the best for last.

(**Teachers:** Consider bringing something personal in to enhance the discussion!)

Q: What do we call the end (and best part) of the 4th of July fireworks show? The grand finale!

In our lesson today, Jesus is going to perform perhaps His most impressive miracle.

Q: What are some other miracles Jesus did?

A: Water into wine, feed the 5000, walk on water, healing people, etc.

This is the last miracle recorded in the gospel of John before Jesus goes to the cross and it is His grand finale. This is the one that made the Jewish religious leaders so mad that it set in motion their plot to have Him killed!

Let’s take a look!

Bible Study:

John 11:1-3: This sets the stage for the grand finale. Jesus is at least 20 miles away from Bethany where Lazarus is dying.

Q: How do you think Mary and Martha got word to Jesus about Lazarus?

A: Guess what: There was no texting! No phone calls. They had to send a messenger and it would take him a whole day to travel this distance! *

John 11:4: Looks like Jesus already knows and has a purpose for this sickness.

Q: What is Jesus's purpose for this sickness as stated in this verse?

A: That God, and specifically Jesus, would be glorified and praised.

Q: What might you say at the grand finale of the 4th of July fireworks show?

A: "WHOA" or "WOW"! God is using this sickness so that people will say "WOW" at Him!

You see, when people see how great God is (saying "WOW"), what follows is people worship Him and put their trust and faith in Him. That is what Jesus has in store here!

John 11:5: Last week we looked at how Jesus, the great shepherd, loves His sheep (**Read John 10:14 again**). Lazarus is one of those sheep that Jesus knows and loves deeply!

John 11:6: What? Wait a minute! Jesus loves Lazarus (v. 5), Jesus was sent for to help Lazarus (v. 3), but Jesus just stays where He is for two more days?

Q: Couldn't Jesus have just healed Lazarus with a thought from where He was? Yes!

Q: But if Jesus loves Lazarus and cares about him, why didn't He just heal Him right away?

A: Remember v. 4! God allows sickness and suffering even to those He loves and He has a good purpose for it that is often hidden to us.

John 11:7-16: Now Jesus decides to go back to Judea where Lazarus is. (**Teachers:** I recommend summarizing v. 8-16 and moving on to the next section). In v. 8-16, the disciples question Jesus's decision here because the Jewish religious leaders are out to get Him. Notice what Jesus says in v. 14-15: Lazarus is dead and they are going back now "so that they may believe". This is all part of His purpose revealed in v. 4.

John 11:17-20: Jesus finally arrives and Lazarus has already been dead four days!

Q: How many of you have ever been to a funeral?

A: It is typically a very sad time as you miss the person that died. Lots of people come to comfort the family and that is what is going on here.

John 11:21-24: But it is not all sadness for believers in Jesus at funerals since they have confidence that Jesus will raise them up at the last day. While Martha is sad, she expresses her belief to Jesus that she will meet Lazarus again in heaven. Little does she know that Jesus has something else up his sleeve!

John 11:25-26: Here is the fifth great I AM statement of Jesus.

- I AM (1) the Bread of Life, (2) the Light of the World, (3) the Door of the Sheep, and (4) the Great Shepherd.

Martha was thinking into the great future when God would raise people from the dead, but Jesus is saying I HAVE THAT POWER RIGHT NOW!

Q: How many of you have seen the movie *Tangled*? What is it that Mother Gothel wants so desperately that she has to keep Rapunzel imprisoned in her own home for?

A: To live forever! Real people have had this desire since the beginning of time. * Even today people are dedicated to scientific research to try and reverse engineer our genetics to beat death.

Yet, there is no hope in such endeavors apart from the One (Jesus) who gives life and IS all life!

The other problem people have with this pursuit is that they want to live in this fallen world forever. The perfect world (heaven) that Jesus invites everyone to join Him in, however, is a place where there is no death, no crying, no sorrow, no pain, etc.

(Revelation 21:4)

John 11:27: Notice at the end of v. 26, Jesus asks her directly if she believes in Him. What a great response (and Jesus hasn't even gotten to the grand finale yet!).

Teachers: Transition into the skit (see last page). We will essentially act out John 11:28-44 (with some embellishments). This is the interaction between Jesus, Mary, Martha, and the crowd leading up to the resuscitation of Lazarus. Have a leader be Jesus, choose some girls to be Mary and Martha, pass out sheets to the rest of the kids to be "the crowd" and plant Lazarus "in the tomb". (1st-2nd graders, consider using the bathroom!) We will have some sheets with which to wrap Lazarus.

Imagine yourself there among the crowd! You are shocked that Jesus would have the nerve to open up the tomb where this man has been dead four days! You can smell the awful stench, but you endure it because you are mesmerized by Jesus wondering what He is going to do next. Then He cries out with a loud voice and out comes the man who died!

