

# Life Group Lesson - Week of April 30

What does your desire for *more* look like? Sadly, in our quest for more we drift from our God-given purpose. God has a plan for each one of us and He calls us to join Him in a greater mission, to live beyond ourselves and in the light of His presence. But too often we think it's not enough. We look to the things of this world to satisfy us and our search for our *more* gets us distracted with insignificant things.

In an attempt to find peace and purpose, many of us venture off-path and weigh ourselves down with needless stress and worries. Others of us are lured in the wrong direction climbing the ladder of success. Some are merely looking for the next adrenaline rush. Whatever our *more* looks like, the quest may drive us for a while, but it will leave us empty. And certainly we will never find peace through self-absorbed pursuits.

On the day of Jesus' resurrection, His disciples were hiding and unwilling to believe the report of the women. Jesus walked alongside two of His followers on the road to Emmaus but they did not recognize Him. They told this stranger on the road: "We had hoped He was the Messiah who had come to rescue Israel"—but it didn't happen the way they thought it would. Certainly, the horrific image of Jesus' death was still fresh for all these men and painful on several levels. Judas had committed suicide. Peter was living with his own denial. It's hard to believe when we are locked into our grief, even our own agendas.

## Read Luke 24:13-34

Pain, regret, grief, fixation on man's agenda, don't take us higher, to a place of faith – but bring us down to a place of fear, desperation, and self-preservation. When the resurrected Christ asked the two on the road what they were discussing, "they stopped short, sadness written across their faces." Although they had heard the report of the women (v22-23), Jesus' bodily resurrection was not even a possibility.

1. Discuss how self-preservation and resurrection are polar opposites.

What did Jesus say about this subject in **Mark 8:34-38**?

Jesus is not about self-preservation. And neither should we be. Jesus' confidence came from clarity about His mission in the world. He was not worried about preserving Himself or making a name for Himself. His desire was to please His heavenly Father. He said, "No one can take my life from me. I sacrifice it voluntarily. For I have the authority to lay it down when I want to and also to take it up again. For this is what my Father has commanded" (John 10:18). He was willing to be rejected, scorned, beaten, abused, bruised, scarred, marred by lead-tipped whips, adorned by a crown of thorns—entirely sacrificed so that the world could be saved.

Just about a week before His death, Jesus had told His disciples: "Now the time has come for the Son of Man to enter into His glory. I tell you the truth, unless a kernel of wheat is planted in the soil and dies, it remains alone. But its death will produce many new kernels—a plentiful harvest of new lives. Those who love their life in this world will lose it. Those who care nothing for their life in this world will keep it for eternity. Anyone who wants to be my disciple must follow me, because my servants must be where I am. And the Father will honor anyone who serves me. Now my soul is deeply troubled. Should I pray, 'Father, save me from this hour'? But this is the very reason I came! Father, bring glory to your name" (John 12:23-28).

2. At the end of the day, when it's all been said and done, that is what Jesus wanted more than anything – to bring glory to His Father! What is your deepest desire? When all is said and done, what do you want?

If selfish pursuits have captured your attention, and you find yourself unsettled and without peace, what advice does the apostle Paul give us in his letter to the church in Rome? Read **Romans 12:1-21**. Take a moment and contemplate every point Paul makes in this chapter. What especially resonates within your spirit today?

We want peace but are we looking to Jesus for it? He said, "I am leaving you with a gift—peace of mind and heart. And the peace I give is a gift the world cannot give. So don't be troubled or afraid" (John 14:27). We so often look to this world for what the world simply cannot give: peace.

3. Is the following statement true of you—  
*I want more peace, but too often true and lasting peace (peace of mind and heart) is elusive and hidden. It seems my biggest challenge is that I lack clarity about who I am and my purpose for being here.*

If so, the plain truth states that peace comes not by merely believing (agreeing to the fact) that Jesus exists, or even that He died on the cross and rose again. But true and lasting peace comes when you allow Christ to live in you. Peace will come when you decide to walk in a daily, personal relationship with the Prince of Peace. Why not make that decision now?

New Testament scholar, Dr. William Barclay, suggests one reason the two men on the road did not recognize the risen Jesus. Simply, they were headed towards the sunset. Emmaus is west of Jerusalem. The sun was literally in their eyes. Perhaps this is true with many followers today. We are walking towards the sunset instead of the sunrise. In other words, we are facing the wrong way to see Christ.

4. Are you facing the wrong way with the wrong attitude and negative spirit? Are you willing to confess and turn from this mindset and instead, posture yourself to hear from God, to receive His revelation? Close in a time of prayer.



**Text: Luke 24:13-53**

**Peace Takers:**

1. \_\_\_\_\_ gazing

A) \_\_\_\_\_

B) \_\_\_\_\_

2. Distracted by \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_ and doubt

4. \_\_\_\_\_ Identity

A) Putting our \_\_\_\_\_ on God

B) Not allowing God to put his \_\_\_\_\_ on us.

## **The Plain Truth**

Peace comes not by \_\_\_\_\_ Jesus \_\_\_\_\_,  
but when Christ is \_\_\_\_\_ in you.

**Peace Givers/Makers:**

1. Moving from \_\_\_\_\_ with the Holy to \_\_\_\_\_  
“personal holiness”.

2. A clear \_\_\_\_\_ in Christ

### ***One Year Bible Readings***

Apr. 30: Judges 11:1-12:15, John 1:1-28, Psalm 101:1-8, Proverbs 14:13-14

May 1: Judges 13:1-14:20, John 1:29-51, Psalm 102:1-28, Proverbs 14:15-16

May 2: Judges 15:1-16:31, John 2:1-25, Psalm 103:1-22, Proverbs 14:17-19

May 3: Judges 17:1-18:31, John 3:1-21, Psalm 104:1-23, Proverbs 14:20-21

May 4: Judges 19:1-20:48, John 3:22-4:3, Psalm 104:24-35, Proverbs 14:22-24

May 5: Judges 21:1-Ruth 1:22, John 4:4-42, Psalm 105:1-15, Proverbs 14:25

May 6: Ruth 2:1-4:22, John 4:43-54, Psalm 105:16-36, Proverbs 14:26-27