



ELEMENTARY LARGE GROUP

LESSON 5 THE ROAD TO EMMAUS

LESSON AT A GLANCE

WONDER TRUTH: Jesus Surprises Us

SCRIPTURE: Luke 24

GOD'S BIG STORY: After His death on the cross, Jesus appears to two of His followers as they are walking on the road to Emmaus. At first they don't recognize Him, but Jesus opens their eyes to the surprising truth that He is alive.

WORD OF WONDER: I will spend time thinking about everything you have done. I will consider all your mighty acts. —Psalm 77:12

CURIOSITY

BELIEF

FAITH

- | | |
|---|----------|
| • ***Pre-service - Brain Teaser: "Aha!" Moment | 8–10 min |
| • Welcome Question: If you could take a road trip anywhere, where would you go? | 2 min |
| • SMALL GROUP | 25 min |
| • Declaring God's Wonder | 1–2 min |
| • Prayer of Invitation | 1–2 min |
| • Worship: Love Come Down, Praise You Anywhere | 8–10 min |
| • God's Big Story | 5–6 min |
| • Connecting the Wonder Truth | 1–2 min |
| • Responding in Worship: Jesus Paid It All | 3–4 min |
| • Blessing Your Kids | 1–2 min |
| • SMALL GROUP: Responding in Worship Activity | 5–10 min |



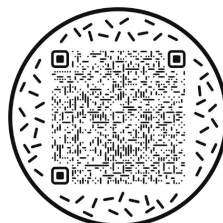
Schedule:

Pre-service Activities: 10 min before service

Small Group: 20-25 minutes

Large Group: 30-35 minutes

Small Group Response Activity: 5-10 min



Connected Easter Elem Spotify playlist

INVITATION

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

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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

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.

Large Group

Spark curiosity, encourage exploration, and get kids thinking about the wonder of God.

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WORD OF WONDER: Psalm 77:12

As kids arrive...

Around 20 minutes before service begins, display series theme loop. Play high-energy music in the background.

LG Leader walks around the room on mic and greets kids by name as they enter the room. Welcome kids by name and greet them with enthusiasm. Be extra intentional about hearing and responding

SLIDE: SERIES THEME LOOP

VIDEO: COUNTDOWN (2min OR 30sec) Start a countdown to begin game 10 minutes prior to service start)

Brain Teaser: "Aha!" Moment

8-10 MINUTES PRE-SERVICE

SUPPLIES: stickers or other small prizes (optional)

SLIDE: AHA MOMENT

Ask kids whether they've ever had an aha moment, a moment when they suddenly understood something or realized something was important.

"Today you're going to play a game to see how many correct aha guesses you can get as a group. If you get up to seven correct guesses, we'll all stop and celebrate!"



Gather kids together in a group and have them all face the same direction while sitting. Invite one volunteer to stand in front of the group for seven seconds, allowing time for everyone to notice certain details about that person's appearance (for example, wearing glasses, both shoes are tied, hair is pulled back, etc.). After seven seconds, invite the volunteer to travel to a designated corner of the room where the rest of the kids can't see him. (Remind the group to remain facing forward!) There, he will change one small thing about his appearance and then return to the group to see if anyone recognizes the difference. If kids want to make a guess, invite them to raise their hand and say, "Aha!" and share what they think is different. Once someone has guessed the one thing that person changed about his appearance, invite another volunteer forward and play another round. Keep a tally of how many aha guesses the group gets correct. Once the group reaches seven, take a moment to celebrate with foot fives! Also consider passing out congratulatory "surprises" (optional small prizes) as kids celebrate.

Leader Tip: For Younger Kids. If kids are stumped, ask leading questions about certain parts of the volunteer's appearance. For example, "Do you notice anything different about her feet?"

Make It Inclusive! For kids with cognitive developmental disabilities that limit their participation in activities like this one, assign a volunteer buddy to navigate the activity with them.

