



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.

•• **EARLY ARRIVER IDEA**

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

**What You Need:** "Power" cards

**What You Do:**

- Set out the "Power" cards in the middle of the table.
- Prompt kids to look carefully at the items.
- After a few seconds, guide kids to close their eyes. (*No peeking!*)
- When all eyes are closed, remove and hide one card.
- Tell kids to open their eyes.
- Challenge kids to identify the missing item.

**HINT:** Guide kids to silently point to their noses when they identify the missing object. This will help ensure that every child has time to guess independently.

- Repeat. Play as long as time remains.



- End by encouraging kids to identify what the objects have in common.

•• **MORE POWER TO YA**

*Made to Move | An activity that increases the oxygen in the brain and taps into the energy in the body*

**What You Need:** No supplies needed

**What You Do:**

- Direct kids to stand about an arm's length apart from each other.
- Name two objects or animals.
- Guide kids to vote for the one they think is more powerful by pantomiming that object or animal.
- Possible pairings include:
  - a polar bear or a kitten
  - a whale or a goldfish
  - a bicycle or a motorcycle
  - a car or a rocket ship
  - a lion or a mouse
  - a lightbulb or the sun
  - an elephant or an ant
  - a puppy or a moose

**What You Say:** [Transition] **Today in Sunday CM worship/WOW family worship, we are going to hear/we heard about someONE who's more powerful than anything in the world!"**

*[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.

•• **BIBLE STORYTIME** [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:** Spark Story Bible, "Finger Puppets" and "Lazarus and Tomb" activity pages, crayons

**What You Do:**

- Give each child a "Finger Puppets" and a "Lazarus and Tomb" activity page.
- Invite kids to color the figures.
- As kids color, read "Lazarus" (p. 440-443) from the Spark Story Bible to your group.

**What You Say:** "How do you think Mary and Martha felt when their brother died? How do you think they felt after they saw Lazarus walk out of the tomb? How would you have felt?"

"Sometimes things don't go the way you expect. Think of Mary and Martha. They expected Jesus to heal their sick brother, Lazarus. But they expected Jesus to heal Lazarus BEFORE he died. So when Lazarus died, they thought Jesus was too late.

"But it turned out that God had a different plan—a better plan, a more AMAZING plan. A plan to show the world how powerful God is by bringing Lazarus back from the dead!"

"So [Bottom Line] whatever happens, remember how powerful God is. Remember that God loves you and that God can do more than you could ever imagine!"

"Bring your activity pages home with you today and ask your family to help you cut out the figures and tape them into finger puppets. Then, you can share the story of Lazarus with them and teach them that [Bottom Line] whatever happens, remember how powerful God is."



●● **GOD CAN!** [Live for God | Application Activity]

*Made to Move | An activity that increases the oxygen in the brain and taps into the energy in the body*

**What You Need:** No supplies needed

**What You Do:**

- In the pause, help kids pantomime the following things that only God can do. Use inflection to help keep kids' interest high.
  - God can make the sun rise in the morning (*pause*) and set at night (*pause*).
  - God can make a tiny seed (*guide kids to pantomime a seed in the ground*) sprout leaves (*prompt kids to "sprout" leaves*) and grow from a small tree (*pause*) to a medium tree (*pause*) and then to a GIANT tree (*pause*) that sways in the wind (*pause*).
  - God can make a chick peck out of an egg (*pause*) and grow into a bird that soars in the sky (*pause*).
  - God can make the wind blow softly (*pause*) or fiercely (*pause*).
  - God can send rain (*pause*) to water the earth.
  - God can make a rainbow in the sky (*pause*).
  - God can make someone who can't walk (*pause*)...walk (*pause*)!
  - God can make someone who is blind (*pause*)...see (*pause*).
  - God can make someone who is sick (*pause*)...better (*pause*).
  - And God can make someone who is dead (*pause*)...come back to life (*pause*)!

**What You Say:** "Is God powerful? (*pause for answers*) Yes! God is more powerful than anything! Nothing is impossible for God.

"So no matter what problems you face—whether it's someone who isn't kind to you, something that makes you really sad, troubles at home, or troubles at school—remember how powerful God is, and remember that God can do anything. So, **[Bottom Line] whatever happens, remember how powerful God is.** God loves you, and God can help you!"

●● **JESUS CAN!** [Hear from God | Memory Verse Activity]

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

**What You Need:** Bible, ball-pit ball

**What You Do:**

- Lead kids in a memory verse mash-up of "Hot Potato" and "Duck, Duck, Goose."
- Help kids look up and "read" the verse using the navigation tips below...

**Finding verses with kindergartners + 1st graders |** Hold up a Bible opened to the table of contents to show the kids what the page looks like. Lead them to find John in the list under "New Testament." You can help by telling them that John starts with the letters J-O. When the kids find John, lead them to look at the page number beside the word. Explain that the number tells them on what page they can find John. Help the kids find the page. When they find John, explain that the big numbers on the page are the chapter numbers. Help them find chapter 16. Explain that the small numbers are verse numbers. Help them find verse 33 in chapter 16. Read the verse aloud to your group. Then lead everyone to say the verse together.

- Next, guide kids to name some troubles we might have, whether it's sickness, moving to a new place, losing a pet, or being sad.
- Emphasize that no matter what happens, we can have hope because God is bigger and stronger than anything.
- Guide kids to sit in a circle.
- Give one child the ball-pit ball and guide her to quickly pass it to her right.
- As kids continue to pass the ball "Hot Potato"-style, say the first sentence of the memory verse: "In . . . this . . . world . . . you . . . will . . . have . . . trouble."
- When you say, "trouble," the child holding the ball names a trouble someone might have.
  - He might say: getting sick, losing a toy, having a pet die, a friend moving away, or feeling sad.
  - After he names a trouble, compassionately say (*to all the kids*), "Jesus said: "But take heart! I have overcome the world."
- **NOTE:** As kids learn the words of Jesus' promise, invite them to say it with you, too.

