

Surprise? The Road to Emmaus



Luke 24:13-35

As our Encounters Bassline series continues, we discover the story of two disciples despondently walking along the road to Emmaus. As they contemplated the events of a horrendous weekend, Jesus came up and walked with them. Instead of revealing himself to them, he shared with them the ultimate Bible study. Every prophecy that spoke of his life was meticulously explained, highlighting how this ‘surprise’ encounter should never have been unexpected. In today’s Bassline we will walk with these disciples along their journey to discovering the resurrected Jesus.

You will need:

- Road Ahead handout
- Bibles (physical or mobile)



Beat

Leader’s notes:

Ask each member of the group to think of a key moment in the history of the world. They can choose any event they like from any country. Go around the group and list their ideas on a flipchart. Read the list out and clarify any events that the young people have not heard about.

Ask:

If you could travel back in time and witness one of these events, which one would you choose? Explain your answer.

Say:

Our Bassline session today focuses on the aftermath of one of the most important moments in history – the death and resurrection of Jesus. We join two of Jesus’ followers trying to process the mind-blowing events of those days.



 **Bridge****Ask:**

- Think about the historical event you chose to witness. Which friends would you turn to in order to process what had happened? How would you explain it to them?

 **Amplify****Say:**

In today's encounter, we find two disciples trying to grapple with the death of Jesus. The story is found in Luke 24:13-35.

Read:

¹³ Now that same day two of them were going to a village called Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem. ¹⁴ They were talking with each other about everything that had happened. ¹⁵ As they talked and discussed these things with each other, Jesus himself came up and walked along with them; ¹⁶ but they were kept from recognising him.

– (Luke 24:13-35)

Ask:

- This reading starts with the words, 'Now that same day ...'. Look back to the beginning of Luke 24. What 'same day' is Luke talking about? What has just happened? (*Jesus had risen and appeared to Mary Magdalene - see previous session.*)
- At this moment, how do you think these two disciples are feeling?
- What do you think they are talking about and discussing together?

Say:

As the disciples tried to make sense of the day's events, they were joined by Jesus. There are other moments in the Easter story where Jesus is not recognised, but this time the Bible specifically mentions that 'they were kept from recognising him'.

Ask:

Why do you think Jesus prevented the disciples from recognising who he was?

Read:

¹⁷ He asked them, 'What are you discussing together as you walk along?'

They stood still, their faces downcast. ¹⁸ One of them, named Cleopas, asked him, 'Are you the only one visiting Jerusalem who does not know the things that have happened there in these days?'

¹⁹ ‘What things?’ he asked.

‘About Jesus of Nazareth,’ they replied. ‘He was a prophet, powerful in word and deed before God and all the people. ²⁰ The chief priests and our rulers handed him over to be sentenced to death, and they crucified him; ²¹ but we had hoped that he was the one who was going to redeem Israel. And what is more, it is the third day since all this took place. ²² In addition, some of our women amazed us. They went to the tomb early this morning ²³ but didn’t find his body. They came and told us that they had seen a vision of angels, who said he was alive. ²⁴ Then some of our companions went to the tomb and found it just as the women had said, but they did not see Jesus.’

– (Luke 24:17-24)

Ask:

- How does Cleopas describe Jesus and the events of the last few days?
- When he talks about Jesus, what is missing from his description?

Say:

Cleopas talks about Jesus as a wise prophet rather than describing him as the Messiah. He talks about Jesus in the past tense and confesses, ‘We had hoped that he was the one who was going to redeem Israel.’ It would seem that at this point Cleopas thought that all hope was gone.

Read:

²⁵ He said to them, ‘How foolish you are, and how slow to believe all that the prophets have spoken! ²⁶ Did not the Messiah have to suffer these things and then enter his glory?’ ²⁷ And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he explained to them what was said in all the Scriptures concerning himself.

– (Luke 24:25-27)

Say:

Without realising it, these two disciples experienced a Bible teaching session with the person at the heart of its story!

Ask:

Imagine what it would be like to turn up to your Bassline session next week and Jesus is the group leader. How would you react?

Say:

Jesus called the two disciples ‘foolish’, because everything in their Scripture was pointing to this moment. We’ll look into this in more detail during our Sound Check, but the death and resurrection of Jesus should not have been a surprise to his followers. This was not a surprise encounter. It had been previewed throughout the Old Testament and spoken of repeatedly by Jesus during his three-year ministry. The surprise was that Jesus surpassed any hope they could ever expect as he died on the cross and rose to life just three days later.



