

MARTHA DECLARES HER FAITH IN CHRIST

All Activity Sheets

KEY WORDS

MESSIAH SON OF GOD TRUST PROBLEM TESTIMONY WORLD SUFFER

BIBLICAL REFERENCE

John 11:1-44.

LESSON OBJECTIVE

To help children trust in God despite the problems they may suffer, and to teach them that trust in the Lord allows them to share their testimony with others

MEMORY VERSE

“Yes, Lord,” she replied, “I believe that you are the Messiah, the Son of God, who is to come into the world.” (John 11:27, NIV*)

PREPARE YOURSELF TO TEACH

In John 11:1-44, we see Jesus taking control in a death situation. In this scenario, he shows his power and great glory.

We know that Jesus had a close relationship with Lazarus and his sisters. So, when he gets sick, they go to him, their great friend. It is surprising that Jesus does not go immediately after their call. Instead, he waits four days. Even though the petition was made, he had to wait for God’s timing for the answer.

Martha is the first one to approach Jesus after he arrives. Maybe she was sad and at the same time, a little upset. She complained to Jesus that he had arrived too late. “Master, if you would have been here, my brother would not have died” (v. 21). She felt that Jesus could have helped them. Then she reflects and says full of faith, “But I also know that everything you ask God, God will give to you” (v.22). Jesus answers with encouraging words, “Your brother will live” (v.23).

The previous phrase opens the conversation to speak about the theme of the resurrection. Martha believed, like many Jews, that the resurrection would happen at the end of the world. Jesus Christ clarifies that this could happen that very same day, because he is the resurrection and the life, and everyone who believes in him will not die eternally. Even though he is speaking of a spiritual resurrection and not just physical, these words encourage and give hope to Martha’s sad heart. She makes a valuable statement, “Yes, Lord, I have believed that you are the Christ, the Son of God that has come to the world” (v.27).

With these words, Martha reaffirms her faith in Christ in spite of her sadness. Although she did not know Jesus would resurrect her brother Lazarus that very day, her words, "I have believed" show that she continued to believe in him in spite of the adversity she was going through.

Today, many people believe in Christ and follow him, but when they have a difficult situation, they get angry at God. They distance themselves from him and even blaspheme his name. Martha is a good example of a woman of faith. She loved Jesus like a great friend, but did not really know about his power as the Son of God. She showed a lot of faith during a very difficult moment that only Jesus could help her. She did not doubt why he did not respond to her call; on the contrary, this trial helped her to reaffirm her faith and to trust Christ in a full way.

Her faith was rewarded when Jesus resurrected her brother. She then believed more and more, and not only that, this miracle helped her to understand that she should tell others what God had done in her life and in the life of her family. Martha and Mary were true followers of Jesus, even after his death and resurrection.

INTRODUCE THE LESSON

Activity: Trust

We will start the session by studying the word "TRUST." (Before the session, write the word "Trust" on poster board.) Start a discussion with your children asking them what they believe the meaning of the word "Trust" is. Let them participate, and come to a conclusion. Then have everyone write down the answer on Student Activity Sheet #262-A entitled "Martha declares her faith in Christ" (under the word "Trust"). Then ask them who they trust (let those who have not participated answer this). Tell them to write down the names of those they trust on their worksheets.

Let your children unscramble the words that show when we need to trust in someone (when "I feel lonely", "I am sad" or "I am afraid"). Say, "Think of a time when you needed to trust in someone. Now, draw in the blank circles a face that expresses those feelings."

Before they finish this activity, ask, "If someone whom you trust breaks your trust, would you continue trusting in that person?" (Let several children answer.) Tell them that today they will study a Bible story where something similar happened to a woman. But before you tell the story, have them fill in the blanks at the bottom of their worksheets. Ask them: "Who is the one who never fails and who we can always trust?" (God) Tell them that people might fail us but we can always trust in the Lord. Then, distribute Student Activity Sheet #262-B and #262-C.

TEACH THE LESSON

Ask four children to represent the people in the story and have them help with the dialog while the rest of the children listen. Be sure to meet with these four children in advance so they are familiar with their part of the dialog.

Martha: (Say to the messengers): You have to find Jesus! He is the only one that can help Lazarus. When you find Jesus, tell him, "Lord, the one you love is sick." He will know what to do.

