

# My Best Friend Is Jesus



- Theme:** Jesus raises his friend, Lazarus, from the dead. 5th Sunday in Lent Yr. A  
**Object:** Song, "My Best Friend Is Jesus" ([Click Here](#))  
**Scripture:** Then he said, "Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep, but now I will go and wake him up." John 11:11 (NLT)

Do you have a friend that you would say is your best friend? (If you wish, let them tell you who their best friend is.) I hear a lot of people these days saying that someone is their "BFF". Do you know what "BFF" means? It means "Best Friend Forever". The idea of being "best friends" has been around for many, many years.

I even remember when I was about the same age as some of you, we often sang a song at Sunday School called "My Best Friend is Jesus." The song went like this: (Sing it for them, if possible.)

My best friend is Jesus,  
Praise him, Praise Him.  
My best friend is Jesus,  
Praise Him!

Can you imagine a better best friend to have than Jesus? Do you think Jesus had any friends that he might have considered a "Best Friend Forever"? Our Bible lesson today tells about Jesus and one of his friends. It tells about something very special that Jesus did for that friend. That friend's name was Lazarus.

Jesus received word from Mary and Martha, the sisters of Lazarus, that their brother was very ill. When Jesus heard about it, he said, "Lazarus's sickness will not end in death. This has happened so that God will receive Glory from this." So, although Jesus love Mary, Martha, and Lazarus he stayed where he was for two more days. Finally, he told his disciples that he was going to Bethany to the home of his friends. "Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep, but now I will go and wake him up."

The disciples said, "Master, if he's gone to sleep, he'll get a good rest and wake up feeling fine." Jesus was talking about death, but his disciples thought he was talking about taking a nap.

When Jesus finally arrived in Bethany, Martha ran to meet Jesus and told him that Lazarus had been dead for four days. "If only you had been here, my brother would not have died. But even now I know that God will give you whatever you ask."

Jesus told her, "Your brother will rise again."

"Yes," Martha said, "I know that he will be raised up in the resurrection at the end of time."

Jesus told her, "I am the resurrection and the life. Anyone who believes in me will live, even after dying. Everyone who lives in me and believes in me will never ever die."

So, Martha went back and got her sister Mary and they took Jesus to show him the place where

Lazarus was buried. When he arrived at the tomb, Jesus told them to roll away the stone that covered the entrance. He prayed to his Father and then he called in a loud voice, "Lazarus come out!" Do you know what happened? Even though he had been dead for four days, Lazarus walked out of the tomb! He wasn't dead — he wasn't even sick!

Oh my! How would you like to have a friend like that? Well, I do, and so do you! "My best friend is Jesus. Thank him! Thank him! My best friend is Jesus, Thank him!"

Heavenly Father, we are thankful that Jesus is our Best Friend Forever. We praise him, we love him, and we thank him for dying on the cross so that we might have everlasting life. In Jesus' name we pray, amen.

**TP ROLL Lazarus:** Provide children with an empty toilet paper roll and tissues or toilet paper to wrap around the roll, like Lazarus was wrapped for burial. The children can leave a small open section for the eyes. Glue on two moveable eyes from craft store.

**Graveside poster:** Let the children can work together on a large poster board to paint a large dark tomb, some grass and trees. Give each child a cut out of a man's figure for them to glue tissues to the human figure and then tape or glue onto their painted picture as Lazarus rising from the grave.

**Lazarus Mask:** Give each child a white paper plate, and a tongue depressor. Children can cut a wide slit for their eyes and hold up to their face and tell the story today. Pieces of tissue paper can be glued onto the plate and black lines drawn across the plate. Another option would be to staple two plates together and cut a small oblong opening so that this would look like the tomb and a figure of Lazarus could be placed into that opening. The children will color the plates as a tomb and wrap the man figure with tissue paper.

**FRIENDS CIRCLE:** Have children get in a circle and play a FRIENDS Game. Each child can take a turn at saying another child's name and WHY he is a good friend. Encourage children to name children who have not been named yet. Children may need ideas of what to say, such as "you are kind, you obey your parents, you smile, you come to SS, you helped me," etc. After playing the game for a little while so everyone gets called on, have children PRAY in that circle and THANK JESUS for being their BEST FRIEND! And then begin class!

**"HELP MY FRIEND" GAME:** Teacher can have a few identical items in 2 bags if there will be two teams. This game can be run like a relay race if teacher desires. The rule of the game is that a "friend" on the team has to put the items on the other child. The child can NOT put the items on himself. Encourage children to talk about helping each other as FRIENDS and then how JESUS helps us all the time and what a FRIEND WE HAVE IN JESUS! Close the game time with children singing WHAT A FRIEND WE HAVE IN JESUS or taking turns in reading the words of that song.

**"DRAW A FRIEND" CHART:** Have children draw a "friend" on a FRIEND CHART. Then have the children or the teacher write words around the chart about what they enjoy about that friend that they drew. Bright colors will make the chart fun to look at during the class time and the friends' qualities can be shared during class again. Let children know that JESUS is all those qualities and much, much more!!

**CONNECTED FRIENDS:** Roll out a long sheet of paper from a paper-roll so that children can draw friends HOLDING HANDS. Make a colorful title: WE ARE FRIENDS. JESUS IS OUR BEST FRIEND, or a bright title of teacher's choice that will lead children to discuss today's story.

**FRIEND'S BIBLE VERSE COLLAGE:** Give all the children a "child" cut-out with a word on each cut out. Children can work together to put their words in order on a large poster. Depending on the size on the S.S. class, (larger class)... GREATER LOVE HAS NO ONE THAN THIS, THAT HE LAY DOWN HIS LIFE FOR HIS FRIENDS, or (smaller class)... JESUS IS A FRIEND IN TIME OF NEED.