Read:

²⁸ As they approached the village to which they were going, Jesus continued on as if he were going further. ²⁹ But they urged him strongly, 'Stay with us, for it is nearly evening; the day is almost over.' So he went in to stay with them.

³⁰ When he was at the table with them, he took bread, gave thanks, broke it and began to give it to them. ³¹ Then their eyes were opened and they recognised him, and he disappeared from their sight. ³² They asked each other, 'Were not our hearts burning within us while he talked with us on the road and opened the Scriptures to us?'

– (Luke 24:28–32)

Ask:

- What happened the moment the disciples recognised Jesus?
- What happened on the road to Emmaus that confirmed they had been walking with Jesus?

Say:

As Jesus shared Scripture with them, they felt his presence even if they did not recognise his face. Their hearts burned within as he shared the truth about who he was.

Read:

³³ They got up and returned at once to Jerusalem. There they found the Eleven and those with them, assembled together ³⁴ and saying, 'It is true! The Lord has risen and has appeared to Simon.' ³⁵ Then the two told what had happened on the way, and how Jesus was recognised by them when he broke the bread.

Ask:

- How did meeting Jesus transform the outlook of these two disciples?

Say:

When we encounter Jesus, our lives are transformed and, just like the disciples, we'll want to tell everyone about it.

 **Bridge****Ask:**

- If you were walking along the road and experienced a surprise encounter with Jesus, what would you ask him?





Sound Check

Say:

In today's Bible reading we saw that Jesus explained to the disciples everything that had been said about him in Scripture. We're going to take some time to explore just a few of the many instances where the Old Testament described the life of Jesus.

Leader's notes:

Give each member of the group a Road Ahead handout. Along the road there are Scripture references for the group to explore and feed back what they discover about Jesus. When the group has had time to read and summarise the Scriptures, discuss what the Old Testament had to say about his life and how accurate those prophecies were.

The Scriptures listed on the handout are shown below with a brief summary.

Isaiah 7:14 – He will be born to a virgin.

Micah 5:2 – He will be born in Bethlehem.

Isaiah 9:1 – His ministry will start in Galilee.

Isaiah 35:5–6 – He will work miracles.

Zechariah 9:9 – He would enter Jerusalem on a donkey.

Psalm 41:9 – He will be betrayed by a friend.

Zechariah 11:12 – He will be sold for thirty pieces of silver.

Isaiah 53:5 – He will be wounded and bruised.

Psalm 22:16 – His hands and feet will be pierced.

Zechariah 12:10 – His side will be pierced.

Isaiah 53:9 – He will be buried in a rich man's tomb.

Psalm 16:9–10 – He will be raised from the dead.

 **Bridge****Leader's notes:**

If your group would like to discover what the mathematical chances are of someone fulfilling the prophecies of the Old Testament, then watch and discuss the clip.

Watch:

The Mathematical Case for Jesus – What TV (stop at 4:00)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GU6h1uxDXlc>

Selah

Ask:

- Have you ever had a 'road to Emmaus' moment where an encounter with Jesus surprised you? Share your experience.
- How have you had certain expectations of Jesus and the way he would answer your prayers, only to experience a surprise ending to the story?

Say:

The disciples acted as if this encounter with Jesus was unexpected. In their lowest moment, as they mourned his death, they couldn't see what was right before them.

Ask:

- In what ways do we fail to see Jesus in times of crisis or confusion?
- What does the story of the disciples' encounter with Jesus teach us about how to handle those moments of darkness?

Say:

When we are confused or facing challenging circumstances, we often fail to see Jesus walking along with us. For our Selah reflection today, we're going to take time to see Jesus in our everyday lives. As you listen to the music, recognise that no matter the path you are currently walking, Jesus walks with you.

Watch:

'Jesus I Will Walk With You' by ~Sam and Tom Brewster – Joyful Noise (4:58)
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=k37UYXDyWcc>

Leader's notes:

When the music has finished, pray with the group.

Coda

Say:

In a piece of music, the coda brings the different aspects of the melody, harmonies and bassline to a conclusion. It pulls together the different themes and often, but not always, brings resolution to a piece of music.



Ask:

As you reflect on everything you have learned today, what is your coda?

What is the one thing you will take away from this session about the disciples' surprising encounter with Jesus on the road to Emmaus?

Leader's notes:

Give the young people a moment to think about your question and briefly share their coda with the group before the session comes to an end.

Road Ahead

