

# GOD IS MORE POWERFUL THAN DEATH

FOUNDATION: GOD IS POWERFUL - GOD GIVES STRENGTH

## BIG TRUTH: GOD IS MORE POWERFUL THAN DEATH

*John 11:21-25; 1 Corinthians 15:3-4; Ephesians 1:18-23, 2:1-6; Hebrews 2:14-15*

## BIBLE VERSE: 1 CORINTHIANS 15:56-57

*The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.*

## BIG IDEAS

- God is the author of life.
- Sin leads to death.
- God is more powerful than death.
- God raises the spiritually dead to life.

## BIBLE STORY: JOHN 11

The story of Lazarus is a popular story that reveals the human nature of Jesus while He was on earth. His apparent sorrow over His friends' grief reveals His true humanity. Yet, His ability to raise Lazarus from the grave reveals His divinity. Only God has the power to raise from the dead and Jesus showed this power when He called Lazarus from the grave. This story is more than a happy ending though. In it lies the foundational truth that God raises people to new life when they believe in His Son. God is more powerful than death and He gives new life to spiritually dead people when they believe in Jesus Christ.

## FOUNDATION: GOD IS POWERFUL—GOD GIVES STRENGTH

God is more powerful than anyone or anything else in the universe. His power is the ability to do what He desires to do. God has a purpose, will accomplish it, and His purposes always bring Him glory. Since God is the source of all power, it means that He gives us strength. We need to do the things He calls us to do. Paul says in Philippians 4:13 that he can “do all things through Christ who gives him strength.” That means that we can do anything and endure anything that God calls us to because it is God Himself who is giving us His strength to do it.



### Every child should know that:

- God is more powerful than all things: than creation, than our fears, and than death



### Every child should be in awe of:

- Awe for how strong and powerful God is



### Every child should be able to:

- Recognize that everything they see and everything they feel is under God's power



### Every child should want to:

- Trust God with all of their fears

## FAMILY DEVOTION: WHEN THE DEAD LIVE AGAIN

God's power and might are never more evident than when He gives new life to those who are dead in their sins. He not only has the power to breathe life into a lifeless body, but He has the power to forgive sins and make a person new.

GOD IS MORE POWERFUL  
THAN DEATH**BIBLE VERSE: 1 CORINTHIANS 15:56-57**

*The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.*

**We experience pain from death because of our sin.**

- We are sinners.
- Sin has affected every part of our hearts and our lives.
- Sin leads to death. We are all dead in our sins.
- Eventually, we will all die in this life. When someone dies without trusting in Jesus, they die to be eternally separated from God because of their sin.
- When someone that we know dies, we feel the sting of death.
- This is a consequence of sin that has broken creation and our relationships.

**God is more powerful than death.**

- God is holy and cannot sin.
- God is over all things, and He controls all things.
- God controls even death. He is the One who decides when we will die.
- He is the only one who is stronger than death. In the Bible, we see this to be true when He raises people from the dead, such as Lazarus or Jairus' daughter. He did these things to show people that He is more powerful than death.
- Even when Jesus, who is fully God, died on the cross, death was not more powerful than He is. He rose from the grave, proving that He is the One who is more powerful than death and our sin.

**God gives us victory over death through Jesus.**

- It is through Jesus' death on the cross that our sins are forgiven.
- When we trust in Jesus to save us, we are given a new, restored relationship with God.
- It is through Jesus' resurrection that we are promised eternal life in Him.
- Even if we die in this life, when we have Jesus, we can trust that we will be raised again to live forever with Him.
- It is because Jesus rose from the grave that we have victory over sin and over death. God's power over death is given to us as a gift by His grace. This leads us to worship and praise Him.

**BIBLE STORY: JOHN 11***Death and Resurrection of Lazarus*

Supporting Scripture: John 1:3; Job 10:9-12

**Teacher Introduction:**

John's account of the death and resurrection of Lazarus is a moving one. We see many things happening during this story. A close friend of Jesus is dying and yet Jesus doesn't go to him immediately. We see the faith of Mary and Martha as they choose not to be angry or hopeless, but remain confident in the power their friend, Jesus has. Although Jesus surely cared very much about His friends, we see Him submitting to the will of the Father. We see Jesus weeping over the sorrow that His close friends feel over the loss of their brother. Yet, His weeping is not full of bitterness, regret, or hopelessness. It is a sorrow that is hopeful with the knowledge that death does not win in the end. He will triumph over death and hell and all who believe will be resurrected, called forth from the grave, just as He calls Lazarus forth from the grave in this story. Ultimately, we see the great power that is God's and no one else's. There is no other who can call forth the dead. God is more powerful than death.

