

Stories That Matter — Week 2: Astounded Us

Opening Prayer: Gracious and Living God, We come before You today with all that we carry—our questions, our doubts, our hopes, and our longing for something more. Just as You met the disciples on the road, meet us here in this space. Open our eyes to recognize Your presence, open our hearts to feel Your truth, and open our lives to be changed by Your resurrection power. Let this be more than a conversation—let it be an encounter. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Theme: From Astonishment to Awareness: Recognizing Jesus in the midst of confusion. This week explores how God meets us in moments when life feels unclear or overwhelming. Like the disciples on the road to Emmaus, we often walk through seasons of confusion—but Jesus walks with us, reveals truth, and transforms our perspective.

Secular Quote: “Life can only be understood backwards; but it must be lived forwards.”

— Søren Kierkegaard

Starter Question: Think of a time in your life when something happened that completely caught you off guard—something that left you feeling overwhelmed, confused, or even “astounded.” What made that moment so impactful?

Digging Deeper Questions

1. Walking in Confusion (Luke 24:13–24)

- What does their statement, “*We had hoped...*”, reveal about their expectations of Jesus?
- Have you ever experienced a moment where your hopes in God didn't match your reality?

2. The Hidden Presence of Christ (Luke 24:15–27)

- Why do you think the disciples didn't recognize Jesus at first?
- In what ways might we overlook Jesus' presence in our everyday lives?

3. Hearts Burning Within (Luke 24:28–32)

- What do you think it means that their “hearts were burning within them”?
- Can you recall a moment where you felt spiritually awakened or stirred by God?

4. Recognition in the Breaking (Luke 24:30–35)

- Why do you think Jesus was revealed in the breaking of the bread?
- How does this connect to worship, communion, or shared meals today?

Actionable (Live It Out This Week): Choose **one or more** of the following practices:

1. Walk with Awareness: Take a literal walk this week (like the Emmaus road).

2. Practice Table Fellowship: Share a meal intentionally—with family, friends, or someone new.

Closing Prayer: Risen Christ, Thank You for walking with us—even when we don't recognize You. Thank You for meeting us in our confusion, our disappointment, and our wondering. Stir our hearts like You did on that road. Open our eyes in the breaking of bread, in the sharing of stories, and in the quiet moments of our lives. Send us out from this place not just as people who have discussed faith—but as people who have encountered You. Give us the courage to run back into the world with hope, with joy, and with the truth that You are alive. We may not understand everything... But we trust You. In the name of the Risen Jesus, Amen.

Daily Scripture Guide:

Monday – Remember the Story-Scripture: Isaiah 51:1–3

Focus: God invites us to remember where we came from and how He has been faithful.

Tuesday – Taste and See-Scripture: Psalm 34 8–10

Focus: Faith is not just understood—it is experienced.

Wednesday – Living as New People-Scripture: 1 Peter 1:22–23

Focus: Resurrection changes how we live and love.

Thursday – Walking with Jesus-Scripture: Luke 24:13–16

Focus: Jesus is present even when we don't recognize Him.

Friday – Hearts Burning Within-Scripture: Luke 24:25–32

Focus: God's Word awakens something deep within us.

Saturday – Eyes Opened-Scripture: Luke 24:30–35

Focus: Jesus is revealed in the ordinary moments—especially in shared experiences.