

## CROSSING OUT SECRET DISCIPLES

March 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2026

**When It All Went Down // John 19:31-42**

### Sermon Context

After Jesus declares “It is finished,” the story doesn’t end—it forces a response. In John 19:31–42, we see different people encountering the cross and deciding what to do with it. Some try to hide their conviction, others examine the evidence, and some step out of the shadows into bold faith. The cross doesn’t leave room for neutrality—it calls us to move from hidden belief to public devotion.

### CONNECT – Announcements (page 2) & Building Relationships

1. How has praying for “Your One” gone this week? Any updates on “Your One”?
2. Have you ever had a moment where you knew there was **no going back** after a decision? What happened?

### REFLECT - Out of the Word and Into Our Lives

3. Read John 19:31-42 aloud together. What stood out to you most from the passage itself? What stood out to you from Sunday’s message?
4. What were the religious leaders trying to accomplish by removing the bodies quickly? Why do you think they were more concerned with appearances and ritual than truth? In what ways do people today try to hide conviction instead of dealing with sin?
5. Where in your life are you currently trying to **hide conviction instead of dealing with it honestly**? What would it look like to bring that into the light this week?
6. When you look at the cross, do you tend to **minimize your sin, ignore it, or truly face it**? What does your response reveal about your view of Jesus?
7. What details prove that Jesus truly died (not just “passed out”)? Why does John emphasize eyewitness testimony so strongly? What happens when someone honestly examines the evidence about Jesus?
8. Why does John say he is writing these things? What keeps people from believing even when evidence is strong? What does it look like to **move from awareness to belief**?
9. What risks did Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus take by going public? What changed in them after the cross? Why does the cross make **secret discipleship impossible to maintain**?
10. In what areas of your life might you be living as a **“secret disciple”**—following Jesus privately but not publicly? What fear is driving that?
11. If someone looked at your everyday life (work, friendships, conversations), would it be **obvious that you follow Jesus**? Why or why not?
12. What is one specific step you know God is calling you to take to **go public with your faith**? (A conversation, invitation, confession, baptism, obedience, etc.)

13. What is one “ship” in your life that needs to be **burned** so there is no turning back?  
What has to change starting this week??

🕒 **PROTECT – Care for one another (divided, gender-specific groups)**

**Practice The 3 Circles Method Again**

**Review These Bridges to the Gospel<sup>1</sup>**

**1. CHURCH Bridge**

- a) "Were you brought up in a particular religious tradition?"
- b) "Do they talk about heaven much in your church?"
- c) "What does your church teach about the way a person becomes a Christian?"

**2. PERSONAL EXPERIENCE Bridge**

- d) "Through the years have you come to know Christ in a personal way, or are you still on the way?"
- e) "What is your current level of interest in spiritual things?"
- f) "Where are you in your own personal search for meaning and purpose in life?"

**3. INTELLECTUAL Bridge**

- g) "Is there a specific question or concern that is hanging you up in your spiritual journey?"
- h) "Has anyone ever shared with you what the Bible teaches about \_\_\_\_\_?"
- i) "Has anyone ever shared with you how to have a personal relationship with God?"

**4. PERSONAL OPINION Bridge**

- j) "In your personal opinion, what is a Christian?"
- k) "What do you think of?" (God, Jesus Christ, religion, the Bible, meaning of life, etc.)

**5. CURRENT ISSUES Bridge**

- l) "Rob, the Bible is a remarkably relevant book. Would you like to see what it has to say about this issue?"

**6. SPORTS Bridge**

- m) "Did you know that (name of well-known athlete) is a Christian?"

**7. FELT NEEDS Bridge**

- n) (Used to show how the Gospel answers the deepest needs of people)
- o) "You know, I still have my share of problems too, but having a personal relationship with Jesus Christ has made all the difference in how I handle them! I used to worry myself sick; God is teaching me how to have peace in the midst of the storms of life."

---

<sup>1</sup> From Dr. Timothy Beougher Professor of Evangelism at SBTS & Author of *Invitation to Evangelism*. (Not Original to Pastor Avery)



p) "Yes, Mary, I have experienced great loneliness in my life too. I used to wonder if anyone would miss me or even care if I died. But I have found a special Friend who loves me just as I am, who will never leave me."

**8. PRAYER Bridge**

q) "Is there something I could pray about for you?"

**9. RELATIONSHIP Bridge**

r) "Bill, we've been friends for a while now. We have talked together about so many things, yet there is a very important part of my life I have never shared with you. Could I share with you about my spiritual pilgrimage?"

**Identify 2 or 3 Bridges that would work best for you.**

**Practice using one bridge with a partner to lead into a gospel conversation. (Use the 3 Circles Method to share).**

**Announcements**

**Journey to the Cross: Friday, April 3<sup>rd</sup> @ 6:00 pm**

**Easter Egg Hunt: Saturday, April 4<sup>th</sup> @ 11:00 am**

**Easter Services: Sunday, April 5<sup>th</sup> @ 8:30 am, 10:00 am, 11:30 am.**

**Resources for Going Deeper**

**Helpful Evangelism App:**

Download this app: <https://www.namb.net/evangelism/life-on-mission-app/> or search Life on Mission App