

**Read: Luke 24:36-49**

## Making Sense of Salvation's Math

### **Luke 24:36-49**

While they were still talking about this, Jesus himself stood among them and said to them, "Peace be with you." They were startled and frightened, thinking they saw a ghost. He said to them, "Why are you troubled, and why do doubts rise in your minds? Look at my hands and my feet. It is I myself! Touch me and see; a ghost does not have flesh and bones, as you see I have." When he had said this, he showed them his hands and feet. And while they still did not believe it because of joy and amazement, he asked them, "Do you have anything here to eat?" They gave him a piece of broiled fish, and he took it and ate it in their presence. He said to them, "This is what I told you while I was still with you: Everything must be fulfilled that is written about me in the Law of Moses, the Prophets and the Psalms." Then he opened their minds so they could understand the Scriptures. He told them, "This is what is written: The Christ will suffer and rise from the dead on the third day, and repentance and forgiveness of sins will be preached in his name to all the nations, beginning at Jerusalem. You are witnesses of these things. I am going to send you what my Father has promised; but stay in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high."

*In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.*

The math teacher was nearing her wit's end. She had done everything she could think of to explain the concept of subtracting with regrouping, but Joey was not getting it. She worked with Joey outside the classroom and at recess. She even showed him some videos on an educational website. Joey was still confused.

Then, she noticed his sci-fi shirt and had an idea. "Joey, how about you think of it like this—if you don't have enough ones, you can go over to the tens column and then *transport* the tens to the ones." "Transport?" said Joey slowly. "Oh! I see—I TRANSPORT the tens to the ones! I got it!" he ended enthusiastically.

The teacher opened Joey's mind by using a word he could understand.

The disciples were confused, not by a tricky math problem but by the fact that the One whom they had followed for the last three years was killed, right before their eyes, on a cross. It just didn't add up. What were they supposed to do? Confused and afraid, they hid together in a room.

Jesus appeared to his disciples and gazed at them with loving understanding. “Peace be with you,” he said as he watched their scared and bewildered faces. They wondered, “Is this really Jesus? What if it’s Jesus’ ghost?”

Then, like the teacher did for Joey, Jesus found ways to help them understand. “Here guys! Look! It’s me! See these scars on my hands and feet? Remember three days ago when you saw me nailed on the cross? Touch the nail marks, I’m real!” The teacher, Jesus, could see that his students were still not quite getting it, so he tried another approach. “Do you have anything to eat? Watch me eat this broiled fish. How many ghosts eat broiled fish?”

And then, “Jesus opened their minds so they could understand the Scriptures.” Like Joey, they finally got it. With their newfound understanding of Christ’s death and resurrection—he urged them to tell others about what they had learned.

*The questions below are to help families discuss this devotion. The questions are divided by age group as suggestions, but anyone could reflect on any of the questions as they desire.*

### **Questions for the Younger Children**

- What is something you have trouble understanding?
- What were the two things that Jesus did to show his scared disciples that it really was him and not a ghost?

### **Questions for Elementary Age Children**

- It’s easy to get angry or frustrated when you don’t get something. When that happens, how can this story help you deal with times of confusion in your life?
- Who is your favorite teacher? What makes that person a good teacher? Thank God for the good teachers in your life and the best teacher—Jesus!

### **Questions for Middle School and Above**

- What are some math concepts that confuse you? How did you eventually figure them out?
- What are some biblical truths that might confuse you? What can you do to clear up the confusion? (Spoiler alert: thank God for the Holy Spirit who works faith in our hearts despite our confusion!)

### **Closing Prayer:**

Dear Teacher, sometimes things just don’t make sense. Thank you for opening our minds to the most important math lesson: 3 nails + 1 cross = 4 givenness because of Jesus, and heaven is ours! Please help us to tell others the same. Amen.