**Teaching Guide:**

The guide below is provided to help you teach the narrative: *Death and Resurrection of Lazarus*. The four points are the Big Ideas that should guide your lesson as you share from John 11 and teach the narrative: *Death and Resurrection of Lazarus*. Footnotes are provided for further study of the text and God's interaction with His people. Throughout the lesson, questions are placed to help you guide the preschoolers to think about and process the narrative: *Death and Resurrection of Lazarus*.

**Opening Illustration:**

Bring in a kids' play tent or pop-up tunnel. Pretend the tent is Lazarus' tomb. Allow the children to take turns getting inside the "tomb". Have the class call out "Come Out!" to the child who is inside the tent.

- In our story today, Lazarus came out of the tomb or grave just like you came out of the tent.
- God is more powerful than death. He's more powerful than anything or anyone.

**BIG IDEA: GOD IS THE AUTHOR OF LIFE.****Creating the world and all that is in it is God's design.<sup>1</sup>**

- The idea of mankind and the world all originated with God.
- God is the creator of all things and all people.
- He is the great designer and everything that is reflects His great design.
- Everything that is created is from God.

**God writes every story of every person on this earth.<sup>2</sup>**

- God is the author of every person's life. No person is accidental or comes into being through any other source.
- God plans and fulfills each person's life exactly as He designs.
- When Lazarus died, God was not surprised.
- Lazarus' death was a part of the story God was writing.

**God uses every person's story for His glory and the good of mankind.**

- Lazarus' death and resurrection was for God's glory and mankind's good.
- God knows every day of every person's life. Each person's life is drawn out exactly as God designs.<sup>3</sup>
- God knew the days that Lazarus would live. He knew the day Lazarus would die and He knew the day Lazarus would be called forth from the grave to live again.
- God writes every moment of every person's life.



Bring in at least three different stuffed animals. Lead the children through making up a story about the stuffed animals. Lead them in a discussion about how God writes our stories just like they created the story for the animals.

*Who is the author of all life? (God is the author of every person's life. He writes every story.)*

1. John 1:3: All things are from God, who is the great Creator.

2. Job 10:9-12: Even before the foundations of the world, God planned each and every person. Their stories are from Him. He authors every single one of them.

3. Job 14:5: God knows the number of days a person will live because He is the author of every life. He writes every story.

**BIG IDEA: SIN LEADS TO DEATH.**

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**Death is a consequence of sin.<sup>4</sup>**

- Before Adam and Eve's sin, there was no death.
- No animals had died, no plants, no person. There was only the perfect world and people that God had created.
- Death is the consequence of sin. Adam and Eve sinned and the consequence of this sin was that death entered the world.
- Death is God's mercy towards His people in not allowing us to continue to live forever in our sin.

**Death is a part of life now because of sin.**

- When Adam and Eve sinned, the consequence for all of mankind was death.
- Lazarus died because we live in a fallen world. Every person will die unless Christ returns.
- Lazarus was resurrected from the dead because God is greater than our sin and He is greater than the consequence of our sin.

**Sin is the cause of death.**

- No one will escape death unless Christ returns.
- Because of sin, death entered the world.
- Jesus sorrowed with His friends when Lazarus died. He sorrowed that Lazarus had to die.

*Why is there death in the world? (Because of sin there is death. Death is the consequence of sin.)*

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4. Romans 6:23: The consequence or payment for our sin is that death happens. Prior to the first sin in the Garden of Eden, there was no death.

**BIG IDEA: GOD IS MORE POWERFUL THAN DEATH.****God has power over death.**

- Lazarus' death was not a surprise to God.
- God is all-knowing and all-powerful.
- Jesus knew that Lazarus would be raised to life again.
- God is more powerful than anything, including death.

**God has complete control over every situation.**

- Jesus was not surprised by Lazarus' death because Jesus knows everything.
- Jesus was sorrowful over Lazarus' death because death brings pain.
- God is in control of every situation.
- He knows what each person feels and He does what is best for them.

