

## Day 1 - When Life Doesn't Go the Way We Thought Luke 24:13-21

The road to Emmaus begins with two men leaving Jerusalem—the very place where everything was supposed to come together. Instead, it's where everything seemed to fall apart.

Luke tells us they were:

*"talking with each other about everything that had happened" (v.14)*

The word Luke uses carries the idea of processing, debating, even wrestling. These weren't casual reflections—they were trying to make sense of a story that no longer made sense.

Then comes the turning point:

*"We had hoped that he was the one who was going to redeem Israel." (v.21)*

Have you ever had your hope collapse like that? Like everything you were counting on just... gave way?

- Your plans.
- Your dreams.
- Your expectations for how life would turn out.

Gone—because of a bad decision, unexpected circumstances, or someone else's actions.

You had hope...And now you're left trying to make sense of what happened.

While they are saying *"we had hoped..."*, Jesus is literally walking beside them.

They thought:

- The mission was over
- Hope was gone
- The story had ended

But they didn't yet realize that everything was still unfolding.

We often live in our own version of *"we had hoped..."*:

- "I thought God would fix this by now."
- "I thought this would turn out differently."
- "I thought things would go another way."

Like these two men, we try to interpret our lives based on what we expected to happen.

And sometimes—just like them—Jesus is closer than we realize, even when we don't recognize Him.

*"Jesus himself came up and walked along with them." (v.15)*

**Final Thought** They thought the story was over. But it wasn't over—it was still unfolding.

**Reflection** Where are you saying, *"we had hoped..."*? Could it be that more is happening than you can currently see?

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## Day 2 — When Facts Replace Faith

Luke 24:19-21

Earlier that day, some women had gone to the tomb and found it empty. They reported seeing a vision of angels who

said Jesus was alive (v.22–23). Others went to check and found the tomb just as the women had said—but they still did not see Jesus (v.24). As the two men walk along the road, Jesus asks them what has happened. Their response is clear, detailed, and accurate.

They said:

*“About Jesus of Nazareth... He was a prophet, powerful in word and deed before God and all the people. The chief priests and our rulers handed him over... and they crucified him.” (v.19–20)*

They knew the story.

They could explain:

- Who Jesus was
- What He did
- How He died

And yet, something was missing.

They go on to describe the reports of the resurrection (v.22–24). They had heard that the tomb was empty. They knew others had seen something.

But it hadn't changed them.

They were still walking away.

They had the facts...But missed the meaning. They had information without transformation.

It's possible to know a lot about Jesus:

- To understand the story
- To agree with what happened
- To explain it to others

...and still not personally embrace the reality that He is alive.

Because faith isn't just knowing what happened back then. It's trusting what it means right now.

Like these two men, we can hold all the right information and still feel stuck, distant, or disillusioned.

We can talk about Jesus...without truly walking with Him.

**Final Thought** They knew the story of Jesus. But they had not yet experienced the reality of the risen Christ.

**Reflection** Are you relating to Jesus as a set of facts...or as a living Savior?

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### Day 3 — A Loving Rebuke

Luke 24:25–27 — “How foolish you are...”

After listening to their confusion, their disappointment, and their version of events, Jesus finally responds.

He said:

*“How foolish you are, and how slow to believe all that the prophets have spoken!” (v.25)*

At first, His words sound strong.

*“How foolish you are...”*

But this isn't an insult—it's a wake-up call.

They weren't lacking information. They were misreading everything they already knew.

Their struggle wasn't ignorance—it was:

- Selective belief
- Misplaced expectations
- Slow trust in God's full story

They believed parts of Scripture...but not all of it.

They embraced the promises of victory, but overlooked the passages about suffering.

So Jesus does something powerful.

He doesn't immediately reveal Himself. He doesn't perform a miracle. Instead—He opens the Scriptures. He shows them that what felt like everything going wrong was actually everything unfolding exactly as it should.

Then He continues:

*“Did not the Messiah have to suffer these things and then enter his glory?” (v.26)*

And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, He explains how the Scriptures pointed to Him—showing that the Messiah's suffering, rejection, and ultimate glory had been part of God's plan all along (v.27).

Sometimes God's correction can feel sharp.

Not because He is harsh—but because He is helping us see what we've been missing.

Jesus doesn't shame them—He teaches them.

Like these two men, we can:

- Hold onto parts of God's truth
- Filter it through our expectations
- And struggle when life doesn't match our understanding

But Jesus patiently walks us back through truth—so we can see more clearly.

**Final Thought** What they thought was the end of the story was actually part of a much bigger one they hadn't fully understood.

**Reflection** Where might God be correcting your perspective—not to condemn you, but to help you see more clearly?

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#### **Day 4 — Recognizing Jesus in Relationship**

Luke 24:30–31 — “He was recognized by them in the breaking of the bread.”

As they near their destination, Jesus appears ready to continue on.

But the two men urge Him:

*“Stay with us, for it is nearly evening; the day is almost over.” (v.29)*

So He goes in to stay with them.

Then something unexpected happens.

*“When he was at the table with them, he took bread, gave thanks, broke it and began to give it to them.” (v.30)*

And in that moment:

*“Then their eyes were opened and they recognized him...” (v.31)*

Their eyes weren't opened on the road. Not during the conversation. Not even while Jesus was explaining the Scriptures.

But at the table.

It was in a simple, relational moment—sharing a meal—that everything changed.

The way He took the bread...The way He gave thanks...The way He broke it...

Something became unmistakably clear.

This wasn't just information anymore. It became personal, relational, intimate.

Jesus is not only revealed through truth—but through relationship.

Sometimes we don't recognize Him because we're:

- Rushing
- Distracted
- Keeping things at a distance

We may hear truth. We may understand Scripture. But we keep Jesus at arm's length.

But when they slowed down...When they invited Him in...When they sat with Him...Their eyes were opened.

Like these two men, we often encounter Jesus most clearly not just in learning about Him—but in being with Him.

**Final Thought** They had walked with Him for miles. But they recognized Him when they welcomed Him in.

**Reflection** Are you making space to experience Jesus relationally—not just intellectually?

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## Day 5 — When Encounter Changes Direction

Luke 24:33 — “They got up and returned at once to Jerusalem.”

After recognizing Jesus in the breaking of the bread, everything changes.

Just moments earlier, they had been sitting at the table, processing what they had just experienced.

They say to each other:

*“Were not our hearts burning within us while he talked with us on the road and opened the Scriptures to us?” (v.32)*

Then immediately:

*“They got up and returned at once to Jerusalem.” (v.33)*

Earlier that day, they were walking away from Jerusalem.

Away from the place of disappointment. Away from unanswered questions. Away from what felt like the end of the story.

But now?

They turn around.

Same road. Same distance. Completely different direction.

This wasn't a small decision.

It was evening. The journey was long. The road was the same one they had just traveled.

But none of that mattered anymore.

An encounter with Jesus doesn't just comfort you—it reorients you.

They went from:

- Defeated to energized
- Confused to convinced
- Silent to proclaiming

They couldn't stay where they were. They couldn't keep walking in the same direction.

When you truly encounter the risen Christ, your life doesn't stay on the same path.

Like these two men, we can find ourselves:

- Walking away from hope
- Drifting from purpose
- Settling into disappointment

But one real encounter with Jesus can change everything.

**Final Thought** They didn't just feel differently. They went a different direction.

**Reflection** What direction is your life heading right now? Is Jesus inviting you to turn around and go back toward purpose?