Narrator: The messengers took the news to Jesus and came back with an important answer.

Messenger: Jesus said that this disease is not deadly, but for the glory of God, so that the Son of God may be glorified by it.

Narrator: "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" (John 11:5-6).

Martha: Where is Jesus? Why did not he come? He knows that Lazarus is sick. I hope he comes soon. It hurts me to see my brother suffer!

Narrator: But Jesus did not come. Lazarus' sisters were confused and dazed. When he died, they said, "If Jesus would have been here, this would not have happened." Meanwhile, Jesus said to his disciples,

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

Narrator: Jesus said this about Lazarus' death, but they thought he was talking about natural sleep. Then Jesus clearly said, "Lazarus is dead."

Four days later, after Lazarus was buried, the news came that Jesus was coming to the city. When Martha heard this, she went to meet him. She did not understand why he did not come sooner. Did not Jesus know that they needed his help?

Martha: (Jesus comes near and Martha meets him saying,) "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: She returned to her house and told her sister Mary that Jesus was in town and wanted to see her. When Jesus saw how Mary and the Jews with her were weeping because of Lazarus' death, he was deeply moved in spirit and troubled. He asked,

Jesus: "Where have you laid him?"

Narrator: When they showed Jesus the grave, Jesus wept. Then the Jews said,

Jews: "See how he loved him!" (Referring to Jesus)

Some Other Jews: "Could not he who opened the eyes of the blind man have kept this man from dying?"

Narrator: Then Jesus went to the grave and said, "Take away the stone." But Martha said,

Martha: "But Lord, by this time there is a bad odor, 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: When they removed the stone from the grave, Jesus looked up and said,

Jesus: "Father, I thank you that you have heard me. I know 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."

(When he had said this, Jesus called in a loud voice,) "Lazarus, come out!"

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

Jesus: (walks towards some people and says,) "Take off the grave clothes and let him go."

CONNECT THE LESSON

Life application activity: Trust or difficult to trust?

Give your children Student Activity Sheet #262-D about "Trust or Difficult to Trust". Say: "Martha trusted in Jesus because she could see him and talk to him. We can learn to trust in God even when we do not see him, through the things we experience every day. Our trust grows when we pray and see God answer those prayers. For example, we may pray for God to heal us when we are sick, or we may ask God to give us focus when we are going to take a test so that we can remember what we've studied, etc."

Say, "Let's answer the questions that are written on the hand". When is it easy to trust in Jesus? (Let the children express their answers.) When is it difficult to trust in Jesus? (When he does not answer like we want him to; when we are afraid; when we get in trouble for telling the truth, etc.)

Ask the children to draw a star next to the items that are more difficult for them to trust in Jesus. Pray with them and ask God to help them to trust in him, in spite of what they are going through. You can end by singing a song that talks about the topic of faith or trust in God. Then pray for the needs of each child.

PRACTICE THE MEMORY VERSE

[Download Additional Memory Verse Activities PDF](#)

[Download Suggestions for Bible Memorization PDF](#)

Write the memory verse on a piece of cardboard or poster board so that your children can learn it during the course of the unit. Teach them how to find the verse in the Bible. After they have read it, explain its meaning to them, and why it is important that they remember it.

Encourage the children to memorize it. You can play the invisible word game to help them learn the verse. Start by writing the verse on a chalkboard or whiteboard. Say the verse together, aloud. Then erase a word and say the verse again, inserting the erased word in the appropriate place. Continue erasing one or two words and repeating the verse until all the words are erased. You could give a small prize to the child(s) who can say the verse once all the words are erased.

(If you do not have a chalkboard or whiteboard, write the verse on sheets of paper, one word on each sheet and tape it to the wall. Then, instead of erasing a word, take a word off the wall.)

WRAP-UP

Pray

We also suggest that you have a clearly visible place to write down prayer requests and answers. Thus, they will exercise the habit of prayer. Ask your children if they have requests. Intercede for each one, so that they know that you care about them and entrust them into the hands of God.

Encourage

Encourage the children to move forward in their Christian life by trusting Jesus as their personal Savior.

Invite

Motivate your children to attend the lesson each week. Also, challenge them to invite friends.

Prepare a plan to reward or recognize children who, during a certain period, do not miss lessons and are punctual.