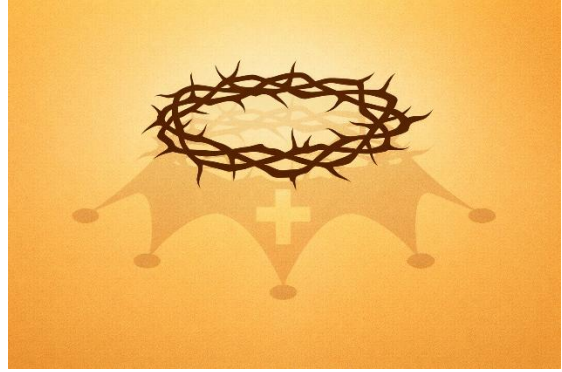


# “Thorns to Throne: An Easter Bible Study”

Luke 24: 1-35



## Leaders Notes:

We are pausing our Hebrews study for a special Easter Bible Study. This session is designed to connect the thorns of the crucifixion to the crown and power of the resurrection. We will explore how the crown of thorns was not a sign of defeat, but a "shadow" of the kingly crown Jesus was destined to wear. The goal is to move the group from seeing their own “thorns” as the end of the story to seeing them as the path to a "throne" perspective.

## Timing tips & Notes for Skipping:

- **The 5-Minute Warning:** In Sections 2 and 4, if the group is sharing deeply about personal "shattered dreams" or seeing Jesus in their "normal" lives, prioritize that over finishing every sub-question.
- **Strategic Skipping (Section 3):** Section 3 (Reflection) is the easiest piece to remove if Section 2 runs long. You can simply ask the "thorns to crowns" question as a closing thought for the group to take home.

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## INTRO – 3min

**Say It:** (Lead your group by reading this section aloud to them.)

Happy Easter Week! We’ve been studying in Hebrews how Jesus is the better sacrifice and the “living way.” Today, we look at the moment that “living way” actually opened. We often treat the resurrection like a happy ending to a sad movie, but for the first witnesses, it was confusing, terrifying, and hard to believe. Today, we’re going to walk from the empty tomb to a dusty road to see how Jesus turns our thorns into a throne.

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## SECTION 1 – Empty Tomb (15min)

**Read It:** (Ask someone to read aloud.)

- Luke 24:1-12

**Discuss It:** (Spend most of your time in discussion.)

- **The Expectation Gap: The women went to the tomb with spices to anoint a corpse (vs. 1). They were prepared for a funeral, not a resurrection. Where in your life are you currently "preparing for a funeral" (focusing on what is dead or gone) while God is trying to show you something living?**

We often settle for the shadow of grief because we can't yet see the substance of the resurrection. Like the women, we need to be reminded: "Why do you look for the living among the dead?"

- **In His crucifixion, Jesus' crown of thorns was a sign of the brokenness of the world. Now that we know the tomb is empty, how does that painful crown of thorns actually prove He is the true King of Glory?**

The resurrection was the turning point that made people realize that those thorns were only a shadow of Jesus' true crown. Jesus didn't just avoid our pain or even death itself, He went right through it and came out as the winner. He took the worst, messiest part of our world (the thorns) and turned it into His throne. **The thorns were the shadow; the empty tomb is the substance.**

- **In verse 11, the Apostles dismissed the resurrection news as "nonsense." Why is it often easier for us to stay in the thorns of our disappointment than to believe in the crown of a new beginning?**

Staying in grief or cynicism feels safer because it doesn't require us to hope again. Believing in the "throne" means we have to risk our hearts on the "substance" of something we cannot yet see. **When the world sees a dead end as nonsense, faith sees a throne being prepared.**

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## SECTION 2 – Emmaus Road (18min)

**Read It:** (Ask someone to read aloud.)

- Luke 24:13-24

**Say It:** (Lead your group by reading this section aloud to them.)

Now we meet two disciples walking away from Jerusalem. They are heartbroken. Notice verse 21: 'But we had hoped that he was the one who was going to redeem Israel.' This is the language of a shattered dream.

**Discuss It:** (Spend most of your time in discussion.)

- **The "But We Had Hoped" Moment: These disciples had a specific blueprint for how Jesus should have saved them. When has a "But I had hoped..." moment in your life made it difficult for you to recognize Jesus walking right next to you?**  
Like shadows, our expectations are often just small pictures and faint images of what God is actually doing. Disappointment is usually the gap between our pre-conceived ideas and His better reality.
- **The Blindness of Grief: Jesus was walking with them, but they were "kept from recognizing him" (vs. 16). Why do you think Jesus often waits to reveal Himself until we've voiced our deepest disappointments?**

He allows us to experience the pain and struggle of the walk so the glory of His presence is more meaningful. He wants to be our companion in the mess, not just the solution to it. **Jesus is often closest when the dream feels furthest away.**

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## SECTION 3 –Reflection – Thorns to Throne (7min)

**Read It:** (Ask someone to read aloud.)

- Luke 24:25-35

**Reflect on It:** (Optional Activity)

**Say It:** (Lead your group by reading this aloud to them.)

In verses 25–35, Jesus explains that the Messiah had to suffer to enter His glory (vs. 26). He was connecting the shadow of the cross to the substance of the crown.

