



GETTING READY

1. Opener/Closer

What You Need:

- Host
- One whole small group
- Camping lantern (or large flashlight)
- Paper bags with various random, silly items inside; enough bags so that each person in the chosen small group gets one)
- One paper bag with some kind of light inside (flashlight, light bulb, headlamp, glow stick, etc.)
- Tape
- Prize for the winner to share with his/her small group (*optional*)

Music and Sound Effects (SFX):

- Upbeat music to use as kids enter and exit the room
- Suspenseful music (suggestion: "Can't Give Up" by Network Music Ensemble)
- Celebratory music (suggestion: "Celebrate" by Orange Kids Music)

Large Group Visuals:

- Theme Slide
- Hope Slide
- Blank Bottom Line Slide
- Bottom Line Slide
- Blank Memory Verse Slide
- Memory Verse Slide

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

- Theme Loop
- Countdown (30- or 60-second version)
- Theme
- Theme Transition to Life App
- Life App Transition to Theme

What You Do:

- Fill the bags with the random items, and fill one bag with the light. Seal the bags with tape. You might want to make a mark on the bottom of the bag with the light, so you can keep track of it and easily give it to the last kid in line.

2. Bible Story

What You Need:

- Storyteller
- Bible

Large Group Visuals:

- Blank Bottom Line Slide
- Bottom Line Slide
- Three different “scenes” with backdrops, signs, and props to distinguish each one (see “What You Do”):
 - Scene One: across the Jordan River
 - Scene Two: Lazarus’s house
 - Scene Three: Lazarus’s tomb
 - Scene Four: Lazarus’ tomb with stone rolled away

What You Do:

- Use volunteers/kids from the audience and images on screen to help tell the story.

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*

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, *NirV*

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

Host enters.

Optional Video (Media Package): Countdown (30- or 60-second version)

Optional Video (Media Package): Theme

Opener

HOST: “Hey, everybody! My name is [your name], and I am so glad you’re here today! Welcome to [your environment’s name]. This month is all about looking on the bright side and finding light in the darkness.

Hold up the camping lantern.

“We all find ourselves in the dark sometimes. And I’m not just talking about actual darkness. Sometimes we go through tough times in life, and things can FEEL really dark. It’s like you’re walking through a room without any light. Maybe something bad happens. Or maybe the good thing you hope will happen doesn’t happen.

“But let me ask you this: What makes the dark less scary? *(Pause for response.)* Yes! That’s right! Light makes the dark less scary. And when you’re going through something dark and scary, HOPE can light the way.

CG: Hope Slide

Optional Video (Media Package): Theme Transition to Life App

“Hope is believing that something good can come out of something bad.

CG: Theme Slide

Optional Video (Media Package): Life App Transition to Theme

“Hope is like a light in the darkness. To help us remember that, I thought we’d play a little game. Is that all right with you? *(Pause for response.)* Great! I need one whole small group and their Leader to join me on the stage.

Choose a group to come up, and line them up across the stage. Hand each person a bag. Make sure you give the bag with the light in it to the very last kid in line.

(To contestants) “All right! Here’s a bag for each of you. It’s sealed up tight, so make sure you don’t peek inside! We’ll turn out the lights, and it’ll be up to all of you to help us find the light in the dark. We’ll go one at a time. When I point to you, you can open your bag, and we’ll see which one of you has the light inside!

(To audience) “Are all of you ready for it to get dark in here? *(Pause for response.)* Don’t worry. Our friends up here will help us find the light.

“Three . . . two . . . one . . . lights out!

ROOM LIGHTS: Off

SFX: Suspenseful music (suggestion: “Can’t Give Up” by Network Music Ensemble); keep playing throughout the game

Hold up the camping lantern.

“All right! I think we’re ready. *(Point to the first contestant)* [Kid’s name], can you show us what’s in your bag?

Hold the lantern next to the kid so the audience can see what he pulls out of the bag.

“Let’s see . . . soap! Good try, but I don’t think soap makes any light, do you? Let’s see what’s in [next kid’s name]’s bag.

