

# Resurrection and Life

JOHN 11:17-53 (BSB) · TEACHER GUIDE · DIGDEEPER.AI

## THE BIG IDEA · SAY IT AT LEAST FIVE TIMES

Jesus is the resurrection and the life. Do you believe this?

Open with it, bring it back after every section, close with it. By the end they should be able to finish the sentence for you.

- Before this passage (day 16): John 10:1-18, The Good Shepherd. Its big idea: The good shepherd knows you by name and lays down his life freely.
- After this passage (day 18): John 12:20-36, The Grain of Wheat. Its big idea: Jesus goes down like a seed to draw everyone to himself.

## Open

Recall last time: the Good Shepherd said he would lay down his life for the sheep (John 10). Today we see what that costs him. Ask: “When has help seemed to arrive too late for you?” Give people a moment. Then read John 11:25-26 aloud. Big idea: Jesus is the resurrection and the life. Do you believe this? Ask one person what stuck from last time.

## Run Sheet

### 1. Martha: “Even Now” (John 11:17-27, about 12 min)

The one thing: Jesus meets grief with a claim: resurrection is not just a future event, it is him.

Ask: Martha says “if You had been here” and “even now I know” in one breath. Why might both belong in an honest talk with Jesus?

### 2. Tears at the Tomb, a Voice in the Grave (John 11:28-44, about 15 min)

The one thing: Jesus grieves death with us, and then he overpowers it.

Ask: Jesus knew he was about to raise Lazarus. Why do you think he wept anyway?

### 3. One Man for the People (John 11:45-53, about 10 min)

The one thing: Giving Lazarus life puts Jesus on the road to his own death.

Ask: Everyone saw Lazarus walk out. Why do you think some believed and some went to the Pharisees?

## Close (never cut it)

This passage shows who Jesus is: the One who weeps at our graves, calls the dead by name, and goes to his own death to gather his scattered children. Read verse 25 once more, then ask his question and leave it in the room: “Do you believe this?” Give a moment of quiet and let it stand.

## PROTECT THE ENDING

If section 3 starts late, drop its optional points and the discussion, read verses 50-53, and give the close its full time.

## KIDS SIDE ANSWERS

Story order: 5, 1, 2, 4, 3 (top to bottom) · Feelings: Martha sad, Mary sad, People who believed happy, The leaders worried · Code: LAZARUS COME OUT

Act it out: One child lies behind a chair wrapped loosely in paper streamers. The others are the crowd. The teacher says, “Take away the stone,” then calls, “Lazarus, come out!” The child walks out and the crowd unwraps him.

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## 1. Martha: “Even Now”

JOHN 11:17-27 · ABOUT 12 MIN · SECTION 1 OF 3

### THEIR PAGE, WORD FOR WORD (ANSWERS FILLED IN)

- Lazarus has been dead four days. Every hope is gone.
- Martha brings Jesus her complaint and her trust together.
- Jesus answers with himself: he is the resurrection.

Martha said, “Lord, if You had been HERE, my brother would not have died.”

Jesus said, “I am the RESURRECTION and the LIFE.”

Discuss: Martha says “if You had been here” and “even now I know” in one breath. Why might both belong in an honest talk with Jesus?

Jesus meets grief with a claim: resurrection is not just a future event, it is him.

### MUST COVER

- Martha pairs complaint and trust, and Jesus does not rebuke her (11:21-22).
- Martha believes in a resurrection “at the last day.” Jesus points her to himself (11:24-26).

### IF THERE'S TIME

- “Four days” (11:17): burial was quick, and by day four no one expected anything but grief.
- Her answer in 11:27 is the belief John wrote his whole Gospel to produce (see John 20:31, near the end of the book).

Illustration idea: A child is told “Dad will be home eventually.” That is true, but it is different from Dad walking through the door.

### RUNNING THE DISCUSSION

- Listen for: It's okay to be honest, even disappointed, with God.
- Listen for: She was hurt but still trusted him.

If it drifts: Go back to verse 25. Jesus doesn't argue with her grief. He points her to who he is.

### TRY SAYING SOMETHING LIKE

Martha had a belief about the last day. Jesus stood in front of her and said, “I am.” Do you believe this?

Short on time? Skip the four-days background. Keep verses 21-27.

