

Small Group Guide: When Hope Comes Back to Life

Key Scripture

Read Luke 24:13-27 together as a group.

Main Points Summary

1. Disappointment comes to rob our faith when God doesn't do what we expected
 2. Jesus draws near to disappointed people
 3. The disappointment of the cross is actually the pathway to the promise
 4. Hope comes back to life as the resurrection declares that disappointment is never the end
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Discussion Questions

Understanding Disappointment

1. The two disciples were walking away from Jerusalem (the foundation of peace) toward Emmaus (a place of temporary relief). What are some modern "Emmaus" destinations people walk toward when disappointed with God?
2. The sermon mentioned "we had hoped" (Luke 24:21). What does this phrase reveal about the disciples' hearts? Have you ever felt this way about God?
3. Pastor Clay said, "Disappointment comes to rob our faith when God doesn't do what we expected." Why do unmet expectations affect our faith so deeply?

Jesus Draws Near

4. The disciples' eyes were "kept from recognizing" Jesus even though He walked beside them. What keeps people from recognizing Jesus today, even when He's near?

5. Why do you think the disciples didn't go back to check the tomb themselves after hearing the women's report? What keeps us from "looking into" the claims of Christ more deeply?

6. Jesus called them "foolish ones, and slow of heart to believe" (v. 25). How is this both confrontational and compassionate? When has God lovingly confronted your unbelief?

The Necessity of the Cross

7. Jesus said it was "necessary" for Christ to suffer (v. 26). The sermon connected this to our own trials using 1 Peter 1:6-7. Why are trials necessary for genuine faith?

8. Pastor Clay said, "You cannot bypass the cross in this life." What does this mean practically for how we live as Christians?

9. How does understanding that "the worst thing is never the last thing" change how you approach current disappointments or suffering?

When Eyes Are Opened

10. The disciples' hearts "burned within them" as Jesus opened the Scriptures (v. 32). When have you experienced this kind of spiritual awakening through God's Word?

11. After recognizing Jesus, the disciples immediately returned to Jerusalem—back toward hope and community. What does this teach us about responding to renewed faith?

12. The sermon stated that Jesus wanted them to "see Him in the Word before they saw Him in the flesh." Why is encountering Jesus through Scripture so important?

Key Takeaways

- Disappointment is a normal part of the Christian journey, but it doesn't have to rob our faith.
 - Jesus actively pursues us in our moments of greatest discouragement and doubt.
 - Suffering and the cross are necessary pathways to resurrection life and genuine faith.
 - Death has been defeated by love—the resurrection proves disappointment is never the end.
 - We must move beyond a "glance" at Jesus to actually "going in" and surrendering fully.
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Practical Applications

This Week's Challenge:

Choose one or more of these action steps:

1. Identify Your Emmaus

- Where are you walking away from God's promises right now?
- What disappointment has caused you to seek comfort elsewhere?
- Pray specifically about turning back toward "Jerusalem"

2. Open the Scriptures

- Spend time this week reading through the Old Testament prophecies about Christ (Genesis 3:15, 22; Psalm 22; Isaiah 53; Zechariah)
- Journal about how seeing Jesus throughout Scripture impacts your faith

3. Invite Jesus In

- Like the disciples urged Jesus to "stay with us," practice inviting Jesus into your daily life beyond Sunday
- Set aside 15 minutes daily to sit with Jesus in prayer and Scripture

4. Share Your Story

- Like the disciples who immediately told others "The Lord is risen indeed," share with someone this week how Jesus has brought hope back to life in your story

5. Examine Your Faith

- Honestly assess: Have you given Jesus a "glance" or have you truly "gone in"?
 - If needed, pray the prayer of surrender from the sermon
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Prayer Requests & Closing

Share & Pray:

- Where do you need hope to come back to life?
- What disappointments are you carrying?
- How can we pray for one another this week?

Closing Prayer Focus:

- Thank God for the resurrection and victory over death
 - Ask for eyes to see Jesus clearly, especially in Scripture
 - Pray for courage to walk back toward faith when disappointment comes
 - Pray for those who raised their hands during the sermon
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For Further Study

Recommended Scripture Reading:

- John 20:1-18 (Mary at the tomb)
 - 1 Corinthians 15 (The resurrection chapter)
 - Hebrews 12:1-3 (Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith)
 - Romans 8:18-39 (Present suffering and future glory)
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