Guide each person in the group to open their bag, one at a time. Comment on the random items in the bags, and keep the tone light and silly. Talk about the kids trying to win as a group, so that individual kids don’t feel like they’ve lost. Make sure the bag with the light in it is opened last.

(Looking at the last kid) “We’ve only got one more chance. *(To audience)* Do you think [last kid’s name] might have a light in her bag? Well, let’s find out!

Cue the last kid to open her bag and reveal the light.

ROOM LIGHTS: On

SFX: Celebratory music (suggestion: “Celebrate” by Orange Kids Music)

(To the winning kid) “Amazing! There’s the light. I knew it had to be here somewhere, and you found it! *(To contestants)* Way to go, team. Thanks for your help.

Dismiss the contestants to their seats. Optional: Give the winning kid a prize she can share with her whole group.

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.

“Let’s take some time to worship God and thank Him for being our awesome Creator. Everyone stand up and get ready to sing!”

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

Communicator enters as Worship Leaders exit.

CG: Theme Slide

Setting up the story

STORYTELLER: “Hi, everyone! Today our story is about my FAVORITE person ever. Can anyone guess who that is? *(Take a few answers.)* Some of those are definitely people I LOVE! But my favorite person in the whole world is Jesus! We get to learn all about Jesus in the Bible.

“A man named John, who spent a lot of time with Jesus, wrote the book of John that we can find in our Bible today. *(Hold up Bible.)* John wrote his book a long, long time ago, when Jesus was walking around on the earth. People followed Jesus everywhere He went. They followed Him around because they wanted to be healed and they wanted to learn more about God.

“But the religious leaders of the day didn’t like Jesus at all. They wanted to trap Him. Do you know why? They wanted to trap Jesus because He made things so simple. Jesus taught people to love God and to love others.

The religious leaders thought it should be more complicated than that. They wanted people to follow a whole bunch of rules. And they definitely didn't like how Jesus said He was God's Son!

"These religious leaders were so angry that they tried to arrest Jesus and throw stones at Him!

Scene One (across the Jordan River).

"Jesus left Jerusalem and went across the Jordan River."

hello from the other side

STORYTELLER: "Jesus had a friend named Lazarus who lived back home in the town of Bethany. While Jesus was far away, across the Jordan River, Lazarus became very, very sick.

Scene Two (Lazarus's house).

"Lazarus lived with his two sisters, Martha and Mary, who were also Jesus' friends. When Lazarus continued to get sicker and sicker, the sisters began to worry. They sent a message to Jesus to tell Him about their brother. But then something interesting happened. Jesus got the message about Lazarus, but He didn't rush right to his home. He stayed where He was.

Scene One (across the Jordan River).

"Let's look in the Bible to see exactly what happened."

Open the Bible to John 11:4 (NirV) and read.

"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." John 11:4

"Jesus stayed where He was for two more days, and then He said to His friends: "Let us go back to Judea" (John 11:7 NirV).

Open the Bible to John 11:11 (NirV) and read.

"He said: "Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep. . . . But I am going there to wake him up." John 11:11

"The disciples were probably thinking, 'Oh, that's not that big of a deal, then. He'll be fine. Why would Jesus need to travel all that way just to wake him up?' But Jesus didn't mean that Lazarus was really asleep. He explained to His friends that Lazarus had DIED."

on the road again

STORYTELLER: "Can you imagine how confused the disciples must have been? If Jesus really cared about Lazarus, why did He stay away when Lazarus was so sick? The disciples didn't understand.

Scene Two (Lazarus's house).

"Jesus and His friends traveled to Bethany. At that point, Lazarus had already been in the tomb for four days. Lots of people were there to comfort Mary and Martha, who were so sad because their brother was gone. When Martha saw Jesus coming, she ran out to meet Him.

“Listen to their conversation.

Open the Bible to John 11:21-23 (NirV) and read.

“Lord,” Martha said to Jesus, “I wish you had been here! Then my brother would not have died. But I know that even now God will give you anything you ask for.” Jesus said to her, “Your brother will rise again.” John 11:21-23

“Jesus also said this.