Aha moments are worth celebrating, especially when you suddenly and surprisingly discover something you didn't fully see before. God's big story is full of people who experience surprises and aha moments. Not surprisingly, the person behind some of the biggest surprises and aha moments in history and even in our lives today is Jesus Himself! Today's Wonder Truth is **JESUS SURPRISES US**.



Welcome Question

SUPPLIES: paper, coloring utensils, poster board OR , whiteboard, dry-erase markers (if needed)

SLIDE: WELCOME QUESTION

At service start time, draw kids' attention to the Welcome Question.

Invite kids to write answers on the poster board or whiteboard.

If you could take a road trip anywhere, where would you go?

"Some people prefer to know ahead of time exactly where they're going and what they'll be doing on a road trip, and some people prefer to just be surprised. Today we're going to hear about two people who were on a road trip back to the village of Emmaus. These two experienced quite a surprise when a very special and unexpected person showed up out of nowhere and started traveling with them! But first, it's time for small group!"

Small Group

Introduce small group time. While kids are in small group, consider sitting in the groups for a few minutes each. Engage and interact as is appropriate.

Countdown

After about 15 minutes of small group, give a 5 minute warning and begin the countdown.

VIDEO: COUNTDOWN

"Hey everyone! Welcome to our Large Group Worship time! My name is _____ and I'm excited to take this time to worship God, review what we just read, and talk about ways we can respond to what we are learning about God! We are going to pray as we prepare our hearts to worship God!"

Declaring God's Wonder

SLIDE: DECLARATION

Read each line boldly and invite kids to repeat after you.

Thank You, God, that You are good! (Kids repeat.)

You made me on purpose, for a purpose. (Kids repeat.)

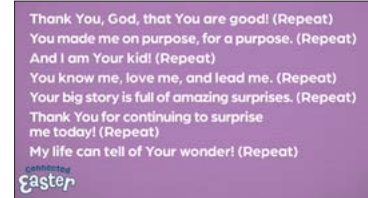
And I am Your kid! (Kids repeat.)

You know me, love me, and lead me. (Kids repeat.)

Your big story is full of amazing surprises. (Kids repeat.)

Thank You for continuing to surprise me today! (Kids repeat.)

My life can tell of Your wonder! (Kids repeat.)



Prayer of Invitation

Before entering into God's big story, lead kids in a prayer of invitation. Use your own words. Here is an example: **God, You know us, love us, and lead us! We pray Your Holy Spirit will lead us to aha moments about You and that our eyes will be open to see and understand how You made the way to forgiveness and freedom and to all the ways that You are still at work in our lives today. In Jesus' name, Amen.**

Worship

Consider sharing some about the songs you are going to sing. What they mean, why we sing them, why they are meaningful and important to you!

"We're going to stand and sing together! One way that we show love to God is to worship through song! So stand up, sing loud, and join in the motions with us. God loves to hear us sing praises to Him! Let's stand together and sing!"

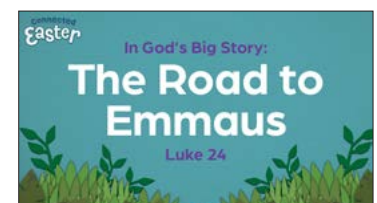
WORSHIP VIDEOS: Love Come Down, Praise You Anywhere

God's Big Story

SLIDE: TITLE

Explain to kids that they are going to hear a story from the New Testament about what happened after Jesus died on the cross, offering the way out of slavery to sin and into freedom and a forever relationship with God. "

"Let's start by watching part of God's big story directly from the Bible. Afterward, we will watch and experience more of the story!"



LESSON 5 THE ROAD TO EMMAUS

EXPERIENCE IT! SCRIPT

SUPPLIES: posterboard, permanent marker (prep only), coloring utensils, wrapped present, party supplies (i.e. party bunting, party hats, streamers, party blowers)

On a posterboard in landscape orientation, write with a permanent marker “3, 2, 1 ...” as large as you can on one side. Write “SURPRISE!” on the reverse side. This is your cue card to count down (and flip over) each time you want the kids to yell, “Surprise!”

