

**Grace**

We need God's love.

POWER TEXT

"Jesus said to her, '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?'" (John 11:25, 26).

KEY REFERENCES

- John 11:17-37
- *The Desire of Ages*, chap. 58, pp. 528-533
- *The Bible Story* (1994), vol. 9, pp. 22-27
- student story on page 122 of this guide.

OUR BELIEFS

- No. 9, The Life, Death, and Resurrection of Christ
- No. 26, Death and Resurrection
- No. 11 Growing in Christ

OBJECTIVES**The students will:**

- **Know** that even when we suffer, God invites us to see beyond it to His love.
- **Feel** assured of God's everlasting love and mercy.
- **Respond** by determining to trust God even when they suffer.

Two Sad Sisters



**God's love
holds us tight
in times of
grief.**

The Bible Lesson at a Glance

Mary and Martha, wrapped in grief, cling to their faith in Jesus. His presence in their lives brings comfort and unexpected joy. Faith helps them see through their tears to a future life that escapes the second death.

This is a lesson about grace.

Grace brings comfort to breaking hearts, even while tears flow. Even when our loss is aching and real, hope and love are also real and within our reach.

Teacher Enrichment

We need God's love; God is love. In times of grief or loss it only makes sense to turn to God, the source of love.

On His arrival "Christ did not at once enter the house, but remained in a quiet place by the wayside. The great outward display observed by the Jews at the death of friends or relatives was not in harmony with the spirit of Christ" (*The Desire of Ages*, p. 529).

"In Christ is life, original, unborrowed, underived. 'He that hath the Son hath life' (1 John 5:12, KJV). The divinity of Christ is the believer's assurance of eternal life. 'He that believeth in me,' said Jesus, 'though he were dead, yet shall he live; and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this?' Christ here looks forward to the time of His second coming" (*ibid.*, p. 530).

"To all who are reaching out to feel the guiding hand of God, the moment of greatest discouragement is the time when divine help is nearest. They will look back with thankfulness upon the darkest part of their way. 'The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly' (2 Peter 2:9, KJV). From every temptation and every trial He will bring them forth with firmer faith and a richer experience" (*ibid.*, p. 528).


For what am I grieving? How am I responding to God's love and strength during this time? How will my perspective change when I faithfully rely on His plan and timing?

Welcome


Welcome students at the door and direct them to their seats. Ask them how their week has been. Encourage learners to study their Sabbath School lesson regularly, and use several minutes to debrief students on the previous week's lesson.

Ask: **What was the most interesting part of the Bible story? What activity did you find most helpful? Which activity was the most fun?** Invite students to share their experiences and/or the handiworks they created for Sabbath School during the week.

(The leader should be familiar with the previous lesson to be able to direct the discussion.) This is also a good time to have students recite the power text.

Have students begin the readiness activity of your choice. 

Program notes

| LESSON SECTION | MINUTES | ACTIVITIES | MATERIALS NEEDED |
|---|---------|--|---|
| Welcome | Ongoing | Greet students at door. Ask about their week. | |
| 1 Readiness | 10-15 | A. <i>Rise and Shine!</i> B. <i>Mary, Martha</i> | a blindfold |
|  Prayer and Praise | 15-20 | See page 117. Prayer and Praise may be used at any time during the program. | songbooks, world map, pushpins, offering plate/basket |
| 2 Bible Lesson | 15-20 | Introducing the Bible Story Experiencing the Story Exploring the Bible | Bibles Bibles |
| 3 Applying the Lesson | 10-15 | <i>Scenario</i> | |
| 4 Sharing the Lesson | 10-15 | <i>Comfort Pages</i> | art supplies, three-ring binder (optional) |
|  Closing | | A. Prayer and Closing Comments B. Reminder to Parents C. Coming Up Next Week | |

LESSON 11

1

READINESS ACTIVITIES

Select the activity or activities that are most appropriate for your situation.

A

Rise and Shine!

