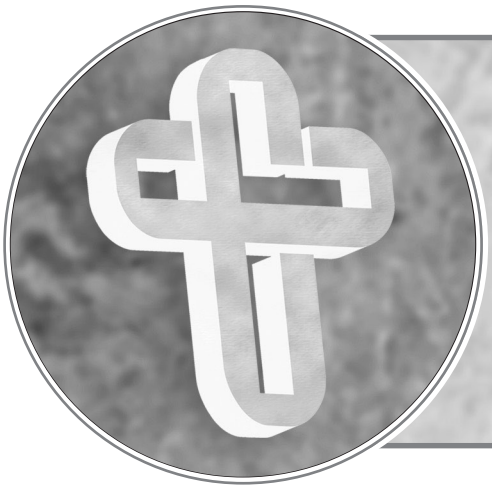


CORNERSTONE CONNECTIONS

DECEMBER 13 2025

journeying with Jesus

Scripture Story: Luke 24:13-34.
Commentary: *The Desire of Ages* (or *Humble Hero*), chapter 83.
Key Text: Luke 24:30-32.

PREPARING TO TEACH

I. SYNOPSIS

Perhaps the angels in heaven say of us today, "What are you thinking? Can't you see the truth right in front of your eyes?" It's easy for us to look back at the pivotal story of Christ's death and resurrection and feel baffled by the disconnection, lack of clarity, and utter disbelief of Christ's disciples. But it may be that humanity today is more blind than the two travelers on the road to Emmaus on the day Christ rose from the dead.

The Emmaus story is rich with insightful angles and poignant lessons. The men walk home at the end of the day having not seen Jesus yet, but walking with their eyes cast down. In defeat they trudge their way home with Christ at their side, and their attitude has everything to do with how they process the events of the weekend. Another insightful moment comes when Christ begins to teach them from the Scriptures along the way. The disciples would later say, "Did not our hearts burn within us as He opened the Scriptures to us?" (see Luke 24:32). Furthermore, the disciples invited the stranger to stay and, as a result, Christ revealed Himself to them.

Students will be able to draw various lessons from their study of this story. One key theme is the risen Christ, who comes to us in our disillusionment and dismay and, if we listen and cling to Him, He will reveal Himself to us.

II. TARGET

The students will:

- Understand that the process of revelation and learning takes time and effort. *(Know)*
- Sense a growing confidence that Christ comes to us when we struggle. *(Feel)*
- Decide to let God's Word reveal who He is to us today. *(Respond)*

III. EXPLORE

The Son, Seventh-day Adventist Fundamental Beliefs, no. 4: "God the eternal Son became incarnate in Jesus Christ. Through Him all things were created, the character of God is revealed, the salvation of humanity is accomplished, and the world is judged. Forever truly God, He became also truly human, Jesus the Christ. He was conceived of the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary. He lived and experienced temptation as a human being, but perfectly exemplified the righteousness and love of God. By His miracles He manifested God's power and was attested as God's promised Messiah. He suffered and died voluntarily on the cross for our sins and in our place, was raised from the dead, and ascended to heaven to minister in the heavenly sanctuary in our behalf. He will come again in glory for the final deliverance of His people and the restoration of all things. (Isa. 53:4-6; Dan. 9:25-27; Luke 1:35; John 1:1-3, 14; 5:22; 10:30; 14:1-3, 9, 13; Rom. 6:23; 1 Cor. 15:3, 4; 2 Cor. 3:18; 5:17-19; Phil. 2:5-11; Col. 1:15-19; Heb. 2:9-18; 8:1, 2.)"

TEACHING

I. GETTING STARTED

Activity

Refer the students to the What Do You Think? *section of their lesson. After they have completed it, discuss their responses.*

As the students respond, you might note the trends and similarities of the responses as they share.

It's often believed that being an eyewitness to Jesus would remove all doubts in our relationship with Him, that if we were able to see Jesus face to face our faith would never waver. But being in the literal, physical presence of Jesus is no guarantee that our faith would be stronger—as the disciples' lives reveal. As we'll discuss in our lesson today about the disciples on the road to Emmaus, feelings can cloud our vision of who God is.

