



THAT'S WHAT HE SAID

AUGUST SERMON SERIES

Discussion Guide

You Have Heard It Said

Matthew 5:21-48 / Pastor Dave Bennett / August 23, 2026

Session Overview

Our scripture from the sermon this week is all about how society had interpreted the Law and Jesus correcting the people of what the Law truly means. Last week, we heard that Jesus did not come to abolish the Law but to fulfill it and that's exactly what he's doing in this passage - telling us what the Law was always supposed to mean. In our sermon this week, we will be talking about some of the things we may have getting wrong and challenged to make a drastic decision to turn and follow the authority of heaven.

Session Flow (60-75 minutes)

Welcome and Icebreaker (10 minutes)

Many of us do things out of a habit that we have imitated from someone else even when we didn't know the intention behind it. Do you have any imitated habits like this?

Purpose: The sermon is all about correcting habits without heart, so this question will point the group in that direction.

Scripture Reading

Read Matthew 5:21-48 aloud together. Split the passage among the group if you would like.

Leader Coaching Sidebar

- We will be talking about some estranged relationships and who we may need to reconcile with. Keep an inviting environment so everyone feels comfortable sharing with one another.
- While others in the group are sharing difficult situations, take note of it so at the end of the discussion when you end in prayer, you can pray for each other by name. This creates a dynamic of intentionality among the group that can help the group come closer together.

Discussion (40-50 minutes)

- 1. Pastor Dave said that everyone has an opinion on how you should live your life. What are some voices that most shape how people make decisions today?**

Leader's Note: The group can relate the voices of our culture to the voices that caused Jesus to make his "you've heard it said..." statements.

- 2. Jesus repeatedly says, "You have heard it said... but I tell you..." What does that phrase reveal about His authority?**

Leader's Note: We know that Jesus is the King of kings and has all the authority, but the people in his day did not. How does the statement of authority change our perspective now?

- 3. The sermon is not Jesus changing the Law but revealing the full depth of it. How does that change the way you understand obedience?**

Leader's Note: This can bring a new perspective into the Law and how we can follow the Law well from now on.

- 4. What are some of the "social rules" we have in our culture that goes against what Jesus teaches us?**

Leader's Note: Once again, this can reveal the reality that we can also fall into the temptation of listening to the voices of the world and not the voice of Jesus.

- 5. The sermon asks, "How much of what you believe God says is actually something you just heard?" What is one belief or habit that we may need to bring back under the authority of Scripture?**

Leader's Note: Think about how lies about God can spread from the voices of the world.

- 6. When was a time you let your anger guide your actions? What was the outcome and what might that teach you for dealing with anger in the future?**

Leader's Note: We live in a society that pushes to cut someone off rather than work through anger. Think about what Jesus has to say that is counter-cultural to this.

- 7. Is there an unreconciled relationship that might be getting the way of your worship? Why do you think unresolved anger matters so much in the kingdom of God?**

Leader's Note: Encourage the group to be supportive of one another as they may be sharing some sensitive issues within a relationship.

- 8. We learned that the word "perfect" in Matt. 5:48 does not mean without flaws but whole. How does this take the pressure off being obedient to the Laws of God?**

Leader's Note: By shifting the meaning from flawless to whole, we get a new idea of what it means to follow the law - not just to follow the rules, but follow the heart behind them.

- 9. We talked about God's radically uncomfortable generosity. How does imitating this quality challenge you to be more generous to those who have not earned it?**

Leader's Note: Think about how this calls us to treat people who we don't get along with like our closest friends.

- 10. Jesus calls His followers to love enemies and imitate the Father's generous mercy. Who is difficult for you to love, bless, or pray for right now?**

Leader's Note: Once again, be sure to support one another as some people may share difficult stories or situations.

Application and Prayer (10-15 minutes)

If someone looked at your actual choices, reactions, relationships, and priorities this week, which kingdom would they say you are living in—and what would need to change for Jesus' authority to become more visible in you?

Closing Prayer Suggestion

Lord we lift up the relationships that we need to reconcile and also pray for generous mercy to show to all people. We come to you humbly to hear the words you are speaking to us through this scripture. Thank you for sending your son to not abolish the Law but to fulfill it, giving us the perfect model to imitate. We ask you to give us the strength and obedience to be perfect as you are perfect. We ask these things in your name, amen.