

Meeting Jesus on the Emmaus Road

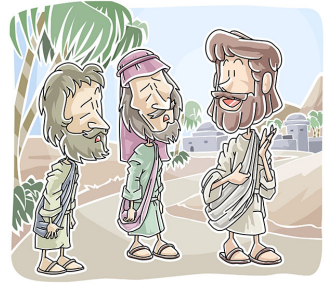
Luke 24:13-35 NIV

Bible Lesson & Activities for Children



THE SUNDAY SCHOOL STORE

It's Jesus! Burning Hearts and Big Picture Explanations



The “Sunday School answer” is stereotypically Jesus, but the truth is that the identity of Jesus really is essential to our faith. This lesson reviews the events of the disciples on the Road to Emmaus, and their encounter with the risen Christ. Jesus opened their eyes to understand that everything in Scripture and history led up to Him. Help children see how the Messiah is the “big picture answer” to our questions. The disciples on the road realized who He was, and we can, too!

What’s the big idea? Sometimes we have a tendency to get caught up in smaller details and miss out on a broad scope of things. It’s important to notice how central the Resurrection is to our faith. Jesus lived, died, and rose for us! All Old Testament prophecies and events lead up to Him, and all New Testament events spread His story. Jesus is always with us and will help us to understand when we lose our way.

Passage: Luke 24:13-35

Target Audience: Kindergarten-6th grade

Materials Needed: Construction paper; paper plates; popsicle sticks; glue; markers or crayons; tape; scissors; decorative supplies; varied pictures; Bibles.

More Resources Online

- Watch the [video demonstration of the object lesson](#).
- Watch the [video example for the craft projects](#).
- Watch the [video Bible story “The Story of Easter”](#) from Saddleback Kids Club
- Watch the [video Bible Bible story “The Road To Emmaus”](#) from Crossroads Kids
- For more free illustrations, visit [Christian Clip Arts](#) and [Ministry-To-Children](#)

Object Lesson (5 minutes)

Greet children, and invite them to join in a game of "Pictionary"...

Hello, children of God!

I'd like to start off with another little game today. Have you ever played a game called "Pictionary"? In this game, one person draws a picture, and the rest of the players try to guess what is being drawn. You don't have to wait until the end to guess...I'll draw the picture first. *Begin drawing a picture, making it something that would be difficult to understand or guess right away. Continue drawing and allow children to guess things as desired, until the picture is complete.*

Now, maybe you didn't recognize right away what it was that I was drawing here. It could have looked strange or confusing at first, when it was just some random shapes coming together. But when you saw the completed picture, it made a lot more sense, didn't it? This happens to us sometimes. We don't always understand what is happening in our lives until later, when we can step back and recognize how God has been working.

This reminds me of a story that happened in the Bible. Right after Jesus rose from the dead, there were a couple of disciples who were walking along the road from Jerusalem to a place called Emmaus. They were talking about Jesus and what had happened, and as they were walking along, Jesus came up and joined them! But they didn't recognize right away that it was Jesus. Somehow He kept them from knowing it was Him. Jesus asked them what they were talking about, and they explained that they were sad and confused because they had hoped in Jesus, only to see Him killed. They mentioned that the women had claimed to see Him alive, but they didn't know what to believe. Jesus then explained to them how all of the Old Testament prophecies and words had led up to Him,

and how the death and resurrection fulfilled everything previously predicted. He showed them the big picture of God's plan, and how Jesus was at the center of it all. When the disciples arrived at their destination, they begged Jesus to stay with them awhile. As they were sharing a meal, their eyes were opened, and they realized it was JESUS with them, risen and alive! Then Jesus disappeared, and the disciples were so excited that they ran all the way back to Jerusalem (seven miles away) to share what they had experienced.

