

## On the Road to Emmaus: Seeing Jesus in the Old Testament

**Luke 24:13–35**

### Student Devotional

Have you ever watched a **movie with a massive plot twist**, only to realize there were **clues** hidden throughout the whole story? You go back and rewatch it, and suddenly everything makes sense.

That’s exactly what happens in Luke 24.

Two disciples are **walking away** from Jerusalem, their **hearts heavy with disappointment**. They had followed Jesus, believed in Him, hoped He was the **Messiah**—but now He was **dead**, and their dreams were **shattered**. As they talk, a **stranger** joins them on the road. They don’t recognize Him, but He starts **explaining the Scriptures** to them—showing how the **entire Old Testament** had been pointing to **this very moment**.

It’s only when they **sit down for a meal** that their **eyes are opened**—the stranger is **Jesus Himself, alive and risen!** In that moment, their sorrow **turns into joy**, and they **rush back** to tell the others.

This story is more than just an **interesting encounter**—it’s a **blueprint for how we meet Jesus today**. Through Scripture, through the breaking of bread, through open hearts **ready to see Him**.

Over the next five days, we’ll step onto that road, **unpack this story**, and learn how to recognize Jesus in our own lives.

### Day 1: Confusion on the Road

**“That very day two of them were going to a village named Emmaus... talking with each other about all these things that had happened.” (Luke 24:13–14, ESV)**

## Think About It:

Ever had a **dream completely fall apart**? Maybe you worked hard for something—a scholarship, a relationship, a career path—only to see it **slip away**. That sense of loss can be **crushing**, leaving you **questioning everything**.

That’s where these two disciples were. They weren’t just **walking to Emmaus**—they were **walking away** from their hope.

- They had expected Jesus to **redeem Israel**—probably in a **political** or **military** way.
- They had seen Him **crucified**, and now their faith **felt like a mistake**.
- Even though they **heard rumors** of the empty tomb, their **hearts were still heavy with doubt**.

It’s easy to **miss Jesus** when we’re focused on **our disappointment**. Sometimes, we expect Him to work in **one way**, and when He doesn’t, we assume **He’s not there**. But what if He’s been **walking with us the whole time**, even when we don’t recognize Him?

## Pray It:

Jesus, when I’m confused and disappointed, help me **see You walking with me**. Give me faith to **trust Your plan**, even when it looks different than what I expected.

## Do It:

Think about **one situation** in your life that didn’t go the way you planned. Instead of focusing on the disappointment, **ask God to show you** how He’s been **present through it all**. Write down any moments where you see **His hand at work**.

## Day 2: Burning Hearts—Seeing Jesus in Scripture

“And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he interpreted to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself.” (*Luke 24:27, ESV*)

## Think About It:

Imagine watching **The Sixth Sense** or **Inception** and having someone **explain the hidden layers** of the story to you **for the first time**. You'd start seeing connections everywhere. That's exactly what happened on the road to Emmaus.

Jesus doesn't just say, "*Surprise! It's Me!*" Instead, He takes them **through the Old Testament**, showing how **every story, prophecy, and symbol** was actually pointing to **Him** all along.

- **Genesis 3:15** – The promised **serpent-crusher** (Jesus defeats sin and Satan).
- **Exodus 12** – The **Passover lamb** (Jesus is the perfect sacrifice).
- **Isaiah 53** – The **Suffering Servant** (Jesus bore our sins).
- **Psalms 22** – A prophecy of **the crucifixion** before it even existed.

Jesus is in **every page of Scripture**, hidden in plain sight. And when the disciples **finally saw it**, their **hearts burned**—like a fire had been lit inside them.

Have you ever had a **moment in Scripture** that made **your heart burn**—where a verse suddenly **came alive**, hitting you in a way you never expected? That's what happens when we **see Jesus clearly** in the Word.

## Pray It:

Jesus, open my eyes to **see You** in Scripture. Let my heart **burn with excitement** as I realize how every page points to **Your plan**.

## Do It:

Pick an **Old Testament passage** (like Isaiah 53 or Psalm 22) and **look for Jesus** in it. Write down any ways it connects to **His life, death, or resurrection**. Let it deepen your faith in **God's perfect plan**.

## Day 3: Recognizing Jesus in the Everyday

"...their eyes were opened, and they recognized him." (*Luke 24:31, ESV*)

## Think About It:

Have you ever been searching for something—your keys, your phone, your sunglasses—only to realize they were **right in front of you the whole time**?

That's exactly what happened to these two disciples. They had been **walking with Jesus** for miles, listening to Him **explain Scripture**, but they **didn't realize it was Him** until He did something incredibly simple—**He broke bread**.

- **It wasn't a dramatic miracle—it was a meal.** Sometimes we expect God to show up in **huge, unmistakable ways**, but He often reveals Himself in the **ordinary**.
- **It wasn't in a crowd—it was in the quiet.** They weren't in a temple, at a revival, or in some emotional worship service. Jesus was right there **in their home**, in their everyday routine.
- **It wasn't in a sermon—it was in an act of fellowship.** Sharing food, passing bread—**something so normal**—but that's where they **finally recognized Him**.

How often do we **miss Jesus** because we're waiting for something **spectacular**, when He's been present in our **conversations, friendships, and daily routines** all along?

Think about this: Where has Jesus been **walking with you**—teaching, guiding, comforting—but you haven't noticed? Maybe in a **quiet moment with a friend**, a **kind word from a stranger**, or even in the **beauty of creation** around you?

