

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.

MEMORY VERSE: I will consider all your works and meditate on all your mighty deeds. —[Psalm 77:12](#)

CURIOSITY Large Group or Small Group

Activities that spark curiosity, encourage exploration, and get kids thinking about the wonder of God.

- Welcome Question: If you could take a road trip anywhere, where would you go?
- Curiosity Questions
- Declaring God's Wonder

**BELIEF** Large Group

A deep and interactive dive into Scripture that guides kids into knowing God more deeply, exploring His big story, and marveling at His wonder.

- Prayer of Invitation
- God's Big Story: Hear It, Watch It, Experience It!
- Connecting the Wonder Truth
- Memory Verse: [Psalm 77:12](#)

FAITH Small Group

An intentional conversation that helps kids see the wonder of God's story and how it connects to their own, emboldening their faith and fostering a deeper understanding of their place in God's kingdom.

- Discussion Questions for Younger and Older Kids
- Small Group Prayer Time
- Blessing Your Kids

CLOSING Large Group or Small Group

Interactive options to reinforce the lesson and keep kids engaged during pick up.

- Aha! Moments
- Series Review Game

INVITATION

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

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.

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 or Small Group

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

Welcome Question

Before kids arrive, display the Emmaus Welcome Question Slide, or point out the following question on a whiteboard: “If you could take a road trip anywhere, where would you go?”



As kids arrive ...

Welcome each kid by name with a foot five (same as a high five but performed with feet). Show them the Welcome Question. If needed, explain that a road trip is a long-distance journey traveled by car or bus. If you have younger kids, be sure to read the question for them.

Free Play

Tables will be set with games, toys, and activities for kids to enjoy until the lesson begins. This is a great opportunity to build relationships by playing right alongside them!

PRO TIP: Use this time for a bathroom reminder in order to avoid unnecessary interruptions later in class.

Countdown Video

At the end of free play...

Play the [countdown video](#) provided and then show it every week before your official start time to signal time to clean up.

Curiosity Questions

At your start time ...

Greet everyone enthusiastically and call on several kids to share their answers to the Welcome Question: **If you could take a road trip anywhere, where would you go?** Invite curiosity by pointing out that road trips can either be planned out ahead of time or can be spontaneous “surprise me” kinds of trips with no plan or agenda.

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 to be curious.

Pose the following “I’m curious” questions. Say “I’m curious ...” before each question and give kids a chance to think about and answer each one. After each question, consider having kids share their ideas with a neighbor before you call on one or two of them to share with the group.

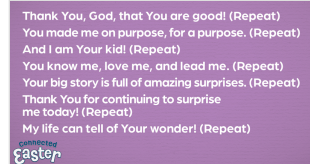
I’m curious ...

- **If you had the chance to invite a special guest to go on a road trip with you, who would you invite? What would you talk about?**
- **How do you think traveling on road trips today is different from traveling on road trips back in biblical times?**

Declaring God’s Wonder

SUPPLIES: Emmaus Declaration Slide

Display the [Emmaus Declaration Slide](#). Read each line boldly and invite kids to repeat after you.



Thank You, God, that You are good! (Repeat)
You made me on purpose, for a purpose. (Repeat)
And I am Your kid! (Repeat)
You know me, love me, and lead me. (Repeat)
Your big story is full of amazing surprises. (Repeat)
Thank You for continuing to surprise me today! (Repeat)
My life can tell of Your wonder! (Repeat)

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Each week we like to make a declaration together of what God says is true about me and you. You can repeat after me!

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.)

Large Group

Guide kids into knowing God, exploring His big story, and marveling at His wonder.

LESSON AT A GLANCE

WONDER TRUTH: Jesus Surprises Us

SCRIPTURE: Luke 24

MEMORY VERSE: Psalm 77:12

Prayer of Invitation

Before entering into God's big story, lead kids in a prayer of invitation. Use the prayer here or your own words: **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.**

God's Big Story

Hear It, Watch It, Experience It!

This lesson includes three opportunities for your kids to enter the story—each one reinforces the others! **HEAR** it read directly from the Bible.

WATCH it in a video. **EXPERIENCE** it through the live script.



SUPPLIES: Bible, posterboard, permanent marker (prep only), coloring utensils, wrapped present, party supplies (i.e. party bunting, party hats, streamers, party blowers), [Surprise Party Sheet](#) (1 per kid, printed 2 sided), [The Road to Emmaus Title Slide](#), [The Road to Emmaus God's Big Story Video](#)

Ahead of time, print a [Surprise Party Sheet](#) for each kid. Fold each sheet in half to make a four-page photo album with "Jesus' Surprise Party!" as the front cover and the page labeled "Jerusalem" as the back.

