

Jesus opens the Scriptures

Lesson Overview

Trace the change from disappointed hope to news of the risen Lord. Explain why the Messiah's suffering belongs with His glory, and distinguish Luke's report from an invented detail.



Passage

Luke 24:13–35



Focus statement

The risen Jesus shows that His suffering and glory fulfil Scripture, so we can trust Him as the Saviour rather than treating His cross as a failed promise.



Age-focused objective

Trace the change from disappointed hope to news of the risen Lord. Explain why the Messiah's suffering belongs with His glory, and distinguish Luke's report from an invented detail.



Memory verse

Then beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he interpreted for them the things concerning himself in all the Scriptures.

Luke 24:27, CSB

Before learners arrive

Work through Teacher preparation and its checklist. Have the existing pack and materials ready as listed there, keep the Bible open and choose one illustration below. Neither illustration requires learners to disclose personal experiences.

Arrange each group's markers in mixed order before the activity. The printed page numbers identify sheets, not the narrative order. Rehearse the reading and the first-stop demonstration. Allow 40 minutes: welcome 2; interactive teaching 18; memory 3; activity 15; prayer and tidy 2. No child acts Jesus; no meal or miracle is reenacted.

How the lesson unfolds

Follow the account's connected movements, then help the children explain and respond.



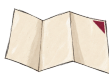
Hope seems to have failed

Two discouraged followers cannot fit Jesus' death into their hope of rescue.



Jesus joins suffering and glory

Jesus explains that the Messiah's suffering and glory fulfil Scripture.



The guest is recognised

At the meal they recognise the risen Jesus who explained the Scriptures.



Good news takes them back

They return to Jerusalem and share the news of the living Lord.

Welcome and connection

2 minutes. Welcome everyone. Ask for one brief explanation of why the people in Nehemiah needed help understanding the reading. Supply the connection for newcomers.



SAY (SUGGESTED WORDING):

God gives us His Word to understand. Last time we heard how helpers explained it to a gathered crowd. Today Jesus Himself explains the Scriptures to two followers. It is the day He rose from the dead. Some women have found His tomb empty and brought the news that He is alive. But two of His followers are still puzzled and discouraged. They are walking from Jerusalem to a village called Emmaus.

Can true facts leave us puzzled?

Interactive teaching: 18 minutes. Allow 1 minute for the opening, 6 for the disappointed conversation, 4 for Jesus' explanation, 3 for recognition, 2 for the return and 2 for the gospel connection. Readings, transitions and brief answers belong within these times.

Choose one teaching illustration

Choose one option, taking no more than 1 minute within the existing opening. Hear one brief answer, then continue. The options replace one another.

Option A • The empty chair – recommended

Tell a short invented situation: “A learner returns and sees a friend’s chair empty. ‘My friend has gone home,’ the learner thinks. Then the teacher explains that the friend is helping carry books from the next room.” Ask, “Was the chair empty? Was the first explanation right?”

Listen for: An observed fact can be true while our explanation of it is mistaken.

Option B • The rest of the message

Say, “Someone hears only the beginning of an invented message: ‘We cannot use this room ...’ They assume the meeting is cancelled. The rest says, ‘... so we will meet next door.’ What did the rest of the message change?”

Listen for: It corrected the assumed meaning without denying the first words.

Return to Scripture: These ordinary examples only distinguish facts from their meaning. They do not explain the resurrection or promise a happy explanation for every disappointment. Luke reports real events: listen for how Jesus explains His suffering and glory from Scripture.

Help the children find Luke 24. Explain that Luke’s Gospel tells the true account of Jesus’ life, death and resurrection. One traveller is named Cleopas; Luke does not name the other.

Explore the Bible passage

1. Hope seems to have failed

 READ ALOUD

¹³ Now that same day two of them were on their way to a village called Emmaus, which was about seven miles from Jerusalem.

¹⁴ Together they were discussing everything that had taken place.

¹⁵ And while they were discussing and arguing, Jesus himself came near and began to walk along with them.

¹⁶ But they were prevented from recognizing him.

¹⁷ Then he asked them, “What is this dispute that you’re having with each other as you are walking?” And they stopped walking and looked discouraged.

Luke 24:13–17, CSB

**Ask**

Who has joined the walk? Do the two disciples recognise Him?

**Listen for**

Jesus Himself has joined them, but they are prevented from recognising Him. We know something they do not yet know.

Listen now as Cleopas and his companion explain their disappointment to the One who understands it best.

**READ ALOUD**

¹⁸ The one named Cleopas answered him, “Are you the only visitor in Jerusalem who doesn’t know the things that happened there in these days?”

¹⁹ “What things?” he asked them. So they said to him, “The things concerning Jesus of Nazareth, who was a prophet powerful in action and speech before God and all the people,

²⁰ and how our chief priests and leaders handed him over to be sentenced to death, and they crucified him.

