



**Connect Bible Study Questions**  
**Easter/April 2024**  
**(31 March - 4 May)**

## Introduction

Every month we have a God-given theme delving into different aspects and areas of faith. Over the course of 2024 these themes connect and take us on a faith journey out into the wonders of life with Jesus. The following discussion questions adapt our theme for small Connect Bible study groups or for individual discipleship and we have additional resources in our monthly resource packs for daily and deeper reflection (check out this month's: [here](#)).

Each weekly session has questions and thoughts which correspond with our **Daily Worship** and **Sunday Live** topics. Our hope is you can use these Connect sessions as best fits your situation and discussions, so as presented or as your conversations lead with all the freedom to pick and adapt as you need. We love to hear how or indeed if, these materials are helping you grow in your faith and walk with Jesus, so please let us know!

## Theme

Welcome to our Connect Bible study questions for April 2024! It takes us from Easter Sunday on 31 March to Saturday 4 May.

This month we will be talking to, walking with, eating, meeting, and being blessed by Jesus our Wild Messiah!

Jesus defied expectations in the first century — refusing to be boxed in. His family, his friends, the establishment, the ruling regime, his loyal followers — all attempted to set limits on Jesus. And, this uncanny storyteller, teacher, and lover of food sidestepped all their attempts. In the 21st century people still try to box Jesus in and — just like in the first century — it's sometimes his most devoted followers that are doing it.

Sometimes we try to put Jesus in a box and only take him out every Sunday to wrap him up again afterwards...

But you can't box Jesus. You can't box God. The love at the heart of universe doesn't come with packaging. There is no gift-wrap option. So this Easter, having leapt after God, leapt with one another and 4 Bible leapers, we want to land our leap next to Jesus. The real Jesus. The wild Jesus. The Jesus who helps people see potential in themselves and their world that they thought was written off.

Like many wild things in the world — the wild sea, and the wild wind, the wild roots and wild flowers — Jesus brings transformation and new life.

Let's meet the real Jesus. The Jesus that re-wilds our hearts!

## **Weekly Overview**

Our theme is divided into five weeks. Each one focuses on a different way we interact with Jesus. In the first we will be talking to Jesus as we relive the wonder of resurrection — our uncontainable, unlimited saviour's return. In the second week we will take a walk with Jesus joining Cleopas and his friend as they head to Emmaus, and unexpected revelation.

In the third week we are eating with Jesus on the beach, reflecting on what it means to catch on to his mission while we munch! The fourth week has us contemplating all the different ways Jesus meets with us and in the final week we turn our eyes to wild heaven as Jesus blesses us.

## **Seeds to sow**

Each week begins with a seed to sow conversation starter. These are open-ended prompts to inspire creative responses to the themes. Perhaps they will inspire you to write a song or a poem, or to paint, draw, move or explore! They are short and sweet, simply a starting off place for you and your imagination. Expand, tailor and develop as suits you.

## **Format**

Each week is split into three question sections. We imagine the material could be the basis for a 90 minute session but feel free to adapt to your group and rearrange the order or adapt the content to suit you.

# Week 1: Wild Jesus!

## Introduction:

Wild Jesus! Beyond expectations, outside limits, without constraints! We begin our theme talking to Jesus as we relive the wonder of resurrection — our uncontainable, unlimited saviour's return. What are our questions for Jesus about this wild story? And how can this wildness of the resurrection — of a love so wild even the tomb couldn't hold it — inspire us to live today?

**Seeds to sow:** How can we be part of new life and re-wilding this week?

**Video:** Coming to [www.sanctuaryfirst.org.uk/connect](http://www.sanctuaryfirst.org.uk/connect) soon!

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### 1) Luke 24: 1-12

*Wild Jesus, Uncontainable!*

The disciples dismissed the tale as wild gossip. But this wild gossip was true!

What questions do you have for Jesus about this moment?

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### 2) John 20: 18-23

*Wild Jesus, Unlimited!*

Locked doors, and nerves rattling with fear, are not able to hold Jesus back.

What situations this week could we invite Jesus and his words of peace into?

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### 3) Matthew 8: 18-22

*Wild Messiah*

What does it mean to us that we have such a wild messiah? One who back then couldn't be contained by a building, and who still can't be constrained by walls or a roof today!

Jesus, we want to know what your wild life means for ours!

How wild is our faith?



# Week 2: Wild Walking

## Introduction:

This week we will take a walk with Jesus, joining Cleopas and his friend as they head to Emmaus... and unexpected revelation. There are things that we learn from talking to Jesus, to coming to Jesus in prayer, and there are other things we learn as we journey beside Jesus — going somewhere together. If last week we were face to face with Jesus, here we are side by side looking out at the wild open road ahead together.

**Seeds to sow:** What walks could you have with Jesus this week?

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### 1) Luke 24: 13-27

*A Wild Saviour by our side*

This story catches us off guard, what is Jesus up to, why is he holding back?

Jesus's first action here is simply to fall into step with the disciples in their grief and confusion and walk with them in that. And then he throws Cleopas and his pal a curveball. The takeaway: walks with Jesus can get wild...

What do you notice in this story? What's been your experience of Jesus walking along the road with you?

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### 3) Luke 24: 28-32

*A Wild Moment!*

After all the words on the road, it is an ordinary action, a simple gesture — which opens their eyes in a sudden wild moment of revelation. Are there certain revelations of Jesus that are only possible to glimpse when we have walked a little way with him?