If your floor is not fit to sit on, lay down a blanket or quilt first. Have everyone sit on the floor and fold their arms. Say: **Without unfolding your arms, rise and shine.** Allow time for everyone to try to get up. When they admit they cannot do it, ask: **What if I sit back-to-back with you?** Sit back-to-back with one of the students. Encourage the student to lean back on you and link arms. Put your feet flat on the floor and gradually move your feet closer to your body. If you both do this, you can rise together without your hands touching the floor. Say: **Each person who rises may go help someone else in the same way I just did. Let's see how quickly we can have everyone on their feet.** If one or two persons still cannot get up, have students stand on either side, take them by the arms, and hoist them up.

Debriefing

Ask: **How did it feel to be on the floor unable to rise? Did you feel better when I challenged you to rise and shine? Now imagine how Mary and Martha must have felt while mourning the death of Lazarus. So Jesus sat down with them and offered grace to lean on.** Allow students who know the power text to say it either individually or in group:

"Jesus said to her, '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?' " (John 11:25, 26).

Have the entire class repeat the power text together. Allow visitors and students who don't know it yet to read along. Affirm them for their effort. However, do not single out students by forcing everyone to say it, nor reprimand those who don't know it. Sabbath School is a place where students need to feel comfortable and accepted as they grow in God's grace.

Ask: **According to this text, what does Jesus have to offer?** (resurrection, eternal life) **What does John 3:16 say that God has to offer?** (love) **We have good reason to lean on Jesus. Always remember:**

 **God's love holds us tight in times of grief.**

Accommodations for students with special needs

This activity may be challenging for students with physical disabilities. Consider involving these students in observing, discussion, and answering questions.

B

Mary, Martha

YOU NEED:

a blindfold

Blindfold a student who is now "Martha." Clear an area of the classroom and have everyone stand and form a circle around "Martha." Whenever "Martha" calls "Mary?" everyone else must reply "Martha!" The object of the game is for "Martha" to try to identify another student, by pointing in the direction where she thinks that student is standing and saying the student's name. If "Martha" identifies correctly the other student, that person then becomes "Martha." If "Martha" does not correctly identify the other student, she needs to keep going until someone is rightly identified to take "Martha's" place. Play the game for several minutes or until several people have a chance to be "Martha." You may also use chairs and have students sit rather than stand.

Debriefing

Ask: **What did it feel like to be catching someone you couldn't see?** (frustrating, impossible, easy, disadvantaged, cheated on) **How did you identify the person you were chasing?** (They didn't; it was hard; they recognized the voice, etc.) Read John 11:4-6, 21-24. **Being "Martha" in the game helps us understand Martha in John 11. What had she been chasing after?** (answers, the healing of her brother) **What couldn't she see that Jesus could?** (the reason Jesus did not come sooner, the future, God's plan for her life, etc.) **In what way are you like Martha?** (We cannot see the future; we grieve; grief blinds us.) Read 1 John 4:16. If you have not done Readiness Activity A, review now with the students the power text as outlined in activity A.

"Jesus said to her, '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?' " (John 11:25, 26).

Say: **Remember,**

 **God's love holds us tight in times of grief.**



Prayer and Praise

Notes

Fellowship

Report the students' joys and sorrows (pleased and troubled) as reported to you at the door (as appropriate). If they have given you permission, share one or two special items from students' Bible study during the week. Acknowledge any birthdays, special events, or achievements. Give a special, warm greeting to all visitors.

Suggested Songs

"The Joy of the Lord" (*He Is Our Song*, no. 92)

"His Sheep Am I" (*He Is Our Song*, no. 84)

"He Will Carry You" (*He Is Our Song*, no. 82)

"In His Time" (*He Is Our Song*, no. 93)

"When I Remember" (*He Is Our Song*, no. 58)

Sing: "When I remember He raised Lazarus, I'll never doubt God anymore."

Mission

Use *Adventist Mission Magazine/Youth and Adult* (go to www.juniorpowerpoints.org and click on MISSION) or another mission report available to you. For the mission story, have a map of the world where the students can identify the location of the mission story and compare it to where they are. You could use pushpins to mark where the mission story takes place.

