

Luke 24:13–35 — Bible Study Handout

Big Idea

Jesus meets weary disciples in their confusion, opens the Scriptures, and reveals Himself in the breaking of bread. On the road to Emmaus, Luke shows that the risen Christ comes near before His followers fully understand, and turns sorrow into witness.

Context

- Occurs on the day of the resurrection, after the women have reported the empty tomb.
- Follows the crucifixion, burial, and the first reports that Jesus is alive.
- Takes place as two disciples leave Jerusalem carrying grief, confusion, and disappointed hope.
- Shows that resurrection faith did not come easily or automatically, even for Jesus' followers.
- Bridges the empty tomb and Jesus' appearance to the gathered disciples, helping explain how sorrow begins to give way to understanding and witness (Bock).

Key Themes

- The risen Christ meeting people in confusion
- Scripture fulfilled in the suffering and glory of the Messiah
- Recognition through Word and table
- Grace that comes near before full understanding
- Hearts awakened by Christ's presence
- Faith that turns people back toward community and witness

Passage Overview

Verses 13–16 — The Road of Disappointment

- Two disciples are walking to Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem.
- They are discussing the events of Jesus' death and the report of the empty tomb.
- Jesus Himself comes near and walks with them.
- They do not recognize Him, showing that their sorrow and misunderstanding still cloud their vision (Green).

Verses 17–24 — Honest Grief and Incomplete Hope

- Jesus asks what they are discussing and listens as they tell their story.
- They describe Jesus as a prophet mighty in word and deed.
- They confess, "We had hoped" He would redeem Israel.
- Their words reveal both faith and confusion. They had real hope, but they did not yet understand a suffering and risen Messiah (Wright).

Verses 25–27 — Scripture Opened

- Jesus rebukes them for being slow of heart to believe all the prophets have spoken.
- He explains that the Messiah had to suffer before entering His glory.
- Beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, He interprets the Scriptures concerning Himself.
- Luke shows that the cross and resurrection are not interruptions of God's plan, but its fulfillment (Bock).

Verses 28–32 — Recognition in the Breaking of Bread

- As they reach Emmaus, Jesus acts as though He will continue on.
- The disciples urge Him to stay with them.
- At table, Jesus takes bread, blesses it, breaks it, and gives it to them.
- Their eyes are opened, and they recognize Him.
- They realize their hearts had been burning while He opened the Scriptures to them (Green).

Verses 33–35 — Turned Around into Witness

- The disciples return to Jerusalem that same hour.
- They rejoin the larger group of disciples and share what happened.
- Jesus was made known to them on the road and in the breaking of bread.
- Resurrection encounter does not leave them where they were. It turns them back toward fellowship and witness (Wright).

Important Observations

- Jesus comes near before the disciples know it is Him.

- He listens to their sorrow before correcting their understanding.
- Their problem is not only grief, but misread expectations about how God would redeem.
- Luke connects understanding Christ with understanding Scripture.
- The table becomes a place of revelation, not just nourishment.
- The road to Emmaus shows that faith often grows through stages, from confusion, to burning hearts, to clear recognition.
- The disciples' return to Jerusalem shows that meeting the risen Christ changes direction and restores community (Green).

Wesleyan Insights

- **Prevenient Grace:** Jesus takes the initiative. He comes to the disciples before they understand or respond rightly. Grace moves first (Collins).
- **Illuminating Grace:** Christ opens the Scriptures and begins to reshape how the disciples understand God's work.
- **Means of Grace:** Jesus is made known through Word and table. Scripture and the breaking of bread become places where grace is received and hearts are awakened (Maddox).
- **Transforming Grace:** The encounter does not end with comfort. It leads to movement, renewed fellowship, and witness.
- **Holiness and Community:** Resurrection faith is not private. Christ sends His people back into the shared life of discipleship.

Life Application

- Jesus still meets people in seasons of confusion, disappointment, and grief.
- We often want God to work in ways we expect, but Christ may be present in ways we do not immediately recognize.
- Scripture is not just information, it is a place where Christ still speaks and opens hearts.
- The table reminds us that Jesus is not distant. He still gives Himself to His people in grace.
- Faith is not always instant clarity. Sometimes it begins with a heart stirred before the mind has caught up.
- Real encounter with Christ turns us back toward the life of the church, toward testimony, and toward hope.

Reflection Questions

1. What do the two disciples understand correctly about Jesus?
2. What do they still misunderstand?
3. Why do you think Jesus listens before He teaches?
4. What does this passage show us about reading the Old Testament in light of Christ?
5. Why is the breaking of bread such an important moment in the story?
6. Where might Jesus be walking with you right now, even if you do not yet recognize Him?

Key Verse

“Were not our hearts burning within us while he talked with us on the road and opened the Scriptures to us?” — Luke 24:32

Cross References

- Isaiah 53:3–12
- Luke 9:22
- Luke 24:44–48
- Acts 2:42
- Romans 10:17
- 1 Corinthians 11:23–26
- Hebrews 13:2

Takeaway

Luke 24:13–35 shows that the risen Jesus meets His followers in confusion, opens the Scriptures, and reveals Himself in the breaking of bread. He still comes near to weary people, turns hearts toward truth, and sends His people back into the world as witnesses.