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### 2) Isaiah 61

*A Wild Saviour, bringing transformation.*

Here we interrupt the walk to hear a reference from Isaiah, perhaps part of the Scripture Jesus was discussing on the road to Emmaus.

Righteousness and praise springing up like wild flowers!

Looking at our world and the societies, and communities we live in — what dusty dry roads do you see the world travelling in? Where do we see places in need of renewal and transformation?

What would it look like for Jesus to transform arid, parched land (both literally and figuratively) in our neighbourhoods, into meadows of wild flowers? Vibrant praise springing up!

You could stop and pray about it as a group just now.

# Week 3: Wild Eating

## Introduction:

This week we are eating with Jesus on the beach, reflecting on what it means to catch on to his mission while we munch! Food is not incidental to life with Jesus, it's a hugely important part of it!

**Seeds to sow:** How can we eat with Jesus today?

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### 1) John 21: 1-14

#### *Catching on!*

If you were on that boat, how would you feel? You've been out all night and some distant figure on the shore suggests you just try the other side!

How do you respond to Jesus offering you breakfast on the beach?

And also it's important to remember that sometimes in life we don't catch a thing.

Imagine this chapter ended at verse 3. Sometimes a given chapter in our lives ends at verse 3. Before rushing on to the miraculous catch let's remember the empty nets and weary arms hauling them. Let's remember empty cupboards and empty shelves. Jesus joins us in our eating, but also in our hunger, knowing himself keenly what it is to hunger and thirst.

How can we remember those with empty nets and empty cupboards this week?

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### 2) John 21: 15-19

#### *Catching a break!*

You could say Peter catches a break. Three times he denied Jesus and now he gets three times to return to him. And note, all this happens *after* breakfast. Jesus ate with Peter and the rest before this encounter. Jesus cares about feeding us body and soul.

Jesus used food here intentionally. How could you use food to bless others this week?

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### 3) Isaiah 55: 1-7

#### *Catching a bargain...*

Free food! Eating is not simply a metaphor in the Bible — it is a central part of restoration and revival. Our Wild Jesus wants to eat with us — for nourishment is at the heart of the central message of God's grace!

What's the good news here you would share with others?

# Week 4: Wild Encounters

## Introduction:

Meeting with Jesus 2,000 years ago — and meeting with him today— can lead to wild outcomes! Jesus crossed social boundaries and brought disparate people together. Jesus bust out of all the boxes people tried to put him in. And while we might feel smug, feeling like we know Jesus better, are we not sometimes guilty of putting Jesus in a box too? Of limiting who we think Jesus meets with, and how they meet? Are we only comfortable with a Jesus on our terms, who never surprises us or stretches us? Or are we up for meeting the real Jesus, the wild Jesus, who loves so compassionately and deeply?

**Seeds to sow:** Are there any ways we have been surprised by Jesus in our lives?

**Video:** Coming to [www.sanctuaryfirst.org.uk/connect](http://www.sanctuaryfirst.org.uk/connect) soon!

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## 1) Matthew 9: 10-13

### *Wild Dining!*

Here we see those on the margins able to get comfy while those in the establishment start feeling uncomfortable.

What do we learn from God here? What do we see God doing? How comfortable are we sitting alongside those on the margins?



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## 2) Luke 5: 12-26

### *Wild Healing.*

Jesus's acts of compassionate healing — helping others physically and spiritually — caused consternation and uproar.

What's your thoughts about the healing in this passage?

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## 3) Luke 19: 1-10

### *Wild Hospitality.*

Jesus breaks protocol! He invites himself round to the house of an unpopular and unloved citizen — and in that very gesture Zacchaeus's life is transformed.

As a church we are called to be disrupters and stand up for those who are excluded. How do we find our voice challenging unfair and ungodly systems?

# Week 5: Wild Blessing

## Introduction:

In this our final week we conclude by looking up to the glorious wildness of heaven and asking Jesus for his blessing. His blessing to appreciate this life and this world given to us. His blessing to know him and grow with him — like the irrepressible wild flowers we are called to be.

**Seeds to sow:** How can the wildness of Jesus's generous, selfless love re-wild our souls with compassion for the world around us?

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## 1) Luke 24: 50-53

*Wild Blessing!*

"...he lifted up his hands and blessed them." The wildness of Jesus is not the wildness of chaos, or whirlwind or wreckage. It is the wildness at the heart of real vibrant, peace and blessing.

Our Wild Jesus is not volatile, or erratic, or unstable. He is wild like a tree is wild — constant, steady, providing nourishment and shelter for others.

So, let's unpack this moment. How come the disciples are praising God when Jesus has just left them? What does this tell us about the blessing of Jesus?



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## 2) Acts 1: 1-11

*Go wild!*

"What you hanging around here for!? Why are you looking at where Jesus has *been*, rather than where Jesus is *now*?"

Do we sometimes need the same nudge? Are we sometimes inclined to look to where we last saw Jesus rather than to the new place Jesus might be calling us? If so, how can we 're-wild' our imaginations to see where Jesus is leading us next?

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## 3) Acts 1: 12-14

*Wild party!*

A new type of community forms around Wild Jesus! People of different backgrounds drawn together through his wild legacy. You can bet there was food and partying as the ragtag bunch set about changing the world. How can we rediscover this spirit of Godly and gentle wildness?