

April 4, 2021

5. Encounter on the Road to Emmaus

Luke 24:13-35

Bedtime conversations with my preteen often take me places I'm not always prepared to go when I'm tired at the end of a long day. We typically end up wading through deep theological issues that take me way out of the realm of easy answers. Lately, his questions are about the nature of God and how God can be both sovereign *and* good with all the hardship the world is facing. You know, easy stuff to tackle when you're half asleep and just wanting to wrap it up quickly and move to your own bed.

If we're honest, we all grapple with these questions at times. It is tempting to think that as Christians we should somehow experience life without suffering or confusion. Through this Lent, I have become more and more aware that painful and difficult experiences are not evidence of God's absence or inability to act. It struck me that in the wilderness, Jesus—God's very self in human form—experienced trial and temptation. If God-become-flesh can suffer, then suffering is clearly not a sign of God's absence!

The disciples on the road to Emmaus are confused and upset. And yet, Christ has risen and walks beside them! Even so, their world is still overshadowed by confusion. I am reminded once again that my pain or confusion about what is taking place in my life or in our world is not a sign that God is absent. It is merely a sign that I don't yet see and understand what God is up to.

Christ has risen, just as he said (Matthew 28:6)! The firstborn from among the dead (Colossians 1:18) has proven to be trustworthy and true. While I cannot always see or make sense of God's work in our world, I trust the promise that Christ's resurrection is the first step toward the ultimate fulfillment of the time when God himself will be with us making all things new (Revelation 21:3-5). Until then, I guess we just keep talking in the dark, asking the questions, and receiving understanding as Jesus sees fit to open our eyes.

—Rachel Wallace

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Rachel Wallace loves Jesus and is seeking to follow him with her husband and two kids in rural Saskatchewan where she pastors Eigenheim Mennonite Church. Her happy place is an armchair with a strong cup of coffee and a furry friend on her lap.

Looking for participant guide page numbers in the leader guide? The page numbers in the leader guide work for both guides.

Resources for this session

Salt & Light Reproducibles are available for use with session 5, found at www.MennoMedia.org/SL.

Salt & Light Videos

Kevin Ressler is the presenter for unit 2, New Creation. These teaching videos are great for leader preparation or introducing each weekly session. They are available on [MennoMedia's YouTube channel](#).

Two additional commentaries:

- “Commentary on Luke 24:13-35,” Arland J. Hultgren.
https://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary_id=54
- “Commentary on Luke 24:13-35,” Marilyn Salmon.
https://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary_id=1671