

Discussion Guide

Date: 1/11/2026

Sermon Title: How can I know Jesus?

Scripture: Luke 10:38-42

This discussion guide is a layout to be used with a group or class. We have included opening and closing prayers to start and end your group. The guide may be used for personal or family reflection as well.

OPENING PRAYER

Gracious and loving God, as we begin this new year and this new journey together, quiet our hearts and minds. Help us to set aside distractions, worries, and the many things that pull our attention away. Like Mary, draw us to sit at the feet of Jesus, to listen deeply, and to receive the gift of his presence. Open your Word to us, shape us by your Spirit, and guide us as we seek to know you more fully. We pray this in the name of Jesus, our Teacher and Lord. Amen.

Opening Question:

1. Share a time when you got distracted and it led to a mistake or missed opportunity. What did you learn from that experience?

Series Framing:

This new worship series, Practicing the Way, invites us to recover the heart of discipleship: knowing Jesus, becoming like Jesus, and doing what Jesus did. If Jesus is no longer physically walking beside us, how do we follow him today? John Mark Comer reminds us that discipleship is not merely believing in Jesus, but arranging our lives around him. This week we begin at the foundation: What does it mean to truly know Jesus?

Digging into the Word:

Read Luke 10:38-42 (NRSV). Invite the group to read the passage aloud slowly. Even use an alternative version if it's helpful.

1. As you enter this story, do you find yourself relating more to Martha or Mary right now? Why? What emotions do you imagine Martha and Mary experiencing in this moment?
2. What is the difference between knowing about Jesus and knowing Jesus?
3. In this text Mary is following Jesus like an apprentice. Who or what is currently serving as your 'rabbi'? The person, idea, or influence that is most actively shaping how you think and live?
4. Mary sits physically at Jesus' feet. What might "sitting at the feet of Jesus" look like in our lives today? For you? What practices help you slow down enough to be attentive to Christ?
5. Jesus says, "There is need of only one thing." What do you think is "one thing" maybe for you? How might our lives and even our church look different if this "one thing" truly came first?

Wesleyan Insight:

John Wesley believed that God's grace not only saves us but forms us through intentional practices.

6. How do practices like prayer, Scripture, worship, and holy conversation help us grow in our relationship with Christ?
7. Which practice might God be inviting you to reclaim or begin in this new year? In the weeks to come as well into Lent we will be exploring practices. Learn more at fumcr.com/practicingtheway

John Wesley wrote: "It is by the grace of God that we know Him, love Him, and are changed by Him."

Other scriptures to consider:

Philippians 3:8; John 15:4; Psalm 27:4; Matthew 6:33

Sermon Questions:

1. The sermon starts with a story of being distracted and when something bad happens, like dropping the ball. What in life is distracting us from following Jesus?
2. Clayton mentions the 3 goals of an apprentice (disciple) of Jesus from John Mark Comer's book to be with your rabbi, to become like your rabbi, to do as your rabbi did. We must determine who is our rabbi? Who is our rabbi? Who are you following?
3. One of the lessons from our scripture is that first goal of being with Jesus. What ways are you finding to just be with Jesus?
4. The second thing Pastor Clayton mentions is the distractions that keep us from following Jesus. What specific distractions in your life prevent you from focusing on what truly matters, and what practical steps could you take to silence them?
5. The sermon raises the question of how much time do you spend consuming media or scrolling social media compared to intentionally sitting in the presence of God, and what does that ratio reveal about your priorities?
6. We are reminded of Emmanuel, "God with us", how can we go through our day knowing that God is with us every moment? Even when you don't know what to say or what to do.

Applying it:

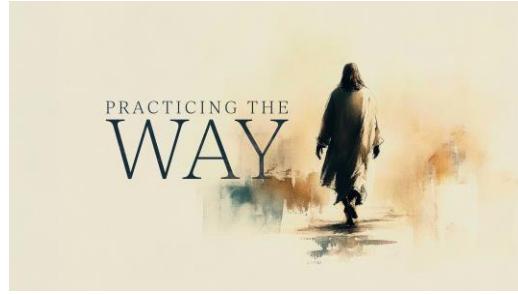
1. How does the concept of apprenticeship in biblical times challenge our modern approach to spiritual growth and discipleship?
2. If you truly believed and lived as though God was present with you in every single moment, how would that change your responses to both challenges and celebrations?
3. What would it practically look like for you to "sit at the feet of Jesus" this week? What specific practices could help you do this?
4. What is one distraction you could silence or reduce this week to create more space for God's presence?

CLOSING PRAYER

Lord Jesus Christ, we confess that we are often distracted by many things. We rush, we strive, and we worry, even when you are near. Teach us to choose the better part—to sit with you, to listen for your voice, and to

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shape our lives around your love. As we begin this journey of practicing the way, form us by your grace so that we may know you more deeply, become more like you, and reflect your love to the world. We offer ourselves to you again this day, trusting that you are faithful to lead us. In your holy name we pray. Amen.

WAYS TO RESPOND

Choose one or more of the following practices this week.

1. Start and end each day this week by saying aloud: "Emmanuel - God is with me." Possibly set 2-3 reminders on your phone throughout the day with just the word "Emmanuel" to pause and remember God's presence.
2. Schedule 15 minutes daily to simply "sit at Jesus' feet" - no agenda, just being present with Him. Choose a quiet space, silence your phone, and read a short passage of Scripture slowly. Practice listening rather than talking. Ask: "Jesus, what do you want to teach me today?"
3. Identify your biggest distraction (social media, news, TV, etc.). Fast from it for one week. Replace that time with Scripture reading, prayer, worship music, or silence. Notice what happens in your heart and mind.
4. Track your time for 3 days: How much time with Jesus vs. other "rabbis"? At the end of each day, ask: "What shaped my thoughts and emotions today?" Make one concrete change based on what you discover.

Looking Ahead:

This is week 1 of a 3-week series on "Practicing the Way."

- Encourage group members to read John Mark Comer's book if interested. Or even attend in-person or online our [Wednesday Learning Community Practicing the Way](#) Jan 14, 21, 28.
- Commit to sharing next week how your chosen practice went.
- Consider: What does it mean to not just learn about Jesus, but to apprentice your life to Him?

"Who is your rabbi? Who or what is shaping your life?
In a world of distractions, where do we find focus to shape our lives?"
Let this question guide your week ahead.