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: Party bunting, party hats, streamers, party blowers, etc. Place a wrapped present labeled “The Promise” somewhere in the party mix.



AT YOUR START TIME: Display the [Emmaus Title Slide](#). 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.

For Older Kids: Guide kids to find the third Gospel, the Gospel of Luke, in their Bible’s table of contents. Help them find [chapter 24](#).

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

Invite three confident readers to read one of the following sections of today’s passage out loud while everyone else follows along: [Luke 24:13–17](#), [Luke 24:20–23](#), and [Luke 24:27–32](#).

LESSON 5 THE ROAD TO EMMAUS

EXPERIENCE IT! SCRIPT

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. Someone will likely say, “Jesus,” but if not, ask them what their photo album books say: “Jesus’ Surprise Party.” **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. Ask the kids to hang on to their photo albums and listen for more instructions to come.

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 pictures they can draw in their “Jesus’ Surprise Party” photo albums when prompted.

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 draw a picture “snapshot” on the second page of their photo album, “The Road,” of what most surprised them when Jesus appeared to the two followers on the road to Emmaus. Allow them time to draw 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 draw a picture “snapshot” on the third page of their photo

album, “The Table,” of what surprised them most when Jesus shared a meal with these two followers. Allow them time to draw 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 draw a picture “snapshot” on the last page of their photo album, “Jerusalem,” of what 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!**

Watch God's Big Story

Watch [The Road to Emmaus God's Big Story video!](#)

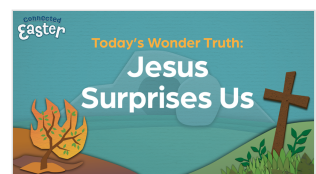


Connecting the Wonder Truth

SUPPLIES: [Emmaus Wonder Truth Slide](#)

Display the [Emmaus Wonder Truth Slide](#).

Our Wonder Truth today is JESUS SURPRISES US.



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!

In Awe of God's Wonder

Spend a few moments allowing kids to think about the wonder of God's story, ask questions, and simply be in awe of Him!

What do you think it would be like to suddenly realize Jesus is with you and then, right after you recognize Him, for Jesus to disappear right before your very eyes? Give kids space to imagine what it would be like, prompting them with questions about how their physical body might feel in that moment, what they might say out loud, etc.

Which surprises are you most curious about from God's big story today? Give time for kids to wonder about the details of the surprising things Jesus said and did. Consider offering your own thoughts as well. For example, "I wonder if the two people saw the scars from the nails on His hands when Jesus broke the bread and gave it to them."

Memory Verse

SUPPLIES: Memory Verse slide

Display the Memory Verse [Slide](#). **The memory verse we've been learning together this month is Psalm 77:12. This verse is a good reminder for us to spend time being in awe of God. When we reflect on God's surprises and how faithful He's been in the past, it reminds us to keep our eyes open today to see God's surprises, big and small, and all the ways He's still at work. Let's read the verse together.**



For an optional discussion, gather kids to talk about these questions:

- **Have you ever been surprised by something God did in your own life, perhaps even something that you thought was too good to be true?**

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LESSON 5 **ELEMENTARY**

Small Group

Help kids see the wonder of God's story and how it connects to their own story.

Divide your group into smaller groups based on age. If your group is already small, stay together for this time.

MEMORY VERSE

I will consider all your works and meditate on all your mighty deeds.

—Psalm 77:12 (NIV)

Questions: Younger Kids

- **As Jesus' two followers walked to Emmaus, why did they feel sad and confused?** (*They thought Jesus was dead, His tomb had been found empty, etc.*)
- **As they walked back to Jerusalem, how do you think these two people felt? Why?**
- **What surprising things did Jesus say and do to help His friends start to recognize Him, or know and remember Him?** (*He walked and talked with two of His followers, He broke bread, He appeared to His disciples, He showed them His hands and feet, He asked for food to eat, etc.*)
- **Do you think Jesus still says and does surprising things today to help us know and remember Him?**
- **What are some things you think Jesus wants you to know and remember about Him?**
- **How can you share those important truths about Jesus with others?**

Today in God's big story, the two people on the road to Emmaus didn't recognize Jesus at first. Then, Jesus helped them understand the truth of who He is and opened their eyes to see Him face to face! Let's pray right now and thank God for helping us see that Jesus is alive and still at work surprising His followers today.

Prayer Time: Younger Kids

Open your prayer time by thanking God for making the way for us to be free from sin and to have a forever relationship with Him through His Son, Jesus. Invite kids to say their own prayer of thanks to Jesus for the good ways that He surprises us. If they aren't sure what to pray, encourage them to repeat a simple prayer after you, such as "Jesus, thank You for loving me!" or "Jesus, thank You for surprising me with Your love!"