²¹ But we were hoping that he was the one who was about to redeem Israel. Besides all this, it’s the third day since these things happened.

²² Moreover, some women from our group astounded us. They arrived early at the tomb,

²³ and when they didn’t find his body, they came and reported that they had seen a vision of angels who said he was alive.

²⁴ Some of those who were with us went to the tomb and found it just as the women had said, but they didn’t see him.”

Luke 24:18–24, CSB

**Ask**

What had they hoped Jesus would do? Why were they discouraged?

**Listen for**

They hoped He would redeem, or rescue, Israel. He had been crucified, and they did not yet understand how His death belonged to that rescue.

**If needed**

Return to verse 21. They had heard the women’s report, but still needed to understand.



SAY (SUGGESTED WORDING):

They think the visitor needs the news explained. Yet the visitor is Jesus Himself! Luke says they were prevented from recognising Him; he does not tell us how. They call Jesus a powerful prophet, which is true, but there is more to know about Him. Their biggest puzzle is this: how can the One who was killed be the rescuer they hoped for? Jesus takes them to the Scriptures.

2. Jesus joins suffering and glory



READ ALOUD

²⁵ He said to them, “How foolish you are, and how slow to believe all that the prophets have spoken!

²⁶ Wasn’t it necessary for the Messiah to suffer these things and enter into his glory?”

²⁷ Then beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he interpreted for them the things concerning himself in all the Scriptures.

Luke 24:25–27, CSB



Ask

According to Jesus, did the Messiah’s suffering mean God’s promise had failed?



Listen for

No. It was necessary for the Messiah to suffer and enter His glory. Jesus explained what the Scriptures said about Him.



If needed

Join the two parts of verse 26: suffering and glory. Messiah means God’s promised King and Saviour.



SAY (SUGGESTED WORDING):

They had not believed all that God had said through the prophets. Jesus showed that His suffering belonged to God’s saving plan. Moses and the Prophets means the Scriptures God had given long before these events. Luke tells us what Jesus explained: the things concerning Himself. He does not list every passage Jesus used. We can trust what Luke tells us without making up the rest of the conversation.

3. The guest is recognised

READ ALOUD

²⁸ They came near the village where they were going, and he gave the impression that he was going farther.

²⁹ But they urged him, “Stay with us, because it’s almost evening, and now the day is almost over.” So he went in to stay with them.

³⁰ It was as he reclined at the table with them that he took the bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them.

³¹ Then their eyes were opened, and they recognized him, but he disappeared from their sight.

³² They said to each other, “Weren’t our hearts burning within us while he was talking with us on the road and explaining the Scriptures to us?”

Luke 24:28–32, CSB



Ask

When did they recognise Jesus? What had He already been doing on the road?



Listen for

They recognised Him at the meal, when their eyes were opened. Before that He had been explaining the Scriptures.



If needed

Keep the two changes distinct: understanding the explanation on the road, then recognising the person at the meal.

SAY (SUGGESTED WORDING):

Their guest was the living Lord. They remembered how deeply His explanation had moved them: their hearts had been burning within them. That does not mean every child must feel heat or excitement when hearing the Bible. Jesus’ words were true because He spoke the truth. Their feelings did not make Him rise. Now they knew who had been walking with them. They had news to tell.

4. Good news takes them back

 READ ALOUD

³³ That very hour they got up and returned to Jerusalem. They found the Eleven and those with them gathered together,

³⁴ who said, “The Lord has truly been raised and has appeared to Simon!”

³⁵ Then they began to describe what had happened on the road and how he was made known to them in the breaking of the bread.

Luke 24:33–35, CSB



Ask

What news did the gathered group already have, and what could these two add?



Listen for

The group said the Lord had risen and appeared to Simon. The two travellers described their own meeting with Jesus on the road and at the meal.



If needed

Verse 34 is spoken by the gathered group; verse 35 describes the travellers' report.

 SAY (SUGGESTED WORDING):

The same people who had left discouraged returned that very hour. Jesus really was alive! In the next part of Luke's account, He shows His hands and feet and eats in front of His followers. He is bodily risen, not a ghost or only a happy memory. His suffering had not defeated God's promise. The risen Lord had shown them how Scripture's suffering and glory belong together.

The rescue His cross accomplished

 SAY (SUGGESTED WORDING):

Why did the promised Saviour suffer? The Bible tells us that Christ died for our sins. We have disobeyed the holy God and need forgiveness. Jesus is His eternal Son, fully God, who became truly human to save us. Listen to how Paul explains the good news.

