



APRIL THEME

**BRIGHT SIDE**  
Find the Light in the Dark

**BIBLE STORY**

John 11:1-45

You Raise Me Up | Lazarus Raised  
Spark Story Bible, pg. 440-443  
Lazarus

**BOTTOM LINE**

Whatever happens, remember how  
powerful God is

**MEMORY VERSE**

"In this world you will have trouble.  
But take heart! I have overcome the  
world."

John 16:33b, NIV

**LIFE APP**

Hope | Believing that something good  
can come out of something bad

**BASIC TRUTH**

I can trust God no matter what

**FOR LEADERS ONLY**

**GOD VIEW:** the connection between **HOPE** and God's character, as shown through God's big story.

**Key Question: How do you react when bad things happen?** We can't escape them. We will all face moments in our lives that seem difficult. We can respond to them in all sorts of ways. We want families to identify the way they react in these moments and figure out a plan for how they can find hope, respond well, and trust God no matter what is happening in their life.

We start the month with friends of Jesus who had lost all hope. John records an incredible moment that we find in **John 11:1-45**. When Lazarus died, Jesus used the opportunity to point people to God. Jesus was stronger than even death itself and raised Lazarus back to life four days after he had died.

**Bottom Line: Whatever happens, remember how powerful God is.** God can do amazing things in your life. We pray that families will understand that when they face something difficult or hard to understand, that they can find hope in God's power.

**SOCIAL: PROVIDING TIME FOR FUN INTERACTION**

Welcome kids and spend time engaging in conversation and catching up. Get ready to experience today's story.

Before kids arrive, **PRAY** for each group member by name. Ask God to help kids understand that they can take comfort in God's ultimate power and in the knowledge that no matter what happens, God is always there for them. Pray that God would continue to put people in your kids' lives who can guide them to God's presence.

•• **JUST FOR FUN**

**Made to Explore | An activity that extends learning through hands on experimentation and discovery**

**What You Need:** No supplies needed

**What You Do:**

- Challenge the group to attempt the following tasks:
  - TASK 1** | Stand with toes and forehead against a wall. With hands braced against the wall, move your feet out from the wall two-foot lengths (*four might be needed for kids whose feet are smaller*). Place your hands at your sides and without moving your arms or feet, try to stand up straight.
  - TASK 2** | Pair up. Have one partner sit down and place his hand on top of his own head while the other partner grasps his partner's arm as close to the elbow as possible. Slowly try to lift the partner's hand off his head.
  - TASK 3** | Pair up. One partner sits up straight in a chair (*one that has a back*) with hands folded in his lap. The other partner should press his finger against the forehead of the person that's seated, and challenge him to try to stand up.



—**TASK 4** | Pair up. The stronger partner should stand with arms extended in front of his chest, one fist on top of the other. Challenge him to keep his fists held tightly in this position as the other partner tries to separate the fists by pushing sideways on the back of each fist using a quick strike with his or her index finger.

• Done correctly, each challenge is physically impossible due to the force of gravity, our center of balance, and other weird science stuff.

## •• GET YOUR HEAD IN THE GAME

*Made to Connect* | An activity that invites kids to share with others and build on their understanding

**What You Need:** Notecards, pens

### What You Do:

- Ask kids to brainstorm things that are powerful.
- Write each of their ideas on a separate notecard.  
—If needed, interject a few additional suggestions that students might not come up with on their own; for example, words, technology, anger, hot sauce, or a chainsaw.  
—The group will likely have named GOD or JESUS, but if not be sure to include them in the list.
- Place all the cards face down on the table.
- Invite two kids to each turn over one card and then decide which of the two is more powerful and why. Remove the cards after each turn.
- Repeat until everyone has had at least one turn.

