



## GETTING READY

### 1. Opener/Closer

#### What You Need:

- Host
- Two kid volunteers
- Two pillar candles
- Lighter
- Two water guns
- Bucket filled with water
- Tape
- Towels

#### *Music and Sound Effects (SFX):*

- Upbeat music to use as kids enter the room
- Upbeat music to use during the game

#### *Large Group Visuals:*

- Theme Slide
- “The Dark Side” Title Slide

#### *Optional Videos (available for purchase through the 252 Media Package):*

- Theme Loop
- Countdown (30- or 60-second version)

#### What You Do:

- For the game, place a table at center stage. On the table, place two candles far enough away from each other that they won't be hit with water from an opponent's water gun. Make sure the candles are new so the wicks are on top of the candles and can be hit by water from a water gun. The candle should not be tucked in a glass jar or other container where the flame is below the rim. Mark the stage with tape behind the table where you want the two volunteers to stand. To make the game more interesting for the audience, consider having the candles between the two volunteers and the crowd, causing the water to also spray the audience.

### 2. Bible Story

#### What You Need:

- Communicator

- Bible
- Two volunteers
- Flashlight
- Stool

*Music and Sound Effects (SFX):*

- Upbeat music to use as kids exit the room
- Upbeat dance music

*Large Group Visuals:*

- Key Question Slide

**What You Do:**

- Place the stool center stage with the flashlight placed on top.
- The light switches need to be easily accessible if the second volunteer will turn off the overhead lights. If your lights are controlled at the front of house, prepare your AV team to come up with a plan to turn off the lights when the volunteer is supposed to flip the switch.

### **3. Worship**

**What You Need:**

- We Are Royals
- Alive Again

# You Raise Me Up

**Bible Story:** You Raise Me Up (Lazarus Raised) • *John 11:1-45*

**Key Question:** How do you react when bad things happen?

**Bottom Line:** Whatever happens, remember how powerful God is.

**Memory Verse:** *“In this world you will have trouble. But be encouraged. I have won the battle over 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.

## **Story: Communicating God’s Truth in Engaging Ways (Large Group, 35 minutes)**

Engage kids’ hearts through a dynamic and interactive Bible story, worship, and prayer experience in a Large Group setting.

**SFX:** *Play high-energy music as kids enter.*

**CG:** *Theme Slide*

**Optional CG (Media Package):** *Theme Loop Video*

**Optional CG (Media Package):** *Countdown Video*

**Optional CG (Media Package):** *Theme Video*

*Host enters.*

### **Welcome**

*Host has lots of energy as he or she welcomes everyone to [Name of Environment]. Host is relatable and inviting. Host discusses recent/upcoming events: Masters Tournament, World Table Tennis Championships, The National Cherry Blossom Festival, Major League Baseball Season Kickoff, Earth Day, Arbor Day, April Fools’ Day, National Ferret Day, National Peanut Butter and Jelly Day, National School Librarian Day, National Caramel Popcorn Day, movie opening (*Breakthrough*, *Penguins*), a viral video on YouTube, etc. Host tells them how excited he or she is that they’re there and briefly runs through what they can expect. This is especially helpful for first-time guests to make them feel like they know what’s happening. The stage should be prepared for the game as kids walk into the large group room.*

### **Opener**

**HOST:** "What’s up, you guys and gals? It is so good to see you here today all bright-eyed and bushy-tailed! Not quite sure what it means to be bushy tailed, but speaking of *bright*, I am really, REALLY excited that you are joining us today because I want to show you an ancient technology . . . that can light up a room."

"No, I’m not talking about your old Flashlight Friends or Pillow Pets. This technology predates the flashlight on my phone, the fluorescent tubes in the ceiling, and neon lights of downtown. I’m talking about CANDLES!"

*Host places two large candles on a table and lights them.*

**\*\*\*Lights: Dim**

"That’s right, people. CANDLES! This ignitable wick tucked in the warm embrace of a chunk of wax can light up a room and take the edge off a cool breeze. Today we thought we would have a little competition using these two candles. We like to call this game ‘The Dark Side.’ We need two volunteers."

