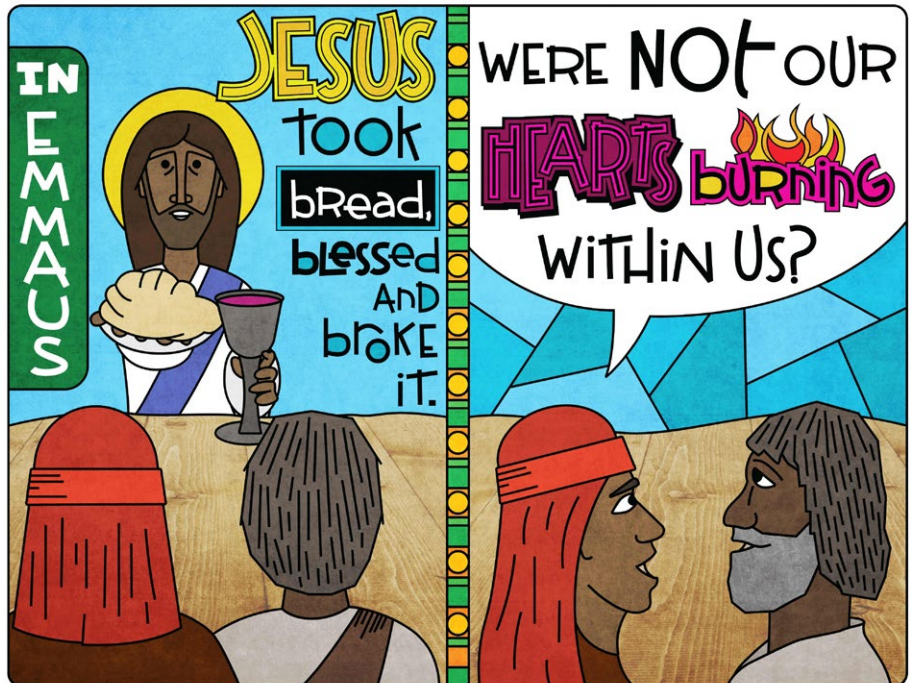


Jesus asks them what they've been talking about. Shocked that there could be a person who didn't know the biggest news of the day, the two tell Jesus what happened. They also shared how Jesus' death shattered their hopes for a new life because Jesus was supposed to be the one who brought freedom to the people. And to make matters even more confusing, they hear that some of the women went to the tomb, found it was empty, and claimed to see angels announcing he's alive!?

As Jesus takes a turn to share, he tells them Jesus' suffering and death is not the end. Remember, they still don't recognize him. This suffering Jesus experienced, that they are experiencing, did, and will continue to create new life. He reminds them that there is a pattern in the stories from scripture - from suffering, new life begins.

Perplexed, a bit in awe, and perhaps even finding comfort with someone who felt familiar, they begged for him to stay for dinner. At the meal, the risen Jesus took the bread, blessed it, broke it, and gave it to them. It was an action they knew all too well. As soon as they recognized him, he vanished before their eyes.



Luke 24: 13-35 - illustratedministry.com

No wonder he felt familiar, and it felt like their hearts were burning as Jesus talked with them on the road! As soon as that joy overtook them, they ran back to the rest of the disciples to say all the good work Jesus had done, all the suffering he went through doesn't end here. The risen Jesus has appeared to them, and they must continue to bring God's promise of new life to the world.

As we are in the midst of suffering and grief, much like the disciples were when they were walking down the road to Emmaus, many of our expectations and hopes have been broken or even shattered. Some of us have felt the deep pain from the death of loved ones because of the novel coronavirus. We don't quite know when the end of the COVID-19 pandemic will be in sight. What we do know is that from suffering comes new life and transformation. In our suffering, let us remember that new life appeared to the disciples, and it will appear to us as well.

Discussion Questions

1. What was your favorite part of this story, or what part resonated with you?
2. What signs of new life are you seeing right now?
3. In what ways are you able to help care for the new life that is appearing now?

Prayer

Dear God, thank you for this story and for teaching us that through suffering, new life will come. Help us to be gentle with each other in our suffering and show us signs of new life. **Amen.**