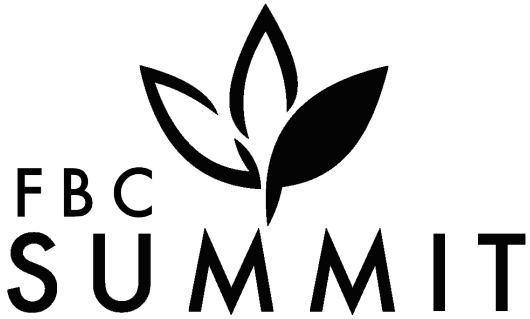




LIFE Group Discussion Guide

August 23, 2026

Matthew 5:1-2

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

Who is someone you have learned a lot from? What made you want to listen to and learn from that person?

Matthew 5 begins one of the most important teaching sections in all of Scripture—the Sermon on the Mount.

Jesus is about to teach His followers what life looks like under the rule and reign of God. Before we begin working through His individual teachings, it is important to step back and understand who is teaching, who is listening, and what Jesus is calling His followers to become.

Today we'll begin our journey through the Sermon on the Mount by focusing on the posture we need when we come to Jesus' teaching: followers of Jesus listen to His Word, receive His authority, and allow His teaching to shape the way they live.

SCRIPTURE READING

Read **Matthew 5:1–2** together.

Ask the group to notice:

- Who Jesus is teaching.
- Where Jesus goes.
- Who comes to Him.
- What Jesus begins to do.

PASSAGE SUMMARY

Matthew 5 begins the Sermon on the Mount, which continues through Matthew 7.

Jesus has already begun His public ministry, announcing that the kingdom of heaven is near. Now He teaches His disciples what life in God's kingdom looks like.

Notice that Matthew mentions both the crowds and the disciples. Jesus sees the crowds, but His immediate focus is on teaching His disciples.

The phrase "he went up on the mountain" also reminds us of important moments in the Old Testament when God revealed His will to His people. Jesus is presented as the authoritative teacher who is bringing God's truth to His people.

Jesus then sits down, which was a common posture for a teacher in that culture.

The important point is not simply that Jesus is giving people information. He is calling people to listen to Him and allow His teaching to reshape their lives.

The main point is: the Sermon on the Mount is Jesus' teaching about what it looks like to live as His kingdom people.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

What stands out to you about the way Jesus begins the Sermon on the Mount?

Jesus intentionally moves away from the crowds and begins teaching His disciples. This shows that the Sermon is not merely information for curious listeners—it is instruction for people who want to follow Him.

Why is it important that Jesus is the one doing the teaching?

Jesus speaks with divine authority. We aren't simply considering another person's opinion or philosophy. We are listening to the Son of God and submitting ourselves to His authority.

What does it mean to be a disciple rather than simply an admirer of Jesus?

An admirer appreciates Jesus, but a disciple listens to Jesus and follows Him. Disciples allow His teaching to shape their beliefs, decisions, relationships, and everyday lives.

Why do you think Jesus began by teaching His disciples before addressing specific behaviors?

Jesus is concerned with transforming the whole person. Christian behavior flows from a transformed heart and a growing relationship with Christ.

What might prevent someone from genuinely listening to Jesus' teaching?

Pride, self-reliance, distractions, preconceived ideas, unwillingness to change, or assuming that we already know what Jesus is going to say.

What does it look like to approach the Sermon on the Mount with a teachable heart?

We listen carefully, ask what Jesus is actually saying, compare our lives with His teaching, receive correction, and seek to obey what He commands.

Why is the Sermon on the Mount important for discipleship today?

Jesus addresses the attitudes, priorities, relationships, and practices that should characterize His followers. It gives us a picture of what life under Christ's authority should look like.

APPLICATION

When you read Jesus' teaching, do you tend to ask, "What does this mean for me to do?" or simply, "What does this mean?"

Why does that difference matter?

Is there an area of your life where you know what Jesus teaches but have been slow to obey?

What might be keeping you from responding?

As we begin studying the Sermon on the Mount, what is one area where you want Jesus to challenge or transform you?

Examples:

- Your attitude
- Your relationships
- Your words
- Your thoughts
- Your priorities
- Your prayer life
- Your trust in God

DIG DEEPER

Read Matthew 7:24-29. ***How does Jesus describe someone who hears His words and actually puts them into practice?***

Read Luke 6:46-49. ***What connection does Jesus make between calling Him "Lord" and obeying His teaching?***

Why is it possible to know a lot about Jesus without actually following Him?

How can a LIFE Group help one another move from simply knowing Scripture to actually living it?

What would change in our church if we became people who consistently put Jesus' teaching into practice?

CLOSING THOUGHT

As we begin the Sermon on the Mount, we should remember that Jesus isn't simply giving us a list of religious rules. He is showing His followers what life looks like under the rule of God. The challenge is not simply to hear Jesus. It is to listen, trust, and obey.

Over the coming weeks, Jesus will challenge the way we think about relationships, marriage, anger, honesty, generosity, prayer, anxiety, judgment, and obedience. Some of His words will encourage us. Some will challenge us. Some may even confront areas of our lives we'd rather avoid. But every word comes from our King.

Ask yourself:

Am I truly listening to Jesus?

Am I willing to let His Word challenge me?

Is there an area where I need to move from hearing to obeying?

As we begin studying the Sermon on the Mount, ask God to give you a teachable heart. Come each week ready not only to learn what Jesus said, but to ask, "How should I live differently because of what Jesus has taught me?"

LOOKING AHEAD

Next week we will discuss **Matthew 5:13-15** as we continue the series, *The Greatest Sermon Ever Preached: The Sermon on the Mount*.

PRAYER FOCUS

- Thank Jesus for teaching us what it means to live as His disciples.
- Ask God to give us humble and teachable hearts.
- Pray that we would approach Scripture with a willingness to obey.
- Ask God to use the Sermon on the Mount to transform our character, relationships, priorities, and daily lives.
- Pray that our LIFE Groups would be places where people don't simply study God's Word but encourage one another to live it out.
- 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 5:1-2

In Matthew 5:1-2, Jesus sees the crowds, goes up a mountain, sits down to teach, and addresses His disciples with profound authority. This opening sets the stage for the Sermon on the Mount, presenting Jesus as the new, greater lawgiver and authoritative teacher.

Setting and Posture

- **The Mountain:** Jesus goes up on a mountain, reminiscent of Moses receiving the law on Mount Sinai, framing Jesus's words as foundational covenant teaching.
- **Sitting Down:** Jesus sits down, which was the standard, formal posture for a Jewish rabbi or teacher delivering authoritative instruction.
- **The Audience:** While crowds are present, He specifically addresses His disciples, indicating that the core ethics of the kingdom are meant for those who are truly committed followers.

The Act of Teaching

- **Coming to Him:** The disciples draw near to listen, showing an active posture of discipleship.

- **Opening His Mouth:** This phrase signals a solemn, weighty, and momentous declaration—transitioning from general ministry and healing into direct, life-defining verbal instruction starting with the Beatitudes.