Open the Bible to John 11:25-26 (NirV) and read.

“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.” John 11:25-26

“Jesus called for Mary, and Mary came out and said the same thing Martha did.

Open the Bible to John 11:32 (NirV) and read.

“Lord, I wish you had been here! Then my brother would not have died.” John 11:32

“Both Mary and Martha had been with Jesus and had seen Him perform many miracles. They knew He was the Son of God. They knew that He COULD have saved Lazarus. They didn’t understand why He didn’t make it in time.

“When Jesus saw that His friends were so brokenhearted, He cried, too. He understood how sad they were.”

Scene Three (Lazarus’s tomb).

alive again

STORYTELLER: “They came to the tomb. It was most likely a cave with a stone in front. Jesus told them to take away the stone. Martha said it would smell bad if they moved the stone away. But Jesus said:

Open the Bible to John 11:40 (NirV) and read.

“Didn’t I tell you that if you believe, you will see God’s glory?” John 11:40

“So they took away the stone.

Scene Four (Lazarus’s tomb with stone rolled away).

“Jesus prayed to God. Then get this: He told Lazarus to come out of the grave. And get THIS: Lazarus DID! Lazarus, who was DEAD, came alive and walked right on out of that grave! Can you imagine how excited everyone was?”

wrapping up THE STORY

STORYTELLER: “When Jesus brought Lazarus back from the dead, He proved that He really is God’s Son. He proved that He is more powerful than anything—even death!

“So you might be wondering, ‘What does that mean for me?’ Well, think about this. If God is more powerful than death, then He is definitely powerful enough to handle whatever you’re going through. Even when you’re going through something tough and it’s hard to understand, even when life seems dark or scary, **[Basic Truth] you can still trust God no matter what.** You can have hope because you know God is with you.

“Here’s what I want you to know.

CG: Bottom Line Slide

[Bottom Line] “Whatever happens, remember how powerful God is.

Pray

STORYTELLER: “Dear God, thank You for caring about people who are hurting. And thank You for being bigger and stronger and more powerful than anything we could face. Help us to remember that **[Basic Truth] we can always trust You no matter what.** We love You, and we pray these things in Jesus’ name, amen.”

“Let’s take some time and worship together and remember HOW POWERFUL GOD IS!!!

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

Communicator enters as Worship Leaders exit.

CG: Blank Bottom Line Slide

Host enters as Worship leaders exit.

Closer

HOST: “Wow! What an incredible story! Mary and Martha expected Jesus to heal their brother Lazarus. They were so sad when they thought Jesus was too late. But God had a different plan altogether! God had a plan to show the world how powerful He is by bringing Lazarus back from the dead.

“The truth is, things won’t always go the way you expect them to. Whatever happens, remind yourself that God is big and powerful. And even if we can’t always understand the things that happen in our lives, we can trust God and know that His plan is good. God loves you, and He knows what you’re going through.

“So, when you don’t get that part you wanted in the school play, or your team doesn’t win, remember how powerful God is. When your mom or dad sits you down to tell you some bad news, or you find out your best friend is moving away, remember how powerful God is. When you find yourself in the dark and you feel afraid, remember how powerful God is.

CG: Bottom Line Slide

[Bottom Line] “Whatever happens, remember how powerful God is.

CG: Blank Memory Verse Slide

“Jesus knew we would have tough times. He knew there would be things in life that we don’t understand. He knew that sometimes we would feel lost in the dark. But Jesus told His friends something important that can give US hope, too. It’s our memory verse for this month: John 16:33. Here’s what He said.

CG: Memory Verse Slide

Read the memory verse from the screen.

“In this world you will have trouble. But be encouraged! I have won the battle over the world, John 16:33b (NirV).

Hold up the camping lantern.

“We can have hope even when life seems dark and scary because we know that Jesus is always with us.

“You’ll get to talk about that some more in Small Group. Have fun!”

Dismiss kids to their small groups.

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

CG: Theme Slide

Optional Video (Media Package): Theme Loop