For this reflection, I'm asking you to sit in silence for 2 minutes and ask yourself, What thorns in my life am I currently viewing as a defeat, when God might be using them as a shadow of a future crown?

Give them 2min to sit in the quiet and think/pray/reflect, and then say:

Write down one area where you need Jesus to open your eyes and help you reframe the situation. Ask Him to help you look beyond the thorn and to trust Him to show you how He might make it a crown.

Ask any willing group members to share their **thorn to crown revelations** and pray for them specifically.

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## SECTION 4 – From Sight to Insight (12min)

**Read It:** (Ask someone in your group to read this passage aloud.)

- Luke 24:25-35

**Discuss It:** (Spend most of your time in discussion.)

- **The Breaking of Bread: Their eyes were opened in an ordinary act (vs. 30). What "ordinary" part of your routine could become a space where you look for the presence of the living Jesus? (or what ordinary space has become holy to you?)**

We often wait for a "burning bush" or a "Red Sea" moment to believe God is with us, but Jesus chose a dinner table to reveal His resurrection. Faith isn't just for the crises; it is for the commute, the laundry, and the lunch break. By recognizing Him in the mundane, we realize His "throne" authority covers every second of our "normal" lives. **Jesus isn't just in the big miracles'; He is also in the broken bread of your lunch today.**

- **The Hidden Glory: In verse 26, Jesus asks, "Did not the Messiah have to suffer these things and then enter his glory?" How does it change your perspective of your current thorns to realize that, for Jesus, the suffering wasn't a detour away from the throne, but the actual path to it?**

We often view our trials as interruptions to God's plan, but this passage shows that the thorns are a necessary step towards the crown. Our current struggles are often the very tools God uses to prepare us for what is next. When the disciples saw the scars on His hands as He broke the bread, they realized the scar didn't cancel out the victory. It proved it. **Thorns aren't a sign that God has left abandoned you; they are the shadow cast by the throne He is preparing for you.**

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## DO IT – 7min

Ask your group members to choose one or two options to practice this week. Talk about your plan and encourage them to share their goals with one another. Plan to discuss their choices again next week. Create a little accountability within your group.

- **The Emmaus Walk:** Go for a 20-minute walk this week with a friend or spouse. Spend the first 10 minutes talking about a "But I had hoped..." disappointment. Spend the last 10 minutes asking, "Where might Jesus be in the middle of this?"
- **The "Hoped For" Pivot:** Look back at the "But we had hoped..." disappointment you identified in Section 2. Write it down on one side of a card, and on the other, write one way Jesus might be using that very "thorn" to redirect you toward His "throne" purpose.
- **The Scar Testimony:** Identify a "thorn" from your past that has now become a "crown." Share that story with someone this week to show them that thorn doesn't cancel out crown. It proves it.
- **The Ordinary Invitation:** At one meal this week, consciously invite Jesus to "break bread" with you. Pause before you eat and acknowledge that He is the living guest at your table.
- **Spur Someone On:** Text someone who is currently in a "tomb" season (grief, loss, or disappointment). Don't give them a cliché; simply tell them, "I'm walking the road with you, and I believe the story isn't over yet."

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## PRAY IT: 3min

(Pray however your group prefers, but if your group struggles with prayer requests becoming a burden, we are offering an alternative each week. Remember: The goal is always **Bible Study, Community, and Care**, so praying for one another is important, but it doesn't have to take place inside your meeting times. As a matter of fact, it's better if it reaches beyond your time constraints. You are the leader and guiding your group to healthy practices is important.)

**Prayer:** (Lead your group by praying this prayer this aloud with them.)

Lord Jesus, we thank You that the tomb is empty and the road is open. We thank You for wearing the thorns so that we might share in Your throne. Forgive us for the times we walk in disappointment, failing to see You standing right beside us in the thorns of our lives. Open our eyes this week to see that our current struggles are not signs of Your absence, but shadows cast by the crowns You are preparing for us. Make our hearts burn with hope in our ordinary meals and our difficult walks. We go out now not as people who are defeated by our thorns, but as people who serve a risen Savior who has already claimed His throne.

May we live as witnesses to Your living presence in every normal Tuesday and every broken moment. Amen.

**TOTAL TIME: 65min**