



CHILDHOOD BIBLE STORIES

NEW TESTAMENT

LIFE



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CHILDHOOD BIBLE STORIES
[NEW TESTAMENT]



more LIFE resources available at
toolkit.salvos.org.au/yourhandkids



1/5

**JESUS FEEDS THE 5000:
 RESPONDING TO A WORLD IN NEED**



How have you felt when you have seen physical need around you in the world?

THIS WEEK'S READINGS

John 6:1-15

How will you be involved with God this week in responding to other's needs?

2/5

**THE CRIPPLED MAN: BRINGING
 OTHERS TO JESUS**



What do you think is the most important need of humanity?

THIS WEEK'S READINGS

Luke 5:17-25

Who will you share about Jesus having the authority to forgive sins with this week?



1/5

JESUS FEEDS THE 5000: RESPONDING TO A WORLD IN NEED



summary

Historians estimate that there were around 20,000 hungry tummies there that day.

Jesus was teaching them, feeding them spiritually, but they also needed to be fed physically.

When Jesus asked the disciples, 'Where can we buy food for them?', they must have felt overwhelmed.

In this story Jesus teaches us about who He is, His immense power, love and compassion for people and the way that He wants to partner with us to meet human need.



you will need

- Enough Bibles for each group member to see look on
If you do activity 1 in "Involve"
- Cut out bread and fish from *appendix 1*
(1 sheet per person)
- A texta for each group member
- Blu tac

keep in mind

This is the only miracle of Jesus that is recorded in all 4 gospel accounts. Each account is slightly different in the details but the central themes and events are the same.



CONNECT



To help your group connect on a relaxed level, spend time discussing some or all of the following:

- » What's the weirdest thing you've ever eaten?
- » If someone made a movie of your life, which actor/actress would you want to play yourself?
- » What do you think is the most important need you have in your life?

DISCUSS



read the bible



Ask someone in your group to read,
John 6:1-15

- » Share with the group if you have ever wanted to help someone who was in physical need but felt helpless? (E.g. An unwell friend, poverty overseas, country affected by natural disaster). What is it about the situation that made you feel helpless?
- » Imagine this: there are 5000 hungry men (probably 15,000-20,000 people if you include women and children!) and Jesus turns to you and says: "Where will we get enough food to feed all these people?" What thoughts go through your mind?

('Discuss' continues on the next page)



- » Why do you think Jesus asks Phillip where they will get food from? (The disciples should have remembered the many miracles that Jesus had already performed, such as turning water into wine (John 2:1-12), healing the official's son (John 4:46-54) and healing the man at the pool in Bethsaida (5:10-17) as well as many other miracles recorded in the gospels of Matthew, Mark and Luke).
- » Jesus is powerful enough to have snapped His fingers and had a meal materialise. Why do you think He didn't just sort it out Himself? Why do you think He involves the disciples and uses the boy's offering of the bread and fish?
- » Jesus knew how much food was needed. And yet there were 12 baskets of leftovers! What do you think this tells us about Jesus?
- » Why do you think Jesus wants to involve us in meeting human need?
- » When confronted with human need do you think we should focus our energies on praying, acting or both? Why?
- » Based on this story, how is God's ability to achieve a goal different to our ability?
- » How do you think the disciples felt that day, being actively involved in the miracle? Have you ever felt God working through you to meet human need?
- » What part of this story is the most encouraging to you personally? Why?



God enjoys involving us in His work of serving others. He doesn't need up and yet he chooses to use us for his work!



INVOLVE



Pick activity 1 OR activity 2 to do with your group.

activity 1 : your bread and fish

The little boy doesn't have very much to offer, but he gives God what he has. What are the 'bread and fish' in your life?

To put it another way, what are the things in your life (however small) that God could use to meet the needs of others?

Take some time as a group to write these things on the cut out bread and fish.

Use the blu tac to stick all of these things to the wall.

Thank God for these things and pray he would use them for His glory and to help others.