**M & M ART:** Children can be given a sheet of paper to draw Mary and Martha, as well as a tomb with Lazarus standing beside it with his arms UP with excitement! After children complete their M & M art, let children have some M & M's to eat, and discuss what the M and M stand for with Mary and Martha calling for Jesus - their friend, to help them!

**FRIENDS LIST:** Have children write JESUS IS MY BEST FRIEND at the top of their poster. Then let them write names of their friends. Encourage the children to TELL their friends about JESUS and that HE is our BEST FRIEND!

## A Saviour Who Weeps



**Theme:** Jesus weeps with his children. Fifth Sunday in Lent - Year A

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

**Scripture:** Jesus wept. 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 "My Tears Bottle." These aren't real tears, it is 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. Even you big strong boys sometimes cry -- even though someone may try to tell you that "big boys don't cry." I made a list of some things that make us cry. Have you ever fallen off your bicycle and hurt yourself so badly that you cried? Have you ever slipped and fallen while carrying a tray of food in the school cafeteria, and though you weren't hurt, you were so embarrassed that you cried? Have you ever moved to a new school where you didn't know anyone and you were so lonely that you cried? Has anyone ever said something mean and hurt your feelings so badly that you cried? Have you ever had a friend that was crying, so you just cried along with them? I think that we all could answer, "yes" to at least one of these questions. We all cry, don't we?

Did you know that Jesus cried? The shortest verse in the entire Bible says, "Jesus wept." What are some of the things that made Jesus cry? I know of at least three things that made Jesus cry.

(1) The Bible tells us that Jesus cried when he prayed for others. It says, "While Jesus was here on earth, he offered prayers and pleadings, with a loud cry and tears." (Hebrews 5:7 NLT)

(2) 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 approached Jerusalem and saw the city, he wept over it and said, "I wish that even today you would find the way of peace. But now it is too late, and peace is hidden from you." (Luke 19:41-42 NLT)

(3) 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. 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 she saw that, Mary's tears of sadness turned to tears of joy.

We all cry, and I am glad that we have a Saviour who weeps too. I am glad that he loves us so much that he hurts when we are hurting. He feels our pain. He sees our tears and, who knows, perhaps he keeps our tears in a bottle.

Dear Jesus, it is comforting to know that when we cry, you cry with us. But it is even more comforting to know that you have power over death and the grave and that one day we will be in heaven with you -- and then there will be no more tears. Amen.

**WATER RUN:** Divide children into teams or just let all children take turns at how long it will take them to fill a little dixie cup half full with water drops from a medicine dropper. Children will have to learn how to suck up the water from a bowl into the medicine dropper and then squeeze into a mini dixie cup.

**TEAR DROP HUNT:** Before classtime, the teacher can cut out large tear drop drawings with a word on each tear drop of things that make us cry or words from today's lesson. The children can be sent out to find some tear drops and bring back to the classroom table and discuss the words on the tear drops and then tape to a poster that will have a large title - JESUS WEEPS WITH HIS CHILDREN.

**TEAR DROP BOTTLES:** Provide each child with a small baby food jar (or similar small bottle) and give children supplies to write words from today's lesson or Bible verse on a strip of colored paper to tape onto the small bottle. Let children place a few drops of water in their jar to take home and to remember today's lesson and to encourage the children that JESUS WEEPS with them when they cry.

**ROCK PAINTING:** Let each child choose a rock from a pile of rocks, to paint or to use bright color markers on the rock, to paint a large tear drop on the rock and write in marker that JESUS CRIES WITH US, or that JESUS HAS POWER OVER DEATH AND THE GRAVE.

**NO MORE TEARS ART:** Give children a piece of paper for each child that has several tracings of tear drops on the paper. At the top, children can write NO MORE TEARS IN HEAVEN, and encourage children to turn each drawing of a tear drop into a picture of a happy face, or the grave stone rolled away or a bottle of tears, etc. Children will enjoy turning the "tears" into some positive from our lesson today.

**JESUS WEPT CARD:** Children can each be given a colorful piece of construction paper and markers and stickers to make this card. Tell children to fold their paper into 3 sections and to draw on each section one of the things that made Jesus cry, from our lesson today. Either words or pictures could be done on their tri fold paper. On the other side of the paper for the 3 sides, encourage children to draw or write and decorate 3 things that make THE CHILD cry and to remember that JESUS CARES and that HE CRIED TOO!

**ROCK COLLAGE:** Give children construction paper to cut out a large rock and glue onto another piece of paper. Have tiny pieces of tissue paper for children to "wad" up and to glue onto the rock. Tell children that every little tissue paper "wad" can stand for the times that we cry and that JESUS understands and the ROCK will stand for the large stone across the grave entrance and that JESUS HAS POWER OVER DEATH AND THE GRAVE and that one day we will be in heaven with no more tears!!

**HEAVENLY CLOUDS:** Provide children with paper and cotton balls to draw several clouds and glue little pieces of the cotton balls around the edges of the clouds. Let children color and decorate the clouds with pictures and words to show there will be no more tears in heaven.

**BIBLE ART:** Children can draw a Bible and cut it out. Then trace that Bible onto a larger paper and glue the two Bible tracings together. In various colored markers, children can decorate and write JESUS WEPT. With pencil or pen, children can write some of the reasons that Jesus wept. Encourage children to take their "Bibles" home this week and to remember that JESUS cried and HE cries with us and understands!