



fellowship church

Sermon Discussion Guide

Easter Sunday, April 5, 2026 - Pastor Scott Allen

The Grave, the Garden, and the God of New Creation (John 19:40–20:18)

Discussion Starter

- Have you ever tried your hand at (literal) gardening? What were some of the enjoyable parts of that experience? What were some of the frustrating parts?
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Reflection Questions

- Look through John's resurrection account (19:40–20:18). What details there strike you or stand out as significant? Why?
 - What circumstances in your life lately reflect *the garden*—God's good intent for creation?
 - What circumstances in your life lately reflect *the grave*—the effects of the Fall, sin, death and decay?
 - Which of these two (garden or grave) feels more dominant in this season of life? Why?
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Application Questions

- (Personal implications) Is it easy or difficult for you to see your own sin as something that contributes to the brokenness of the world? Why?
- (Personal implications) Pastor Scott focused on the story of Mary Magdalene, especially her experience of being transformed by Jesus and hearing his voice speak to her personally. How often do you think about God's heart for you, personally? Why does this truth matter?

- (Communal implications) Life together as Christians includes not only “weeping with those who weep” but “rejoicing with those who rejoice” (Rom 12:15). In light of Resurrection Sunday, spend some time as a group rejoicing together over the good things God has been doing in each person’s life.
- Vision Question: *We are a family of disciples on mission.* What is one place in your life where you feel that God is calling you to help extend the garden?
- (Missional implications) What stood out to you about the baptism testimonies from this week? Do they give you any ideas about what it would look like for you to become a part of someone else’s baptism story?

This week’s guide written by: Riley Neal

Tips for Group Leaders

- DO ask open-ended questions. DON'T ask questions where a short "right" answer ends the discussion.
- DO encourage mutual participation by every group member. DON'T feel the need to respond or weigh in after every contribution. Avoid monologuing. As the leader, your goal is to facilitate mutual discussion between all group members (Eph 4:15–16).
- DO ask follow-up questions: "What do you mean by that?" "Tell me more!" "Has anyone else experienced something similar (or different)?"
- DO feel free to pick and choose questions that are a good fit for your group. DON'T feel the need to get through every question, and don't worry if you spend most of your time on a few questions that generate a lot of good discussion.
- DO keep the main thing the main thing. Steer your conversation toward the main theme of the sermon and the biblical text. DON'T get sidetracked on less important matters, theological debates, etc. A rabbit trail might sometimes be worth pursuing—if group members are wrestling deeply with the implications of biblical truth for their lives. Otherwise, steer conversation back to the main topic.
- DO get into the text. It could be helpful to read over the passage together or ask questions directly related to the text. Help group members engage the text for themselves and respond to what they see there.
- DO revisit important moments from the sermon—a memorable story, an impactful quote, a convicting point of application. "Remember when pastor X talked about Y? What impression did that make on you?"
- DO allow space for reflection, silence, and thoughtful answers. DON'T feel that you need to jump in or ask a new question just because the group has been quiet for a few seconds. A good rule of thumb is to wait until the silence gets awkward, then count silently to ten before jumping in.
- DO bring discussions home to practical, concrete everyday life. DON'T let discussion and application stay in the abstract realm. Steer discussion toward *what does responding to this sermon look like for me?* If comments are vague or general, ask "what would that look like, practically?"