

**PRE-K  
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 and resurrection,, 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. —Psalm 77:12

## CURIOSITY'

## BELIEF'

## FAITH'

- Curiosity Activity: Shadow Surprises
- Puppet Intro and Curiosity Questions
- Declaring God's Wonder
- Prayer of Invitation
- Worship: Jesus Loves Me, God's Way
- God's Big Story
- Connecting the Wonder Truth
- Prayer and Blessing



[Connected Easter Preschool Spotify playlist](#)



## LESSON 5 FOR LEADERS

### INVITATION

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

### LESSON AT A GLANCE

**WONDER TRUTH:** Jesus Surprises Us

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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.



Curiosity

Belief

Faith

Identity

## LESSON 5 EARLY CHILDHOOD

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

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**WONDER TRUTH:** Jesus Surprises Us

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### Welcome

#### Slide: Series Welcome Loop

#### As kids arrive...

Walk around the room and welcome as many kids as possible by showing excitement that they have joined you. Give high-fives, fist bumps, encourage them to sit on the floor in their spots, and ask questions about their week.

#### Video: Countdown

Welcome kids to worship time. Introduce yourself by name.

### Curiosity Activity: Shadow Surprises

**SUPPLIES:** variety of small toys, flashlight

Select a clear portion of a wall to use as a screen. Set aside a variety of small toys where kids can't see them. Invite the kids to sit facing the wall. Let kids know that you will be turning the lights off.

**"Hi, everybody! I'm so glad you're here today! Today we're talking about how we can figure out what something is even if we don't know right away. So we're going to practice trying to figure out what something is even when it's hard to know right away. Pay attention to what you see on the wall as we turn off the lights.** Turn off the lights and shine the flashlight, from behind the kids and on the wall.

**We're going to guess what objects I'm holding up just by their shadow. Are you ready? Let's go!**

Hold up various toys so that their shadow hits the wall. Allow kids to guess what the object is. Repeat several times.

**Great job! I've got one last thing to figure out!** Have a leader stand in front of the flashlight without the kids seeing which leader it is. **Who could this be?** Allow kids to answer. **Great guesses, everyone!** Turn the lights back on and invite kids to turn and see which leader it was.

**Today we're going to be talking about a couple of people who, surprisingly, didn't recognize their very best friend—Jesus! And these people weren't looking at a shadow; they were looking right at Jesus. You might ask why they didn't recognize Him. Well, it's because Jesus wanted to surprise His friends. Sometimes Jesus appears in our lives when we least expect Him. Jesus surprises us! We'll learn more about that in our lesson today!"**

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## Puppet Intro and Curiosity Questions

Introduce the kids to Tac, the curious cat.

**Leader:** Everyone say, "Hi!" to our friend, Tac the Cat! Tac is always curious and has some great questions! Hi, Tac. What have you been up to?

**Tac the Cat:** Hi there! I just came from an awesome walk outside! I love walking through God's creation. You always see such amazing things! I was really surprised by a few of them too.

**Leader:** Oh, neat! What surprising things did you see on your walk, Tac?

**Tac the Cat:** I saw the brightest red flower ever! And I saw a leaf in the shape of a heart. And I saw a bumblebee flying to its hive!

**Leader:** All those things sound lovely! But those aren't really that surprising, Tac. Wouldn't you expect to find flowers, leaves, and bees in nature?

**Tac the Cat:** Of course, but those weren't the really surprising thing!

**Leader:** Oh! So what did you see that surprised you?

**Tac the Cat:** Well, I was walking along a trail. And when I came to a corner, I turned and saw ... my friend Drib the Bird! He was on a nature walk too! I was not expecting to see Drib on the same trail as me!

**Leader:** That's so funny that Drib would just happen to be on the same nature walk as you at the same time!

**Tac the Cat:** Yeah! He definitely surprised me! And you know what?

**Leader:** What, Tac?

**Tac the Cat:** I think being surprised by Drib was the best part of my walk! We finished the nature trail together. Why do you think being surprised by Drib made me so happy?