Questions: Older Kids

- **How were the two followers of Jesus feeling as they walked to Emmaus? Why were they feeling that way?** (*doubtful, sad, hopeless, confused*)
- **How do you think the two people felt as they walked back to Jerusalem after seeing Jesus? Why?**
- **Jesus opened the eyes of the two people on the road to Emmaus in two ways: first, He opened their spiritual eyes to understand what the Scriptures say about the Messiah,**

and second, He opened their physical eyes to recognize who He was. Which of these eye openings do you think surprised them more? Why do you think that?

- In today's story, Jesus helped the two people (and later His disciples) understand who He was. What are some ways you can help others understand the truth about Jesus?
- What are some things you can do to help keep your spiritual eyes open to fully understand God's truth?

Leader Tip: If kids struggle to think of things they can do to keep their spiritual eyes open, suggest simple spiritual practices such as prayer (asking God for understanding), memorizing Scripture, talking to a trusted adult who follows Jesus, writing prayers to God in a prayer journal, remembering and listing the ways God has been faithful in the past, etc.

Today in God's big story, the two men on the road to Emmaus were talking about Jesus to Jesus Himself, and they didn't even know it! Jesus surprised them by helping them understand who He is and why He had come. Jesus then opened their physical eyes to recognize that it was Him! Let's thank God for helping us understand that His Son, Jesus, is alive and still at work surprising His followers today.

Prayer Time: Older Kids

Open your prayer time by praising God for making the way for all people to have a forever relationship with Him through the death and resurrection of His Son, Jesus. Invite kids to share their own praises for how Jesus has surprised people throughout God's big story and how He is alive and still surprising us today! Then invite kids to say a prayer for someone else who needs their eyes opened to see the whole truth about Jesus.

Blessing Your Kids

Speak this blessing over your kids, as a group or as individuals. If you bless kids individually, insert each name into the blessing.

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!

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!

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Large Group or Small Group

Use any of the following activities to reinforce the lesson and keep kids engaged during pick up.

Option 1: "Aha!" Moment

SUPPLIES: stickers or other small prizes (optional)

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?"

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! JESUS SURPRISES US.

OPTION 2: NAME THAT STORY REVIEW

SUPPLIES: scissors (prep only), basket or bowl, posterboard or whiteboard, marker or dry-erase marker, tape, [Name That Story Sheet](#)

Ahead of time, print the [Name That Story Sheet](#) and cut the slips apart. Place the slips in a basket or bowl and mix them up. Write the title of each lesson from the series in large print on a posterboard or whiteboard with space between each one: The Burning Bush, Crossing the Red Sea, Holy Week, The Resurrection, The Road to Emmaus.

Leader Tip: *For Older Kids.* Erase the lesson titles on the board after reading the first two key points. Then number the lessons one through five (in chronological order).

In this game, kids will identify the lesson from the Connected Easter series that is described by each slip from the [Name That Story Sheet](#) and tape that slip under the title of that lesson.

Let's see how much we remember from the parts of God's big story we've explored during this month! Hold up the basket or bowl of slips. **In this basket are slips of paper with Wonder Truths and key points from the Bible stories on them. You're going to take turns pulling slips of paper and reading them out loud. Then those who think they know which lesson the Wonder Truth or key point is from will raise their hands. I will call on someone to name that story, and if she is right, she'll come up and tape that slip of paper below that lesson title. We will play until we've gone through all the slips and named all the stories correctly.** Invite a kid volunteer to pull a slip from the basket and read it to the group. Then choose someone with a hand raised to identify which lesson (written on the board) the slip describes. If that person is correct, she can come up and tape the slip to the board. If she is incorrect, give someone else a chance to answer. Continue until all the slips have been read and the correct stories identified.

Below is a list of all the key points and the corresponding lessons in order for your reference:

The Burning Bush

God Hears and Sees His People

Moses saw a strange sight. A bush was on fire but not burning up.

Crossing the Red Sea

God Rescues His People

God made a way for the people of Israel to escape through the Red Sea.

Holy Week

Jesus Loves Us and Gave His Life for Us

Jesus was led outside the city and nailed to a cross.

The Resurrection

Jesus Lives

Mary went to tell the disciples the incredible news. "She said, 'I have seen the Lord!' " ([John 20:18](#)).

The Road to Emmaus

Jesus Surprises Us

Jesus helped His followers understand that what happened to Him had been written about in the Scriptures.

When kids have correctly identified all the stories, continue: **We've learned a lot over the past few weeks about Jesus. Jesus died to make the way back to God for us. He defeated sin and death and is alive today! Jesus has done so much for us! We have so much to think about and praise Him for!**