

SPRING 2026 WEEK 10
OLDER KIDS (3/4)

GOD IS COMPASSIONATE

JOHN 11

MEMORY VERSE: Romans 5:8

ATTRIBUTE: *Compassionate – God sees, cares, and acts when his children are in need.*

CHRIST CONNECTION: When Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead, He showed that He has power over death. Jesus said, “I am the resurrection and the life.” Jesus died on the cross for our sins and rose from the dead. He gives eternal life to those who trust in Him.

STORY POINT: Jesus showed compassion to his friends by healing Lazarus.

LEADER BIBLE STUDY

The account of Jesus’ raising Lazarus from the dead is a foundational passage in the New Testament. Not only was a dead man brought back to life, this passage in John 11 also contains the shortest verse in the Bible and a glimpse into the humanity of Jesus. John 11:35 says, “Jesus wept.”

In this historical account of the death of Jesus’ dear friend, Jesus is questioned three times for not arriving sooner. The primary reason He is questioned can be found in the words of both Mary and Martha: “Lord, if you had been here, my brother wouldn’t have died.” (John 11:21,32)

Mary, Martha, and others around them had seen and heard of the miraculous things that Jesus was doing. They had only seen Him miraculously prevent death. Their framework for how Jesus worked was limited to their experience with Him.

Martha showed a glimmer of hope in John 11:22 when she said, “Yet even now I know that whatever you ask from God, God will give you.” However, she still seemed to limit what Jesus could do to her previous experience.

It can be easy to put God inside of a box, to limit what we believe He can do to what we’ve seen Him do before. Yet Jesus’ delay served a greater purpose: to give Him the opportunity to perform an even greater miracle—and thus display God’s glory.

Today, we often struggle to pray with confidence that God could heal physical ailments or save those that seem most unlikely to repent. In our minds, we limit what God can do to what we have seen or can explain.

What if we prayed with the confidence that God is a wonder worker, doing more than we could ever ask or imagine? What if we believed that God isn’t bound by our opinions or perspectives? What if we demonstrated our confidence in a God who is beyond our full comprehension, but is always within our reach? Not only would this type of faith change us, but it would also greatly impact those around us.

WELCOME

Greet each kid as he or she arrives. Use this time to build relationships and help new kids connect to your group.

SAY *Have you ever been late to an important event? Why were you late? Has anyone ever been late to your birthday party or other fun event? How did that make you feel?*

ACTIVITY PAGE (5 minutes)

Invite kids to complete the activity page.

SESSION STARTER (10 MINUTES)

RESURRECTION POWER

Form kids into five groups and provide each group with a Bible, paper, and markers. Assign each group one of the following Bible verses: 1 Kings 17:17-24; 2 Kings 4:18-37; 2 Kings 13:20-21; Luke 7:11-17; Luke 8:49-56.

Instruct each group to read the verses and then draw a picture to represent their Bible story. Ask groups to come up with a main point for their story and write it on the drawing. Invite groups to tell their story to the class using the illustration and the main point.

SAY *Resurrection stories happened in the Old Testament and the New Testament. Just as God has power to bring a new life into the world, He also has power to bring life from death. The resurrection power displayed by Elijah, Elisha, and Jesus reminds us that God has victory over death. In our Bible story, we will read of Jesus' power over the death of his friend Lazarus.*

BIBLE STORY

INTRODUCE THE SESSION AND ATTRIBUTE (3 MINUTES)

SAY *Welcome, kids! My name is [your name], and I am so excited you are here. Together, we get to study true stories from the Bible.*

*Each week this year we'll be learning a new attribute of God. An attribute is something that helps us describe a person or thing. For instance, one attribute of a circle is that it is round. Knowing about the attributes of God helps us understand him better. **This week, our attribute is compassionate. Compassionate means that God sees, cares, and acts when his children are in need.** He cares for his people.*

REVIEW THE TIMELINE (1 MINUTE)

Show the Giant Timeline. Point to individual Bible stories as you review and show where today's story falls in the larger story of the Bible.

PRAY (1 MINUTE)

SAY Before we open our Bibles to begin the story, let's pray together. Pray with me: 'Dear God, please open our ears to listen and our eyes to see the truth from Your Word. Give us hearts to believe. Amen.'

TELL THE BIBLE STORY (10 MINUTES)

JESUS RAISED LAZARUS

Jesus and Lazarus were friends. Lazarus lived in the town of Bethany, in Judea, with his sisters, Mary and Martha. One day, Lazarus got sick. Mary and Martha sent a message to Jesus. "Lord, Your friend Lazarus is sick," they said.