**God is not overcome or rendered helpless by death like mankind is.<sup>5</sup>**

- Jesus was not afraid that He would never see Lazarus again.
- He knew that He had power to overcome the grave.
- Jesus also understood the greater purpose in the death of Lazarus.
- Jesus felt compassion for His friends, Mary and Martha.
- He sorrowed with them over their heartbreak.
- He sorrowed that people have to experience the pain of death in this life.
- His sorrow was not born out of hopelessness, but out of a grief that death occurs on this earth.



Play "Lazarus, Come Out!" with the children. Have each child take a turn lying down in the "grave". The "grave" can be a blanket on the floor or a large cardboard box that a child could fit in. When the child is in the "grave", have the rest of the class yell, "Lazarus, come out!" The child in the "grave" will jump up and join the rest of the class. Lead the children in a discussion about how God is more powerful than death.

*Who is more powerful than even death? (God is more powerful than death. He controls all things, even death.)*

5. Revelation 1:18: God is more powerful than death. Jesus holds the keys to death and hell. He was once dead, but is now alive forever and evermore.

**BIG IDEA: GOD RAISES THE SPIRITUALLY DEAD TO LIFE.****God holds the power over death.<sup>6</sup>**

- God raises the spiritually dead out of their sin into new life.
- He breathes new life into the spiritually dead when they repent, confess and believe in Jesus Christ as Savior.
- Jesus' life and death are the way God gives new life.
- Lazarus' death was never meant to be forever.
- Jesus knew that Lazarus' illness would not lead to death forever.
- He knew the plan God had to raise Lazarus to life again.



Sing "Forever" with the children. Lead them in a discussion about how God is more powerful than death. God raises the spiritually dead to life through His Son, Jesus Christ.

**God raised Lazarus to life again to bring others to life spiritually.**

- Lazarus' physical death and resurrection were a symbol of what God does for those who believe in His Son.
- Many Jews believed and were spiritually raised to new life after Jesus called Lazarus from the grave.
- God used Lazarus' life and death for His glory and mankind's good.
- God does not waste any part of our lives, even our death.

**Death is not the end for those who believe in Christ.**

- All are appointed to die unless Christ returns.
- For those who believe, death is not the end.
- Death in this world is the beginning of eternal life in heaven.
- Lazarus was allowed to die and then was resurrected to show the people around him that God gives life to the spiritually dead.
- God uses all things for His glory and for our good---even death.

*What does God do for the spiritually dead? (He raises them to new life in His Son, Jesus Christ.)*

6. Revelation 1:18: Christ was dead and rose again of His own power because He holds the power over death and hell.

## HOOKS

**God Is The Author Of Life**

Give each child a blank piece of white paper. Help them fold it into a book. Ask the children to draw pictures telling a story about themselves. Once they finish, lead them in a discussion about how God is the author of our life stories.



- God created everything and everyone and He controls all things. He writes our stories.
- How has God written your story so far? (Help them think about how God has brought them to church, given them their parents, their siblings, their friends, etc.)
- God is the author of all things and He is involved in our lives.

**God Is More Powerful Than Death**

Cut a sheet into long strips. Have the class wrap someone up like a mummy. They can take turns being wrapped up if they like. Tell them that Lazarus would have been wrapped up like this when he was placed in the tomb or grave. Lead them in a discussion about how sin takes us captive like being wrapped up like a mummy.



- Is it easy to get free when you're wrapped up like a mummy? (No, your arms and legs are trapped.)
- Sin does this to us. It traps us and keeps us dead in our sins.
- Do you know who sets us free from this trap? (God raises us from the dead to new life.)
- God makes us alive again and sets us free through the death of His Son, Jesus Christ and Jesus' resurrection.

**God Raises The Spiritually Dead To Life**

Bring in two flowers in pots. One flower should be living and the other one should be withered or dead. Ask the children to compare the two flowers.

- What are some things that are different about the two flowers? (One flower is alive and the other is dying or dead.)
- What does it take to keep a flower alive? (Flowers need sunlight, water, food.)
- Sin makes us withered and dead like this flower (point to the dead flower).
- Do you know what gives us life? (God gives us life. He breathes life into us from the beginning and then He gives us new life when we are dead because of our sin.)