

## Homework for Lesson 38: A Story to Tell

A key component of the Christian journey is being able and willing to share your faith experiences with others. For many, this is one of the hardest parts of being a Christian.

The people, places, and things we encounter on our journeys have an interesting way of impacting how we remember what took place and the reason we tell others what took place. It's important that we hear one another's stories and understand how we experience our journeys with God differently, because in hearing how others experience God, we are better able to explain how we experience God. Sharing our stories strengthens the Body of Christ and is an important component of being a follower of Christ. We're going to take some time now to explore how sharing stories from our lives is part of what it means to be a follower of Christ.

### What Just Happened There?

Have you ever been in a situation where you've had to ask the question, "What just happened there?" Maybe you were in class and you zoned out for a bit, and you leaned over to a friend to find out what you missed. Maybe you were watching a sports event where you weren't familiar with the rules and you had to ask someone to clarify why the player was being escorted out of the game. Or maybe you were with a group of people and something so amazing happened that you couldn't fully process the entire meaning of what happening and you needed to hear their perspective to totally understand what was going on.

In the Gospel of Luke, there is a detailed description of an encounter Cleopas and another disciple had with the Risen Christ. In this one description, Luke writes about three different stories. The first story is how the disciples remembered and experienced the life, death and resurrection of Jesus. The second story is how Jesus explains and teaches these traveling disciples about all of the scriptures in light of His life, death, and resurrection. The third story is of how Cleopas and the other disciple couldn't keep this encounter with the Risen Christ to themselves.

Read Luke 24:13-24,

Think about "what just happened there."

What did Cleopas report had just happened in Jerusalem?

What do you think was Cleopas' intention for telling this stranger about what had just happened in Jerusalem? Why did he do it?

If Cleopas had not been telling these events to Jesus, and had in fact been talking to a stranger who didn't know Jesus, how do you think that person would have reacted to the story they had been told?

Read Luke 24:25-27

Think about "what just happened there."

What did Jesus explain to Cleopas and the other traveler had just happened in Jerusalem?

What do you think was Jesus' intention for telling these two about what had just happened in Jerusalem? Why did he do it?

If the travelers had known it was Jesus explaining the scriptures to them, how do you think that they would have reacted differently to the story they had been told?

Read Luke 24:28-35.

Think about “what just happened there.”

What did the two traveling disciples report had just happened on the way to Emmaus?

What do you think was their intention for telling the other disciples in Jerusalem about what had just happened to them? Why did they do it?

If the traveling disciples had not known the disciples in Jerusalem, who do you think they would have told about this encounter they had with the Risen Christ?

There are many different things we can learn about sharing stories from the Road to Emmaus story. We learn from the traveling disciples that you never know who you’re talking to or what kind of story you’re going to end up with at the end of the day. We learn from Jesus that God plays a significant role in the story of our lives. We also learn that through sharing stories, God continues to be present and active in the world.

Verse 35 says, “Then the two disciples described what had happened along the road and how Jesus was made known to them as he broke the bread.” These disciples were on a journey. Along that journey they felt a variety of emotions, they told someone about the events in their life that were concerning them, they listed as someone helped them understand the importance of scripture to their present situation, they invited a stranger to stay with them, and they ate together.

Then they had an experience with the Risen Christ and that experience changed their story. Where just hours before they had “downcast faces” they all of the sudden had a new hope and people to share it with. They didn’t have this powerful experience and keep it to themselves. They immediately went to find people to share their experience with. Their acceptance that Jesus is alive was not the end of the journey, but just the beginning.

For the eighth graders it may seem like this journey of Confirmation is coming to an end. You’ve felt a variety of emotions, shared with others where you are in life, listened as other people of faith have explained how God’s word shapes how we live, you’ve hung in this journey together, and goodness knows you’ve eaten. Somewhere along the way, you have experienced God. And just like the disciples on the road to Emmaus, you can’t keep that experience to yourself.