

# EASTER

*Learn why Jesus died and rose again*

## BIBLE BACKGROUND FOR YOU

For groups meeting weekly - especially those who meet on Sunday - the Easter story presents challenges. We jump from Jesus entering Jerusalem to his resurrection. As leaders we have other ways of engaging with the story during Holy Week, and should make the most of them, but we may need to find ways to help our groups understand the whole story.

Jesus' entry into Jerusalem tells us a lot; he is the King of Israel, but not the sort of king most expected. It sets the tone for the whole Easter narrative, raising profound questions about who Jesus is, what he came to do and how we understand him. As we move on to the scene in the garden we see Jesus in a different situation, facing dark times. Not everyone in Jerusalem was as enthusiastic as the Palm Sunday crowd. We find ourselves

asking where we stand. Are we among the enthusiastic supporters, the opponents, the easily swayed inhabitants of Jerusalem or the fearful disciples?

Luke's account offers us some unique insights into the resurrection, especially with the story of the two on the road to Emmaus. We cannot ignore the confusion and questions that the disciples had, but nor can we doubt the reality of the resurrection as a physical event located firmly in history. These events lie at the heart of our faith and transform our lives. Do we move beyond our celebration of the resurrection to experience the new life of Jesus in us? How do we respond to what Jesus says to his disciples about their responsibility to take the good news of his resurrection to all people?

### For your small group with a wide age range

Easter is a time for celebration! We want to highlight the real, amazing reason for our celebration - that Jesus died for us and then came alive. Our younger children may not be familiar with the events leading up to Easter Day (which are very different from other stories about Jesus when he appeared to be in control of events). Be sensitive to this and help them see that he was trusting God. Help older children to realise that Jesus knew what he was doing and had decided to follow God's plan, whatever the cost.

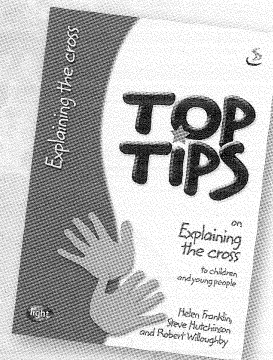
### Resources for ministry

#### *Top Tips on Explaining the Cross*

Practical advice and inspirational stories for anyone wanting children and young people to understand and respond to the cross. Includes clearly presented biblical ways to explain the meaning and effect of Jesus' death and resurrection:

- Jesus takes our place
- Jesus triumphs over evil
- Jesus as a reconciler
- Jesus' dramatic rescue bid

ISBN: 9781 84427 330 0



### Highlights from LightLive

Go to the 'Search LightLive' tab at [www.lightlive.org](http://www.lightlive.org) and enter this session's Bible reference to find:

- 'Bible story picture': a regular activity for 2-7s
- 'Audio Bible story': a regular mp3 download for 3-7s
- 'Learn and remember': a PowerPoint of a Bible verse to learn, for 5-11s (see also pages 53 and 67)
- 'Presentation': an activity with animation for 11-14s

**SERIES 2 EASTER  
SESSION 4**

# Walk to Emmaus

**Bible:**

Luke 24:13-35

**Aim:** To see how God's plan, made long ago, succeeded

## CORE PROGRAMME

*For 3-14s*

### Bible story with pictures

15 - 20 minutes

**Why:** to see how God's plan, made long ago, succeeded

**With:** an enlarged copy of the pictures on page 69, *SU Bible Timeline*, some special bread, for example, hot cross buns or fruit loaf (optional)

#### 1 Prepare

Display the pictures around the room in order, making sure there is enough space for the children to gather around each one. Put the *Bible Timeline* near Picture 6. Invite the children to move with you to each picture in turn, as indicated.

#### 2 Travel and listen

**Picture 1.** Say that Jesus had many friends as well as his 12 disciples. Today Cleopas, one of these other friends, is going to tell his story. Perhaps he is one of the people in the crowd here. What things could Cleopas tell us about Jesus?