Illustration

Share this illustration in your own words:

It is clear that the two disciples who walked the road to Emmaus on Resurrection Sunday did not get the right message. It is like the story of how the Napoleonic Wars ended. The Duke of Wellington led the armies to victory at the Battle of Waterloo. However, when the battle had ended, Wellington sent news of the great victory back to England. A series of bonfire stations had been set up to send code messages back to England. The message that Wellington sent to the homeland was: "Wellington defeated Napoleon at Waterloo." But a thick fog set in and clouded the message, so that the people in England heard only the first part: "Wellington defeated." The news devastated many back home until the fog lifted and the full, clear message was revealed. What a difference it makes to have all the information!

II. TEACHING THE STORY

Bridge to the Story

Share the following in your own words:

It is likely that the disciples and many others on that Sunday had only part of the message, which left them with a confused view of the outcome. When in your life have you had a situation that left you disillusioned and confused—as though you were in a fog? How did you emerge from the cloud? What did you do to try to see your situation more clearly?

Out of the Story *for Teachers*

After you read the Into the Story *section with your students, use the following in your own words to process it with them.*

- Read the story and *underline* the phrases that you think are key to understanding the interchange between Jesus and the two disciples.
- How does the Bible describe their attitude? What do they do and say that reveals their emotional state?
- Why do you think they don't immediately recognize Jesus? Is it because Jesus is concealing His identity, or are they so confused they don't see who He is?
- When the disciples said, "We thought He was the *one* who would redeem Israel," what other way could this happen other than Christ dying?
- What do you think changed in their understanding of Christ and His death when Jesus taught them from the Scriptures as they walked? What in particular do you think made their hearts burn?
- When Christ broke the bread, what images do you think went through their minds?
- What do you think is the message God has for you in this passage?

Extra Questions for Teachers

- How much would knowing that Christ is risen change their mind-set? Notice that they heard rumors from the women that Christ's body was not there. Can you say their first words in verses 19-24 with a different attitude and have it mean something entirely different? Try reading it out loud both ways: one with an attitude of despair and failure, and the other with an attitude of hope and possibility. How does our mind-set shape the meaning?
- How do the symbols and rituals (such as Communion, baptism, etc.) awaken our experience in worship? What would make them more effective reminders for us today?

Use the following as other teachable passages that

relate to today's story: Matthew 17:1-8; Revelation 1:1-3; John 21:4-8; Acts 9; Luke 16:19-31.

Sharing Context and Background

Use the following information to shed more light on the story for your students. Share it in your own words.

The town of Emmaus was about seven miles west of Jerusalem, which means the disciples were walking into the setting sun as they made their way home. It is hard to know how long they walked, but it took long enough to approach their destination as it became dark. Given that they were deep in discussion, it is likely that they were not pressed for time, but were pressed by a more important conundrum.

Looking at a few key words Luke uses to describe the mind-set of the disciples helps to provide background that explains their behavior. Luke says: "And they *talked together* of all these things which had happened. So it was, while they *conversed* and *reasoned*" (Luke 24:14, 15; emphasis added). These three words describe an ongoing discussion—back and forth, throwing ideas around. In a sense they were playing the tape forward and backward of the weekend events, trying to make sense of them.

Christ did two things to help them understand. First, He reminded them of what God said in His Holy Word: "And beginning at Moses and all the Prophets, He expounded to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself" (Luke 24:27).

Tips for Top-Notch Teaching

Time Teaches

Students, whether they are talkers or thinkers, need time to flesh out their thoughts or let them marinate. You can tell the students in your class who talk out their ideas and those who simply ruminate. The key for both is that time helps both types of learners. In your teaching make sure there is time to think and time to discuss the things that matter the most.

This lesson is a case study in discussion and reflection. The travelers were "discussing," but it wasn't enough—they needed time for the biggest event in history to settle in to its great significance. Whether you offer students time to think in class, or reflective opportunities after class, the critical point is to give them permission to be patient with their conclusions.