**CG: "The Dark Side" Title Slide**

*Host calls up two volunteers and allows them to introduce themselves to the crowd. Instruct the volunteers to stand four to six feet behind the table holding two water guns.*

"Obviously, no one should handle fire without adult supervision and a bucket of water nearby. For today's purposes, I will serve as the adult, and this bucket of water (*reference*) will serve as the bucket of water. Moving on."

"The rules to our game are simple. Both of you need to stand behind the markers on the floor. Armed with a water gun, you will be shooting to extinguish the flame. The first one to snipe out his or her flame and create THE DARK SIDE wins! Any questions? (*Pause for response*) Good! Then let's get to it. On your mark. Get set. GO!"

**SFX: High-energy game music**

*Kids will spray water at the candles. The candles should be between the audience and the water guns. This will allow the two volunteers to spray the crowd when they miss.*

"WOW! You both did a great job. I'm not sure what is more wet, the candles or the crowd. Regardless, great job. Get on your feet and give a rousing round of applause to both of our volunteers. And while you're at it, give it up for our favorite Worship Leader, [*Name of Worship Leader*]!"

*Host dismisses volunteers.*

**Announcements**

*Use this as an example of what to say. Make it your own and help the kids feel welcomed. Then take a moment to share any/all announcements.*

**HOST:** "I'm so excited to be here with all of you today and get a little crazy! If it's your first time here, I want to welcome you and I would love to have a chance to meet you and get a high-five! Your group leaders are here almost every week... they're pretty amazing. Here at Mission, we believe that this is a place for you and you belong here no matter who you are or what you believe. At the core of who we are as a church, we believe that **JESUS CHANGES EVERYTHING FOR EVERYONE!**

"I have just a few announcements for you all today..."

*Share any/all announcements.*

"One of the things we do each week to help us focus on God is to sing... some of you will know the words to the songs, so we want you to shout and sing them out really loud. If you don't know the words... they'll be on the screen for you. Feel free to clap, jump, sing and shout along with us! The best part about this is the message of the song and how good God is! Let's all stand up and sing together!"

*Worship Leaders enter. Host exits.*

## **Worship**

**WORSHIP LEADER:** "Thank you, *[Name of Host]*. Let's get up and get loud as we sing and dance for who God is and what he's done for us!

## **We Are Royals**

**WORSHIP LEADER:** "That was amazing! (*Take a moment to say something about the next song*). So let's give everything we have and worship God together!

## **Alive Again**

**WORSHIP LEADER:** *PRAY*

*Communicator enters as Worship Leaders exit.*

## **CG: Blank Bottom Line Slide**

### **COMMUNICATOR SCRIPT**

#### **Introduction**

**COMMUNICATOR:** "Hey, everyone! I have a couple tasks I need to complete before we can get started, and I was wondering if I could get two of you to help. Now before you volunteer, I need you to know that the jobs are really hard to do. So if you are up for the challenge, let me know."

*Communicator selects two volunteers. Make sure to select volunteers who will try to complete the task even if asked to do an impossible task. Communicator allows volunteers to introduce themselves when it is their respective turn.*

"Alright, thanks for your willingness to help. For our first volunteer, I have this flashlight sitting on my stool. I need it turned on, but I want you do it without touching the light itself. In fact, I want you to stand directly behind the light and turn it on by giving it 'the look.' That look is also called 'the stank eye.' You know what I'm talking about, right? Give it that look like your mom gives you when you are not doing what she asked you to do."

