

Children's Lesson Easter 3A

THEME: Starting over

SCRIPTURE: Luke 24:13-35 and 2 Timothy 4:7-8

On the Road to Emmaus (Adaptation)

That same Sunday, two other friends of Jesus left Jerusalem to walk home to Emmaus. As Cleopas and another trudged along, they kept going over the sad events of the past few days. They scarcely noticed when a stranger walked up next to them. Instead of overtaking them, he matched his pace to theirs and began to talk.

“You’re looking miserable,” he remarked. “What’s the matter?”

“You mean you haven’t heard?” Cleopas answered. “You must be the only person around here who doesn’t know what’s been happening. Jesus, our master, has been put to death. We were certain that he was God’s Messiah and now our hopes have gone!”

The stranger laughed gently. “You’ve made a big mistake,” he said. “Think what the prophets had to say about the Messiah. Isaiah compared him to an innocent lamb, being led to the slaughter-house. The messiah had to die—not for a crime he had committed but for the sins of other people, in order to bring them peace and forgiveness from God.”

The journey flew by as the stranger went from one Old Testament writing to another, explaining that it was God’s plan that the Messiah should first die and then rise from death, because he had conquered evil.

It seemed no time before they were at their own door. The stranger looked as if he was going on up the street.

“Do come in!” Cleopas begged. “It’s getting late. Have supper with us.”

The stranger accepted and, when the supper was ready, he took the bread, thanked God for it and shared it between them.

They recognized the familiar way he did it all.

The stranger was Jesus—alive!

They turned to him, but he had gone.

“No wonder our hearts grew warm when he talked to us!” Cleopas said. “We must go straight back to Jerusalem and tell the others.”

But when they arrived the eleven disciples greeted them with the news, “Jesus has risen!”

As they all talked excitedly together, Jesus himself joined them. He shared his meal and explained to them all the wonderful things he had told the two on the Emmaus road.

2 Timothy 4:7-8

⁷ I have fought the good fight. I have finished the race. I have kept the faith. ⁸ Now, a crown is waiting for me. I will get that crown for being right with God. The Lord is the judge who judges rightly, and he will give me the crown on that Day. He will give that crown not only to me but to all those who have waited with love for him to come again.

OVERVIEW: Children run a race and experience fresh starts

PREPARATION: You need a piece of paper and piece of candy or some reward for each person

SHARING THE STORY

1. The story of the Emmaus Road can be shared in many ways. Have Fun!
 - Read it from the adaptation above
 - Assign parts with a Narrator describing the action and characters either reading their lines or pantomiming their lines
 - Have children use facial expressions to demonstrate how each character felt when saying their lines
2. Questions to consider:
 - Has there ever been a time when you could no longer see or talk to a friend or someone you love? How did that make you feel? How do you think Cleopas and his friend felt as they were walking to Emmaus?
 - Describe a time when you were disappointed when you were disappointed.
 - What are things we can do when things don't work out as we had planned?
 - How did Jesus make it better for Cleopas and his friend?
 - How can Jesus make it better for us when we are sad and disappointed?

EXPERIENCE THE STORY

Give each person a sheet of paper. Have everyone line up on one side of the room. Tell each to hold out their right hand, palm up, fingers spread apart. Have each balance their paper on their fingertips. Say: **On "go," balance your paper while walking to the opposite side of the room and back. If the paper falls off, just stop, put the paper back on your fingertips, and keep going until you finish the race. Ready? Go!**

RESPONSE

After the race, congratulate everyone for finishing the race. Say: **No matter how many times you dropped your paper, you picked it up and kept going. Good job.**

Hand out reward. Ask: **How did you feel during the race? How would you have felt if you had to go all the way back to the beginning each time you dropped the paper?**

Read aloud 2 Timothy 4:7-8.

The writer talks about not giving up on his race, fighting the good fight and keeping faith. He is talking about trusting Jesus and not giving up. Jesus followers were tempted to give up after Jesus died. But they kept their faith. Seeing Jesus helped them do this. Seeing Jesus helped them to "pick up the pieces" after they were disappointed and keep going in life. Jesus helps us start over. Just like the disciples had choices about what to do after Jesus died, we also have choices about what to do when things don't turn out the way we would want. Jesus reminds us that no matter what, God will be there to help us even when we are going through difficult times.

PRAYER

God, thanks for always loving us, forgiving us, and giving us fresh starts in life even when we are disappointed and sad. Amen.