



# REDISCOVERING THE CROSS

SMALL  
GROUP  
GUIDE

March 28, 2021

THE SHADOW OF THE CROSS

## HOW DID IT GO? (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](http://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.

### 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](mailto: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/](http://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 did God stir you to learn and grow from this passage?

## HEAD (15-20 MINUTES)

READ ALOUD THE PASSAGE FOR THIS WEEK, JOHN 12:12-19.

### HEAD

Observe the text and the author's main points.

12 The next day the great crowd that had come for the festival heard that Jesus was on his way to Jerusalem. 13 They took palm branches and went out to meet him, shouting, "Hosanna!" "Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!" "Blessed is the king of Israel!" 14 Jesus found a young donkey and sat on it, as it is written: 15 "Do not be afraid, Daughter Zion; see, your king is coming, seated on a donkey's colt." 16 At first his disciples did not understand all this. Only after Jesus was glorified did they realize that these things had been written about him and that these things had been done to him. 17 Now the crowd that was with him when he called Lazarus from the tomb and raised him from the dead continued to spread the word. 18 Many people, because they had heard that he had performed this sign, went out to meet him. 19 So the Pharisees said to one another, "See, this is getting us nowhere. Look how the whole world has gone after him!"

1. Though other gospels may give more detailed accounts, what basic things does John want to communicate in verses 14-15? Read Zechariah 9:9 also and share what aspects of a deliverer are emphasized in this prophetic verse.
2. Read verse 16 again. Consider reading John 2:22 also. How is everyone in the above verses participating in bringing Jesus's glory closer to fruition?
3. Without even realizing it, the Pharisees speak truth in verse 19. What is true about verse 19?
4. Now read ahead to John 12:20-23. How do these verses affirm (or change) your answer to #3? What about these events would signal to Jesus that the time for glory had arrived?

### HEART (15-20 MINUTES)

1. Allow yourself to personally enter this scene. Who all do you meet? How would you describe each person or group (or animal) and the role they play in this scene? Now make it more personal. Who do you most relate to currently? Why do you think that is?
2. Consider why the "whole world" was going after Jesus. Why have you chosen to "go after Him"? How can we be a more vocal witness to the world around us and what difference do you think that would make in "the whole world going after Him"?
3. Bonus question if you have time: Pastor Matt discussed our fickle nature in comparison to God's relentless faithfulness, as exemplified in these verses. How does fickleness or lack of faith interrupt your relationship with the Lord? How can you submit to our King in this area of your life?

### 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

- Join your FPC family on our final LenTEN podcast episode where you will be guided through the prayer practice known as Imaginative Prayer through the verses we studied today.
- Commit to spending time journaling about your response to question #1 (or #3) under the Heart session. Spend time reflecting and in prayer with the Lord.
- Attend (in person or virtually) the Maundy Thursday and Good Friday services at FPC Houston. To register, visit [fpchouston.org/save-a-seat](http://fpchouston.org/save-a-seat).

## REACHING OUTWARD: INVESTING IN YOUR NEIGHBORS

- ❑ Consider inviting a friend to one of FPC's Holy Week or Easter Services: [fpchouston.org/save-a-seat](https://fpchouston.org/save-a-seat).
- ❑ Is there someone in your life who may be part of the "crowd" we read about today (maybe you might even realize you are part of that crowd)? Are they (or you) open to Jesus but haven't quite trusted in Him completely? Prayerfully consider inviting them to Alpha, a community designed to help people explore questions about spirituality and faith in a non-judgmental space. This 8-week course begins April 6th but registration will remain open until Tuesday, April 13. At this time, all meetings will take place online via Zoom. For more information, email Pastor Emmanuel Paulpeter ([epaulpeter@fpchouston.org](mailto:epaulpeter@fpchouston.org)) or to register online, visit [fpchouston.org/alpha](https://fpchouston.org/alpha).
- ❑ Consider partnering with one of our FPC Ministry Partners:
  - ❑ houston welcomes refugees Online Orientation. Free, and required before becoming a Welcome Team or Move-In Team member. April 6 and April 19. 50 minutes via zoom.
  - ❑ "The Church & Human Trafficking" Class Join the Freedom Church Alliance for this free class to discuss the Church's role in battling human trafficking! Monday evenings April 12, 19 and 16 from 7-8 PM.
  - ❑ MSM Operation ID needs Data Intake Volunteers M-Th from 9-11 AM. Interested or want to know more? Contact Carrie Sadler, Volunteer Coordinator, at [csadler@msmhouston.org](mailto:csadler@msmhouston.org).

## 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.