Decorate your stage area: Bring out whatever party supplies you’ve got in the back of your closet! Party bunting, party hats, streamers, party blowers, etc. Place a wrapped present labeled “The Promise” somewhere in the party mix. (If possible, repurpose the wrapped present labeled “The Promise” from Connected Easter Lesson 1: The Burning Bush.)

Leader Tip: There will be many places to “whisper” in this story. Use a stage whisper, which is directed toward the kids, meant to be heard, and communicates that you and the kids are in on the surprise together.

Make a noisy and enthusiastic entrance with some party supplies, perhaps with a party blower. **It’s a party!** And then, in a whisper: **But shhhh! It’s a surprise party! And we need to practice!** Using the giant posterboard cue card, teach the kids that when you give them the countdown cue “3, 2, 1,” they will shout, “Surprise!” Consider using your party blower, or some other way to make noise, when they say, “Surprise!” You will repeat this multiple times during the story, so ask the kids to keep an eye out for your cue. **By the way, who is the surprise for?** Ask it as a real question, as if you truly don’t know, and get some answers. **We’re surprising Jesus? But ... wait.** Pause and think. **There’s nothing that could surprise Jesus. He is God and knows everything!** Pause and think again. **You know what, I think we have this backwards ...**

You see this present? Hold up the wrapped present labeled “The Promise.” **This present is for you. It’s a promise that God made a long time ago, and Jesus is the promise! He was a big surprise. Almost no one expected Him to come to earth as a helpless baby. Almost no one expected He would die. And almost no one expected He would come back to life again! Our story today will show us how surprised Jesus’ friends were when He came back to life. It’s “Jesus’ Surprise Party!” He surprises us.**

On the day Jesus rose from the dead, Mary Magdalene went to the tomb and found it (use the cue card and count down **3, 2, 1, SURPRISE!**) **empty! The tomb was empty! Two angels appeared to Mary and the women who were with her. The angels told them, “Jesus is not here! He has risen! Remember how he told you he would rise” (Luke 24:6). The women went to tell the disciples and those with them. But the disciples didn’t believe it. The women’s words made no sense to them.** Ask the kids to listen carefully to the next parts of the story and take a picture with their minds of the moments that are most surprising to them. These “snapshots” will be memories they will think back on at the end. Show them how to motion like they are taking a picture. You will prompt them to take “snapshots” throughout the story.

Later that day, two of Jesus' followers were walking on a road to a village called Emmaus, which was near Jerusalem. On the way, they talked about everything that had happened. Then (use the cue card and count down 3, 2, 1, SURPRISE!) **Jesus Himself showed up**, but "God kept them from recognizing him" (Luke 24:16). The man (whisper: **who was Jesus**) asked the two followers, "What are you talking about as you walk along?" (Luke 24:17). They looked sad. Cleopas, one of the two followers, said, "Are you the only person visiting Jerusalem who doesn't know? Don't you know about the things that have happened there in the last few days?" (Luke 24:18). Whisper: Of course, Jesus knew, but He asked them anyway, "What things?" (Luke 24:19).

They reported what had happened, how the chief priests and Jewish leaders handed Jesus over to die on a cross. "But we had hoped that he was the one who was going to set Israel free" (Luke 24:21) **they said**. Jesus' death had left them confused. Then they told the man (whisper: **who was Jesus**) about the women at the tomb. The men continued, "Some of our friends went to the tomb. They saw it was empty, just as the women had said" (Luke 24:24).

