



LESSON 5 FOR LEADERS

INVITATION

We invite you to pause, listen, and shift your gaze toward the Father ...

LESSON AT A GLANCE

WONDER TRUTH: Jesus Surprises Us

SCRIPTURE: Luke 24

WORD OF WONDER: Psalm 77:12

The two individuals dragging themselves to Emmaus were about as discouraged as humanly possible. They thought Jesus would set all things right, rid the neighborhood of Romans, and lead Israel back to the glorious days of King David's reign.

Instead, they saw Him arrested, tortured, murdered.

As you read Luke 24:13–49, notice that Cleopas and his friend had already heard reports that Jesus had risen, yet they were still sad. Perhaps they didn't quite believe the stories. Perhaps they thought that because Jesus had been crucified He couldn't be the all-powerful Redeemer of Israel after all.

They perked up when a stranger fell into step with them and explained what the Scripture said about the Messiah. That was a pleasant surprise.

But what transformed them, what set them alight, was the realization that they were with Jesus. Surprised? Yes. Delighted? Absolutely. Changed forever? In an instant.

This week as you lead, ask the Holy Spirit to deliver an Emmaus moment to your kids. For there to come a time when kids realize Jesus isn't just out there somewhere but rather is in the room. He's with them. And He wants to be with them forever.

How will that look? I have no idea, but I'm 100 percent certain His desire is to be real in the minds and hearts of your kids ... and you.

And He's not above springing a surprise or two to make that happen. So pray for a surprise. And, when you see it, be grateful.

You know who's behind it.

—**Mikal Keefer**

Children's Ministry Volunteer and Author

Contributor to Wonder Ink

LESSON 5 FOR LEADERS THE ROAD TO EMMAUS

DID YOU KNOW?

FOUNDATION BUILDING BLOCKS

WHO?

Two of Jesus' followers were walking from Jerusalem to Emmaus. One was named Cleopas, perhaps the same person as the Clopas mentioned in John 19:25. The identity of the other is unknown.

WHAT?

The risen Jesus appeared to two of His followers on the road to Emmaus, but they didn't recognize Him. Jesus explained to them what was written in Scripture about the Messiah. Later, Jesus broke bread with them, and their eyes were opened to recognize Him.

WHERE?

The exact location of Emmaus is debated. Two suggestions are el-Qubeibeh, which was seven miles northwest of Jerusalem, and Amwas, which was 18 miles northwest of Jerusalem.

WHEN?

Jesus appeared on the road to Emmaus the third day after His death, the same day Mary and the other women discovered the empty tomb and some of the disciples went to see it. This was after that but before Jesus appeared to the gathered disciples.

CONNECTING TO GOD'S BIG STORY

Jesus' resurrection means His followers' hopes have been realized and the promises of Scripture have been fulfilled. Jesus is the Messiah, and the good news of His salvation will spread to the ends of the earth.



Curiosity

Belief

Faith

Identity

LESSON 5 EARLY CHILDHOOD

Play Stations

SUPPLIES: dry-erase markers (4), tissues, coloring utensils

Wonder Ink RESOURCES: Trace the Road Printable, The Road to Emmaus Coloring Sheet (1 per kid)

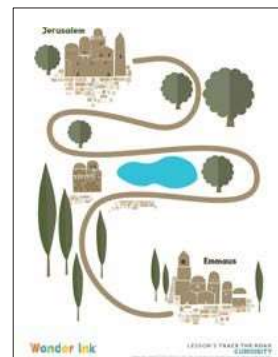
Greet kids warmly as they arrive and briefly explain the play stations. Invite them to play at any of the play stations.

Welcome to church! While we're getting ready to start, you can play at any of these stations to help get ready for our lesson today. Do you have any ideas of what we'll be learning about today?

Play Station: Trace the Road

Set-up: Print the Trace the Road Printable and laminate (or place the printable in a gallon-size resealable bag). Tape the covered printable to the table. Set out dry-erase markers and tissues.

Play: Invite kids to trace the road with the dry-erase markers. They can wipe the sheet clean with tissues and draw again.





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LESSON 5 EARLY CHILDHOOD

Prayer of Invitation

Before entering into God's big story, lead kids in a prayer of invitation. Use the prayer here or your own words: **Dear God, we believe that You love us and take care of us. Please come near to us as we learn about You today. Sometimes we don't recognize it, but You're always with us. Thank You for always caring for us. Thank You for surprising us with Your love every day! In Jesus' name, Amen.**

God's Big Story

Pull out the Bible

Ask: What is this called? The Bible

Ask: Why is the Bible special? Because it is God's word. Everything in it is true. It really happened.