**What You Say:** “There are a lot of things in our world that are powerful, but our great God is above them all. That’s something we should never forget no matter what happens. The Bible is full of evidence of God’s strength. **[Transition] Today in Sunday CM worship/WOW family worship, we are going to hear/we heard an amazing Bible story that illustrates God’s power.”**

*[Sunday Leaders: Lead your group to the Family Room for Children’s Ministry worship. Wednesday Leaders: Continue with the study.]*

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## GROUPS: CREATING A SAFE PLACE TO CONNECT

Create a safe place to connect and learn how the Bible story applies to real life experiences, through interactive activities and discussion questions.

## •• TAKE A SNAPSHOT [Live for God | Application Activity]

*Made to Play* | An activity that encourages learning through following guidelines and working as a group

**What You Need:** Deck of cards

### What You Do:

- Shuffle the deck of cards.
- Pass the deck to the person on your right.
- He should flip over the first card.  
—If it is a black card, he should tell about a “dark” time in his life when he was disappointed, sad, or going through a tough situation.  
—It could be a recent event or something that happened in the past.  
—How did they feel going through that hard time?
- If it is a red card, he should tell about a “bright” time in his life when he was excited, happy, or doing something fun.
- After everyone has had two turns flipping a card, go back to the “dark” stories that were shared.  
—Did the event turn out for good in some way.  
—Was there a bright side?



- Did they learn to trust God in a new way?
- Did they learn something as they went through it?

**What You Say:** “Life is filled with dark days and bright days, ups and downs, highs and lows. Many times, things happen that are out of our control. However, there IS one thing that’s always IN our control—the way we react to those situations whether they’re good or bad. For followers of Jesus, there’s always hope even on the darkest days. This month we’re going to discover that in Jesus there’s always a BRIGHT SIDE.

●● **BIBLE STORY EXTENSION** [Talk about God | Bible Story Review]

**Made to Imagine | An activity that promotes empathy and facilitates biblical application through role-play and reenactment**

**What You Need:** Bible, “Lip Sticks” activity pages, scissors, craft sticks, tape

**What You Do:**

- Work as a group to cut out the “lips” and tape them to craft sticks.
- Review the Bible story by selecting and reading aloud key portions of your choosing from John 11:1-45.
- Pause the story to let kids interject what they think the characters may have been thinking and feeling at that time.
- Invite the group to choose the most appropriate “Lip Stick” to hold in front of their mouths as they share.
- At the end of the review, read John 11:45 then ask . . .
  - Why do you think the people in this verse believed in Jesus?
  - If you had been there when this miracle took place, what would you be thinking or feeling?
  - Why do you think Jesus waited until Lazarus was dead for several days before He came?
  - How can this story give you hope when you’re in a tough situation?

●● **DISCUSSION QUESTIONS** [Live for God | Application Activity]

**Made to Connect | An activity that invites kids to share with others and build on their understanding**

**What You Need:** Bible

**What You Do:**

- Ask the following questions...
  - Read John 11:4 aloud. What are some ways that sickness, suffering, or other tough situations bring glory to God?
  - If God is powerful enough to bring a dead person like Lazarus back to life, what does that tell you about God?
  - If God is super-powerful, why do you think God doesn’t bring all the people we love back to life again or make every sick person well?
  - How do you react when bad things happen?
  - What helps you when you need to trust God in tough situations? **[Make it Personal]** *(Give students an example from your own life of what helps you to trust God in difficult circumstances. Is there a particular verse you recite over and over to yourself? Is there a friend who continually reminds you to take comfort in God’s power?)*

●● **VERSES TO TAKE WITH YOU** [Hear from God | Memory Verse Activity]

**Made to Explore | An activity that extends learning through hands on experimentation and discovery**

**What You Need:** Bibles, pens, “Verses to Take with You” activity page, tape

**What You Do:**

- Give kids a pen and a copy of the “Verses to Take with You” activity page.
- Assign one of the following verses to each group member. *(Some verses will be given more than once.)*
  - John 16:33b** | “In this world you will have trouble. But be encouraged! I have won the battle over the world.”

