



**Walking the  
Emmaus Road:**

**A Journey from  
Lament to Hope**

## ***Luke 24:13-35***

*Now on that same day two of them were going to a village called Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem, and talking with each other about all these things that had happened. While they were talking and discussing, Jesus himself came near and went with them, but their eyes were kept from recognizing him.*

*And he said to them, “What are you discussing with each other while you walk along?” They stood still, looking sad. Then one of them, whose name was Cleopas, answered him, “Are you the only stranger in Jerusalem who does not know the things that have taken place there in these days?” He asked them, “What things?”*

*They replied, “The things about Jesus of Nazareth, who was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people, and how our chief priests and leaders handed him over to be condemned to death and crucified him. But we had hoped that he was the one to redeem Israel. Yes, and besides all this, it is now the third day since these things took place. Moreover, some women of our group astounded us. They were at the tomb early this morning, and when they did not find his body there they came back and told us that they had indeed seen a vision of angels who said that he was alive. Some of those who were with us went to the tomb and found it just as the women had said, but they did not see him.”*

*Then he said to them, “Oh, how foolish you are and how slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have declared! Was it not necessary that the Messiah should suffer these things and then enter into his glory?” Then beginning with Moses and all the prophets, he interpreted to them the things about himself in all the scriptures.*

*As they came near the village to which they were going, he walked ahead as if he were going on. But they urged him strongly, saying, “Stay with us, because it is almost evening and the day is now nearly over.” So he went in to stay with them. When he was at the table with them, he took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them. Then their eyes were opened, and they recognized him, and he vanished from their sight. They said to each other, “Were not our hearts burning within us while he was talking to us on the road, while he was opening the scriptures to us?” That same hour they got up and returned to Jerusalem, and they found the eleven and their companions gathered together. They were saying, “The Lord has risen indeed, and he has appeared to Simon!” Then they told what had happened on the road and how he had been made known to them in the breaking of the bread.*

1. The Emmaus journey begins with lament. Reflect for a few minutes on your own history and relationship with this practice. Is lament a part of your spiritual life?
2. We've explored some reasons – religious and cultural – why “people of faith” often resist lament. Do any of these reasons resonate with you? Can you think of others?
3. “*But we had hoped...*” Sit with this phrase for a few minutes, and allow yourself to enter into its honesty, its vulnerability, its pain. If you were to complete the phrase in your own words, what would you say? What hopes would you list? If changing the pronoun helps you write more honestly, then start with, “*But I had hoped,*” and proceed to make your list from there. If you find yourself resisting, it's okay. Maybe reflect on that resistance. Where is it coming from? What is it about this practice that turns you off? Why?

1. Jesus offers the Emmaus travelers hope by enlarging and contextualizing their stories of lament. Reflect on a story you're telling yourself these days about your life, your world, your hopes, your dreams. How might the Spirit be inviting you to deepen or enlarge this story? Where and how might the perspective of the "stranger" on the Emmaus Road fill in some gaps?

2. The Emmaus story culminates around a common table, a shared meal. It ends when the "stranger" is invited to host, and makes sacred recognition possible. Imagine that you are being invited to Christ's table of new possibility, new nourishment, new visioning. What do you need to receive right now from this abundant table? What are you hungry for? And what do you have to share with others?

## Crafting a Lament

**Invocation:** How do you want to address God as you make this lament?

**Complaint/Protest:** What is wrong? What is on your heart?

**Confession of Trust:** What have you known, trusted, or experienced of God in the past that you might call to remembrance now?

**Petition:** What are you asking for? What assurance do you need?

**Vow to Praise:** What can you honestly affirm and praise about God right now?