**Picture 2.** This is something Cleopas could tell us about Jesus. Maybe he saw Jesus dying on the cross; he certainly knew that Jesus'

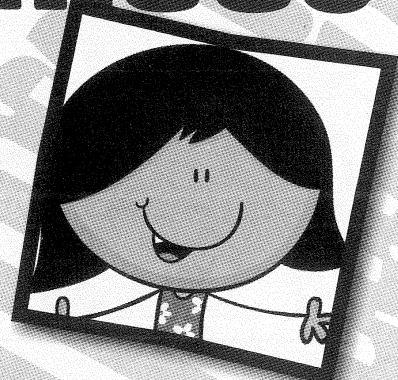
dead body was put in a tomb, just three days before our story.

**Picture 3.** These women look very excited. They went to Jesus' tomb early in the morning – and came back saying they had seen angels and that Jesus was alive! Let's listen to what happened to Cleopas.

**Picture 4.** I am Cleopas. My friend and I live in Emmaus, a village near Jerusalem. We decided to go back home on Sunday evening. We were puzzled and sad at what had happened to Jesus. We were talking about it...

**Picture 5.** A man came and walked with us. We didn't mind, because it is safer to walk in groups. He asked us what we were talking about. We told him all about Jesus dying on the cross. And we said we were puzzled about the women saying Jesus was alive again. Surely that must be nonsense.

**Picture 6.** The man told us we were being very slow at understanding what God had said in the Bible. We didn't mind him saying that because he went on to explain it all. (*Show the Bible Timeline and indicate the events and people mentioned below.*) God's people had disobeyed him, so God planned a way for them to be his friends again. The man reminded us how Abraham, Moses and David had all known about God's plan, and how Isaiah the prophet talked about this special person coming from God. He would have to die and then come back to life again. We began to see that



Jesus was this special person and it was all part of God's plan.

**Picture 7.** At last we reached our house in Emmaus. It was getting late so we invited the man to stay with us. When we sat down to our supper, our visitor took the bread, thanked God for it and then broke it and gave it to us. Suddenly we recognised him. It was Jesus! At that moment he disappeared, but it didn't matter. We knew that Jesus was alive! God's plan had worked!

**Picture 8.** We forgot about our supper and went straight back to Jerusalem. We told the good news to Jesus' other friends, and found some of them had seen him too!