Bridge → Martha answered in words. Her sister is about to see it happen at the tomb.

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## 2. Tears at the Tomb, a Voice in the Grave

JOHN 11:28-44 · ABOUT 15 MIN · SECTION 2 OF 3

### THEIR PAGE, WORD FOR WORD (ANSWERS FILLED IN)

- Mary falls at his feet with the same words as Martha.
- Jesus is deeply moved, and he weeps.
- He calls a dead man by name, and the man walks out.

Jesus WEPT.

He called out in a loud voice, “Lazarus, come OUT!”

Discuss: Jesus knew he was about to raise Lazarus. Why do you think he wept anyway?

Jesus grieves death with us, and then he overpowers it.

### MUST COVER

- He is “deeply moved in spirit and troubled” and weeps with the mourners (11:33-35).
- “Take away the stone... Lazarus, come out!” The dead man obeys his voice (11:39-44).

### IF THERE'S TIME

- He prays aloud “for the benefit of the people standing here” so they may believe (11:41-42).
- “Unwrap him and let him go” (11:44): others are given a part in freeing him.

Illustration idea: A doctor who knows the treatment will work still sits down and holds the hand of a frightened family.

### RUNNING THE DISCUSSION

- Listen for: Because he loved Lazarus and his sisters.
- Listen for: Because death is sad and wrong, even if it will be undone.

If it drifts: If talk turns to why God doesn't raise everyone now, come back to verse 44. Stay with what Jesus did here.

### TRY SAYING SOMETHING LIKE

The One who wept at the grave is the One who emptied it. He is the resurrection and the life. Do you believe this?

Short on time? Drop both optional points. Read verses 35 and 43-44 slowly.

Bridge → Everyone saw the same miracle, but not everyone went home believing.

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### 3. One Man for the People

JOHN 11:45-53 · ABOUT 10 MIN · SECTION 3 OF 3

#### THEIR PAGE, WORD FOR WORD (ANSWERS FILLED IN)

- The same sign: many believe, some report him.
- The council fears losing its place and nation.
- Caiaphas speaks cold politics and God speaks through it.

Many of the Jews who had seen what Jesus did BELIEVED in Him.

Caiaphas said it is better “that one man DIE for the people.”

Discuss: Everyone saw Lazarus walk out. Why do you think some believed and some went to the Pharisees?

Giving Lazarus life puts Jesus on the road to his own death.

#### MUST COVER

- One sign, two responses: belief and betrayal (11:45-46).
- Caiaphas means a political trade, but God means a death that gathers “the scattered children of God” (11:49-52).

#### IF THERE'S TIME

- “Our place” means the temple. Rome destroyed it in AD 70 anyway. The scheme failed and God's plan stood.
- Last time, the Good Shepherd said he lays down his life and gathers other sheep into one flock (John 10). Here the plot to kill him begins.

Illustration idea: Two people watch the same rescue on the news. One cheers. The other asks who is going to get blamed.

#### RUNNING THE DISCUSSION

- Listen for: They were afraid of losing power or control.
- Listen for: Seeing a miracle isn't enough if you don't want it to be true.

If it drifts: Point to verses 51-52. John cares less about their motives than about what God was doing through them.

#### TRY SAYING SOMETHING LIKE

To give Lazarus life, Jesus walks toward his own death. He is the resurrection and the life. Do you believe this?

Short on time? Skip the Rome and temple background. Read verses 50-53 and go to the close.

Bridge → The passage ends with a plot to kill him. We end with the question he asked Martha.

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## With One Friend, Over Coffee

ABOUT 30 MINUTES · FOR A FRIEND WHO IS CURIOUS, OR NOT SURE

1. Set the scene. Lazarus, a close friend of Jesus, has been dead and buried four days. His sisters are grieving and the house is full of mourners. By day four, no one expects anything.
2. Read Martha's conversation. Read John 11:21-27 together. Notice she is honest with Jesus about her hurt. Notice he answers by pointing to himself: "I am the resurrection and the life."
3. Watch the tomb. Read 11:33-44. Jesus weeps, has the stone taken away, and calls, "Lazarus, come out!" Ask what stands out to them.
4. Take the doubt seriously. If they wonder whether this grew in the telling, say that's a fair question. Point out that John names the town, the family, and the witnesses, and the enemies of Jesus didn't deny it. They plotted to kill him because of it (11:45-53).
5. Leave his question with them. Read verses 25-26 again. Don't ask for an answer. Just say this is the question Jesus puts to everyone who reads it: "Do you believe this?"