OR

activity 2 : human needs

The people on the mountainside needed food and Jesus provided it in involving the disciples and the young boy.

Have each group member share one human need that they care about and one way that they would like God to use them.

Have everyone pray aloud for the person on their right.



APPLY



What is one thing you will do differently this week based on what we've talked about during LIFE group?

OR

Stick your loaves and fishes somewhere you will see them frequently this week as a reminder of what we've talked about. Keep praying to God that He will use you for His purposes

LEADER NOTES

Don't forget to include some fun/relaxation in every LIFE group night. Start with a game of Uno, Karaoke or Xbox or just put out some snacks and let people chat! Building a community in LIFE Group is crucial to genuine relationships and opens up opportunities for sharing genuinely with one another.

FOLLOW UP

About 3 days after your group has met, follow up all your group members and encourage them about what they learnt in LIFE group.

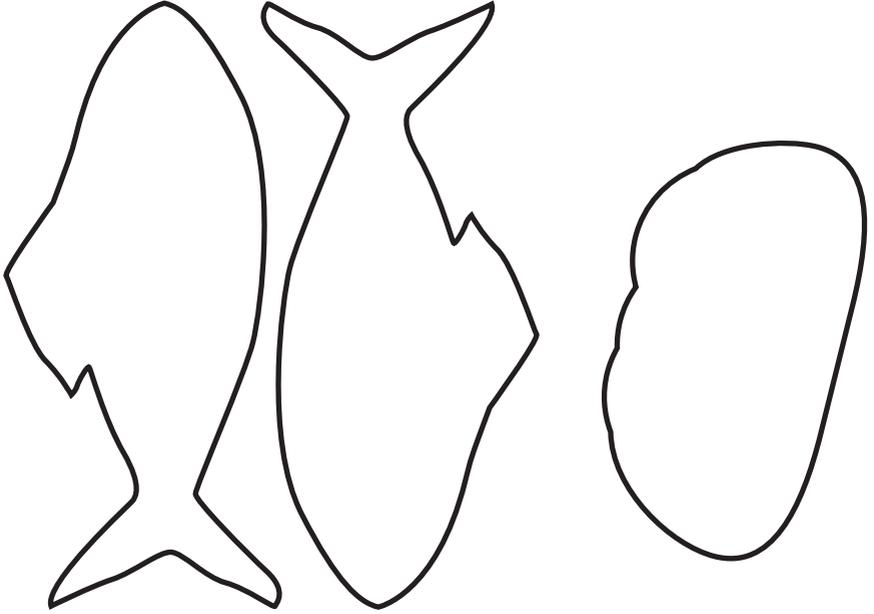
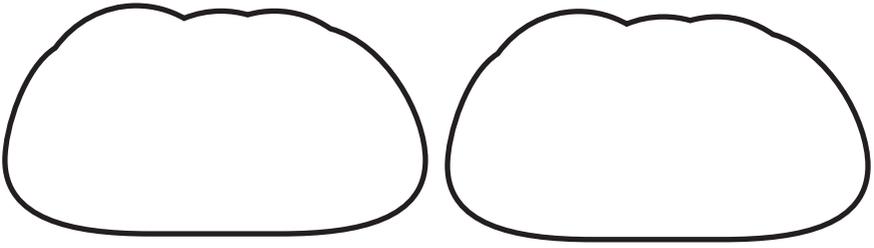
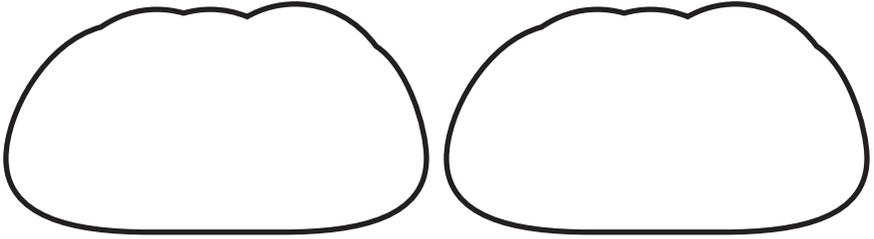
You could ask them:

How have you been working alongside God this week to help others?



