

## WEEK 4 LESSON GUIDE



### BIG IDEA

Jesus can change anything.

### BIBLE

**Jesus Raises Lazarus:** John 11:1-45; 2  
Corinthians 5:16-21

## LARGE GROUP TIME

Hello humans and robots and everyone in between! It's our final week of *Changing Gears*, and I can't wait to talk about today's Bible story with you! We've been hearing about all the things that change — and don't change — with Jesus, but today's story will fry all of your circuits. It will blow you away! Let's begin!

### WHAT? What are we talking about today?

#### MUSIC | Worship

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** You can lead kids in worship with any songs of your choice, but here are some suggestions that go along with this month's theme. Make sure you have purchased any licenses required to play or perform these songs. For more information, [read this!](#)
  - "Not the Same" (North Point InsideOut)
  - "Won't Look Back" (SEU Worship)
  - "You Never Change" (Gateway Kids)
  - "2 Corinthians 5:17" (JumpStart3)

#### ACTIVITY | Robotic Charades

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** This is like regular charades except each word must be acted out using stiff, robot-like movements. Make sure every word is an action word so they're easier to act out (such as swimming, rowing a boat, taking a selfie, trying on clothes, painting, climbing, surfing, skiing, or even doing a fun dance move kids know). Kids can work in teams or take individual turns. Use a track [like this](#) for some fun background music!
  - ✂ **PRETEEN HACK:** Play Reverse Charades, where one kid guesses while everyone acts the word out together. Some preteens are introverted or self-conscious and may not be comfortable doing actions altogether, so this would alleviate the pressure from one person having to act in front of the group.
- Not everything stays the same, and there are times when that makes things so much more fun! Let's see who can keep up with our ever-changing game of charades.

### ACTIVITY | Living Robot

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Have each team dress up a team member or a leader as a robot using foil, painter's tape, and other supplies. Create two teams, set a timer, and see who can accomplish the task first!
- Nobody wants to be a robot . . . unless there's a little competition involved! Let's put our creative minds together with our teams to create a living robot.
- Not everything can change for the better. But look at that — you used random items and transformed them into great, living robots! I can't even recognize them anymore!

### QUESTION | Have you ever seen someone do something that looked impossible?

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** To get the conversation going, you may choose to show a trick shots video (like [this one](#)).
- **Have you ever seen someone do something that looked impossible?** Maybe it was an illusion or a cool trick shot that just seemed impossible? And then BOOM . . . they nail it!
- Some things might appear to be impossible, but we might find out later that it was a carefully planned performance, creative filming, or even just luck! But today's Bible story will show us that Jesus tackled something that didn't just appear impossible — it was impossible and yet, he nailed it!

## SO WHAT? Why does it matter to God and to us?

### SCRIPTURE | John 11:1–45 (Jesus Raises Lazarus)

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Read and act out the script while sharing the Bible story from John 11:1–45 as [an inventor in the lab](#) showing off robot inventions. Recruit another leader to play the robot character, [dressed as a robot](#) and speaking in a robotic voice, or operating a [robot puppet](#) instead.
- [Inventor is sitting back in a chair with a book covering their face, presumably asleep. Robot speaks in a smart assistant tone.]
- **Robot:** Hello humans, welcome to the *Changing Gears* laboratory. I am Laboratory Assistant Zed or LAZ for short. Speaking of which, Rickie the inventor is having a little bit of a LAZY day. I should probably let Rickie know you are here.
- [Robot walks up to Inventor and beeps loudly.]
- **Inventor:** [Wakes up abruptly] What? What? I'm awake. LAZ, suspend alarm.
- **Robot:** Alarm suspended. Your guests have arrived.
- **Inventor:** Oh right, thank you LAZ. I see you've already met my newest and most advanced storytelling robot! LAZ started off as a lab assistant, helping me with my projects, but something went wrong with the wiring and I had to shut LAZ down. Thankfully, I was able to reboot LAZ and even add the storytelling functions, so Laboratory Assistant Zed is good as new! Which reminds me of today's Bible story! LAZ, activate story mode!
- **Robot:** Voice recognition confirmed. Story mode on. Commencing story from John chapter 11. Telling story from the point of view of Lazarus. Male. Brother of Martha and Mary. Hello. I am Lazarus. I am dead.
- **Inventor:** Right, let me give you some background. Jesus was good friends with three siblings: Mary, Martha, and Lazarus. One day, Jesus got word that Lazarus was very sick. The sisters sent word to Jesus about their brother. Even though he knew that the people from their town, Bethany, would not welcome Jesus, he decided to go anyway and his friends went with him.
- **Robot:** Sadly, by the time Jesus arrived, I had already died. My sisters were devastated. They told Jesus that if he had gotten here sooner, I might have lived. But Jesus assured them that I would come back to life.