**Leader:** It's always nice when we find our friends, even if they surprise us. Sometimes, it's the surprise itself that brings us joy! Because we love our friends, we feel happy to see them—even if we're surprised. It reminds me of a story in the Bible when some friends were on a walk and someone very special surprised them on their walk.

**Tac the Cat:** Oh, wow! Who was it? I can't wait to hear!

**Leader:** It's our story for today. We'll find out when we hear God's big story.

**Tac the Cat:** Well, that sounds great. Now I've gotta go meet up with Drib the Bird and see what else he found on his walk! Bye!

**"Have you ever been curious about something? Let's take a moment and think: Have you ever been surprised by a friend? Allow the kids to respond. How did it feel when you recognized your friend? Allow the kids to respond. We all see and hear things that make us curious. Did you ever stop to think about how Jesus loves you and wants to be your friend?"**

### **SLIDE: WONDER TRUTH**

Today's Wonder Truth is **JESUS SURPRISES US**. Today we'll discover that sometimes Jesus surprises us!"

## **Declaring God's Wonder**

### **SLIDE: DECLARATION**

Encourage the kids to say the statements and do the motions with you.

**Thank You, God, that You made me!** (Kids repeat words and motions.)

Make prayer hands, then point up to God and to yourself.

**And I am Your kid!** (Kids repeat words and motions.)

Put your hands on your hips.

**Jesus loves me so much;** (Kids repeat words and motions.)

Spread your arms out wide to your side one at a time, then pull them in for a hug around your chest.

**His love for me is big.** (Kids repeat words and motions.)

Hold your arms up high and wide above your head.

**The Holy Spirit leads me,** (Kids repeat words and motions.)

Bring your arms down from the sky, making a path in front of you.

**And I can follow You.** (Kids repeat words and motions.)

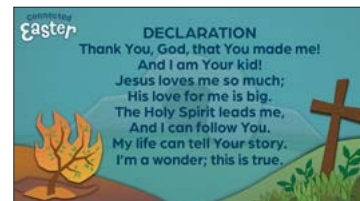
March in place like you're following the leader.

**My life can tell Your story.** (Kids repeat words and motions.)

Hold your hands in front of you like an open book.

**I'm a wonder; this is true.** (Kids repeat words and motions.)

Put your hands up, shaking your fingers, celebrating ("praise hands").



## 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: **Dear God, we believe that You love us and take care of us. Please come near to us as we learn about You today. Sometimes we don't recognize it, but You're always with us. Thank You for always caring for us. Thank You for surprising us with Your love every day! In Jesus' name, Amen.**

## Worship

**"Today we'll learn about how Jesus surprises us. Let's sing and thank Jesus!"**

WORSHIP: Jesus Loves Me, God's Way

## God's Big Story

**SUPPLIES:** Bible

Hold up a Bible and show the kids. Tell them that today's story comes from the book of Luke in the Bible. Open a Bible and show them where the story is found.

### Bible Time Rhyme

Say the Bible time rhyme (with motions) each week before the Bible story to remind kids that what they're about to hear is part of God's big story.

**I open my Bible and what do I see?** (*Hold your hands together, then open your palms, as if opening a book.*)

**God's big story, waiting for me!** (*Point to yourself.*)

**"Let's watch part of God's big story, a part that comes from the book of Luke in the Bible."**

**VIDEO: GODS BIG STORY**



## GOD'S BIG STORY SCRIPT

**SUPPLIES:** Bible, balloons (1 per kid), butcher paper (5'), markers, party hats (1 per kid), tape, confetti (optional), party blowers (optional, 1 per kid)

**Allergy Caution:** Be aware of any latex allergies or sensitivities among your kids and volunteers before doing this activity!

Before the story, inflate a balloon for each kid and write, "Surprise!" on the butcher paper to be a party decoration. Place the balloons, party hats, and any other party supplies near the God's Big Story space but out of the way of the kids. Tape the banner to one wall.