Q: Wouldn't you say WHOOOOAAA?

John 11:45: What was Jesus saying the purpose of this was? God's glory and that people would believe in Him!

Key Point: What about you? Jesus asked Martha straight-up whether she believed in Him. (**John 11:26**)

Her response was, “Yes, Lord, I believe that You are the Christ, the Son of God.” (**John 11:27**).

What is your response? These miracles were not just for the people who were there, but for YOU as well! **Read John 20:31**. Martha’s confession of faith sounds very much like this key verse at the end of the gospel explaining why John, the author of this book, wrote these things down.

All of Jesus’s public miracles have been recorded so that YOU also may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing YOU may have life in His name. These are real historical events! God has acted so that YOU may believe in Him, follow Him, and have life in Him!

Q: Do you say “WHOA” when you look at Jesus? That is the response of belief and worship!

Q: Or do you say “MEH” when you look at Jesus? That is the response of unbelief and rejection.

Optional Small Group Activity:

Break your kids up into groups and have them pretend to be Bible time investigators! Consider writing on the board, “Jesus is _____” and have them pretend to enter into their story as reporters reporting on who Jesus is! Assign these passages of Scripture to each group and after giving them a pencil and paper, have them prepare a quick news brief to share with the class.

Group #1: **John 11:17-25**

Group #2: **John 11:38-43**

Group #3: **John 20:24-28**

After a few minutes have each group share with the class and add some of their findings to the white board filling in the blank.

After all groups go, add “the resurrection” to the list if it didn’t get added and then remind the kids that Jesus not only raised Lazarus from the dead, He Himself had victory over death! Jesus is alive today in heaven, and will return!

Finish off by reading **1 Thessalonians 4:16-18** and stress that these words are to comfort us when we are sad about people who have died.

Bring It Home

(Devotional for the Family)

Lesson Theme: “Jesus: The Resurrection and the Life”

Scripture: John 11

Memory Verse: John 11:25 *“Jesus said to her, “I AM the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live.”*

Teachers/Parents: We got our study started by sharing “saving the best for last” experiences. Do you have any experiences (i.e. food, sports, traditions) where you save the best part of it for last? Why do you think you do that? Discuss!

Discussion Questions:

- 1) The gospel of John records seven public miracles of Jesus. The raising of Lazarus in John 11 is considered perhaps the “grand finale” of them all. Throughout John’s gospel, Jesus turns water into wine, heals sickness, heals a paralyzed man, feeds the 5000, walks on the water, heals the blind man, and now raises Lazarus from the dead. Which is most impressive to you and why?
- 2) Read **John 11:5-6**. Do these two verses catch you off guard at first? Why? How does v. 4 help us make sense of these two verses?
- 3) Read **John 11:21-24**. There is both sadness and hope in Martha’s words to Jesus. Why is it that at a funeral or memorial service for believers, there is both sadness and hope?
- 4) Read **1 John 5:11-12**. How does this help us better understand what Jesus says about Himself in **John 11:25**? How do these verses show that Jesus is God?
- 5) **John 11:35** is one of the most peculiar verses in the Bible. What do you think Jesus wept about and why? How does this show the humanity of Christ?
- 6) Read **John 11:43-45**. Jesus does not just make empty claims about Himself being the resurrection and the life, but He proves it here. Many believed! What is your response to what Jesus does in this chapter?
- 7) Read **John 20:31**. This is the key verse in understanding the gospel of John. These miracles were not just for the people of Jesus’s day, but they were also recorded for us. How should what Jesus did 2000 years ago influence you every action today and throughout this week?

Jesus Raises Lazarus Skit

John 11:28-44: The act should begin having Martha fetch Mary who is among the crowd.

Martha (to Mary): The Teacher has come and is calling for you.

Martha then brings Mary to Jesus

Mary (to Jesus): Lord, if You had been here, my brother would not have died.

Jesus (to Mary/Martha): Take me to where you have laid him. Oh, and do you have any Kleenex?

Martha and Mary bring Jesus to the tomb who looks sad and upset

Jewish Crowd: See how he loved him! This dude opened the eyes of the blind. Couldn't he also have kept him alive if he was here?

Jesus (to Mary/Martha): Take away the stone.

Martha (to Jesus): Seriously? He's been dead four days! It reeks!

Jesus (to Martha): Did I not say to you that if you believe you will see the glory of God? (*Instruct someone to "open the tomb"*)

Jewish Crowd: EEEEWWWW! Do you smell that? What is he doing?

Jesus (to the Father): Father, I thank You that You always hear Me, but I speak out now **so that all of these people may believe** that You sent Me: **LAZARUS, COME FORTH!**

Lazarus now hops out!

Jewish Crowd: WHOOOOOOOAAAAAAA!