- **Inventor:** That must have been really difficult for your sisters to take in. And even though Jesus knew he was just about to do this impossible thing, the Bible tells us he wept for you. It shows that he really cared about your family.
- **Robot:** He sure did. Why else would he have done what he did next?
- **Inventor:** And what was that?
- **Robot:** Jesus told the people to remove the stone from the entrance of the tomb. By this time, I had been lying inside the tomb for four days . . . I probably did not smell or look so good.
- **Inventor:** No, you probably didn't. But still, your sisters trusted Jesus. And Jesus was about to do a miracle like none they had ever seen.
- **Robot:** Yes, that's right. They rolled the stone away, and I heard Jesus pray and then thank God for hearing his prayer.
- **Inventor:** Jesus most likely said this out loud so that everyone else would know that Jesus was truly sent by God. What did Jesus do next?
- **Robot:** He yelled at me to come out! Even though I was dead! It didn't matter, though. Jesus told me to come out, so that's what I did.
- **Inventor:** Whoa, I wonder what everyone else was thinking as you came out of that tomb with all that cloth wrapped around your body and face!
- **Robot:** I'm sure I was a strange sight. But I was perfectly fine! Everyone who was there saw with their own eyes the amazing thing Jesus had done and chose to believe in him, too.
- **Inventor:** Now that's a story about change if I've ever heard one! Good job, Laz! Deactivate story mode!
- **Robot:** Story mode off.

### BIG IDEA | Jesus can change anything.

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Write the Big Idea on an 8.5x11" piece of paper and affix it to the torso of the GrowBot. Then, cover it with a flap until it's time for the big reveal. (You may choose to display the Big Idea from each week on a bulletin board to make space for the new one.)
- It's GrowBot time! And the Big Idea is [lift the flap]: **Jesus can change anything.**

### VIDEO | Changing Gears, Episode 4

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Play this week's episode of [Grow TV](#).

### VIDEO | "Eve Restores Wall-E's Memory"

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Show [this](#) video clip from "Wall-E."
- **Does this clip remind you of our story today? How?**
- Wall-E's memory had been wiped clean. It looks like all is lost with Wall-E, but Eve makes some changes, and all is right again. It was like he came back to life!
- But what Jesus does is so much better than what Eve did for Wall-E. Jesus is able to step into the most difficult situations and change things for the better. **Jesus can change anything.**

### ACTIVITY | Roll With It

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Give each kid a [roll-up snack](#). Instruct them to unroll it, and wrap it up again to remind them of today's story. Have kids wrap their snack around one of their hands or provide a spoon they can do this on.
- ✳ **PRETEEN HACK:** Instead of using fruit snacks around their hands, have preteens get in teams then use toilet paper or crepe paper streamers to wrap a teammate then have the wrapped teammate race to the finish line.

- Today's Bible story is amazing! When Lazarus was raised from the dead, he had already been wrapped for burial. That didn't stop what Jesus could do, though!
- **Jesus can change anything!**

### SCRIPTURE | 2 Corinthians 5:16–21

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Read 2 Corinthians 5:16–21 aloud with your group. Then, collect some coins and a bill of the same amount (coins that add up to \$1 and a dollar bill) to talk with kids about change.
- We talked about how **Jesus can change anything** today, and that change almost always starts with us. Before we try to change other people, we need to begin the work with ourselves.
- That's why this Bible passage is so neat. It tells us that anyone who knows Jesus is a "new creation."
- [Show coins.]
  - I have an assortment of coins here. **Who knows how much this is?**
  - That's right. And with this money, I could probably buy a bag of chips from the nearest vending machine. But some machines only accept bills.
- [Show bill.]
  - **Between the coins and the bill, which one is worth more?**
  - They're worth the same! The bill is brand new and looks completely different than the coins, but the value did not change. But now that I have this bill, I can go get that bag of chips I've been talking about!
- When we become a "new creation" because of Jesus, we're not suddenly worth more to God. Like we learned this month, God's love for us isn't changed by anything.
- But when we are changed by God, our purpose changes. The way we see things changes. The way we treat others changes. We are the same and yet . . . so different!
  - You might have noticed in your school, in our community, and in the world around us that some groups of people tend to not get along. Some of these grudges go back generations! This was the case back in Bible times, too, and this led to a lot of arguments and hostility, even though they were all believers.
  - The author of 2 Corinthians 5 is telling them, and us, that now that we are new creations, we need to let go of the old ways and start anew. Because Jesus changed them, they can go out and change their world.
- **Can you imagine what this world could be like if everyone remembered this message?**
- Let's take a moment to pray for our world today. **What are some changes that we can ask Jesus for?**

