FBC SUMMIT

LIFE Group Discussion Guide

October 4, 2026

Matthew 5:33-37

CONVERSATION STARTERS

What are some highs or lows you experienced this past week?

What Scripture has been shaping you recently?

Where have you seen God moving in your life this week?

What did you hear in today's sermon OR read in today's passage that you would like to discuss?

What did you learn about yourself in today's sermon/passage?

What did you learn about God in today's sermon/passage?

What convicted you as you listened to today's sermon OR read in today's passage?

OPENING

What qualities make you trust someone when they give you their word?

Our words reveal a great deal about our character. We make promises, give our word, make commitments, and tell people what we intend to do. Yet it can be tempting to exaggerate, make excuses, or use impressive promises to convince others that we are trustworthy.

In Matthew 5:33–37, Jesus teaches that His followers should be people whose words can be trusted. Our integrity should be so consistent that we don't need elaborate promises to convince people we're telling the truth.

Today we'll how the followers of Jesus should live with such honesty and integrity that their simple "yes" and "no" can be trusted.

SCRIPTURE READING

Read **Matthew 5:33–37** together.

Ask the group to listen for:

- What Jesus says about making oaths.
- Why our words should be trustworthy.
- What Jesus means by letting our "yes" be "yes" and our "no" be "no."

PASSAGE SUMMARY

Jesus continues His teaching in the Sermon on the Mount by addressing truthfulness and integrity.

The Old Testament taught God's people not to make false vows and to keep the promises they made. Over time, people had developed ways of using oaths to make certain statements sound more trustworthy while treating other statements as less binding.

Jesus goes deeper than simply asking whether someone technically kept an oath. He is concerned with the character of the person speaking**.**

A disciple of Jesus should be so committed to truth that his or her ordinary words can be trusted.

This means:

- We tell the truth even when it costs us.
- We keep our commitments.
- We don't manipulate people with our words.
- We don't exaggerate to make ourselves look better.
- We don't use religious language to make questionable statements seem more believable.
- We take responsibility when our words and actions don't match.

Jesus isn't saying that every formal oath or legal affirmation is inherently wrong. His emphasis is on developing such consistent integrity that our everyday speech is truthful and dependable.

Jesus calls His followers to be people of such consistent integrity that their words can be trusted without needing elaborate promises.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Why do you think Jesus placed such a strong emphasis on truthfulness?
Truthfulness reflects God's character. When Christians consistently speak the truth, their lives demonstrate integrity and give credibility to their witness.

What is the difference between being technically truthful and being genuinely honest?
Technical truthfulness can involve carefully choosing words to avoid an obvious lie while still misleading someone. Genuine honesty seeks to communicate truthfully and clearly without deception or manipulation.

Why might people feel the need to make promises or swear that they are telling the truth?
They may want to convince others, protect their reputation, make an exaggerated claim seem credible, or avoid the consequences of simply telling the truth.

What are some ways people can misuse words without technically lying?
Exaggeration, half-truths, misleading statements, gossip, leaving out important information, sarcasm intended to deceive, or making promises they don't intend to keep.

What does Jesus mean when He says, "Let your yes mean yes, and your no mean no"?
Our words should be straightforward and trustworthy. We should mean what we say and follow through on our commitments.

How can our speech affect our Christian witness?
When our words are consistently honest and trustworthy, people can see Christ's character reflected in us. When we are dishonest or deceptive, our credibility and witness can be damaged.

What role does humility play in becoming a person of integrity?
Humility allows us to admit when we are wrong, avoid exaggerating our accomplishments, accept responsibility for our mistakes, and speak honestly even when the truth is uncomfortable.

APPLICATION

Are there situations where you are tempted to exaggerate, hide the truth, or make yourself look better? What would honest communication look like instead?

Are there commitments you've made that you need to take more seriously? What step can you take to follow through?

What is one practical way you can strengthen your integrity this week?
Examples:

- Tell the truth even when it is uncomfortable.
- Admit when you are wrong.
- Keep a promise you've made.
- Stop exaggerating.
- Refuse to participate in gossip.
- Follow through on something you've committed to doing.

DIG DEEPER

Read James 5:12. How does James reinforce Jesus' teaching?

Read Ephesians 4:25. Why does Paul connect truthfulness with Christian community?

Why can exaggeration damage our credibility even when the basic statement is true?

How does God's faithfulness provide a model for our own integrity?

How can a healthy LIFE Group cultivate a culture where honesty, confession, and accountability are encouraged?

CLOSING THOUGHT

Jesus isn't simply telling us to avoid lying. He is calling us to become people of integrity**.** Our words should match our character. When we say yes, people should be able to trust us. When we say no, people should be able to trust us. When we make a commitment, people should know that we intend to keep it. Our integrity matters because our lives are meant to reflect the character of Christ.

Ask yourself:
Can people trust my words?

Do my actions match what I say?

Am I honest even when the truth is inconvenient?

Is there a commitment I need to make right?

This week, intentionally practice complete honesty in your words and follow through on your commitments—even when doing so is inconvenient or costly.

Remember: A person of Christian integrity doesn't need impressive promises because consistent character makes their words trustworthy.

LOOKING AHEAD

Next week we will discuss **Matthew 5:38-42** as we continue the series, *The Greatest Sermon Ever Preached: The Sermon on the Mount.*

PRAYER FOCUS

- Thank God that He is completely trustworthy and faithful.
- Ask Him to help us become people of honesty and integrity.
- Pray for courage to tell the truth even when it is difficult.
- Ask God to help us keep our commitments and take responsibility when we fail.
- Pray that our words would strengthen our relationships and reflect Christ to others.
- Pray that our LIFE Groups would be communities where honesty, accountability, grace, and integrity are encouraged.
- Pray specifically for the invitation portion of our worship services—that hearts will be open, the Spirit will move powerfully, and people will respond in obedience to Christ.

COMMENTARY

Matthew 5:33-37

Jesus addresses how people used clever, indirect oaths and substitutions to deceive others without technically breaking a vow or invoking God's name.

<u>Background on Oaths</u>

- **Binding Vows:** Oaths made directly to God were considered serious and binding under Old Testament law.
- **Religious Loopholes:** People avoided using God's personal name by swearing by heaven, the earth, Jerusalem, or their own heads.
- **Dishonest Gain:** Religious individuals used these substitutes as technical loopholes to lie or manipulate while making it seem like they were telling the truth.

<u>Jesus' Command</u>

- **No More Oaths:** Jesus tells his followers not to swear oaths by heaven, earth, or even their own heads, noting that people do not even control their own hair.
- **Simple Honesty:** He instructs disciples to let their "yes" mean "yes" and their "no" mean "no".
- **The Root of Deception:** Anything beyond honest, plain speech comes from evil and dishonest hearts.