

# OVERCOMING DISCOURAGEMENT

## Conversation Guide

Week 1 – Remember the Resurrection

### Recap:

On the road to Emmaus, two of Jesus' disciples talked together as they walked. They were confused, sad, and disappointed. They had been following a great and respectable leader whom they were sure was the Messiah—and then suddenly He was gone. Their hopes were dashed; they were deeply discouraged and were questioning all the events which had taken place.

Was Jesus not who He said He was? How had the Romans succeeded in executing Him? What were they supposed to do now?

Suddenly another man appeared and walked with them. He asked them why they were so disappointed. They couldn't believe that this man hadn't heard, but soon they would realize this wasn't just any man; they were walking with Jesus.

During this pivotal walk with Jesus, these disciples learned that, to overcome disappointment, one must look for Jesus in the disappointment by remembering that: 1) God is sovereign, 2) God is for you, and 3) God is your victory.

As you walk with Jesus, you can remember these three things as well, as you learn to overcome disappointment and remember the resurrection.

### Discussion Questions:

#### Upward:

- Read Romans 8:28. What is God's purpose?
- Read Romans 8:28-30. These verses say that we have been predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, Jesus. Why is this important? What does it mean to be conformed to the image of Jesus?
- How do we know God is sovereign?

#### Inward:

- Read Romans 8:31-39. How does God display His love for you?
- What can separate you from God's love? Do you ever fear that something you have done might make God love you less? How do these verses combat that fear?

#### Outward:

- How does knowing that God never gives up on us change the way you view others?
- Is there someone in your life who is difficult to love? How can you pray for your heart to change towards that person?

# OVERCOMING DISCOURAGEMENT

## Conversation Guide

### Week 2 – Look for Hope in Discouragement

#### Recap:

As the two disciples continued walking down the road toward Emmaus with this strange man, they began to tell him of all that Jesus had done and all that they had hoped He would do. But all that hope was gone now; their circumstances had brought them to a place of deep disappointment. The future looked bleak, and they couldn't see a way up from where they stood.

The stranger began to tell them of what the scriptures said and how they testified to the Messiah. He reminded them that hope didn't come from their circumstances, but from a person—Jesus! He was testifying to Himself, and soon the disciples' eyes would be opened.

Perhaps you're walking through some dark circumstances of your own and you're not sure of the way up. Remember that hope has a name, and His name is Jesus.

Jesus never promised a problem-free world. In fact, He promised that we would have many trials. But one day, He will usher in the new heaven and the new earth. Until then, we overcome discouragement by remembering that 1) we read the Bible to find Jesus, not to find a solution to our problems, 2) Jesus rewrites our story with His story, and 3) His life, death, and resurrection were foretold.

#### Discussion Questions:

##### Upward:

- Have you read scriptures in the Old Testament that speak about Jesus? How is this possible?
- Read Hosea 6:2. This is a prophecy in the Old Testament. How does it point to Jesus?

##### Inward:

- Read Romans 5:12-15. How has your story changed because of Jesus?
- How do you approach the Bible in your everyday life? Do you see it as a "manual" with solutions or as a way to grow in intimacy with God? What do you think is God's intention for us with the Bible?

##### Outward:

- Do you read the Bible with others regularly? This could be a spouse, friend, child, or neighbor. What would be the benefit of reading with someone else?
- If you don't make it a regular practice to read the Bible with others, how can you take your next step towards this practice?

# OVERCOMING DISCOURAGEMENT

## Conversation Guide

### Week 3 – Remember, Jesus Will Not Abandon You

#### Recap:

The disciples and their new traveling companion came to a village and decided to stop for the night. Their friend indicated that he wanted to continue further down the road, but they convinced him to stay. They had been so encouraged by their new friend and wanted to continue the conversation. (Maybe you can identify with how they were feeling. Having encouraging friends can be a lifeline when you find yourself in a dark place.)

They sat down to eat and as He blessed the bread, suddenly their eyes were opened. This wasn't just a wise stranger, it was Jesus! No wonder their hearts had burned within them as He spoke with them. In an instant Jesus was gone, but the wisdom and encouragement He had shared with them from the scriptures remained, and they were forever transformed.

Unable to contain their excitement, they sprang up immediately to travel back to Jerusalem. They knew that the other disciples had to be informed that Jesus truly was the Messiah—and He was alive! Can you imagine the joy which must have radiated from them?

When they thought their Savior had abandoned them, He proved to them that He would never abandon them. It's the same for us today. Jesus is with us always. He will not forget us, and He will never abandon us. He is with us even when we don't realize it. He is with us in the scriptures. He is with us in the Lord's Supper. When we have that realization, our reaction is the same as that of the two disciples on the road to Emmaus: We simply have to tell someone about it!

#### Discussion Questions:

##### Upward:

- When is a time that you felt Jesus with you when you were going through a hard time?
- How is God with us in the Lord's Supper?

##### Inward:

- What are some Bible verses you can connect with to overcome disappointment? If you're not sure, reach out to someone who can help you.

##### Outward:

- When was the last time you shared with someone about Jesus? How did it go?
- If you've never shared with anyone about Jesus, what's holding you back?
- Who can you share the gospel with this week?