#### 3 Think and pray

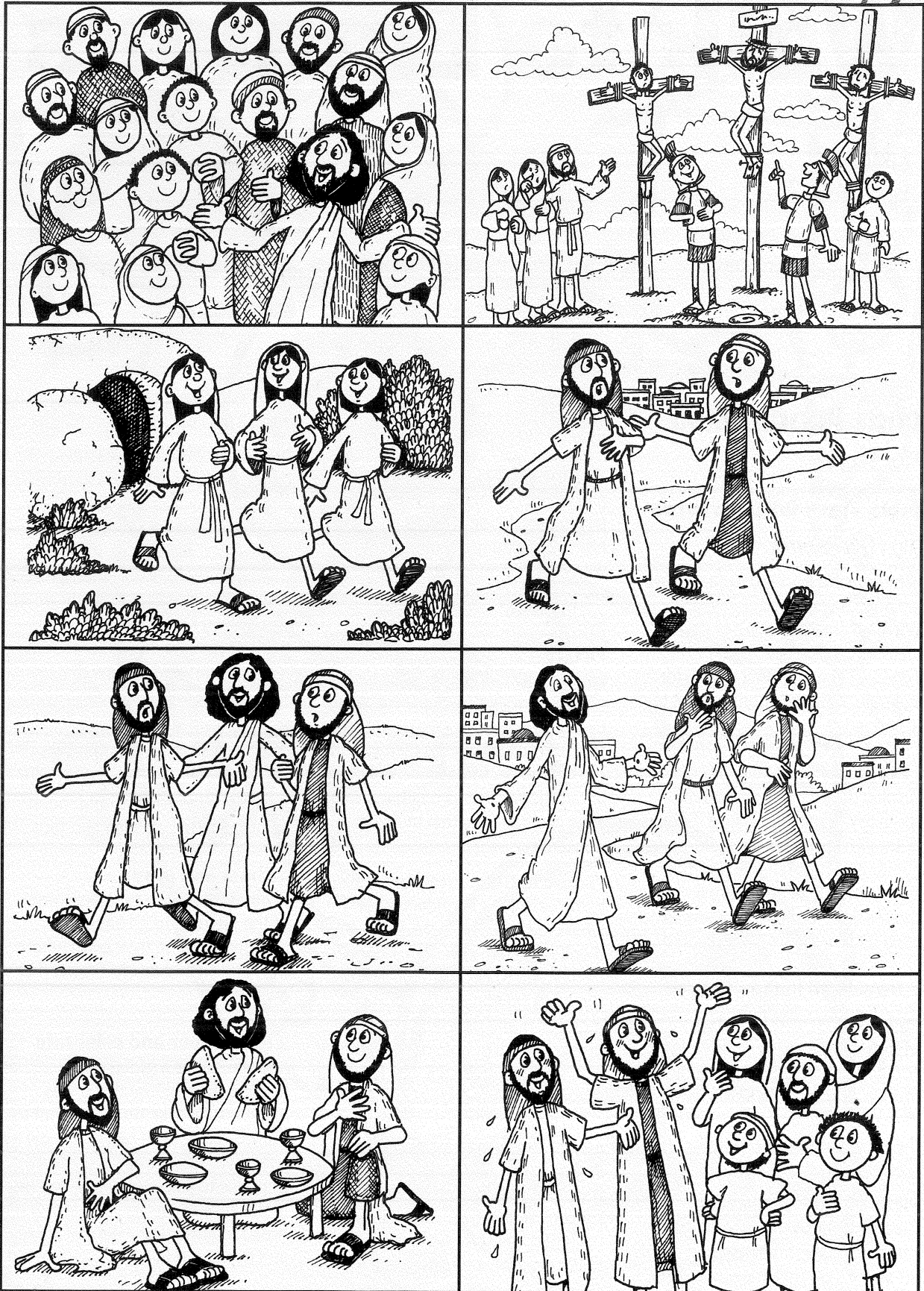
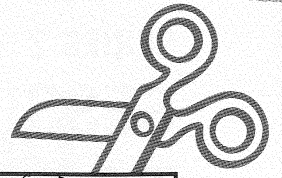
Invite the children to choose one of the pictures to go back to (or another place on their own) where they can sit and talk to God in their own way.

#### 4 Remember and celebrate

Sit together as a group again. Remind the children that it was when Jesus broke the bread that the friends recognised him and knew he was alive. Take turns saying words of praise to Jesus, rejoicing that he is still alive today, as you eat some bread together (be aware of allergy and hygiene issues).



Pictures for Bible story with pictures



CORE PROGRAMME CONTINUED

### Think and pray

⑤ - ⑩ minutes

**Why:** to thank God that his plan succeeded

**With:** pictures of the cross and the empty tomb (use pictures 2 and 3 from page 69)

- 1 Show the children a Bible. Ask: 'What does the Bible tell us about God's plan?'
- 2 Show them the cross. Ask: 'Where does the cross fit into God's plan? What does it show us about God?'
- 3 Show the children the empty tomb. Ask: 'What does this show us about God? How does it show that God's plan succeeded?'
- 4 Quietly, encourage the children to think about God and his plan, and how they fit into it. Be available to talk to children individually, if they wish.
- 5 Finish with a time when children and leaders can say prayers aloud, thanking God for his plan.

### Picture reminders

⑮ - ⑳ minutes

**Why:** to know that Jesus is alive

**With:** copies of page 71, art materials

- 1 Look together at the picture of Jesus breaking bread on page 71. Challenge the children to remember what happened next, to Jesus and to his followers.
- 2 Ask if they can remember when this took place. Look up Luke 24:13 and note that it was on the same day as Mary, Peter and others found that Jesus was not where they thought he would be.
- 3 Notice that the picture on page 71 is shown within the shape of an egg, a shape that many people use to remind them of Easter.