### QUESTIONS YOU MAY HEAR

"Did this really happen, or is it a story that grew?"

I can't prove it to you over coffee. What strikes me is that it's tied to a real village near Jerusalem, a named family, and many witnesses. Even the people who wanted Jesus dead treated it as something he had done.

"If Jesus knew he'd raise Lazarus, why did he cry?"

The passage says he was deeply moved and troubled. He loved these people, and he felt what death does to them, even knowing it wasn't the end.

"Christians still die. What does 'will never die' mean?"

The same verse says the believer "will live, even though he dies." Bodies still die. Jesus is saying death doesn't end the life he gives.

"Why would raising someone get Jesus killed?"

The leaders feared everyone would follow him and Rome would crack down. The high priest said one man should die for the people. John says God meant it more deeply than he knew.

# Evergreen Principles

Four standards every week. The rest rotate: each lesson brings the few that fit its passage best.

## EVERY LESSON

### 1. Pray before you prepare

Teaching the Bible is spiritual work first (John 15:5).

If you're new: Pray for your class by name during the week.

If you've taught for years: Pray for the one person you find hardest to reach.

### 2. Study the text first

Understand the passage yourself before any help.

If you're new: Read it in two translations; write your own questions first.

If you've taught for years: Don't lean on old notes. What did you miss last time?

### 3. Teach one big idea

People remember one sentence, not four points.

If you're new: Write it in 12 words or fewer before anything else.

If you've taught for years: Test every story against it. If it doesn't serve it, cut it.

### 4. Point to Christ

All of Scripture points to him (Luke 24:27).

If you're new: Ask: what does this show about Jesus?

If you've taught for years: Show grace as the reason for obedience, not just the rule.

## FOR THIS LESSON

### 1. Plan for the skeptic and the grieving

This passage holds a death, a miracle, and a doubtful crowd in one scene.

If you're new: Expect someone to be grieving. Have an honest, short answer ready for "did this happen?"

If you've taught for years: Let a grieving person's honest question shape section 1 the way Martha's did.

### 2. Let silence do its work

"Jesus wept" is best heard, not explained.

If you're new: Read verse 35, then pause for a count of five before saying anything.

If you've taught for years: At the close, ask Jesus' question and stay quiet longer than feels comfortable.

### 3. Let the passage land the way it lands

John is showing who Jesus is and ends with Jesus' own question.

If you're new: End on who Jesus is and his question. Don't add an assignment.

If you've taught for years: Resist tying the Caiaphas section into a tidy moral. Let its irony point to the cross.

## BEFORE CLASS

- ☐ Read the passage three times
- ☐ Big idea in one sentence
- ☐ Opening and close chosen
- ☐ Know what you'll cut
- ☐ Handouts, pens, extra Bibles
- ☐ Prayed for the class by name

## Openings, Closings & Hard Moments

Pick one opening and one close; rotate so class doesn't get predictable.

## OPENINGS

- ask a real-life question: When has help seemed to arrive too late for you?

- tell a short story: Tell briefly of a hospital waiting room where the news came too late, and how people talked about “someday” to cope.
- start in the text: Read 11:17 and 11:39: “four days” and “by now he stinks.” Ask what the people at that tomb expected.

### **CLOSINGS**

- restate the big idea: He wept at the tomb, emptied it, and went to his own death. He is the resurrection and the life. Do you believe this?
- allow quiet reflection: Read 11:25-26 slowly, ask “Do you believe this?”, and give a minute of silence.
- call back to the opening: We started with help that came too late. At Bethany, Jesus came after all hope was gone, and it wasn't too late for him.

