THE ROADS SERIES · MILE MARKER 03

The Road Leads to the Table

Can the Eucharist set you free? A free companion guide on the Emmaus road, eyes that were opened, and learning to receive.

THE DIRT ROAD WITH JANSEN

Free From What?

Can the Eucharist actually help us get set free? And what does set free even mean? Paul gives us a place to start.

> GALATIANS 5:1
>
> For freedom Christ has set us free; stand fast therefore, and do not submit again to a yoke of slavery.

A yoke is heavy. It is the wooden beam laid across an animal's shoulders so it can be driven where someone else wants it to go. That is the picture Paul paints. Something heavy, weighing us down, steering us where we were never meant to go.

And here is the part we do not like to say out loud. We get enslaved because there is a real enemy. Invisible, but real. Behind every sin is the whisper of a demon, a suggestion that feels like our own thought. Paul calls them fiery darts.

> EPHESIANS 6:12
>
> For we are not contending against flesh and blood, but against the principalities, against the powers, against the world rulers of this present darkness, against the spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places.

Being set free starts with understanding where that whisper is coming from. And Jesus did not leave us to fight an invisible enemy with nothing in our hands. He gave us the sacraments. Every one of them pours out grace, and grace is what we need to win a spiritual battle.

In this guide, we are going to look at one of them up close. We are going to walk the road to Emmaus and watch two people get their eyes opened at a table.

Seven Miles to Emmaus

It is the third day. That very morning, women went to the tomb and found it empty. Now, that same afternoon, two disciples are walking out of Jerusalem toward a village called Emmaus, about seven miles away. They are talking about everything that has happened. The cross. The burial. The rumors.

Then a stranger falls into step beside them.

> LUKE 24:15 AND 16
>
> While they were talking and discussing together, Jesus himself drew near and went with them. But their eyes were kept from recognizing him.

When I read stories like this, I step into them. I picture myself as the fourth person on that road. I can hear the gravel. I can see how heavy their faces are. And I can hear Jesus ask what they are talking about.

They stop right there in the road. Are you the only visitor to Jerusalem who does not know what just happened? And Jesus, with what I can only call a holy sense of humor, says, "What things?"

So they tell Him. They tell Jesus all about Jesus. And then He starts teaching. Beginning with Moses and all the prophets, He walks them through the Scriptures and shows them Himself on every page. Patient. Kind. Direct. He is teaching them how to look, so they can finally see.

> *"Their eyes were open the whole walk. They just could not see."*

Here is what gets me. These two had followed Him. They knew His voice. And still they did not recognize the One walking right beside them. Sometimes the Lord is closer than we think, and our eyes are simply not open yet.

Their Eyes Were Opened

By the time they reach the village, evening is coming. Jesus acts as if He is going on. But they will not let Him. Stay with us, they say. The day is almost over. So He goes in.

> LUKE 24:30 AND 31
>
> When he was at table with them, he took the bread and blessed, and broke it, and gave it to them. And their eyes were opened and they recognized him.

Notice when it happens. Their eyes were not opened while He talked. They were not opened while they walked beside Him. They were not opened when they sat down at the table. Their eyes were opened the moment He took the bread, blessed it, broke it, and gave it to them.

Took. Blessed. Broke. Gave. That is the Mass. That is the Eucharist.

As a former Protestant pastor, I did not see this connection for a long time. Scott Hahn helped me see it in his book *The Lamb's Supper*, and I cannot recommend it strongly enough.

There is power in the broken Body of Christ. Not just fellowship around a meal. Real power. Power to heal, to restore relationships, to give wisdom and understanding. If you are raising teenagers, you already know you need supernatural strength. The Eucharist is that powerful.

> LUKE 24:32
>
> They said to each other, "Did not our hearts burn within us while he talked to us on the road, while he opened to us the scriptures?"

The Word warmed their hearts on the road. The breaking of the bread opened their eyes at the table. The road leads to the table.

Learning to Receive

Jesus took, blessed, broke, and gave. But somebody had to receive. And for a lot of us, that is the hardest part.

Have you ever gone to confession, been absolved, and walked out wondering if it really worked? Maybe I did not say it right. Maybe I should have cried. Maybe I am still carrying it.

I remember one of my early confessions. The sins I confessed were dark. The priest absolved me, and I got up to leave. Then I stopped, turned around, and asked, "Father, can I ask you a question? Have I really been forgiven?"

He looked at me, not just in the eyes, but almost into my heart, and said, "Yes. You have been forgiven. You have been absolved." I was looking at the priest, but it was as if I could see Christ on the cross. Not a figure from history. Someone who stepped into my sin and my darkness and touched my life.

> *"The Eucharist opens the eyes of our understanding, so we can see our own story the way the Kingdom sees it."*

Why Opened Eyes Matter for Freedom

Take a spirit of rejection. One approach asks, what spirit is it, and tries to cast it out. Discipleship Deliverance asks a deeper question. Where was the open door? Did it come through generational patterns, personal sins, a soul tie? Where did that spirit find access to your story?

Answering that takes more than information. It takes opened eyes. Every sacrament gives us grace for the fight, and at the table, the Lord opens our eyes so we can see what is holding us back from the purpose He has for us.

Questions For the Road

Take these with you this week. Step onto the road as the fourth person and walk with them. Bring what you notice to prayer.

- ○ Where in your life has the Lord been walking right beside you, while your eyes were kept from recognizing Him?
- ○ The two disciples said, "Stay with us." Is there a place in your heart where you have been letting Jesus keep walking instead of inviting Him in?
- ○ What is hard for you to receive right now? Forgiveness? Reconciliation? Hope? Grace for yourself?
- ○ Is there a pattern you keep fighting where you have only asked "what is it?" and never "where did the door open?"
- ○ When you go to Mass, do you come to watch, or do you come ready to receive?

Before Your Next Mass

1. **Arrive a few minutes early.** Sit quietly and name one thing you are carrying.
2. **Bring it to the table.** As the bread is taken, blessed, broken, and given, offer that thing to Him.
3. **Receive on purpose.** As you receive the Eucharist, pray simply, "Lord, open my eyes."

A Prayer for Opened Eyes

You do not need the right words. Pray this slowly, or pray it in your own words. The Lord is not waiting for a perfect prayer. He is waiting to be invited in.

PRAY THIS THIS WEEK

Lord Jesus, You walked the road with those two disciples when they could not see You. Walk with me too.

Open the Scriptures to me until my heart burns. Open my eyes at Your table, so I can see my own story the way You see it.

Show me where I have opened a door to the enemy, and give me the grace to close it. Teach me to receive Your forgiveness, Your healing, and Your love, all of it.

Stay with me, Lord. The day is far spent. Come in. Amen.

Where Do I Go From Here?

If this stirred something in you, here are two next steps.

Start with the free guide. *The Five Strategies Behind Your Struggles* walks through the five open doors the enemy uses most and helps you recognize them in your story. Join The Mile Marker at TheDirtRoadWithJansen.com and it is yours.

Walk the full process. Discipleship Deliverance is a self-paced course or a live online class, with a workbook and a journal to help you look at your own story. Learn more at DiscipleshipDeliverance.com.

Keep Walking the Road

The road leads to the table.
And at the table, He opens our eyes.

This guide is a companion to Mile Marker 03 of the Roads series on The Dirt Road with Jansen, episodes anchored in the biblical roads where Jesus meets people mid-journey.

Listen to the full episode, read the blog, and find every free guide.

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