Jesus doesn't just meet us on **spiritual mountaintops**—He meets us at **our dinner tables, on our morning drives, in our everyday moments**. The real question is: **Are we paying attention?**

## Pray It:

Jesus, I don't want to miss You. Open my eyes to **see Your presence** in my daily life—whether in Scripture, in the kindness of others, or in quiet moments of peace.

## Do It:

Be intentional today—**look for Jesus in the small things**. Maybe it's a **friend's encouragement**, an **answered prayer**, or even just the **beauty of the world around you**. At the end of the day, write down **one moment** where you recognized God at work.

## Day 4: Hearts on Fire—Sharing What We’ve Seen

**“They said to each other, ‘Did not our hearts burn within us while he talked to us on the road...?’” (Luke 24:32, ESV)**

### Think About It:

You know that feeling when you’ve just seen an amazing movie, and as soon as the credits roll, you can’t wait to text your friends? **“You HAVE to see this!”** That excitement, that rush—that’s exactly what’s happening here.

The two disciples had spent **hours** walking with Jesus, listening to Him explain Scripture, but they **didn’t recognize Him** at first. Yet, something inside them was **stirring**, something they couldn’t quite put into words. It was like a fire **slowly building**, a **light flickering on** in the dark places of their understanding.

- **Before their eyes were opened, their hearts were already burning.** Truth was sinking in, reshaping their thinking, bringing clarity to what once felt confusing.
- **That fire inside them was the work of the Holy Spirit.** Sometimes, God is at work **in our hearts before we even realize it**—stirring us, waking us up, preparing us for a deeper encounter with Him.
- **When they finally understood, they couldn’t keep it to themselves.** They had just walked seven miles, but as soon as Jesus disappeared, they turned right back around and **rushed back to Jerusalem** to tell the others.

Have you ever had a moment like that? Maybe it was a **Bible verse** that hit differently, a **sermon** that felt like it was meant just for you, or a **conversation** that opened your eyes to something about God’s love. Those moments aren’t random—they’re God **lighting a fire in your heart**. The next step? **Share it**. Don’t let the flame die out—let it spread.

### Pray It:

Holy Spirit, let my heart **burn for Your Word**. Give me excitement for the gospel, and help me share what You reveal to me with others.

## Do It:

Think of **one thing** God has taught you recently. **Share it with someone today**—a friend, family member, or small group. Don't keep it to yourself.

## Day 5: Running to Share the Good News

**“And they rose that same hour and returned to Jerusalem...” (Luke 24:33, ESV)**

## Think About It:

It was **late**. The disciples had **just walked seven miles** from Jerusalem to Emmaus. They were probably **exhausted**, ready to eat and sleep. But the second they realized Jesus was alive, **they didn't wait for morning—they ran back**.

- **They didn't make excuses.** They could have said, *“It's too late, we'll go in the morning.”* But the news was too good to delay.
- **They didn't worry about the journey.** The road back to Jerusalem wasn't a smooth, well-lit path—it was dark, dangerous, and tiring. But when your heart is on fire, **your feet follow**.
- **They had to tell someone—immediately.** When you truly understand the resurrection, you can't keep it to yourself.

If we **really believe** Jesus is alive, shouldn't our **urgency match theirs**? Shouldn't we **speak boldly, love fiercely, and live differently** because the resurrection **changes everything**?

Think about it: What if we treated the **gospel** with the same energy we give to **sharing exciting news** in our lives? If we can't wait to tell people about **a new show, a sports win, or a crazy life update**, why do we hesitate to share that **Jesus defeated death**?

- **Do we put off sharing Jesus because we think it's “not the right time”?**
- **Do we stay quiet because we're afraid of what people might think?**
- **Are we so caught up in our own routine that we forget we carry the greatest news in history?**

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The disciples **ran through the night** to tell others what they had seen. **What's stopping you?**

### Pray It:

Jesus, let Your resurrection **ignite urgency in me**. Give me the boldness to **speak up** and tell others about what You've done in my life.

### Do It:

Think of **one person** who needs to hear **about Jesus or His impact in your life**. **Reach out to them this week**—whether it's a message, a conversation, or an invite to church.

## You're Ready for Class!

This week, you've walked the road to Emmaus—from **confusion to revelation, from sorrow to joy**. **Come to class ready to share:**

- A **new way** you've seen Jesus in Scripture.
- A **moment where you recognized Him** in your everyday life.
- A **step of boldness** you took to share His story.

The road to Emmaus **isn't just their journey—it's ours too**. Jesus is walking with you. **Are you paying attention?**

## Before We Gather

- What are some ways our own limited expectations of Jesus can lead to disappointment or misunderstanding?
- Why do you think Jesus chose to explain Himself *through Scripture* instead of just saying, "It's Me, risen!" right away?

- When have you experienced a “heart burning” moment—where Scripture or fellowship opened your eyes in a new way?
- What should we do when we realize the truth of who Jesus is, just as these disciples did on the road?
- Which Old Testament passages (like Isaiah 53 or Psalm 22) have opened your eyes to Jesus in fresh ways? How do they deepen your worship?
- Think of a “normal” daily routine you have—commuting, cooking, exercising. How might inviting Jesus intentionally into that activity change your perspective?
- In what recent gathering (church service, small group, retreat) have you felt your heart “burn within you”? What caused that sense of spiritual ignition, and how can you nurture it again?
- The disciples ran back to Jerusalem at night. Is there a relationship or situation where you sense God nudging you to share what you’ve discovered about Christ, despite potential awkwardness or inconvenience?