Tell the Bible Story

The Big Picture Bible, page 258

The Emmaus Disciples

Word of Wonder

WORD OF WONDER

**I will spend time thinking about everything you
have done.**

—Psalm 77:12

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- **Where were the followers of Jesus walking to?** (*Emmaus*)
- **What did Jesus talk to His followers about while walking to Emmaus?** (*He talked with them about what the Bible says.*)
- **What did Jesus' two followers do when they recognized Jesus?** (*ran back to Jerusalem to tell the other disciples*)
- **How would you have felt if you were with the disciples when Jesus appeared?**
- **How could we recognize Jesus if He surprised us now?**
- **Why is it important that Jesus is alive forever?**

Sometimes we don't recognize Jesus, but He is always with us. Jesus surprises us! Even in our worst circumstances.



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LESSON 5 EARLY CHILDHOOD

Game: Recognize Me!

SUPPLIES: large blanket

Jesus' followers didn't recognize Him the first time they saw Him on the road to Emmaus. Let's see if we can recognize each other!

First, let's go around and tell each other our names. Allow kids to share their first names.

Awesome! It'll be important for us to know each other's names to play our game.

For this game, we'll split into two teams. Place kids into two teams. Have the teams sit opposite each other with some space between them. Have two leaders hold up a large blanket between the teams so that the blanket prevents the teams from seeing each other. **I will call on one person from each team to come sit facing the blanket. I'll call you up by pointing to you instead of saying your name. On the count of three, the leaders will drop the blanket. When the blanket is dropped, you'll be face- to-face with someone from the other team. Your job is to say the other person's name before that person says yours. If you get stuck, your team can help! OK, leaders, make sure that blanket is in place!** Invite one kid up from each team to sit and face the blanket. Make sure the kids don't say the name of the person sitting right in front of the blanket. Count to three. Have leaders drop the blanket and encourage the kids to say the name of the person sitting on the other side.

Leader Tip: Ask two leaders or older kids to hold the blanket up between the two teams. Add more rounds of sharing each other's names before play if your group is new to each other.

Repeat this game with everyone who wants to play.

That was pretty fun! Some of you are really quick! Sometimes it takes a while for us to recognize the person in front of us. That's just what happened to Jesus' followers as they walked with Him to Emmaus. They didn't know it, but Jesus was always with them. And when Jesus made Himself known, He did it in a big way! Jesus is always with us, but sometimes He shows up in our lives in unusual ways. Jesus surprises us!

LESSON 5 EARLY CHILDHOOD

Responding in Worship: Prayer Walk to Emmaus

SUPPLIES: painter's tape, construction paper (2 sheets)

Wonder Ink RESOURCES: Emmaus Printable

Print the Emmaus Printable and tape it on a wall. Create a starting line with painter's tape about nine feet from the Emmaus Printable. This starting

line will be "Jerusalem." Create a "road to Emmaus" by placing a sheet of construction paper on the floor a few feet away from the starting line. Then place another sheet of construction paper a few feet away from the first sheet of construction paper. Add a line of painter's tape from the starting line to each stop to the Emmaus Printable, creating a pathway for the kids to follow.



When Jesus first showed up and started walking with two of His followers on the road to Emmaus, they didn't recognize Him. They had no idea they were looking at the risen Jesus until Jesus opened their hearts to understand everything the Scriptures say about Him. After they recognized the whole truth about Jesus, they recognized that the person walking with them was Jesus Himself!

Jesus' followers were sad and confused, but Jesus showed up and helped them understand that His death wasn't the end of the story. He is alive and still at work! Jesus knows our hearts and what we need, just like He knew the hearts and needs of the two people in the story. He loves us too much to leave us alone in our sadness and confusion. He wants to lead us to a full understanding of who He is and what it truly means to follow Him.

Line kids up at the starting line of "Jerusalem." Show kids the "road" that leads to "Emmaus." Tell them they will each have a chance to walk down the road and stop and pray at each piece of construction paper. At the first piece of paper, invite them to give God praise for something He's done in their lives lately. At the second piece, encourage them to ask God to surprise them with His help in a situation they're living through right now. And finally, when they reach Emmaus, allow the kids to touch the wall and say, "Jesus, You surprise me!" before they run back to Jerusalem (the starting line.)