It is likely that Jesus used the same passages of Scripture and repeated the same things He had been teaching for three years. But timing can be everything. Not only did Christ teach them who He was, but He showed them by breaking the bread. The text says: "He sat at the table with them, . . . took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them" (Luke 24:30). The entire Hebrew worship/education tradition rests on the reenactment of

Teaching From . . .

Refer your students to the other sections of their lesson.

- **Key Text**
  Invite the students to share the key text with the class if they have committed it to memory.
- **Flashlight**
  Read the Flashlight *statement, pointing out that most of the time it is from the commentary on this week's story found in the book* The Desire of Ages. *Ask what relationship they see between the statement and what they have just discussed from* Out of the Story.
- **Punch Lines**
  Point out to your students the verses listed in their lesson that relate to this week's story. Have them share the verse that speaks most directly to them and allow them to explain why they chose it.
- **Further Insight**
  Ask them how the quote in Further Insight *conveys the point of the story in this lesson.*

God's acts in their history. Every festival was a vivid display of who God is and what He has done. The Hebrew mind was trained to observe and remember every gesture, nuance, and symbol. In Deuteronomy 6:6-9 the lesson plan for learning actively reads: "And these words which I command you today shall be in your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up. You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates."

To get an idea of the significance of the revelation at the table, consider the fact that the two disciples made their way back to Jerusalem that very night, in the dark, to find the rest of the other disciples. This whole story is rich with spiritual truths. But understanding how the Hebrew mind viewed the process of learning fills in the background of this story and offers some practical insight on how to experience a "revelation" of Christ.

III. CLOSING

Activity

Close with an activity and debrief it in your own words.

The goal of this activity is to demonstrate how the passage of time, discussion with others, and persistent vision enable us to see and know Christ better.

Using a photo, a picture, or a display of fruit or flowers, invite students to describe what they see on a piece of paper. Make sure you unveil the item briefly and then cover it up. Invite students to share what they initially noticed. As they discuss what they saw, some will notice things others will not have noticed and therefore will have a broader understanding. Also, reveal the item on display again for a little bit longer period of time and see what else they see.

Compare your first response with what you now understand. How did having a conversation with others about what you saw help? How does this activity connect with what the two disciples experienced on the road to Emmaus? What can we learn from it today?

Summary

Share the following thoughts in your own words:

First impressions always make a significant impact. But if first impressions were the primary basis for how we see each other, and Christ for that matter, we would miss the mark. This story is not a case of misplaced first impressions. The disciples on the road to Emmaus walked and talked with Jesus. They knew Him beyond the first impression. But trauma and tragedy have a way of creating a fog that clouds our vision and suspends our ability to put the whole picture together. In Hebrews the Bible says: "But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death crowned with glory and honor, that He, by the grace of God, might taste death for everyone" (Hebrews 2:9).

If you are saying to yourself, "Yeah, I see Christ and know who He is, but . . . ," then you are still in a fog. If who Christ is and what He has done for you does not do much to stir your soul to want to follow Him, then you are not seeing Him clearly. The disciples on the road thought they had Christ figured out. But their discussion revealed there was more to know. The revelation occurred because they cared enough to walk, talk, and keep looking; because in time, the risen Christ appeared. Even though it was dark and dangerous on that road, "they rose up that very hour and returned to Jerusalem, and found the eleven and those who were with them gathered together, saying, 'The Lord is risen indeed, and has appeared to Simon!'" (Luke 24:33, 34).



Remind the students about the reading plan that will take them through the inspired commentary of the Bible, the Conflict of the Ages series. The reading that goes with this lesson is *The Desire of Ages (*or *Humble Hero*), chapter 83.