 READ ALOUD

³ For I passed on to you as most important what I also received: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures,

⁴ that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures,

1 Corinthians 15:3–4, CSB

 SAY (SUGGESTED WORDING):

Jesus took the judgement sinners deserve and rose bodily on the third day. We receive His forgiveness by turning from sin and trusting Him. A clever explanation or a strong feeling cannot earn that gift. The cross was not the end of hope: through His death and resurrection Jesus accomplished our rescue. We can trust Him and keep listening when His Word corrects what we expected.

Lesson focus: The risen Jesus shows that His suffering and glory fulfil Scripture, so we can trust Him as the Saviour rather than treating His cross as a failed promise.

Invite quiet reflection on the Saviour the passage reveals. Children may ask questions about trusting Him with an appropriate leader within the church's safeguarding arrangements. Do not ask for a public profession or infer faith from excitement.

Memory verse — Luke 24:27

3 minutes. Show page 7 and read the complete verse.

 READ ALOUD

²⁷ Then beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he interpreted for them the things concerning himself in all the Scriptures.

Luke 24:27, CSB

Explain interpreted as explained the meaning. Ask whom the Scriptures concerned. Practise in three phrases, then join them with the reference: “Then beginning with Moses and all the Prophets”; “he interpreted for them”; “the things concerning himself in all the Scriptures.” Children may read along. Ask how verse 26 helps us understand the verse: the Messiah’s suffering and glory belong together.

Walk the Emmaus account

15 minutes. Groups of three or four arrange four stops and walk or point through them, explaining what changes. Give every group its own pages 1–4 in mixed order and pages 5–6. The product is a narrated route, not a drawing or written worksheet. Keep routes on accessible tables if space is limited.

- 1. Model and distribute — 2 minutes.** Hold the “Disappointed conversation” marker and locate verse 21 on the passage sheet. Model, “This comes before they recognise Jesus. They hoped He would rescue Israel, but they do not yet understand His death.” Return the marker to the mixed set. Show that a narrator points to a reference and explains; nobody acts a biblical person.
- 2. Arrange, investigate and revise — 8 minutes.** Give groups 2 minutes to arrange the four markers in the account’s order. During the next 4 minutes, take one stop at a time. A reader or adult reads its reference from the supplied passage; another child explains the change; another points to the supporting words. Rotate roles, with a fourth child checking that the explanation stays within Luke’s account. Give the last 2 minutes to the “Can this enter our retelling?” claim on page 6. Put that claim aside by covering its box or saying “not reported”. Explain why and replace it with what Luke actually tells us in verse 27. The markers can stay on the table throughout.
- 3. Narrate the route — 3 minutes.** Each group walks safely beside its own markers or points through them while seated. Share the narration among members; an adult can voice a child’s pointed answer. Explain disappointed hope, Jesus’ correction, recognition and return. At “Scripture explained”, pause to say why suffering did not mean the promise had failed. Listeners ask for a verse when a claim needs support, and the group corrects it together.
- 4. Apply and check — 2 minutes.** Use the question below. Then ask why an interesting detail should be left out if Luke does not report it. Look for truthfulness rather than fear of asking questions. The Bible gives us enough to understand the main point without inventing the entire conversation.



Ask

A friend says, “Jesus’ death meant His rescue had failed; the only good thing was that His friends felt happier later.” Which stop helps you answer, and why?



Listen for

At “Scripture explained”, Jesus says the Messiah had to suffer and enter glory (vv.25–27). His death belongs to God’s saving purpose. He really rose; the change was not only in their feelings. Recognition and the reports in verses 31–35 support that.



If needed

Point to verse 26, then the return marker. Ask whether a changed mood is the same as a risen Saviour.

A possible complete narration: “They were discouraged because Jesus had died, although they hoped He would redeem Israel (v.21). Jesus explained from Scripture that the Messiah had to suffer and enter glory (vv.25–27). They recognised Him at the meal (vv.30–31), then returned to Jerusalem and told what happened (vv.33–35). Luke does not name every passage Jesus explained.” The invented claim on page 6 says He quoted Psalm 23 first. Luke does not report that, so it cannot be presented as part of his account. This does not mean Psalm 23 is untrue or unimportant.

Prayer and tidy

2 minutes. Gather the markers and passage sheets. Invite quiet reflection, with voluntary prayer if children wish.

Suggested prayer

Lord Jesus, thank You for suffering for sinners and rising from death. Help us understand Your Word and trust You as our Saviour. Correct our mistaken ideas and help us tell the truth about You. Amen.

Reflect after teaching

Could children explain the necessity of suffering and glory, rather than only order the events? Did they distinguish explanation from recognition and set aside the unreported detail for a sound reason? Record actual timing, access to each group's passage and any teaching connection to revisit. Keep personal information out of shared notes. When introducing the next unit, briefly recall that careful reading asks what the text says and how its meaning leads us to trust God.

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