



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 where every child can see them.
- 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.



•• OVERREACTION

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

What You Need: “Overreaction” activity page

What You Do:

- Read the situations listed on the activity page one at a time.
- After each scenario, pause and ask kids to silently act out the reactions they might have in each situation.
- Do this for as long as time and interest allow.

What You Say: “Each day is full of situations that cause big reactions and strong emotions in us. Some are normal, regular reactions, and some are over the top! **[Transition] Today in Sunday CM worship/WOW family worship, we are going to hear/we heard about a situation that caused a pretty big reaction.**”

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

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.

•• LIP STICKS [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:

- Guide the kids to review the story, letting them provide as many details as they can.
- Ask a few questions to get them started, if needed:
 - Who were the main people in our story today? (*Jesus, Lazarus, Mary, and Martha*)
 - Why did Lazarus’s sisters feel sad and hopeless? (*Their brother, Lazarus, was dead*)
 - What did Jesus do to help? (*He rose Lazarus from the dead*)
 - What did today’s story prove? (*How powerful God is*)

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?

What You Say: “Lazarus’s sisters must have felt helpless watching him struggle when he was sick and even more so after he died. It



must have felt like there was no possibility of everything being okay again. They were in an impossible situation. **[Make It Personal]** *(Talk about a kid-appropriate time when you thought all hope was lost, like when you were lost, your dog was lost, etc.)* There are often times in our lives when we feel like nothing is going right and like nothing will ever be okay again, but **[Bottom Line]** whatever happens, remember how powerful God is.”

●● **MORE POWER TO YA** [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:

- 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: “Can you think of something that is more powerful than ANY of the things we listed in this game? *(Pause.)* Yes! God is more powerful than anything! Nothing is impossible or too hard 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 IS THE ROCK** [Hear from God | Memory Verse Activity]

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

What You Need: Bible, rock

What You Do:

- Look up the verse John 16:33b as a group and read it aloud together..

Finding verses with 2nd + 3rd graders | Guide them to open their Bibles to the front and find the table of contents. *(Hold up a Bible opened to the table of contents to show the kids what the page looks like.)* When the kids find the table of contents, lead them to find John in the list under “New Testament.” 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.

- Ask the group to stand in a circle, and hand the rock to a group member.
- As a group, say the first word of the verse and then whoever has the rock passes it to the next child.
- Say the next word, and the kid with the rock passes it again.
- After the whole verse has been recited, everybody should spin in a circle one time before you begin reciting the verse again.
- Repeat several times, until kids learn the verse.

What You Say: “This rock reminds us of strength and the stone that was removed from Lazarus’ grave. Pick up a rock outside today and let it remind you of this verse. Lazarus faced the ultimate trouble when he died. But Jesus showed him that even in that situation, he is powerful. **[Bottom Line]** Whatever happens, remember how powerful God is.”