Sometimes we don't recognize things that are right in front of us, and sometimes we don't understand the big picture of what God is doing in our lives. There might be times when things happen that seem confusing or frustrating, and we can get upset. We look at the little details, but don't know what the big picture is. It's important to trust that God has a plan, and He knows what it is. Even when we have no idea what the future holds, we know Who holds the future! We can trust that the Lord will provide, and we can ask for Him to help us trust when we are confused.

And we know that He is always with us. Sometimes we don't recognize it or realize it, but just like the disciples on the road, He is present with us always and everywhere! Jesus brings things all together. He is at the center of the Bible, of God's amazing plans, and of our lives. We can trust in Him that one day the big picture will make sense. Meanwhile, we know He guides us and loves us, every step of the way.

Why don't we pray now and thank God for His big picture plans?

Prayer: (Invite the children to repeat each line)

Dear God,

Thank you for always being present with us.

Thank you for having a plan for the future.

Help us to trust in you,

Even when we don't understand your ways.

Thank you for your love

We love you, God!

In Jesus name, Amen!

Game & Activities Suggestions (10 minutes)



This passage features an interesting story of an unexpected encounter with Jesus. It is a great reminder that Jesus is always with us, even when we don't realize it, and that He is the answer to our "big picture" questions. Open with some games or discussions to spark thought and introduce themes. Here are some ideas:

- What's the picture? Split students into groups and provide each group with a jigsaw puzzle (of age-appropriate difficulty). Have them race to put the puzzles together.
*Variations (for older students): Do not provide the picture showing what the puzzle will be in the end! Or provide a picture, but blindfold the person who is assembling the puzzle, and have the others describe where to place things.
- What am I looking at? Provide students with several pictures of things, viewed in a close-up format. Invite them to guess what the picture is, just from the zoomed-in view.
- "Disguised": Show images of famous stars or well-known individuals (maybe even people in the congregation), but at various stages in life. Invite students to guess who they are in "less recognizable" form.
- On the road relay: This story involves a lot of back and forth running. Have a relay race across a playing field or large room. Have students tag one another saying "The Lord has risen indeed!"

Today's story is a powerful reminder that Jesus Christ is at the center of all we say, do, and believe. He is with us always and often shows up in unexpected ways!

Main Bible Teaching (15 minutes)



This passage is another one that can easily be acted out in parts. You could also read directly from the Bible, and have students take turns. Pause between verse sections to review what the story is about.

Luke 24:13-16 NIV *Now that same day two of them were going to a village called Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem. (14) They were talking with each other about everything that had happened. (15) As they talked and discussed these things with each other, Jesus himself came up and walked along with them; (16) but they were kept from recognizing him.*

Explain that here, “that very day” refers to the same day that Jesus rose from the dead. He had already left the tomb, appeared to Mary, and after this would go to visit the disciples in Jerusalem. It was a busy day for Jesus! But at this time, two disciples were headed from Jerusalem to Emmaus, talking about what had happened to Jesus. One of these disciples is named Cleopas. We aren’t sure who the other was, but it might have been his wife, Mary. When Jesus came to join them, they didn’t realize who it was at first. Perhaps His resurrected body looked different than His earthly one, or maybe He just somehow managed to make it so they didn’t fully perceive who was with them. It would seem that Jesus likes surprises! At any rate, He casually started conversing with them along the road.

Ask: Have you ever not recognized who someone was at first?

How would you feel if a celebrity started talking with you?

Luke 24:17-20 NIV He asked them, "What are you discussing together as you walk along?" They stood still, their faces downcast. (18) One of them, named Cleopas, asked him, "Are you the only one visiting Jerusalem who does not know the things that have happened there in these days?" (19) "What things?" he asked. "About Jesus of Nazareth," they replied. "He was a prophet, powerful in word and deed before God and all the people. (20) The chief priests and our rulers handed him over to be sentenced to death, and they crucified him;

It's interesting here to see Jesus "play dumb" about the situation. We can almost imagine Him smiling mischievously to Himself as Cleopas and companions tell Him about Himself. Clearly, the disciples are still upset about what had happened, and naturally so. It also seems as though news about the crucifixion had already spread, since they wondered why He didn't know about it.