Offering

YOU NEED:

Say: **Our offerings will help to spread the news all over the world that God's love holds us all close during times of grief and loss.** offering plate/basket

Prayer

Say: **God loves to answer our prayers. Sometimes He is busy answering even before we call. But unless we admit our need and ask, we cannot receive.** Ask everyone to make a fist with their hand. **We tend to hold on to our doubts, fears, and grief.** Hold up your fist. **But in order to receive our answer we need to open our hands** (open your hand) **and give it all to God. So this morning let's pray with a partner and take turns. First one person tells God what they are letting go of. Then the other prays for what is needed. Then switch and do it again. When you are done, wait quietly with heads bowed.** Close with a prayer for the students' joys and sorrows, for the birthday and other special event celebrants, as well as for the visitors. To conclude, sing "God Is So Good."

*Prayer and Praise may be used at any time during the program.

2

BIBLE LESSON

Introducing the Bible Story

Say: **There is so much that we can learn about God’s love for us in the story of Mary, Martha, and Lazarus. This is the second week that we are studying lessons in John 11.**

Experiencing the Story

If possible, sit in a circle (large church: more than one circle), each person with their own Bible. Say: **As we continue reading John 11, let’s remember what has happened so far in verses 1-16.** Encourage the students to give the main facts of the chapter thus far. For instance:

1. Lazarus falls sick.
2. Mary and Martha send a messenger to Jesus.
3. Jesus says Lazarus will not die and stays where He is.
4. After two days Jesus says Lazarus is sleeping and returns to Bethany.
5. The disciples protest and Jesus announces Lazarus is dead.
6. Mary and Martha hold fast their faith.

Say: **Now let’s go around the group, reading one verse each.** (Allow for students who are hesitant to read in public.) **After each verse, let’s stop and tell where grace is in this verse.** Begin reading John 11:17-37. Grace could be found as follows:

Verse Grace in the verse

- 17 Things look so bad that Jesus’ miracle is going to look even more miraculous.
- 18 The short distance from Jerusalem must have been a gift

Verse Grace in the verse

- 19 The comfort.
- 20 The arrival of Jesus.
- 21 Jesus’ power to save.
- 22 Jesus’ power to give.
- 23 Grace’s promise.
- 24 Grace deferred (put off till later).
- 25 The source of grace.
- 26 The promise of life.
- 27 Jesus, the gift.
- 28, 29 Grace shared.
- 30, 31 Grace waits.
- 32 The power of grace.
- 33 Grace sympathizes.
- 34 Grace is God looking for us.
- 35 Grace feels with us.
- 36 Grace is love.
- 37 Doubting leaves no room for grace.

Debriefing

Ask: **What did you learn about grace from reading this passage?** (Grace is many-sided; it is always there; Jesus is the center of it; they have to be looking for it to see it; etc.) **What does this story suggest about the faith of Mary and Martha? Which verse/verses indicate that Martha was not expecting Lazarus to be raised?** (verse 24) **Was her faith: (A) wavering, (B) strong, or (C) weak?** (Strong; it did not waver.) **What can we learn about faith from Martha?**

 **God’s love holds us tight in times of grief.**

YOU NEED:

- Bibles

3

APPLYING THE LESSON

YOU NEED:

- Bibles

Exploring the Bible

Say: **Let's take a closer look at the faith of Mary and Martha:**

- 1. When the sisters' hopes were disappointed, what was the problem? There was no problem; they just thought there was a problem.**
- 2. Then, according to verses 14, 23, 34-36, why did Jesus wait so long to come?** (He was setting them up for the most wonderful miracle of all, one that would prove that He was from God. See *The Desire of Ages*, page 528.)
- 3. What would have happened if Jesus had come before Lazarus died?** Read verses 21, 32. **Ellen White assures us that Mary and Martha were correct; Lazarus could not have died in Jesus' presence. Why not?** Read verses 25, 26. **Ellen White again says in *The Desire of Ages*, page 528: "Had Christ been in the sickroom, Lazarus would not have died; for Satan would have had no power over him."**
- 4. What assurance can we take with us from this lesson that will help when we face suffering and death?** (Accept their responses.) **Let's remember the promises found in our power text for today, John 11:25, 26.**

"Jesus said to her, '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?'" (John 11:25, 26).

- 5. Can we know that this promise is for us, too?** Read 1 John 5:12. **Look closely; the text is saying that anyone who has Jesus—only you know for sure if you have Jesus. If you do—if you have asked Him into your life—you now have Him and you have forever.** Next week we will talk more about the power of resurrection life. In the meantime, remember the whole point of this lesson:

 **God's love holds us tight in times of grief.**

Scenario

Read the following to your students: **Your best friend's father died. Your friend's mother is depressed and cannot seem to come out of it, even though it has been months since the funeral. Your friend is wondering what to do. What in this lesson might you tell your friend that can help their mother?** (Accept their responses.)