Humble Hero is book 3 in a special adaptation of the Conflict of the Ages series, created by the Ellen G. White Estate and Pacific Press®. Read more about it at www.cornerstoneconnections.net/article/191/about-us/conflict-of-the-ages-companion-books

CORNERSTONECONNECTIONS
DECEMBER132025

STUDENT LESSON

Scripture Story: Luke 24:13-34.
Commentary: *The Desire of Ages* (or *Humble Hero*), chapter 83.

journeying with Jesus



Photo by Alden Ho

flashlight

"Christ never forces His company upon anyone. He interests Himself in those who need Him. Gladly will He enter the humblest home, and cheer the lowliest heart. But if men are too indifferent to think of the heavenly Guest, or ask Him to abide with them, He passes on. Thus many meet with great loss. They do not know Christ any more than did the disciples as He walked with them by the way" (*The Desire of Ages*, p. 800).

keytext

"Now it came to pass, as He sat at the table with them, that He took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them. . . .

"And they said to one another, 'Did not our heart burn within us while He talked with us on the road, and while He opened the Scriptures to us?' "

(Luke 24:30-32, NKJV)

what do you think?

Agree or Disagree

The disciples, having been eyewitnesses to Christ, had an easier time believing and being faithful than followers today. Explain.

What is more helpful for believing: a firsthand experience, or having the Bible and all of history to testify on Jesus' behalf? Do you ever think that if you could have been there and seen Jesus, your faith in Him would be stronger?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

INTO THE STORY

"Now behold, two of them were traveling that same day to a village called Emmaus, which was seven miles from Jerusalem. And they talked together of all these things which had happened. So it was, while they conversed and reasoned, that Jesus Himself drew near and went with them. But their eyes were restrained, so that they did not know Him.

"And He said to them, 'What kind of conversation is this that you have with one another as you walk and are sad?'

"Then the one whose name was Cleopas answered and said to Him, 'Are You the only stranger in Jerusalem, and have You not known the things which happened there in these days?'

"And He said to them, 'What things?'

"So they said to Him, 'The things concerning Jesus of Nazareth, who was a Prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people, and how the chief priests and our rulers delivered Him to be condemned to death, and crucified Him. But we were hoping that it was He who was going to redeem Israel. Indeed, besides all this, today is the third day since these things happened. Yes, and certain women of our company, who arrived at the tomb early, astonished us. When they did not find His body, they came saying that they had also seen a vision of angels who said He was alive. And certain of those who were with us went to the tomb and found it just as the women had said; but Him they did not see.'

"Then He said to them, 'O foolish ones, and slow of heart to believe in all that the prophets have spoken! Ought not the Christ to have suffered these things and to enter into His glory?' And beginning at Moses and all the Prophets, He expounded to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself.

"Then they drew near to the village where they were going, and He indicated that He would have gone farther. But they constrained Him, saying, 'Abide with us, for it is toward evening, and the day is far spent.' And He went in to stay with them.

"Now it came to pass, as He sat at the table with them, that He took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them. Then their eyes were opened and they knew Him; and He vanished from their sight.

"And they said to one another, 'Did not our heart burn within us while He talked with us on the road, and while He opened the Scriptures to us?' "

(Luke 24:13-32, NKJV)

did you know?

Perhaps one of the greatest ironies is couched in the word the disciples used for their fellow traveler. The word *paroikeis*, typically translated "visitor," means to inhabit a place as a stranger. Another way to say it is: "Is it possible that you are the only one who doesn't have a clue about what is going on here?" But in truth, as you'll read in the story for this week, Jesus was more *at home* with understanding than the two disciples.

OUT OF THE STORY

Read the story and *underline* the phrases that you think are key to understanding the interchange between Jesus and the two disciples.

How does the Bible describe their attitude? What do they do and say that reveals their emotional state?

_____
_____
_____
_____

Why do you think Jesus is not immediately recognized? Is it because Jesus is concealing His identity, or are they so confused that they don't see who He is?

_____
_____
_____
_____

When the disciples said, "We thought He was the *one* who would redeem Israel," what other way could this happen other than Christ dying?

_____
_____
_____

What do you think changed in their understanding of Christ and His death when Jesus taught them from the Scriptures as they walked? What in particular do you think made their hearts burn?

_____
_____
_____
_____

When Christ broke the bread, what images do you think went through their minds? What do you think is the message God has for you in this passage?