Jesus told His disciples, "Lazarus' sickness will not end in death. This sickness will bring glory to God and to the Son of God." Jesus stayed where He was for two more days. Then Jesus said, "Let's go back to Judea."

By the time Jesus arrived in Bethany, Lazarus had been in a tomb for four days. Martha hurried to meet Jesus, but Mary stayed home.

Martha said, "Lord, if You had been here, my brother wouldn't have died." Martha knew Jesus could do a miracle though. "I know God will give You whatever You ask," she said.

Jesus replied, "Your brother will rise again."

Martha believed that Lazarus would rise from the dead in the future—on the last day. But **Jesus said, "I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in Me, even if he dies, will live. Everyone who lives and believes in Me will never die—ever.** Do you believe this?"

"Yes, Lord," **Martha said. "I believe You are the Messiah, the Son of God."**

Martha went back to her house. She told Mary that Jesus wanted to see her. So Mary left the house, and all the people who had come to comfort Mary and Martha followed her.

Mary fell at Jesus' feet and said, "Lord, if You had been here, my brother would not have died!" **Mary was crying. Jesus wept too.**

Mary led Jesus to the tomb where Lazarus was buried. It was a cave, and a huge stone covered the opening. "Remove the stone," Jesus said.

So the stone was moved aside. Jesus looked up and said, "Father, I thank You that You heard Me." **Then Jesus shouted, "Lazarus, come out!"**

Lazarus came out of the tomb, wrapped in linen and cloth. Jesus said, "Unwrap him and let him go."

Later, a large crowd of Jews went to Bethany to see Jesus and Lazarus. **The religious leaders decided they wanted to kill Lazarus because Jesus had raised him from the dead and many people were leaving the Jews and trusting in Jesus.**

REVIEW THE BIBLE STORY

SAY Jesus was on His way toward Jerusalem. He was still traveling and teaching when Lazarus became sick and died. When Jesus finally did arrive, Lazarus had been

dead for four days. Martha was disappointed that Jesus had not arrived in time to heal Lazarus. She believed that if He had been there, Lazarus would not have died. What did Jesus tell His disciples before He arrived in Bethany? Look at John 11:4. [Choose a volunteer to read John 11:4 aloud.] Jesus told them that Lazarus' illness would not end in death. And yet, Lazarus did die! Even though Lazarus died, it would not be the end of the story. Jesus said that his death would result in the glory of God and the Son of God.

Martha confessed her belief that Jesus is the Messiah, and that she believed one day Lazarus would rise again. What did Jesus tell Martha? Look at John 11:25. [Choose a volunteer to read John 11:25 aloud.] Jesus told Martha that He is the resurrection and the life and that all who believe in Him, even if they die, they will live again.

Even in the hope of resurrection life, there was still sadness and pain. How did Jesus respond to His friend Lazarus' death? [Allow responses.] Jesus wept. He had so much compassion for his friends, and he was grieved that His friend had died and that death is real. But Jesus has power over death and it will not have the final word for those who believe in Him. How did Jesus prove He has power over death? [Allow responses.] Jesus told Lazarus to 'come out' of the tomb, and He did! Everyone who trusts in Jesus, even if they die, they will live.

But not everyone believed Jesus is God. Who were some of the people that rejected Jesus? [Allow responses.] Yes, some of the religious leaders began to plan how to kill both Lazarus and Jesus. The religious leaders' evil plans were not a surprise to Jesus—He knew He had come to die. But through His death, Jesus would destroy the power of death once and for all. And He did! Jesus died on the cross and rose again.

GOSPEL DISCUSSION

SAY When Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead, He showed that He has power over death. Jesus said, "I am the resurrection and the life." Jesus died on the cross for our sins and rose from the dead. He gives eternal life to those who trust in Him.

GROUP DISCUSSION (10 MINUTES)

Ask the following questions. Lead the group to discuss.

SAY What does it mean to live even if you die?

Lead kids to think about Jesus' words to Martha and that He called Himself the resurrection and the life. Tell kids that through Jesus we have the hope of eternal life with Him. Remind kids that we also have life now through Jesus. Explain that He gives us new hearts that want to love Him and others. Tell kids that we lay down our lives for others and in doing so live through the power of Jesus at work in us.

(Option: Choose a volunteer to read John 12:25.)

SAY Why did Jesus cry even though He would raise Lazarus to life?