Debriefing

Say: **Your experience with getting up from the floor** (see Readiness A, Rise and Shine!) **is similar to that of someone grieving. Grief makes them feel down and out; they can't help it any more than you could get up by yourself. So how will they feel when someone says "cheer up"?** (frustrated, misunderstood, depressed, irritated) **What do they need most that Martha had?** (Jesus) **What might you do to help?** (Tell them about Jesus; share Bible verses.) **What verses in the lesson could you share?** (1 John 5:12; 1 John 4:16, etc.) **The power text for this lesson can also help. Let's say it together:**

"Jesus said to her, '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?'" (John 11:25, 26).

Say: **Also remember the power point:**

 **God's love holds us tight in times of grief.**

4

SHARING THE LESSON

YOU NEED:

- art supplies
- three-ring binder (optional)

Comfort Pages

Invite students to share their conversations if they had interviewed someone during the past week about experiences that strengthened their faith.

Before class come prepared with details about someone (preferably in the church family) who is grieving or struggling. Provide individual sheets of paper, markers, pencils, stickers or other art supplies to everyone.

Ask each student to create a "comfort" page that includes today's power point. Explain that all their messages will be added to a booklet that will be given to the person you have earlier described. As each student completes their page, add it to a three-ring binder, staple them together, or tie them with a ribbon and add a cover with a title such as: With Loving Concern From the Junior Sabbath School Class of _____ Church.

Debriefing

Ask: **How will remembering these truths and promises help this family? Remember that**

 **God's love holds us tight in times of grief.**

(If possible, get an update before next Sabbath from the recipient individual or family so that you can help the class experience what a difference God's love makes.)

Reminder, next week is Global Youth Day. Are you ready?



Closing

Prayer and closing comments:

Stand in a circle; repeat the power text and then the power point. Sing "When I Remember" (*He Is My Song*, no. 58), with the adapted words suggested in Prayer and Praise. Finally, pray that God will let faith in Him shine from your students to their neighbors.

Reminder to parents:

Say: **Check out the student Bible study guide to find Parents' Pages for your use in family worship, or however you wish to use them to spiritually guide your children. You may listen to the podcast of the lesson online at www.juniorpowerpoints.org/podcast.php?channel=1.**

Coming up next week:

Say: **Jesus calls Lazarus from the tomb. By God's grace we have been given the gift of eternal life.**

Notes

Student lesson

Two Sad Sisters

Have you ever put your faith in a friend and felt sure that that person would come through for you? How did you feel when the person let you down? Would you trust that person again? Mary and Martha knew their friend so well that they trusted His love—even when He seemed to let them down. Imagine the scene when Jesus finally arrived.

The day is bright and alive with birdsong as the disciples and Jesus travel to Bethany. But a quiet sadness surrounds the group like a cloud blocking the sun.

"We are almost there," Peter whispers, pointing to the nearby houses of the town. Some folk wave excitedly from a rooftop. A little boy runs across a newly plowed field.

"You missed the funeral," he calls. "It was four days ago." The disciples groan. But Jesus seems not to notice.

"Why do I dread seeing Mary and Martha?" James mutters.

"Yeah, coming late like this makes me uncomfortable," John replies.

"Wait up, guys," Andrew calls. Peter and his fellow disciples turn to see Jesus resting on a rock beside the road.

Peter's mind flashes back to the

deathbed of Jairus's daughter.

"Remember how much Jesus dislikes the hype and fuss the mourners make?" Peter whispers.

James nods. "Being so close to Jerusalem, all their friends and relatives will have come. Some of the priests and Pharisees must have been present as well. No wonder Jesus is not going to the house."

"It's not just that," John protests. "He's taking Lazarus's death harder than we thought."

Scanning the road ahead, John notices a familiar figure approaching. "Martha!" he exclaims, hurrying to extend a comforting arm.

The disciples watch anxiously as Martha approaches Jesus. Lovingly Jesus reaches out to her.