- 4 Encourage the children to decorate their pictures; then cut them out and display them. Say that, like Jesus' followers at the table, we can know that Jesus is alive.

### Make and praise

⑩ - ⑮ minutes

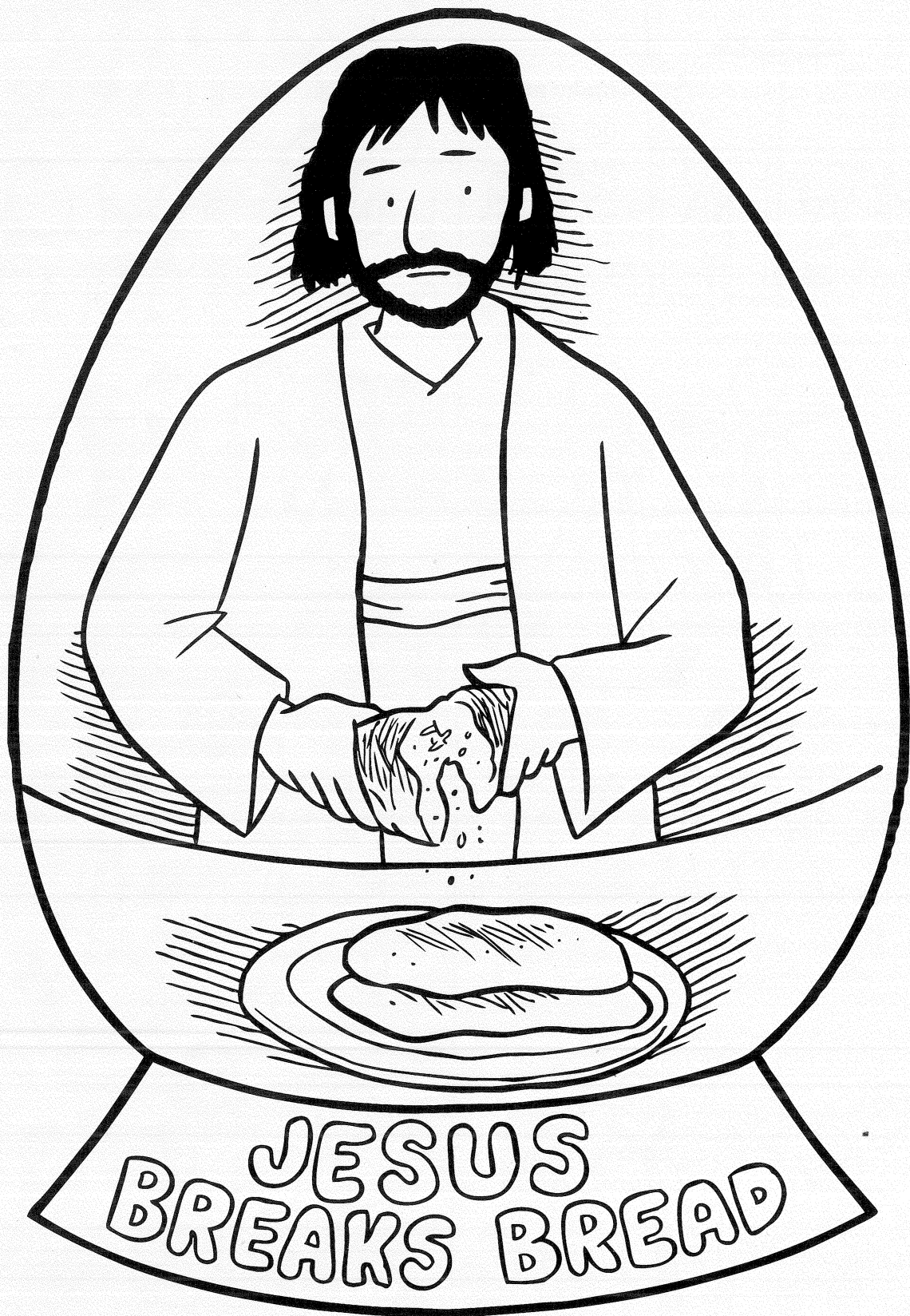
**Why:** to praise God that his plan succeeded