*Communicator encourages kid to give the flashlight a dirty look. After a few funny attempts before the attempt gets stale, Communicator should intervene.*

"Interesting. I had really hoped this would work. It definitely did not fail due to a lack of effort. (*To the volunteer*) Do you have an easier solution to turning on the light? (*Pause for response.*)"

*Communicator allows kid to turn on the flashlight by pushing the power button. Communicator moves to the second volunteer.*

"Good move! For our second volunteer, I need you to turn off all the lights in this room except this flashlight. To darken the room, I want it done by having you do a crazy dance. When I say 'crazy dancing,' I don't mean

some halfhearted attempt at not looking ridiculous. I need you to dance like nobody's watching. We'll even give you some music! DJ in the back, play that song!"

**SFX: Upbeat Dance Music**

*Play the song for about 30-seconds while the Communicator encourages kid to turn off the lights by crazy dancing. After a few moments, Communicator should intervene before the attempt gets stale.*

"I had really hoped that would work, too. Good dance moves, by the way. *(To the volunteer)* What's an easier way for turning off the lights? *(Pause for response.)* Sure! You can use the light switch. Or the people in the back of the room can press a button, and the stage light will go out."

*Communicator allows kid to turn off the lights by flipping the light switch.*

**\*\*\*Lights: Lights Out**

*Communicator dismisses the volunteers and continues in the dark while holding the flashlight on his/her face.*

**TENSION**

**COMMUNICATOR:** "Man, that was way easier than crazy dancing. If you think about it, both of my requests required the impossible to happen. It doesn't matter how long we stare at this flashlight with a stank eye or how hard we dance to turn off the lights; it's not going to happen. It's impossible. This reminds me of life. So many times, situations seem impossible."

"I remember taking pre-algebra as my math class in school. For some kids, the class was super easy, but for me, it felt like I was trying to turn off the lights by crazy dancing. It felt impossible. Maybe this is you when it comes to reading or when you try to make the soccer team or when you try to make new friends. You try your best to accomplish the task, but it is really hard to achieve."

"What are we supposed to do in those hard or impossible moments? What are we supposed to do when life seems to go dark? Should we just give up? Where can we turn for help? You might not have these questions right now, but there will come a time during your life when you will. For others of you, you have these sorts of question all the time. And that's ok! When we have question like this, the first place we should turn is the Bible. Not only can the Bible help us with answers to those tough questions, but we can also find out why we can still have hope when everything seems dark."

**TRUTH**

**COMMUNICATOR:** "However, the story doesn't start in the dark."

**\*\*\*LIGHTS: Lights come up.**

*Communicator turns off flashlight.*

“At this time, crowds followed Jesus everywhere He went. Some wanted to hear what He would say next. Others needed to be healed. Some were just curious. Regardless of their reasons, people would congregate wherever Jesus traveled.”

“Often, the religious leaders were part of the crowds, but more often than not, they wanted to trap Jesus. These leaders did not like that Jesus was claiming to be God. In their culture, this was a crime punishable by death. In our story, Jesus had just left a debate where a group of religious leaders wanted to arrest and even try to get Him killed. However, Jesus left Jerusalem and headed east across the Jordan River before they could do harm. While He was there, Jesus got some news about His friend.”

“For some time, Jesus was friends with Mary, Martha, and Lazarus. These three siblings had numerous interactions with Jesus. But in this moment, Jesus received word from Mary that Lazarus was sick in a town near Jerusalem.”

“To send an urgent word like this to Jesus would mean the family was worried about Lazarus. They feared the worst and ultimately turned to the One they believed could help. John records this story for us in his book of the Bible. Listen to what he said happened. Instead of leaving to help Lazarus right away, Jesus waits. Check this out. *(Open Bible and read John 11:4-6)* **“When Jesus heard this, he said, “This sickness will not end in death. No, it is for God’s glory. God’s Son will receive glory because of it.’ Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus. But after he heard Lazarus was sick, he stayed where he was for two more days.”**”

“When Jesus told His disciples they were headed back to Lazarus, they were not excited. To help Lazarus would mean going near the people who wanted to kill Jesus. This is when Jesus told His friends Lazarus was dead.”