"Lord," Martha whispers, tears running from her eyes, "if You had been here, my brother would not have died." Jesus looks at her with infinite compassion. Then He speaks with assurance, "Your brother will rise again." Martha nods. "I know he will rise again in the resurrection at the last day."

Once again Jesus doesn't fail to speak words of comfort and hope to the grieving sister. He leans forward and with a calm voice He affirms, "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?"

"Yes, Lord," comes Martha's reply without hesitation. She gazes into Jesus' compassionate eyes and continues, "I believe that You are the Messiah, the Son of God, who is to come into the world." Comforted, she quietly withdraws and hurries back to the village, only to return a few minutes later with Mary and a trail of panting, red-eyed mourners.

The sisters' brave smiles crumple. Kneeling at Jesus' feet, Mary sobs a statement of her continuing love and faith in Jesus. "Lord, if You had been here, my brother would not have died." (See John 11: 21-32.)

Tears of sadness and relief spill down Jesus' cheeks. Sadness because He has longed for more than four days to comfort the sisters. Relief because grace has kept the sisters' faith in Him strong. And just because He is as fully a man as He is God, Jesus weeps. In times of grief we, like the two sisters, need to hold fast our faith in God's love.

KEY REFERENCES

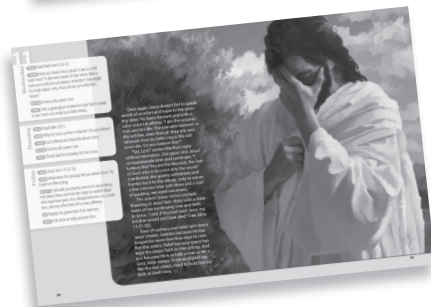
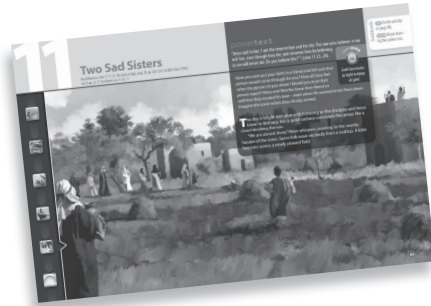
- John 11:17-37
- *The Desire of Ages*, chap. 58, pp. 528-533
- *The Bible Story* (1994), vol. 9, pp. 22-27
- Our Beliefs nos. 9, 26, 11

POWER TEXT

“Jesus said to her, ‘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?’” (John 11:25, 26).

POWER POINT

God’s love holds us tight in times of grief.



Sabbath

DO Do the activity on page 88.

Sunday

READ Read John 11:17-24 and this week’s story, “Two Sad Sisters.”

REVIEW Review the power text.

PRAY Ask God to help your faith grow strong.

Monday

READ Read John 11:25-37.

DRAW Draw the scene described in these verses.

WRITE Write the power text at the top or bottom of your picture. Memorize it.

REVIEW Review the power text.

PRAY Thank God that Jesus understands **all** of your sorrow and sadness.

Tuesday

READ Read 1 John 4:16 and 1 John 5:12.

THINK Some people say that suffering and death come from God. How does this story prove the contrary?

ASK Ask a person to **tell** you what experiences strengthened their faith in God’s love.

REVIEW Review the power text.

PRAY Ask God to give you an unshakable faith.

Wednesday

READ Read Matthew 9:22-25.

THINK Have you heard Jesus speak to you in a still, small voice? Is the voice easier to hear when there is noise and confusion all around, or harder? How might this help explain why Jesus **did** not go to Martha’s house?

REVIEW Review the power text.

PRAY Find a quiet place to kneel and ask God to speak to your heart and make your faith strong.

Thursday

READ Read John 20:31.

THINK Why did Jesus perform miracles? Do you believe?

SHARE Call a friend and share the lesson story.

REVIEW Review the power text.

PRAY Thank God for showing His love to you.

Friday

READ Read John 11:33-36.

THINK What does this passage tell you about Jesus? Try to picture Him crying.

DISCUSS Talk with your family members about things that grieve Jesus and how He longs to comfort those who experience pain, fear, disappointment, loss, loneliness, and any other form of human suffering.

SAY Repeat the power text from memory.

PRAY Ask Jesus to help you trust Him.