



REDISCOVERING THE CROSS

SMALL
GROUP
GUIDE

March 21, 2021

HOW WE CHANGE

HOW DID IT GO? (10 MINUTES)

REACHING UPWARD: GROWING IN YOUR RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD

- ❑ Listen to the Anthem of Preparation on Psalm from the March 7, 2021 Traditional Service (time stamp 29:19) or read Psalm 23 out loud.
 - ❑ As you listen, meditate on God's boundless love for us and all that He has done to welcome us into union with Him.
 - ❑ Ask God to reveal areas where you have been trying to gain righteousness or approval on your own.
- ❑ Seeing all of the work that God has done and continues to do in us and for us, prayer is a powerful way to welcome the Holy Spirit to come and do that work in our hearts everyday. If you have not already, join your FPC family in praying ten minutes a day from now until Easter. Visit fpchouston.org/lent-discipleship-series to access all of the resources.

REACHING OUTWARD: INVESTING IN YOUR NEIGHBORS

- ❑ Do you have a neighbor who is wrestling with their feeling of place or identity? How could you relate this week's lesson as a source of comfort? Could you pray over them or offer to pray with them over their situation as a member of God's family?
- ❑ How would you explain your new identity in Christ to a non-believer? How would you compare and contrast worldly adoption and adoption into God's family?
- ❑ Consider partnering with Presbyterian Children's Home and Services (PCHAS) or Agape, both ministry partners of FPC.

REACHING BEYOND

- ❑ How did God stir you to learn and grow from this passage?

HEAD

Observe the text and the author's main points.

HEAD (15-20 MINUTES)

According to the Westminster Shorter Catechism (Q. 35), sanctification is "the work of God's free grace, whereby we are renewed in the whole man after the image of God, and are enabled more and more to die unto sin, and live unto righteousness." In modern terminology, sanctification is sometimes called spiritual formation.

As you read 2 Peter 1:3-8, watch for God's role and our role in the process of sanctification.

His divine power has granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of him who called us to his own glory and excellence, by which he has granted to us his precious and very great promises, so that through them you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped from the corruption that is in the world because of sinful desire. 5 For this very reason, make every effort to supplement your faith with virtue, and virtue with knowledge, 6 and knowledge with self-control, and self-control with steadfastness, and steadfastness with godliness, and godliness with brotherly affection, and brotherly affection with love. For if these qualities are yours and are increasing, they keep you from being ineffective or unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. (ESV)

1. In verse 8, what does Peter say is the goal, or vision, of sanctification?
2. According to verses 3-4, what are the gifts from God that enable our sanctification?
3. What does “partaking of the divine nature” mean?
4. In verses 5-7, what is the Christian is called to do? What is the ultimate attribute of a follower of Christ?

HEART (15-20 MINUTES)

1. In verse 5, Peter advises us to “make every effort” to develop sanctified lives. Elsewhere in this book, he repeatedly exhorts us to be diligent. What is our role in sanctification?
2. Compare your spiritual maturity (or your group's maturity) now to 3 months ago, a year ago, or to when you were a new believer.
3. Discuss ways you might grow more and how you can begin to partner with God to that end.

HEART

Envision how the text—when applied—might transform your inner life in terms of your thoughts, attitudes, and behaviors.

HANDS (10 MINUTES)

REACHING UPWARD: GROWING IN YOUR RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD

- Set aside a few minutes each day to make space for God by reading Scripture, walking outside, or praying—each with intervals of silent listening to God.
- Journal specifically about your participation with God in your sanctification. Are you growing in your ability to love others? If the Lord convicts you of a certain area for growth, consider reaching out to a friend to begin praying together each week regarding this area of your sanctification.
- Pray ten minutes per day by making space for prayer and pressing play on one of FPC's Lenten Guided Prayers (found on the FPC Houston's Sermons podcast channel), or on our website at: fpchouston.org/lent-discipleship-series. This week's guided prayer is designed to help you reflect on if the qualities listed in verses 5-7 are present and increasing in your life.

SALVATION / JUSTIFICATION

Happens instantaneously when one chooses to follow Jesus Christ as Lord. In a moment we are saved and justified—and this lasts for all of eternity.

SANCTIFICATION

The ongoing process throughout our entire Christian lives that begins with the moment of salvation and is carried on into completion when we are raised with Jesus Christ in glory.

GLORIFICATION

Occurs in a moment when we see the LORD in glory (the completion of our sanctification). Glorification lasts for all of eternity; Christ-followers share in all of the blessings of heaven as co-heirs with Christ: We see God in all of His glory and finally become fully like Jesus.

REACHING OUTWARD: INVESTING IN YOUR NEIGHBORS

- Use email, phone, or social media to invite friends to participate in an FPC livestream Easter Worship Service.
- Send out Easter cards including personal greetings and a resurrection verse.
- Invite someone to the Alpha course that begins April 6. (Contact epaulpeter@fpchouston.org for more details).
- Do Biblical Justice at every opportunity.
- Volunteer with one of FPC's local ministry partners listed at fpchouston.org/go/opportunities/city/grid/.
- Take a practical step to serve someone else in love. What would it look like to make a habit of looking for these opportunities?

REACHING BEYOND

- How is God stirring you to put this passage into practice?

HANDS

Apply the text by moving from inward reflection to outward action looking for practical ways to live the text out in our lives to serve others.

NEIGHBOR

Anyone in your life—whether a friend, colleague, family member, classmate, or literal neighbor—to whom you can show God's love.