APPENDIX 1

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2/5

THE CRIPPLED MAN: BRINGING OTHERS TO JESUS



summary

What is the most important need of humanity? Some say defeating poverty, others say access to education. Others will say love and a sense of belonging. In the story of the crippled man, his physical healing seems to be his most important need. But Jesus shows us that forgiveness of sins is his most important need and Jesus is the only one who can meet it.



you will need

- Butcher's paper for a group brainstorm
- Textas for your group to share

keep in mind

- There are many needs that are important in this world, but the most important is forgiveness of sins. There is no point fixing someone's physical, emotional or social problems if the end result is they still stand in opposition to God and therefore are under His judgement when He returns.
- "Evangelising" is a jargon word that simply means "sharing the good news with the desire to convert someone". If the word evangelise conjures up ideas that are too scary for your group, use "sharing Jesus" or "sharing the good news" instead.



CONNECT



To help your group connect on a relaxed level, spend time discussing some or all of the following:

- » If you could visit any place in the world, where would you choose to go and why?
- » If you could have a superpower, what would it be?
- » What is something in this world that you would like Jesus to fix? Why that thing?

recap

What is something you did last week to help meet another person's needs? Share your experience and your feelings.

DISCUSS



read the bible



Luke 5:17-25

- » Which part of the story is most interesting to you? Why?
- » These men go to some extreme lengths to help their friend. What is the most extreme thing you've ever done to help a friend?

('Discuss' continues on the next page)



- » Can you think of a time when you tried to 'bring a friend to Jesus'? What happened?
- » The friends in the story face several obstacles (transporting a friend who can't walk, a huge crowd, etc) but they show determination to get him to Jesus. What obstacles have you faced in trying to bring friends, family members or strangers to Jesus? Do you usually stop when you hit these obstacles or push on?
- » Why do you think Jesus forgives the man's sins before He heals him of his physical illness? What does this tell us about the importance of having our sins forgiven?
- » What do you personally think is easier to say; "your sins are forgiven" or "pick up your mat and walk"?
- » Why does Jesus have the authority to say "your sins are forgiven"? (The only reason Jesus can say "your sins are forgiven" is because He is going to the cross to die for sins.)
- » The man didn't need to get cleaned up before he came to Jesus. Jesus meets us where we are. Do you think your not-yet-saved friends or family understand this? Why/why not? What conditions or expectations do we sometimes put on people before they come to Jesus for forgiveness?

further questions for mature christians

- » Why do you think it is so important to have a good understanding of who Christ is when we are evangelising?
- » If forgiveness is people's main need, is it wrong to help them solve other problems they have as a way to share the gospel with them? Why/why not?
- » What are the deciding factors for determining which methods of evangelism are acceptable? Does the method even matter?
- » How can we develop friendships for the purpose of leading others to Christ and yet avoid being manipulative in our friendships and conversations?



INVOLVE



In the story, the man was brought to Jesus by a group of friends who worked together.

Using the butcher's paper brainstorm some ways that your LIFE group could work together to bring others to Jesus.

APPLY



What is one thing you will do differently this week based on what we've talked about during LIFE group?

OR

How will you share with someone this week about Jesus having the authority to forgive sins?

OR

Who is someone who you had given up sharing the gospel with? How will you be persistent in bringing them to meet Jesus?



LEADER NOTES

- Faith: The only condition mentioned as Jesus heals the crippled man is, "seeing their faith" (5:20). The question of whose faith did Jesus see can come up in your discussions. Here is a helpful comment from Alexander Maclaren (a minister from the 1800's) regarding faith and healing. "As Abraham's intercession delivered Lot, as Paul in the shipwreck was the occasion of safety to all the crew, so one man's faith may bring blessings on another. But if the sick man too had not had faith, he would not have let himself be brought at all, and would certainly not have consented to reach Christ's presence by so strange and, to him, dangerous a way ..." (Expositions of Holy Scripture [Baker], on Mark 2:1-12, p. 64).
- If sharing their faith and Jesus with people is something your group struggles with, then consider doing the "Sharing Your Faith" LIFE Guide, found on the Youth and Kid's Toolkit.