**With:** pages from an old road map, thick pens, aeroplane instructions from page 72 (optional)

- 1 Show the map pages. Describe maps as plans to help you work out where to go.
- 2 Say that God had a plan too, to help us become his friends. We know his plan worked, because Jesus came alive after he had died on the cross. He can be our friend today!
- 3 Give each child a map page. Ask for suggestions of words or phrases to praise God. Help them write these words all over their own map.
- 4 Fold the maps into paper aeroplanes. Shout the words of praise as the aeroplanes are flown around the room.
- 5 Suggest the children take their planes home to remind them to keep praising God for his plan.

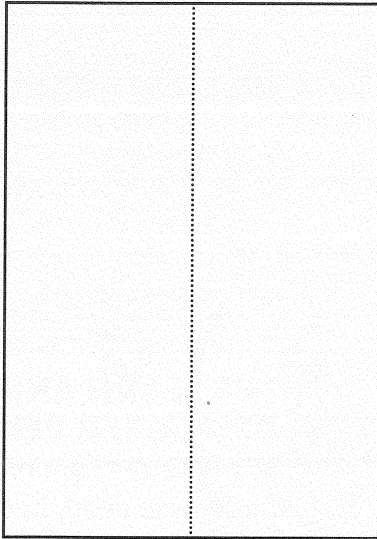


Picture of Jesus for **Picture reminders**

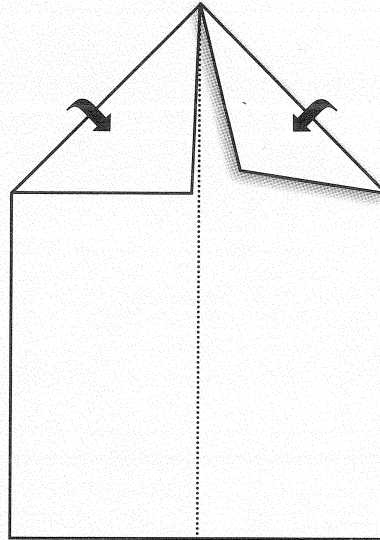


Aeroplane instructions for **Make and praise**

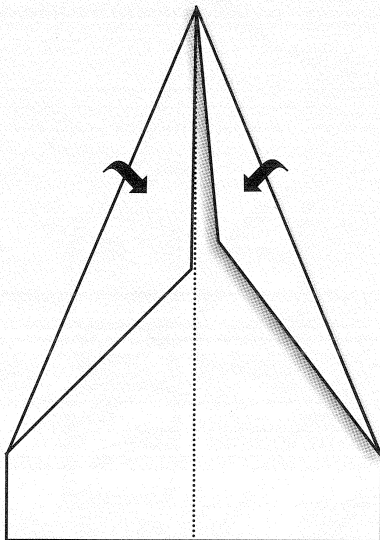
- ① Fold an A4 sheet of paper in half lengthways. Open it out again. There'll be a crease in the centre.



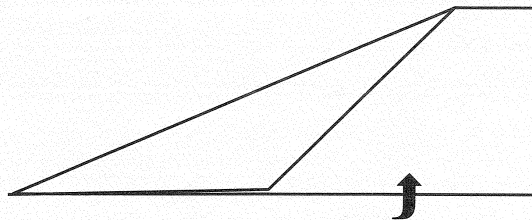
- ② Fold the top corners diagonally down towards the crease.



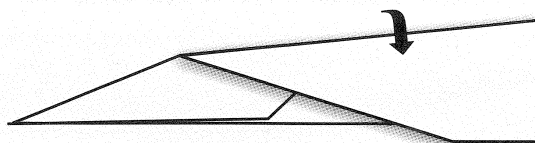
- ③ Fold the right hand side in again down to the crease, about 45mm below the first turnover. Do the same to the left side.



- ④ Now fold the sheet in half lengthwise, with the flaps on the outside.