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

punch lines

"And with great power the apostles gave witness to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus. And great grace was upon them all" **(Acts 4:33, NKJV).**

"From that time Jesus began to show to His disciples that He must go to Jerusalem, and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised the third day" **(Matthew 16:21, NKJV).**

"When they had lifted up their eyes, they saw no one but Jesus only. Now as they came down from the mountain, Jesus commanded them, saying, 'Tell the vision to no one until the Son of Man is risen from the dead'" **(Matthew 17:8, 9, NKJV).**

"But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death crowned with glory and honor, that He, by the grace of God, might taste death for everyone" **(Hebrews 2:9, NKJV).**

"For now we see in a mirror, dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part, but then I shall know just as I also am known" **(1 Corinthians 13:12, NKJV).**

further insight

"The miracles of Christ are a proof of His divinity; but a stronger proof that He is the world's Redeemer is found in comparing the prophecies of the Old Testament with the history of the New."

—Ellen G. White, *The Desire of Ages*, p. 799

Sabbath

Read Acts 4:33.

Read and respond to the voting question in the *What Do You Think?* section of this week's lesson. Many think that being there would enhance the evidence so much that less faith would be required to believe. Is that how it works?

_____

_____

_____

How can we believe in the Resurrection today with the same kind of faith and passion as believers did back then—perhaps even more? Explain.

_____

_____

_____

Sunday

Read Matthew 16:21.

Read the *Into the Story* section and use the questions in the *Out of the Story* section to guide you through this amazing story. What parts of this story were new to you? How do you think this story helps believers today who struggle with having all the right information but still miss the Savior? What lesson or insight did you gain from this story that might change the way you see Christ in your everyday life? How can you pay attention to Him as you walk each day?

_____

_____

_____

Monday

Read Luke 24:30-32.

The *Key Text* this week emphasizes the way God's word brings clarity to our minds and feels like a warm light burning within us.

When in your life has God's Word illuminated your mind with clarity and warmed your heart with purpose? Think about some of the revelations you have witnessed in the Bible. If you had to choose three stories from Scripture that clarify God's purpose and plan for your life, what three stories would you choose? Write them down and send them to a friend or someone you know who might be struggling. Share your story of going from confusion to clarity.

_____

_____

_____

Tuesday

Read Matthew 17:8, 9.

Read the quote in the *Flashlight* section and ruminate on the times in your life when you were "indifferent" to God's voice and presence. How did you emerge from the fog of apathy? Think of someone you know who persistently tries to see Christ in everyday life. Invite them to share with you what they do to fight apathy from clouding their vision of Christ.

Wednesday

The *Punch Lines texts* in this week's lesson capture how important the resurrection is to the Christian faith. Included in the listed verses are a couple that show how Christ clearly foretold the disciples of the Resurrection. How could they forget? Even the Pharisees remembered Christ's promise to rise from the dead (Matthew 27:62-66). Which verse speaks to you personally?

_____

_____

_____

Thursday

Read Hebrews 2:9.

Take a several-mile hike this week—either by yourself or with a friend—not simply for exercise, but to deepen your understanding. Simply talk about all the events of the life of Christ that are meaningful to you. Think and imagine the trial where the disciples recaptured the fire of their faith by listening to God's Word. Bring your Bible and read from the last moments of Christ's life. Take the time to get clear about who He is and what He longs to do in your heart. Confess the things that tend to get in the way of His leading in your life. Stay focused on this for several miles and see what emerges.

Friday

Read 1 Corinthians 13:12.

How does God reveal Himself to you? Think about the events in your life in which God has shown Himself to you in unmistakable ways. Did clarity come immediately or as part of a longer process? Imagine the experiences of others such as Saul/Paul or Thomas and how they got to a point where they were sure in their faith in Christ.

How is the Resurrection relevant today?

_____

_____

_____

Pray for an opportunity to testify to this event with someone this week.

this week's reading*

The Desire of Ages or (*Humble Hero*), chapter 83.

*A special adaptation of *The Desire of Ages*, entitled *Humble Hero*, has been created just for you by the Ellen G. White Estate and Pacific Press® Publishing Association. Get more info about it at: www.cornerstoneconnections.net. By following this plan you will read at least one book of the Conflict of the Ages series each year.