Ask: Have you ever kept a fun secret from someone and surprised them later? Why do you think Jesus did this, rather than showing right away who He was?

Luke 24:21-27 NIV But we had hoped that he was the one who was going to redeem Israel. And what is more, it is the third day since all this took place. (22) In addition, some of our women amazed us. They went to the tomb early this morning (23) but didn't find his body. They came and told us that they had seen a vision of angels, who said he was alive. (24) Then some of our companions went to the tomb and found it just as the women had said, but they did not see Jesus." (25) He said to them, "How foolish you are, and how slow to believe all that the prophets have spoken! (26) Did not the Messiah have to suffer these things and then enter his glory?" (27) And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he explained to them what was said in all the Scriptures concerning himself.

This part of the conversation is particularly interesting. The disciples are revealing that they knew Jesus was supposed to be the redeemer, and also had heard from the women of His resurrection. Evidently, though, they weren't too sure of what they had heard. They were still trying to make sense of it all. Then Jesus explained to them the whole story, describing how all of the Old Testament prophets and Scriptures were ultimately pointing to Him. He laid it all out clearly in a way that they could understand, although they evidently still didn't realize who it was they were walking and talking with.

Ask: What does it take to convince you of something? How do you know what to believe? Have you ever come to a point in a story where things suddenly make sense? How does that feel?

Luke 24:28-32 NIV *As they approached the village to which they were going, Jesus continued on as if he were going farther. (29) But they urged him strongly, "Stay with us, for it is nearly evening; the day is almost over." So he went in to stay with them. (30) When he was at the table with them, he took bread, gave thanks, broke it and began to give it to them. (31) Then their eyes were opened and they recognized him, and he disappeared from their sight. (32) They asked each other, "Were not our hearts burning within us while he talked with us on the road and opened the Scriptures to us?"*

The disciples convinced Jesus to stay with them for a little while, although He acted like He was going on. They were eager to know more from this "stranger." Yet when He blessed the food and gave it to them, they suddenly realized who they had been with. It was Jesus all along! But then He disappeared. It all made sense to the disciples. Their eyes were opened and they understood with powerful clarity that they were with the Lord.

Sometimes we don't grasp what's right in front of us! And when they did realize, they were overjoyed.

Luke 24:33-35 NIV *They got up and returned at once to Jerusalem. There they found the Eleven and those with them, assembled together (34) and saying, "It is true! The Lord has risen and has appeared to Simon." (35) Then the two told what had happened on the way, and how Jesus was recognized by them when he broke the bread.*

The disciples were so excited that they turned right around and made the seven-mile trip back to Jerusalem. They told the other disciples that they had seen Jesus, and how He had made Himself known to them. Jesus is the answer and the center of all our "big picture" questions!

Ask: If you had big exciting news, who would you want to tell first?

Close with prayer, thanking God for always being with us and helping us understand His word.

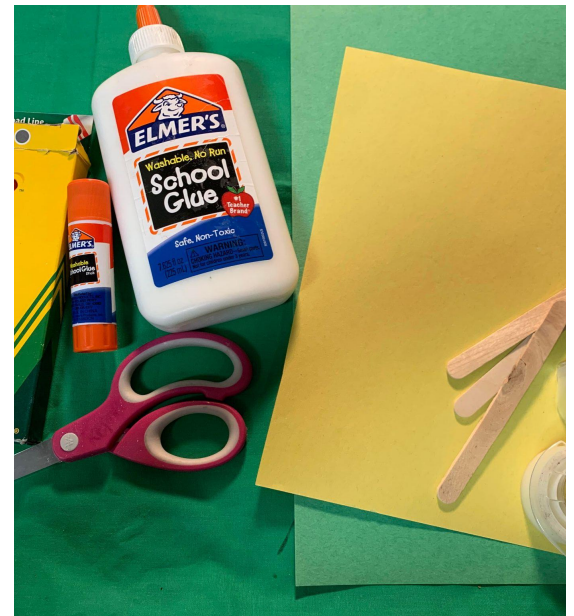
Craft Activities (15 minutes)