- ⑤ Finally, fold down the wings at an angle so that they rise up at the rear of the plane (as shown). Now you are ready to fly!





## EXTENSION IDEAS

### Activities for younger children

#### Prayer walk

10 - 15 minutes

**Why:** to thank God for his plan and that we are part of it

1 Remind the children that in the story the two people were walking along the road when Jesus joined them. Although they didn't recognise him at the time, they found he helped them understand what had happened.

2 Invite the children to come on a walk now (outside with extra adult supervision and parental permission; around your building; within your meeting area; or on the spot, depending on what is practical).

3 Suggest that you each talk to God as you go. Pause now and then to all pray together, thanking God for his plan, for bringing Jesus back to life and for being with you when you are walking, day by day.

#### Bible story picture

5 - 10 minutes

**Why:** to journey with friends who met Jesus, who is alive again, and to discover we can 'meet' him too

**With:** a copy of the picture from page 74 for each child or enlarged copies for group use, art and craft materials

1 You can use the picture as an introduction to the Bible story or to help you review the story together.

2 Ask the children to count how many people they can see on the Bible story picture. Do they know who any of them are? They may identify the man on the far right as Jesus (if not, point him out).

3 Say that the other two people were friends of Jesus - but even though he is walking along with them and talking with them, they

do not know who he is! Does that surprise the children? How could that happen?

4 Agree that it does seem surprising. Suggest that the way to find out why they do not know their friend Jesus, is to hear today's Bible story.

### For older children

#### Creative

15 - 20 minutes

**Why:** to respond personally to the risen Jesus

**With:** art materials or photography equipment (optional)

1 Before the session, choose one or more of these ideas, depending on how you think the young people would most like to express themselves, and gather together suitable materials and equipment.

- **Drama** - you'll need nothing for this!
- **Art** - paper and pens, pencils or charcoal
- **Photography** - digital camera, PC or laptop and photo printer, a board to mount the photos on

2 The idea is to get the young people to think about how the disciples on the Emmaus road responded to the risen Jesus - and to think about how they personally are responding to him now.

■ **Drama** - get the young people in a circle facing outwards. Ask them to picture how the disciples were feeling as they started their journey. How could they communicate that with their faces and bodies? Give them about 30 seconds' thinking time. Then ask everyone to turn around and freeze in a pose with a facial expression as if they were the disciples. Do it again, this time asking them to imagine the disciples as Jesus broke the bread. Then a third time to show how they feel about all they've heard today.

■ **Art** - ask the young people to draw two faces: one of the

disciples at any point in the story, and one of themselves, showing how they feel about all they've heard today.

■ **Photography** - ask the young people to take portrait photos of each other, showing how they feel about all they've heard today.

3 Make time to enjoy what everyone creates! Acknowledge the different responses: a puzzled or questioning response can be really positive, so don't let anyone feel that they are in any way wrong in the way they react!

