

Family Activity for Sunday, March 29, 2020

The Fifth Sunday in Lent

Jesus Raises Lazarus From the Dead

Theme: Jesus cries with us.

Object: A small clear bottle or container with a little water in it.

Scripture to Read: John 11:35

In the book of Psalms, David asked God to put his tears in a bottle. (Psalm 56:8) Do you see this little bottle? I call it my "Tears Bottle." These aren't real tears, it's just water, but it reminds me of the times that I have cried real tears. Now, I don't know that God keeps our tears in a bottle like this one, but I do believe that God sees our tears and hears us when we cry.

Do you ever cry? Of course you do. What is something that makes you cry? (Allow responses.)

I made a list of some things that make us cry.

Have you ever fallen down and hurt yourself so badly that you cried? (Allow responses.)

Have you ever been so sad that you cried? (Allow responses.)

Have you ever cried because someone hurt your feelings? (Allow responses.)

Or have you ever cried because someone else was crying? (Allow responses.)

We all cry, don't we? Did you know that Jesus cried? The shortest verse in the entire Bible says, "Jesus wept." I know of at least three things that made Jesus cry.

First, the Bible tells us that Jesus cried when He prayed for others. It says, "While Jesus lived on earth, he prayed to God and asked God for help. He prayed with loud cries and tears." (*Hebrews 5:7, International Children's Bible*)

The Bible also tells us that Jesus cried when He saw people who were missing out on what God wanted for them. Luke tells us that as Jesus got close to the city of Jerusalem, he began to cry for it. And he said, "I wish you knew... what would bring you peace! But you can't know it because it is hidden from you." (*Luke 19:41-42, International Children's Bible*)

And, another time, the Bible tells us that Jesus cried when friends of His were hurting. Jesus had a friend named Lazarus who became very sick. His sisters, Mary and Martha, sent word to Jesus and asked Him to come and heal Lazarus, but when Jesus arrived, Lazarus had already died. The Bible tells us that when Jesus saw Mary weeping because her brother had died, He cried too. But, that isn't all that Jesus did; listen to what happened next.

Jesus went with Mary and Martha and some others to visit the grave where Lazarus was buried. It was a cave with a large stone across the entrance. When they arrived at the tomb, Jesus said to some of the men who were with them, "Take away the stone." Then Jesus called in a loud voice, "Lazarus, come out!" And Lazarus walked out of the grave. I imagine that when they saw that, Mary and Martha's tears of sadness turned to tears of joy.

We all cry, and I am glad that we have a Savior who weeps, too. He feels our pain and sees our tears. I am glad that Jesus loves us so much that he hurts when we are hurting.

Prayer: Kids are encouraged to join in as age appropriate.

Dear Jesus, it is comforting to know that when we cry, you cry with us. But it is even more comforting to know that because you have died for us, one day we will be in heaven with you--and then there will be no more tears. We pray with JOY and HAPPINESS in your name. **Amen.**

Additional Family Activity Idea:

The raising of Lazarus is one of the most dramatic stories in the gospel. Reenact the story with your family, as a way to experience the lesson firsthand. Talk about how it felt to be the characters.