Jesus is always with us, even when we don't recognize Him right away! Jesus appeared to the disciples on the Emmaus Road, explaining to them a big picture they hadn't even realized was possible. These crafts follow the story of the road to Emmaus. A "pop-up picture" features walking puppets to re-enact the passage. A homemade puzzle reminds children that God always has a big picture in mind. Let's get crafting!

Craft one: “Pop-up Puppets on the Road”

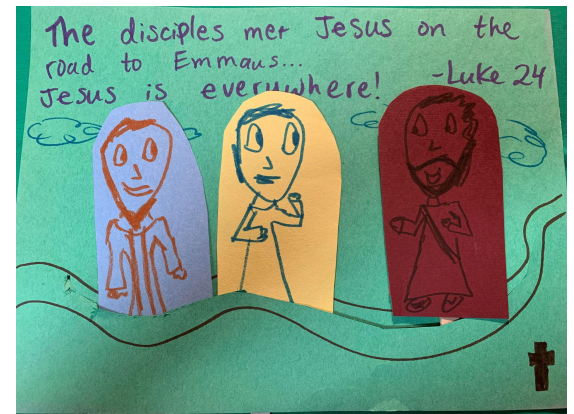
You will need:

- Construction paper or cardstock
- Popsicle sticks
- Glue or tape
- Scissors
- Markers or crayons



Procedure:

1. Decorate one piece of construction paper or cardstock with a “background scene”, creating a “road” for the characters to walk on.
2. Add verses and captions as desired.
3. Draw, cut, and color the “puppets” as Jesus and the disciples. Attach to popsicle sticks with glue or tape.
4. Cut a slit in the bottom of the road paper.
5. Slide the puppets inside the slit, and act out the story by having the puppets “walk” and talk along the road.



Craft Two: "Big Picture Puzzle"

You will need:

- Paper plate
- Crayons or markers
- Scissors
- Envelope or ziploc (optional for storage)



Procedure:

1. Draw a picture on the paper plate.
2. Add verses, captions, or additional decorations as desired.
3. Cut the plate into pieces like a jigsaw puzzle.

Option: draw lines indicating the pieces prior to cutting. For younger students, make shapes very simple, and for older children cut in more complex sizes and shapes.

4. Scramble the pieces and rearrange into the picture! Store in an envelope or bag if desired.



Luke 24:32 NIV

They asked each other, “Were not our hearts burning within us while he talked with us on the road and opened the Scriptures to us?”





Word Search Puzzle

Emmaus - Jerusalem - Road - Cleopas - Risen - Lord

Heart - Burn - Within - Scripture - Moses - Prophets

J	H	P	R	O	P	H	E	T	S	X
P	E	K	G	Y	B	E	D	Z	C	F
W	A	R	Z	L	J	G	Y	L	R	P
X	R	M	U	Q	W	I	T	H	I	N
L	T	F	G	S	H	V	M	X	P	L
C	L	E	O	P	A	S	O	P	T	Z
Q	L	O	R	D	R	L	S	S	U	T
Y	F	Q	S	O	A	I	E	O	R	W
N	D	E	M	M	A	U	S	M	E	I
D	F	B	G	U	E	D	M	E	Y	X
D	T	J	M	K	D	B	U	R	N	Y

Word Search Answers

J H P R O P H E T S X
P E K G Y B E D Z C F
W A R Z L J G Y L R P
X R M U Q W I T H I N
L T F G S H V M X P L
C L E O P A S O P T Z
Q L O R D R L S S U T
Y F Q S O A I E O R W
N D E M M A U S M E I
D F B G U E D M E Y X
D T J M K D B U R N Y