FOLLOW UP

About 3 days after your group has met, follow up all your group members and encourage them about what they learnt in LIFE group.

You could ask them:

Who have you introduced to Jesus this week?
What lengths did you go to, to have them meet
the only one who can forgive them of their sins?



3/5

BUILDING YOUR HOUSE ON THE ROCK OR ON THE SAND: WHICH ARE YOU?

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summary

It's the classic Sunday School song "The wise man built his house upon the rock...and the rain came tumbling down...the foolish man built his house upon the sand... and the rain came tumbling down...the rain came down and the floods came up and the foolish man's house went SPLAT!".

It's a fun song to sing and the idea behind the parable isn't that hard, but as we mature in our relationship with Jesus it's helpful to do a building inspection!



you will need

- An A4 piece of paper per person
- A selection of different drawing tools (suggestions: crayons, textas, coloured pencils, lead pencils, paint and paint brushes etc)
- Snacks
- Quiet music playlist to play during the "Involve" activity
- *Appendix 1* printed for each member of your group

keep in mind

- Parables are stories that Jesus told to make a point about Him, the Kingdom of God and how we are to live. We have to be careful not to draw a parallel between all the tiny little details but rather discover the major overarching point of the parable. Keep this in mind as you discuss this parable.
- Both the wise and the foolish builder depict characters who profess to be Christians, one is revealed to be a true disciple of Jesus (having a deep relationship with Him) whilst the other is shown to be a false disciple (has a superficial relationship) (Luke 6:46).



CONNECT



To help your group connect on a relaxed level, spend time discussing some or all of the following OR do the activity:

- » If you had to give up one of your senses (hearing, seeing, feeling, smelling, tasting) which would it be and why would you give up that one?
- » Would you rather be invisible or able to read minds? Why?
- » Describe your house and what it looks like to the group. What are your favourite elements of your house?

activity – human pyramids

If your group is active and likes a challenge you can have a human pyramid building challenge.

Either split up your group and see who can make the most sturdy human pyramid OR do one pyramid as a group and see how long you can hold it for.

recap

Share stories on how you went introducing people to Jesus last week. Check in with how your plan is going, as a group, to bring people to know Jesus.



DISCUSS



Ask a volunteer to read:

Matthew 7:24-29

read the bible

- » What do you think is symbolised by each of the following:
 - The houses
 - The foundations
 - The storm
- » What can you see as the 'end-points' of the two options? (Get your group to work out what it looks like in real life, not just "one house survives and one house falls over").
- » What is it that makes the wise man in the story wise? Where does true wisdom come from? (Trusting Jesus and His word and living it out in our lives).
- » What is one example in your life of you being like the wise man?
- » What is one example in your life of you being like the foolish man?
- » What are the differences between "hearing" and "obeying" Jesus words? Can anyone share about a time in their life when something unpleasant happened because they heard the Word but didn't obey it?
- » What are some of the things that stop you obeying? (Examples: I don't really believe the words Jesus says, I don't think storms will really come.)
- » What are some practical ways we can avoid being only hearers of Jesus teaching?
- » In what ways is Jesus teaching a secure foundation to build your life on?

('Discuss' continues on the next page)



- » Why do you think people choose to build their lives on the sand (Examples: I don't think storms will come, it is easier to put down roots.)
- » What is difficult about building your life on the rock? (It takes time, energy and sacrifice.)
- » What is easy about building your life on the rock?
- » Jesus states very clearly that the only way to build strong foundations is to obey His teachings. What are others ways we can be tempted to build foundations that we think are secure? (By living by rules, regulations and religion etc.)
- » Do you think we can hear and agree with Jesus teaching without obeying and acting on it? Why or why not?

further questions for mature christians

- » Do you think it is possible to build your life partly on the rock and partly on the sand? What do you think happens if we try to do this?