Jesus' response was a (use the cue card and count down 3, 2, 1, SURPRISE!). He said to them, "**How foolish you are! How long it takes you to believe all that the prophets said!**" (Luke 24:25, emphasis added). Then He told them that the Messiah had to suffer and explained what the Scriptures said about Him. Jesus helped them understand the words of Moses and the prophets. Invite the kids to take a "snapshot" of what most surprised them when Jesus appeared to the two followers on the road to Emmaus and mimic taking a photo. Allow them time to think for a few seconds before continuing.

Leader Tip: Some kids will want to draw detailed scenes, especially those who tend toward perfectionism. Let kids work more on their drawings at the end of the lesson or invite them to finish them later at home. For now, encourage them to keep their drawings quick and simple.

As they approached Emmaus, the man (whisper: **Jesus!**) kept walking, but the two followers didn't want Him to leave. They invited Him to stay with them and share a meal. At the table, the man (whisper: **Jesus!**) took some bread and gave thanks to God. He broke the bread and started handing it to the two followers. When He did, they got an even bigger (use the cue card and count down 3, 2, 1, SURPRISE!). "Their eyes were opened, and they recognized him" (Luke 24:31). **They were looking at the risen Jesus!** Then He disappeared. Now the two followers understood why their hearts had felt warm with excitement as Jesus spoke to them on the road. Invite the kids to take a "snapshot" of what most surprised them when Jesus invited these men to stay and share a meal and mimic taking a photo. Allow them time to think for a few seconds before continuing.

The two followers got up and returned to Jerusalem. When they got there, they learned that Peter, one of Jesus' disciples, had also seen Jesus. They told the disciples and those gathered with them what had happened. Jesus was alive!

Then the disciples got the (use the cue card and count down **3, 2, 1, SURPRISE!**) **of a lifetime. Jesus Himself appeared and stood with them. He said, “May you have peace!”** (Luke 24:36). **The disciples were terrified because they still couldn’t believe what was happening. Was Jesus alive, or was He a ghost? Jesus showed them His hands and feet. He invited them to touch Him and see that He had a body and bones. He even asked for a bite to eat. He wasn’t a ghost at all! He was alive!**

Invite the kids to take a “snapshot” of what most surprised them most when Jesus appeared to His disciples in Jerusalem. Allow them time to draw before continuing.

Jesus helped His disciples understand that what happened to Him was written about in the words of Moses, the prophets, and the psalms. Hold the present in your hands. **Jesus is “The Promise”!** **Now Jesus’ followers can share His name with others so people from all nations can be set free from sin and forgiven. God’s love for the world is not too good to be true. It’s real, and Jesus is alive! Jesus surprises us!”**

Connecting the Wonder Truth

SLIDE: WONDER TRUTH

Pose the following question to kids to help them connect the Wonder Truth to God’s big story:

"Our Wonder Truth today is **JESUS SURPRISES US. Where did you see our Wonder Truth in action in the story?** Allow kids to answer freely.



When Jesus rose from the dead, God’s promises were fulfilled. Everything that Jesus’ followers had hoped for was happening! Jesus is the Messiah, the Savior who makes the way for us to be forgiven and live with God forever. After His resurrection, the good news of Jesus would spread to people all over the world, including us!”

Responding in Worship

SLIDE: RESPONDING IN WORSHIP

Talk about ways we can respond to what we are learning with next steps such as tithing, prayer, asking questions, and worship. Encourage kids to ask their SG leaders any questions they were wondering during the lesson.

***Introduce this next song and invite kids to respond and participate in worship. See the "Worship Posture Tutorial" on the RBKids Resource Page.

WORSHIP VIDEO: Jesus Paid It All



Blessing Your Kids

Speak a blessing over your kids. Use your own words. Here is an example:

Blessing: May you have eyes open to see all the ways God is at work in your life. May you praise Him as you recognize His surprises, big and small, and thank Him for the biggest surprise of all—that Jesus' death and resurrection make it possible to live free from sin as God's kid forever!

Return to Small Group

Instruct Small Group Leaders to close out their time by completing the "Responding in Worship" Activity at the end of their SG Leader Guide.