Explain that death is a consequence of sin and that God originally created the world free of sin. Explain that Jesus was grieved over the devastation sin causes and experienced its sting when His friend died. He also felt compassion for his friends. Remind kids that Jesus came to undo the curse of sin and bring eternal life to all who believe in Him.

(Option: Choose a volunteer to read 1 Cor. 15:55-57.)

SAY *How can you trust Jesus when you face sadness or pain?*

Answers will vary. Remind kids that they can take their sadness and pain to Jesus because He is compassionate and understands their feelings. Encourage kids to remember that in Jesus we always have hope.

(Option: Choose a volunteer to read 1 John 5:4.)

PRAY (2 MINUTES)

Invite kids to pray before transitioning to Apply.

APPLY

REVIEW & BIBLE SKILLS (5 MINUTES)

Distribute Bibles and display the New Testament Israel Map. Guide kids to open their Bibles to John 12. Explain that in the beginning of John 11, Jesus is probably in Perea teaching. Tell kids that He did not stop teaching for two days and then traveled to Bethany (15) to be with Lazarus' family. Explain that Bethany is a small village in Judea just outside the city of Jerusalem (H5).

Consider comparing the New Testament Israel Map to a modern-day map to help kids understand where these stories took place. (Tip: Locate the areas in and around modern-day Bethany or al-Azariya.) Choose a volunteer to read aloud John 11:4-5.

SAY *The area of Perea, where Jesus was teaching, was about a two days journey to Bethany. But instead of leaving right away to see Lazarus, Jesus stayed two days longer. The Bible tells us that Jesus loved Martha, Mary, and Lazarus. So why didn't He rush to see them?*

Jesus knew that He would raise Lazarus from the dead. And He knew that raising him from the dead would result in God being glorified. Many people believed in Him after this miracle. We can trust that even when God's plans don't make sense, He has a purpose. And we can ask Him for the faith to trust Him so that He is glorified.

ACTIVITY (10 MINUTES)

RAISE THE PAPERCLIP

Form kids into groups of three. Provide each group with a strong magnet, string, and a paper clip. Tell kids to tie a 4-inch long string around the paper clip. Direct one kid to place the paper clip on a table and hold the end of the string. Then direct one kid from each group to hold the magnet about five or six inches away from the paper clip. Instruct the kid holding the string to hold it firmly. Lead the kid to move the magnet closer and closer to the paper clip trying to make the paper clip raise off the table without touching the magnet.

SAY *Look how much effort you had to put into this activity just to make a paper clip raise off of the surface of the table. We couldn't just say, 'Paper clip, raise up!' But we learned today that Jesus holds all power. He raised Lazarus from the dead by simply saying, 'Lazarus, come out!' Jesus has power over life and death. When we trust in Him, we are raised to walk in new life.*

JOURNAL AND PRAYER (5 MINUTES)

Distribute journal pages and pencils. Guide kids to think about and answer the questions listed on the page. As kids journal, invite them to share their ideas.

What does this story teach me about God or the gospel?

What does the story teach me about myself?

Are there any commands in this story to obey? How are they for God's glory and my good?

Are there promises in this story to remember? How do they help me trust and love God?

How does this story help me to live on mission better?

Review the gospel and encourage kids to speak with you or another teacher if they have questions. Then pray, praising God for the power He has over death and giving thanks for Jesus' death and resurrection so that we can have new, eternal life. As time allows, lead kids to complete "Order the Events" on the activity page.

BONUS CONTENT

Use these activities as time allows.

QUESTIONS FROM KIDS (3 MINUTES)

Show the "Unit 24, Session 2" questions from kids video. Prompt kids to discuss:

What happens after we die? Does God bring us back to life like Lazarus?

How did Jesus conquer death for us?

MISSIONS MOMENT (3 MINUTES)

In 1881, Buck and Anne Bagby were the first Baptist missionaries to Brazil. One year later, another couple, Z.C. and Kate Taylor, joined the Bagbys in Brazil. These four people along with one Brazilian Christian started the first Baptist Church in Salvador, Bahia, of Brazil in 1882. Two years later, they began another church in Rio de Janeiro.

Tell kids that Anne helped start a school in São Paulo in 1901. Share that the school included a boarding school for girls (a facility where kids live on the school campus). Tell kids that Anne Bagby, her husband, and her children and their families were all very instrumental in starting Baptist churches and schools across the southern United States, Brazil, and Argentina.

Show the missions video and then close in prayer, thanking God for the Bagby's faithfulness to plant churches and asking God to continue to reach Brazilians for His glory.