INVOLVE



During this activity you could play some music or have some snacks for people to munch on.

Draw a picture of your own life depicting the house, sand, rock and storm.

Give everyone 10 minutes to draw and reflect. When the time is up encourage all group members to explain the meaning of their picture to the group.

Ask each group member to share one thing they would like to change about their current set up. Pray for each other.



APPLY



What is one thing you will do differently this week based on what we've talked about during LIFE group?

OR

Do a building inspection of your life this week. Ask yourself the questions in *appendix 1*.

LEADER NOTES

- Jesus is the only worthy foundation to build our lives because His death and resurrection is the only hope we have to overcome (both in this life and the next).
- It is important that we build our foundations on the rock during the good times, we aren't to wait until we are in the middle of the storm to change our foundation from the sand to the rock. It is too late at that point.
- Some helpful passages that you might want to meditate on are:
 - 1 Corinthians 3:10-11: God was kind and let me become an expert builder. I laid a foundation on which others have built. But we must each be careful how we build, because Christ is the only foundation. (CEV)
 - And Psalm 18:2: You are my mighty rock, my fortress, my protector, the rock where I am safe, my shield, my powerful weapon, and my place of shelter. (CEV)



FOLLOW UP

About 3 days after your group has met, follow up all your group members and encourage them about what they learnt in LIFE group.

You could ask them:

Have you spent some time conducting a building inspection of your life? How are your foundations?
How can I be helping you have solid foundations on Jesus?



APPENDIX 1



building inspection

Remember it is not our performance that gets us into heaven; salvation comes by faith alone – yet our obedience to God's word is crucial.

Ask yourself the following questions.

- 🏠 How often do I read the Bible and listen to God speak to me?
- 🏠 What are some ways that I can actively seek to listen to God's instructions and teaching?
- 🏠 Do I listen to God speak and then not obey Him?
- 🏠 What are some practical ways I can make sure that I am a hearer AND a doer of God's Word? (James 1:22)
- 🏠 Have I grown as a disciple of Jesus in the last year?
- 🏠 What storms have I been through this year? How did I go spiritually in these storms?
- 🏠 What did I learn about my foundations when I went through the storms?
- 🏠 Who are some examples of wise Christians in my life who I have seen build their lives on the rock? What can I learn from them? (You might even want to meet up with them and ask them questions.)

If you have any concerns speak to your LIFE group leader, a mentor or someone you trust.

Spend time praying that God would help you to keep building on the rock, not on the sand.



4/5

JESUS AND THE LITTLE CHILDREN: THE VALUE OF KIDS

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summary

Jesus was a busy man and yet he didn't let that busyness get in the way of showing that he valued and cared for children.

He used this moment as a bigger teaching point to show us how to approach Him and His Kingdom.



you will need

If you do activity 1

- A print out of *appendix 1* for each person in your group
- A pen for each member of your group

If you do activity 2

- A piece of A4 paper per person
- A pen for each member of your group

keep in mind

Lots of group members may remember this story from their childhood, you want to make sure that you are encouraging people to read the passage and see what it has to say to them now in this stage of life, rather than just going off their memories.



CONNECT



To help your group connect on a relaxed level, spend time discussing some or all of the following:

- » If you had to live off only one food for a week, what would you choose?
- » If you could choose a theme song for your life, what song would you choose?
- » What is your favourite childhood memory?

recap

Did anything surprising come up in your "building inspection" from last week that you would like to share with the group and ask for prayer for?

DISCUSS



- » What is the most annoying thing you've ever seen a child do?

read the bible



Ask a group member to read
Mark 10:13-16

- » What is your favourite element of this story? Why is it your favourite?
- » Based on their reaction, what do you think the disciple's attitude was to children?