**We're going to use these party supplies in our story in just a little bit, so right now, don't touch them as we listen. To prepare to hear today's story, let's go back just a bit to remember what has happened in God's big story ... Jesus died and then came back to life three days later. The tomb was empty. He was alive! Now for today's part of the story. Later that day, two of Jesus' followers walked to a place called Emmaus. On the way, they talked about what had happened to their friend, Jesus. Then Jesus was there with them! But the two men did not know it was Jesus at first. Jesus asked, "What are you talking about as you walk along?" (Luke 24:17). They looked sad. One of the men 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). Jesus did know. But He asked what they meant anyway.**

**The two men told Him what had happened. They told how Jesus died on the cross. They told how the women went to the tomb and saw that it was empty. Jesus walked and talked with the men. He talked with them about what the Bible said.**

**Let's all stand up and pretend to walk to Emmaus like Jesus and these two followers!** Invite the kids to stand and gather on one side of the room. Then walk from that side to the other. Encourage kids to turn to their neighbors and act like they are talking to each other. When you get to the other side of the room, say, **"Excellent walking!"** Invite the kids to sit down. **If you recognized the person walking beside you, raise your hand!** Allow kids to answer. **Right! Because you know the other kids in our group. However, Jesus' followers didn't recognize Jesus at first. Let's keep learning to see what happened.**

**They got to Emmaus. Jesus kept walking, but the men did not want Him to leave. They asked Him to stay with them and eat. At the table, Jesus took some bread and thanked God. He broke the bread. Then Jesus gave it to the two men. When He did, they got a surprise! Now they knew that it was Jesus! He rose from the dead, and He was alive!** Encourage the kids to jump up and shout, "Surprise!" **They knew then why their hearts felt excited when they walked with Jesus! Then , just like that, He was gone.**

Invite the kids to gather at the "Emmaus" wall. **Now let's all run back from Emmaus to Jerusalem, like these men might have done! On your mark, get set, go!** Allow the kids to run to the other side of the room. Encourage them to sit back down. **Can you imagine walking all the way to one town just to turn around and run back a few hours later? That's just what these followers of Jesus did after they recognized Jesus!**

**The men went to Jerusalem, where more of Jesus' followers were. They heard that Peter, one of Jesus' disciples, had also seen Jesus. The two men told the people there what happened. Jesus was alive!**



**Jesus had one more surprise for His followers!** Distribute the party hats and other party supplies. Encourage the kids to gather under the “Surprise!” banner. Let the kids know that the lights will be turned off, then turn off the lights. **I’ll tell you the next part of the story. And when the lights come on, you can shout, “Surprise!” and act like we’re throwing a surprise party!**

**Leader Tip:** If your group prefers to keep the lights on, encourage the kids to hide behind chairs or under tables, then jump out when you say, “Surprise!”

**Then the disciples got a big surprise! Jesus appeared and stood with them.** Turn on the lights. Everyone shout, “Surprise!” Allow kids to shout, jump, and throw a surprise party. **Jesus gave His followers the biggest surprise of their lives!** Invite the kids to sit down again. **Jesus said, “May you have peace!”** (Luke 24:36). **They were scared, so they needed peace. Was Jesus really alive? Jesus showed them where His hands and feet had been hurt on the cross. Jesus said they could touch Him and see that He had a body and bones. He was real!**

**Jesus died and came back to life. He is alive forever. People who trust Him to save them from sin can be forgiven. Jesus is alive! Jesus surprises us!”**

## Connecting the Wonder Truth

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

### SLIDE: WONDER TRUTH

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

**When Jesus rose from the dead, it showed that God’s promises are true! 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 He came back to life, the good news of Jesus spread to people all over the world, including us!”**

## Prayer and Blessing

After the kids finish their activity, pray with them and thank God for surprising us with His presence. **Father God, thank You for always being with us. We know You are with us. Sometimes, it may be hard to feel Your presence. Thank You for surprising us with Your presence, even in our difficult times! In Jesus’ name, Amen.**

Encourage the kids to hold their hands out in front of them, with palms up, as if their hands were open to receive something. Tell them to listen and receive the blessing as you speak it over them.

**Blessing:** May the Lord bless you with eyes to see Him, ears to listen to Him, and hearts to love Him. Amen.