### NOW WHAT? What does God want us to do about it?

### VIDEO | Us vs. The Machines

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Show the [clip](#) from "The Mitchells vs. the Machines" and quickly go over the plot. Then play dodgeball (with a very soft ball). When you're out, you join the outside ring to help tag the people in the middle. (It's like how the robots in the movie kept getting allies).
- ✳ **SPECIAL NEEDS HACK:** Instead of dodgeball, play a form of tag where once you are tagged by the person who's "it," you have to link arms with that person and help tag other people. You can talk about how your group shape-shifted and changed into something completely different in the end.
- This movie is about how one family had to go up against an army of sentient bots — it's a robot apocalypse!
  - **How do you think you and your family would do?**

- The Mitchells had to change a lot in order to survive being attacked by robots. They weren't as graceful as the Poseys but they ended up being the ones who had to save the world.
- There are lots of things that we might think are forever unchangeable, and all evidence would lead us to believe that it's true. But when Jesus is in the picture, nothing is set in stone. **Jesus can change anything.**

## RESPONSE | Gears of Change

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Just as you did in previous weeks, set up a makeshift [assembly line conveyor belt](#) using butcher paper and two long tables. Distribute a pre-cut printable to each kid, or hand out scissors for kids to cut these out themselves, and some markers. Kids will write or draw their responses on a different gear each week to add to the assembly line.*
  - *Be prepared for kids to bring up unexpectedly difficult topics. Don't gloss over it, but take some time to let them know you hear and care about them. Set aside some time to pray with them.*
- **Jesus can change anything.** That's right, *anything*. That doesn't mean Jesus will change anything every time you ask for it. Jesus knows what's best for us, and sometimes the best thing is to not give us what we want. But that doesn't mean he can't!
- Think about one thing in your life that you want to ask Jesus to change. Then, write or draw a picture to represent that change you'd like to see. Afterward, let's add this gear to the assembly line and go back and look at all the gears of change we've put down this month.

## MEMORY VERSE | 2 Corinthians 5:17

- **"Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here!"**
- Let's practice this month's memory verse together!
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Practice this month's memory verse by having the kids stand in a line and recite one word at a time in their best robot impression.*
- **(Don't forget to also check out the memory verse signs – a combination of SEE and ASL – available in your Programming folder or at [growcurriculum.org/2Corinthians5-17](http://growcurriculum.org/2Corinthians5-17).)**

## PRAYER

- Dear God, thank you for Jesus, who can change anything. Help us to remember that you have the power to transform both big and small things . . . even impossible things. Start the change with us, and help us to go out and make the kinds of changes in our world that let others know how awesome you are! Amen.

## SMALL GROUP TIME

## DISCUSSION

- Who was Mary and Martha's brother?
- Why were people crying when Jesus arrived at the home of Mary and Martha?
- What happened when Jesus called Lazarus' name in front of the tomb?
- Read 2 Corinthians 5:17. What does being a "new creation" mean to you?
- How do you know Jesus can change anything?
- What are some changes we can pray to Jesus about for our church? Our homes? Our school? Our community?
- Who do you know that might need to know that Jesus can change anything? How can you let them know?

### ACTIVITY | Rockin' Robot

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Have kids create their own robot pull-toy crafts. See your Shop & Prep List or [visit this site](#) for more detailed instructions.
  - ✂ **SPECIAL NEEDS HACK:** Pre-measure and cut all needed supplies to help move things along faster, and you can pre-assemble the more complex parts in advance as well.
- Hang this robot somewhere in your room. Anytime you feel stuck or unhappy about something, yank on these strings and watch the robot fly upward. Let it remind you that God sees you, hears you, and loves you very much. Even though **Jesus can change anything**, that fact will never change!