('Discuss' continues on the next page)



- » Jesus was an important teacher and he had limited time to teach. Do you think it was reasonable for the disciples to act like they did? Why/why not?
- » Why do you think Jesus reacted the way He did when the disciples tried to stop the children coming to Him?
- » What does Jesus reaction tell us about His attitude to children?
- » Do you think Jesus would be pleased with how children are treated in your church? Why/why not?
- » What do you think the "Kingdom of God" means?
- » What do you think Jesus means when he says "I promise you that you cannot get into God's Kingdom, unless you accept it the way a child does"? What do you think it looks like for us to accept God and His Kingdom like a little child? Is Jesus saying you won't get in to the Kingdom of God if you have a scientific approach to faith?
- » Would you say you find it easy or difficult to have child-like faith? Why?

further optional questions:



Read

Mark 9:33-37

- » In this passage Jesus is speaking with his disciples and provides some helpful context for the 'Jesus and the Little Children' story. How does reading chapter 9 help you in understanding chapter 10 better? (Children are small and vulnerable, the "least ones" in society; we need to recognise this is us when we come to God, no matter what stage we are at in our lives).



INVOLVE



Choose ONE of the following activities to do with your group.

activity 1 - valuing children

As a group or individually, plan an activity that you will do to show value to children.

You might find it helpful to choose something from the list below (or be more creative and come up with your own ideas):

1. Write them a 'Jesus loves you and so do we!' card.
2. Organise a special segment for them in church.
3. Hold a fundraiser for children in poverty.
4. Organise how you can spend some time with some kids from your church simply valuing them with the time you can invest into them.
5. Help some kids in your church to learn a new skill or have them teach you a new skill!

Your plan should include a step-by-step timeline of how you want to achieve your "valuing children activity".

OR

activity 2 - coming to god as a little child

Ask a volunteer to draw an image of a little child in the middle of the butcher's paper.

Brainstorm the traits that children have that Jesus might want us to have and write them down around the image you've drawn.

('Involve' continues on the next page)



Some examples to help your group to get going could be: dependant on others, still learning, vulnerable, receptive, and doesn't have everything together.

Ask each person to circle two traits that they would like to grow in more as they approach God.

Ask each person to pray for another in the group; that they would keep coming to God every day, specifically praying for growth in the two traits they circled.

APPLY



What is one thing you will do differently this week based on what we've talked about during LIFE group?

OR

If you did activity 1: What will you do this week to work towards your valuing children project?

OR

If you did activity 2: What will you do this week to grow in the two traits that you circled?



LEADER NOTES

There is a great song called: "Jesus Loves the Little Children". You might want to listen to it as a group.

FOLLOW UP

About 3 days after your group has met, follow up all your group members and encourage them about what they learnt in LIFE group.

You could ask them:

What lesson from the story of Jesus and the little children has impacted you this week?



5/5

JESUS RAISES LAZARUS FROM DEATH: SPIRITUAL RESURRECTION

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summary

Jesus has power over death because He is The Resurrection and The Life.

The story of Lazarus shows us the deeper truth that Jesus raises us from the dead and make us spiritually alive in Him.



you will need

- Enough copies of *appendix 1* if you would like to read the passage as a script.

keep in mind

- The discussion this week (as we touch on the topic of death) might upset some group members. Be sensitive and wise in your responses.
- Be aware that the question of; "What about my non-Christian friends and family who have died?" might come up. This is a difficult discussion as God's promise for life after death is only for those who trust in Him. This LIFE group time might not be the right space for discussing this large and sensitive topic. Consider meeting 1-2-1 with members of your group who want to discuss this topic, and see the Leader Notes for some tips on pastorally caring for them and some suggested places for resources.



CONNECT



To help your group connect on a relaxed level, spend time discussing some or all of the following:

- » What's the best practical joke you've seen or heard of?
- » What do you prefer, Pepsi or Coca Cola? Can you explain why?
- » What is the most unbelievable thing someone has told you or you have seen?

recap

How have you noticed your attitudes to children changed since last time we met?