### **WHEN CLASS GETS HARD**

- Someone whose loved one died says, “Jesus raised Lazarus. Why didn't he raise mine?”: Don't rush to explain. Point to “Jesus wept”: he grieves with them. Say honestly that the passage doesn't answer that, and that Lazarus is a sign of what Jesus says he will one day do for all his people.
- Confusion over “will never die” when believers clearly do die.: Read verse 25 and 26 side by side: “will live, even though he dies.” Death still comes, but it does not end the life Jesus gives.
- Silence after a question: Wait. Then rephrase simpler, or ask them to talk to a neighbor first.
- One person dominates: “Thanks. Let’s hear from someone who hasn’t spoken yet.” Talk privately if it continues.
- A question you can’t answer: Say so, write it down, bring an answer next week.
- A tangent takes over: “Great question. Let’s catch it after class so we can finish the passage.”

### **READ THIS WEEK**

- John 5:25-29
- Ezekiel 37:1-14
- 1 Corinthians 15:50-57

Free at [digdeeper.ai/devotionals/john/11-17-53/lesson](https://digdeeper.ai/devotionals/john/11-17-53/lesson)

# Resurrection and Life

JOHN 11:17-53 (BSB) · WHO DO YOU SAY I AM? · DIGDEEPER.AI

Key verse: "I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in Me will live, even though he dies."  
John 11:25

## THE BIG IDEA

Jesus is the resurrection and the life. Do you believe this?

### 1. MARTHA: "EVEN NOW" · JOHN 11:17-27

- Lazarus has been dead four days. Every hope is gone.
- Martha brings Jesus her complaint and her trust together.
- Jesus answers with himself: he is the resurrection.

Martha said, "Lord, if You had been \_\_\_\_\_, my brother would not have died."

Jesus said, "I am the \_\_\_\_\_ and the \_\_\_\_\_."

Discuss: Martha says "if You had been here" and "even now I know" in one breath. Why might both belong in an honest talk with Jesus?

### 2. TEARS AT THE TOMB, A VOICE IN THE GRAVE · JOHN 11:28-44

- Mary falls at his feet with the same words as Martha.
- Jesus is deeply moved, and he weeps.
- He calls a dead man by name, and the man walks out.

Jesus \_\_\_\_\_.

He called out in a loud voice, "Lazarus, come \_\_\_\_\_!"

Discuss: Jesus knew he was about to raise Lazarus. Why do you think he wept anyway?

### 3. ONE MAN FOR THE PEOPLE · JOHN 11:45-53

- The same sign: many believe, some report him.
- The council fears losing its place and nation.
- Caiaphas speaks cold politics and God speaks through it.

Many of the Jews who had seen what Jesus did \_\_\_\_\_ in Him.

Caiaphas said it is better "that one man \_\_\_\_\_ for the people."

Discuss: Everyone saw Lazarus walk out. Why do you think some believed and some went to the Pharisees?

Read this week: John 5:25-29 · Ezekiel 37:1-14 · 1 Corinthians 15:50-57

# For Kids: Resurrection and Life

JOHN 11:17-53 · NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

Big idea: Jesus is stronger than death.

## 1. PUT THE STORY IN ORDER! NUMBER THE BOXES.

- ☐ Jesus called, "Lazarus, come out!"
- ☐ Lazarus died and was in the tomb.
- ☐ Martha ran to meet Jesus.
- ☐ Jesus cried with his friends.
- ☐ Mary cried at Jesus' feet.

## 2. HOW DID THEY FEEL? CIRCLE ONE.

Martha: happy · sad · worried

Mary: happy · sad · worried

People who believed: happy · sad · worried

The leaders: happy · sad · worried

## 3. WORD SEARCH

K W E P T T O M B  
P D B S T O N E J  
P L A Z A R U S E  
H O K V N Y K L S  
D Y R B P C V I U  
O Y D M A R Y F S  
U M A R T H A E R  
V B F O D V D P U  
V R N B V K S G G

JESUS · LAZARUS · MARTHA · MARY · TOMB · STONE · WEPT · LIFE

## 4. SECRET CODE

1=A 2=C 3=E 4=L 5=M 6=O 7=R 8=S 9=T 10=U 11=Z

4 1 11 1 7 10 8      2 6 5 3      6 10 9

## 5. DRAW IT!

Draw the cave with the stone rolled away and Lazarus walking out.

## 6. MEMORY VERSE

"I am the resurrection and the life." John 11:25 Say it to a grown-up: ☐ ☐ ☐

Jesus is the resurrection and the \_\_\_\_\_. \_\_\_\_\_