**\*\*\*LIGHTS: Lights go out.**

*Communicator continues to talk in the dark.*

“Talk about a dark day. No doubt Mary and Martha were completely distraught. Their brother was gone. Their friend, Jesus, who could have helped didn’t show up in time. Although the family wanted Lazarus back, it would be impossible for Lazarus to take another breath. With no other options, Lazarus’ family moved their brother to a tomb for a final resting place.”

*Communicator turns on flashlight.*

“Surrounded by comforting friends, Mary and Martha heard Jesus was on His way. It was four days after Lazarus died when Jesus showed up. It was Martha who came out to meet Jesus. With pain and loss on her mind, she exclaims that her brother would not have died if only Jesus was present. Jesus replied, *(Open Bible and read John 11:23)* **“Your brother will rise again.”** Jesus continued, *(Open Bible and read John 11:25b-26)* **“I am the resurrection and the life. Anyone who believes in me will live, even if they die. And whoever lives by believing in me will never die. Do you believe this?”** Of course, Martha believed this. She knew Jesus was the Messiah, the Son of God!”

“When the other sister, Mary, had a chance to talk with Jesus, she fell at His feet in weeping. She too expressed her belief that Jesus could have saved Lazarus. Surrounded by deep sadness, Jesus was moved. It was in this moment that Jesus too was overcome with emotion. Jesus allowed the tears to pour down his face.”

“Jesus traveled to the tomb that contained the body of His dear friend. A massive stone blocked the entrance, which Jesus instructed them to move. Against the wishes of some, the stone was rolled away. Looking up,

Jesus looked to heaven and said, (*Open Bible and read John 11:41*) **“Father, I thank you for hearing me. I know that you always hear me. But I said this for the benefit of the people standing here. I said it so they will believe that you sent me.”** Then Jesus spoke loud and clear into the tomb telling Lazarus to come out . . . and Lazarus did!”

**\*\*\*LIGHTS:** *Lights come up.*

### **APPLICATION**

**COMMUNICATOR:** “This story is sad yet incredible. We were able to see a family navigate through dark days. John tells us what they were feeling. Mary and Martha thought Jesus could heal their brother, but Jesus showed up too late. They lost their brother. Once he died, there was literally nothing they could do to turn around the situation. But Jesus could. Jesus did. Jesus had a better plan. Upon traveling to Lazarus’ tomb, Jesus proved to the religious elite, His friends, and others watching in amazement that He is more powerful than anything by bringing Lazarus back from the dead.”

“This is not some fable or fairy tale. This actually happened—a true story about our really big God. God controls the sun and skies. His hand created the trees and mountains. His power grows the spring plants and flowers. God even has power over life and death. It’s important to remember this when we face impossible situations or times in life when everything seems to go dark.”

“Things won’t always go the way we expect. We may not make the team, the big shot, or grades we want. Something bad might happen. We might get sick. We might lose something or someone very important to us. And while we are sad, it’s in those moments we need to remember God is bigger than us and our problems. God has a handle on a bigger picture we cannot see. And God loves us even when we don’t feel like He does. God felt the pain of Mary and Martha, and He knows the pain we endure as well.”

### **LANDING**

**COMMUNICATOR:** “I realize these words are easy to say and much harder to remember when bad things happen. We all respond to bad things differently. So as you head to Small Group today, I want you to think about something:”

**CG:** *Key Question Slide*

**“How do you react when bad things happen?** Not how do you think you *should* respond? But really think about how you react when things don’t go your way or something bad happens. Take a second to be honest with yourself.

Going through something that feels hopeless can be really difficult. But we don’t have to go through these moments alone. That’s why we have Small Groups where you can connect with a Small Group Leader and other kids who can help you through the tough times and remind you to have hope. In fact, you’ll talk more about all this with them next. But before you head to groups, let’s pray and thank God for being with us no matter what’s happening in our lives.”

*Communicator leads group in a prayer related to what they just heard then dismisses them to Small Group.*

**SFX:** *Play high-energy music as the kids exit.*