4 End in prayer, and offer an opportunity to talk further with any individuals who'd like to.

## THE LEARN AND REMEMBER VERSE

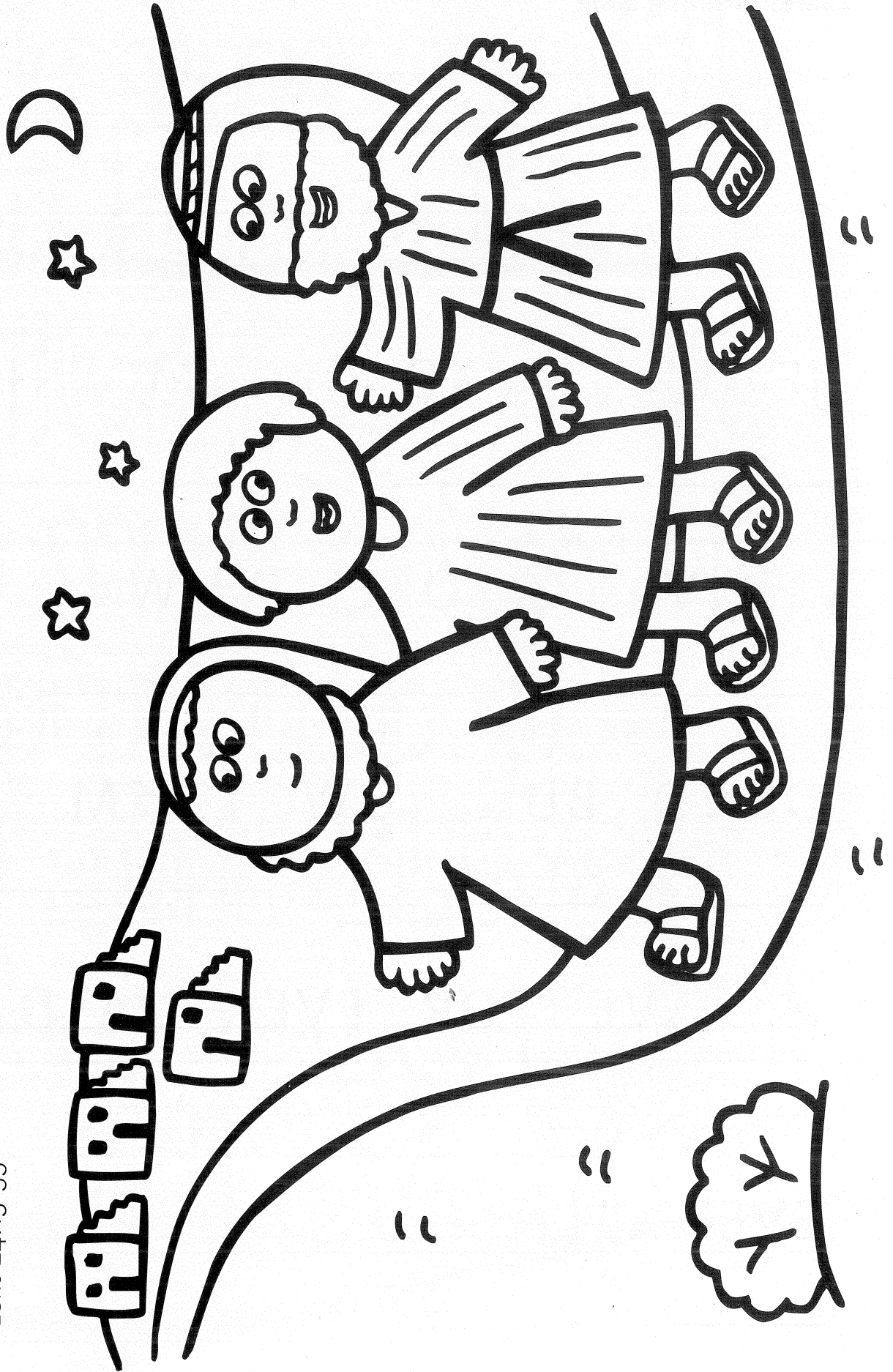
**'Jesus said: "I am the living one! I was dead, but now I am alive for ever and ever."'**

Revelation 1:18

Make enough copies of the coded message from page 74 for each child or pair. Invite the children to tackle the coded message individually or in pairs. Work out the missing letters and add them to the message. Say the verse to each other as an Easter greeting.

A poster for this verse is on page 75. There's also a song, 'Living One', on the *Bitesize Bible Songs 2* CD.

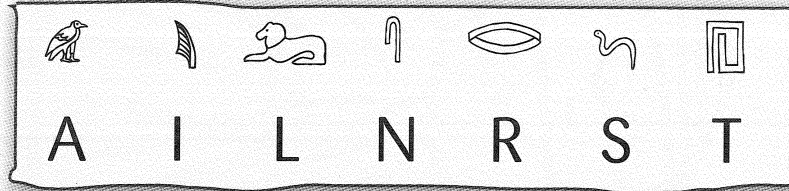
**On the way to Emmaus**  
Luke 24:13-35
























### Easter greeting code






See if you can read the hieroglyphics and fill in the gaps in this Bible verse.




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