DISCUSS



- » What's the first word that comes into your mind when you hear the word 'death'? (There are no wrong answers! Encourage all responses regardless of how silly or serious they might be.)
- » Has anyone ever had someone close to them pass away? How did their passing affect you?

('Discuss' continues on the next page)



read the bible

The passage has been made into a script if you group would like to read it in parts (see *appendix 1*).

If not,



Ask someone in your group to read

John 11:1-44

- » Jesus says; "I am the resurrection and the life", what do you think Jesus means when He says this? (11:25)
- » Jesus say; "The one who believes in me will live, even though they die; and whoever lives by believing in me will never die." (11:25b-26).What could this mean?
- » In verse 11 Jesus says that Lazarus is 'sleeping' even though he knows he has died. Why do you think he says this? (Death is temporary.)



Read

1 Corinthians 15:42-44

- » In The Salvation Army death is officially referred to as a 'promotion to glory'. Do you think this is a fitting way for Christians to talk about death? Why/why not?
- » Jesus didn't raise many people from the dead. Why do you think He chose to raise Lazarus? (People knew that Jesus could heal the sick, but until this point almost no one knew that He had the power to raise people from the dead. God promises in the Old Testament that the Messiah would have victory over death (Isaiah 25:6-8.)



INVOLVE



Lazarus' resurrection points to a larger truth, that God can work a miracle in our lives and turn us from spiritually dead people to alive followers of Christ.

Spend time sharing your spiritual resurrection stories.

How can you tell your story in such a way that God is glorified and people will want to know God more?

Hints and suggestions:

- » Know your story well
- » Tell your story with passion – it is amazing what Jesus has done!
- » It can be helpful to be able to show the difference Jesus has made – the before image of being dead in sins and the new you – resurrected and alive in Christ.

APPLY



What is one thing you will do differently this week based on what we've talked about during LIFE group?

OR

How are you going to share with someone that Jesus is The Resurrection and The Life and what He has done in your life?



LEADER NOTES

- Jesus uses this time as a chance to teach His disciples (and His friends Martha and Mary) about Himself. Encourage your group that we can learn a lot about who Jesus is from this story.
- Bodies begin to decay after 3-4 days and so the unsealing of the tomb would have been seen as a terrible idea.

The question of “what about my non-Christian friends and family who have died” might come up. Below are some tips and some resources to pastorally care for someone who has a non-Christian who has died:

- Remember you are not a counsellor or a theologian, nor do you need to be.
- Focus on comforting and getting alongside them and listening. (You don't need to have all the answers!)
- Put resources in their hands and remind them they can lean on others.
- Give them some Bible verses:
 - Psalm 34:18 – The Lord is near to the broken-hearted and saves the crushed in spirit.
 - Psalm 147:3 – He heals the broken-hearted and binds up their wounds.
 - Isaiah 41:10 – Fear not, for I am with you; be not dismayed, for I am your God; I will strengthen you, I will help you, I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.
- Allow yourself to be upset by the situation alongside your youth. It is sad when someone who isn't a Christian dies. The Bible encourages us to “mourn with those who mourn” (Romans 12:15).

Resources

- A video about what happens after you die and looks at a few different world views.
[<http://fervr.net/videos/what-happens-when-i-die>]
- Salvos Caring: salvos.caring@aue.salvationarmy.org
- Lifeline: 131 114
- As a leader, this blog on how to deal with death in your youth group is really helpful:
<http://youthministry360.com/blog/dealing-with-death-and-loss-in-your-youth-group/>



FOLLOW UP

About 3 days after your group has met, follow up all your group members and encourage them about what they learnt in LIFE group.

You could ask them:

Who have you shared your spiritual resurrection story with? How did it go?



