

Parent Sheet: Jesus Raises Lazarus

What's happening in this story?

After a two-day delay, Jesus and his disciples travel to Judea. By this time, Lazarus has been in the tomb four days. When he finally arrives, we hear one of the most poignant moments in all of Scripture. Famously, Jesus weeps. For all his confidence in God's glory shining through the resurrection of Lazarus (for clearly this is what Jesus always anticipates, confidently), Jesus nevertheless joins all those gathered in their grief. In other words, even his power over death and faith in God doesn't keep Jesus from fully identifying with us in our humanity Jesus weeps.

What does this story mean for kids?

Kids will hear a story about a man who died and was brought back to life. It will be very literal for them, and they will understand that his sisters were sad, that Jesus was also sad, and that Lazarus came back to life. A few may wonder if someone can really be brought back to life. They may wonder why a pet or grandparent was not brought back to life when they were sad. Above all, this is a very poignant moment: Jesus displayed his very human feelings and cried. This is a story that simultaneously focuses on the divinity and the humanity of Jesus.

Using the Leaflet:

In our Bible story today, people are grieving. What is grief? Allow kids to respond. **Grief is a type of sadness that we feel when we lose someone or something we love. Our lesson will teach us about having hope—even when we are grieving.**

Pass out Leaflet and markers:

Talk about their pets or special toys. Hold up leaflet.

We love our pets. Sometimes, though, our pets die—leaving an empty place in our homes and in our hearts. How do we feel when we lose something or someone we love? Allow kids to respond.

We grieve. We feel sad inside. Sometimes we even cry. In our story, Jesus loses a good friend. Jesus cries. Point to the empty fish bowl. Draw a picture in the fish bowl of how you feel when your pet dies, or you lose something or someone you love.

The Bible Story

Read the story from John 11:1-45. Ask these questions after you read the story:

- **Why was Jesus crying?**
- **Tell us about a time you cried.**
- **Who were Lazarus's sisters?**
- **What did Jesus do for Lazarus and his sisters?**
- **Mary and Martha were sad. They felt grief, but Jesus gave them hope. What gives you hope?**



Pass out Leaflet(s) and marker(s):

Unfold and tear off leaflet square with the picture of the cross.

1. Jesus cried and prayed to God. Jesus also showed that there is still hope, even when we experience grief. Today our leaflet is a *labyrinth*. It's not a maze. A labyrinth is a prayer tool. People enter the labyrinth, praying along the way and at the center. Then people leave the labyrinth to go back to their daily lives. We'll use the labyrinth to move us from grief to hope.
2. First, we have to create the labyrinth! Beginning at the top of the cross shape, draw a line up one square, then one square to the right, and finally, one square down, ending at the upper right dot.
3. Now, beginning with the upper left dot, draw a line up two squares, then three squares to the right, three squares down, and finally, one square to the left, ending at the right side of the cross.
4. Next, begin at the left side of the cross. Draw a line one square to the left, four squares up, five squares right, five squares down, and finally, two squares to the left, ending at the lower right dot.
5. Last, beginning at the lower left dot, draw a line two squares to the left, six squares up, seven squares to the right, seven squares down, and four squares left, ending at the bottom of the cross.
6. Now that you have created your labyrinth, follow it all the way from grief to hope with your finger, stopping to complete the activities along the way!
7. Jesus showed us that when we experience grief, there is still hope. Prayer, singing, and being friends are all ways to find hope again. Believing in Jesus means believing in hope.

Circle up with kids for a quick review:

- Lazarus died in our story. How did people feel when Lazarus died?
- Many people felt sad about Lazarus, including Jesus. How did Jesus show his sadness?

Jesus showed his sadness with tears. Jesus raised Lazarus back to life, giving everyone new hope and belief in Jesus.

Pass out Leaflet and Scissors:

Invite kids to cut out the three stars. Together, say the simple prayers.

You can hang the stars at home when you feel sad.

End with a blessing:

Circle up with kids. **God blesses all of us. And that means me** (place a hand on your chest). **And that means you** (place your other hand on the shoulder of the child next to you). Each person passes the blessing by repeating those words and actions. When the blessing makes it back to you, say, **Go and bless the world.**

Extras: The back of the Leaflet has fun activities to choose from and do at home.