APPENDIX 1



John II:1-44 (NIV)

9 Parts (or combine the narrator, disciple and crowd parts for 6): Narrator 1, Narrator 2, Martha, Mary, Jesus, Disciple 1, Disciple 2, Crowd 1, Crowd 2

NARRATOR 1: Now a man named Lazarus was sick. He was from Bethany, the village of Mary and her sister Martha. (This Mary, whose brother Lazarus now lay sick, was the same one who poured perfume on the Lord and wiped his feet with her hair.) So the sisters sent word to Jesus,

MARTHA
& MARY: Lord, the one you love is sick.

NARRATOR: When he heard this, Jesus said,

JESUS: This sickness will not end in death. No, it is for God's glory so that God's Son may be glorified through it.

NARRATOR 2: Now Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus. So when he heard that Lazarus was sick, he stayed where he was two more days, and then he said to his disciples,

JESUS: Let us go back to Judea.

DISCIPLE 1: But Rabbi, a short while ago the Jews there tried to stone you, and yet you are going back?

JESUS: Are there not twelve hours of daylight? Anyone who walks in the daytime will not stumble, for they see by this world's light. It is when a person walks at night that they stumble, for they have no light.

NARRATOR 1: After he had said this, he went on to tell them,

JESUS: Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep; but I am going there to wake him up.

DISCIPLE 2: Lord, if he sleeps, he will get better.

NARRATOR 2: Jesus had been speaking of his death, but his disciples thought he meant natural sleep. So then he told them plainly,

JESUS: Lazarus is dead, and for your sake I am glad I was not there, so that you may believe. But let us go to him.

NARRATOR 1: Then Thomas (also known as Didymus) said to the rest of the disciples,

JESUS: Let us also go, that we may die with him.



NARRATOR 2: On his arrival, Jesus found that Lazarus had already been in the tomb for four days. Now Bethany was less than two miles from Jerusalem, and many Jews had come to Martha and Mary to comfort them in the loss of their brother. When Martha heard that Jesus was coming, she went out to meet him, but Mary stayed at home.

MARTHA: Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died. But I know that even now God will give you whatever you ask.

JESUS: Your brother will rise again.

MARTHA: I know he will rise again in the resurrection at the last day.

JESUS: I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in me will live, even though they die; and whoever lives by believing in me will never die. Do you believe this?

MARTHA: Yes, Lord, I believe that you are the Messiah, the Son of God, who is to come into the world.

NARRATOR 1: After she had said this, she went back and called her sister Mary aside.

MARY: The Teacher is here, and is asking for you.

NARRATOR 2: When Mary heard this, she got up quickly and went to him. Now Jesus had not yet entered the village, but was still at the place where Martha had met him. When the Jews who had been with Mary in the house, comforting her, noticed how quickly she got up and went out, they followed her, supposing she was going to the tomb to mourn there.

When Mary reached the place where Jesus was and saw him, she fell at his feet and said,

MARY: Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died.

NARRATOR 1: When Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews who had come along with her also weeping, he was deeply moved in spirit and troubled.

JESUS: Where have you laid him?

CROWD 1: Come and see, Lord.

NARRATOR 2: Jesus wept.

CROWD 2: See how he loved him!

CROWD 1: Could not he who opened the eyes of the blind man have kept this man from dying?

NARRATOR 1: Jesus, once more deeply moved, came to the tomb. It was a cave with a stone laid across the entrance.

JESUS: Take away the stone.

MARTHA: But, Lord, by this time there is a bad odour, for he has been there four days.

JESUS: Did I not tell you that if you believe, you will see the glory of God?



NARRATOR 2: So they took away the stone. Then Jesus looked up and said,
JESUS: Father, I thank you that you have heard me. I knew that you always hear me, but I said this for the benefit of the people standing here, that they may believe that you sent me.

NARRATOR 1: When he had said this, Jesus called in a loud voice,
JESUS: Lazarus, come out!

Narrator 2: The dead man came out, his hands and feet wrapped with strips of linen, and a cloth around his face.

JESUS: Take off the grave clothes and let him go.





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