



Are You a Fan or a Follower of Jesus?

SERMON BASED SMALL GROUPS

Sunday, October 6th, 2024

Today's Lesson

Today's lesson is based on Pastor Tim's sermon from Sunday, September 29th, entitled "Are You a Fan or Follower of Jesus?" and based on John 6.

PURPOSE

The purpose of today's lesson is to discuss the difference between being a fan or a follower of Jesus Christ and determine which we are.

ARE YOU A FAN OR A FOLLOWER OF JESUS

Read John 6:66-68 and continue to memorize it.

"After this many of his disciples turned back and no longer walked with him. So Jesus said to the twelve, 'Do you want to go away as well?' Simon Peter answered him, 'Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life.'"

INTRODUCTION (*MONDAY DEVOTION*)

Jesus spoke to incredibly large crowds, something many modern pastors and churches long for, but He saw that their motives were misplaced. They were more interested in the food He offered or the healings He provided. They sought the works of Jesus' hands, not Jesus' face and heart.

Jesus reminds the people that He is the bread of life, and the Bible records that the people grumbled instead of accepting His message. His further teaching on eating His body and drinking His blood offended them all, and they left.

The Word of God brings life to some and an offense to others. Which does it bring to you? Are there things Jesus has said in His Word that make you want to leave the faith? What is God asking of you that you find you are unable to digest?

Jesus had many hard teachings. How do we respond to these?

- Luke 14:26 – If you do not hate your mother and father...
- Luke 14:27 – Take up your cross daily...
- Luke 16:13 – You cannot serve both God and money...
- Luke 6:27-28, 35 – Love and pray for your enemies...
- 1 Timothy 2:2 – Pray for those in authority over you...
- Luke 6:29 – Turn the other cheek...
- Luke 9:23 – Suffer like Jesus suffered...
- Matthew 7:13 – Hell is real and many people are headed there...

- Matthew 6:14-15 – Forgive others or God won't forgive you...
- Matthew 10:32 – Deny Jesus before others and Jesus will deny you before God...

What hard teachings from Jesus would you add to this list? How are you doing at following these hard teachings? What is your functional theology in these areas?

POINT ONE: DEFINITIONS OF FANS AND FOLLOWERS (*TUESDAY DEVOTION*)

A fan is an enthusiastic bystander who cheers, critiques, and celebrates an event, but has no part in the actual event. Fans wear the jerseys but don't actually play on the field. Some questions to ask about fans:

- What does it mean to be a TRUE fan? Are fans dependable?
- How many fans think they know more than the coaches or players?
- What do we see in fans who protest a coach or a team member or a strategy?
- What do we think of fans who argue with the referees?
- How do we feel about fans who rush the field or attack the players or threaten the officials?

A follower is one who imitates their leader. One who looks like, talks like, and reflects what is modeled by the leader.

- A follower is willing to fill the lowest position or sit in the worst seats to support the leader, the team, and the goal. Struggles, and even failures cannot keep them away.
- A follower is all in, no matter what, with no hesitation and no qualifications.
- A follower strives to grow, to be trained, to be equipped, in order to help others to become followers as well.

POINT TWO: DESCRIPTION OF FANS (*WEDNESDAY DEVOTION*)

A Fan:

- Sits & is Served – I'm entitled - V. 10
- Talks V. 14
- Seeks Handouts V. 26
- Desires to be seen V. 28
- Thinks works can be good enough.
- Complains & Disappears V. 60-66 - Overwhelmed - Self dependent

A fan is willing to pay to a point, as long as they receive more than they are asked to give, and as long as they get the results they want. If they are pressed, they will walk out, just like fans at some of the recent college football games.

SELF-EVALUATION: Ask yourself; am I like this? Do I do this? In what ways does this describe me?

We have all heard the phrase “fair-weather fans” or “jumping on the bandwagon” to describe how fickle fans can be. A fan is motivated by self-interest and by how they are seen.

SELF-EVALUATION: What perspective does a fan see from? What is their focus?

POINT THREE: DESCRIPTION OF FOLLOWERS (*THURSDAY DEVOTION*)

Follower:

- Stands & Serves V. 11
- Trains V. 16-21
- Seeks God’s Heart V. 27
- Is Surrendered V. 40
- Confesses & Depends on God V. 68-69 - Overcomers - Spirit Filled

A follower is not concerned with what following will cost; their motive is the spread of the Gospel and the increase of Jesus’ name and glory. A follower does not desire glory for themselves.

A follower sees from the perspective of the Word of God and seeks the face and the heart of God.

SELF-EVALUATION: As we did for the description of fans, ask yourself again; am I like this? Do I do this? In what ways does this describe me?

TRAINING OPPORTUNITY – D-GROUPS

We have an opportunity to practice this kind of personal mentorship (personal training). We will be launching discipleship groups (D-Groups). D-Groups will consist of 3-4 people of the same gender, meeting outside of our normal service times and locations, to help us close the gap between what we profess and what we practice. D-Groups will provide mentorship and accountability and will also train participants to become mentors to others. For more information, please see a member of the staff today.

FURTHER STUDY (FRIDAY DEVOTION)

As we were studying for this small group we found the following from a Life In Action devotional. A fan is someone who wants to be close to Jesus for their own benefit, while a follower is someone who is loyal and all in for Jesus:

- Fans

Fans are in it for themselves, and want the benefits of being close to Jesus without having to do anything in return. They are fickle and may come and go, especially if things don't go their way.

- Followers

Followers are loyal and all in for Jesus (sound familiar?), and are committed to following him through the ups and downs. They are faithful and stay with Jesus even when things are difficult.

Some say that there is nothing wrong with being a fan. However, when it comes to Jesus, it is important to move from being a fan to being a follower.

Some ways to recognize a follower of Jesus include: Recognizing Jesus' authority in their lives, Making disciples, Getting baptized, and Obeying Jesus' commands.

What's the difference? A follower is willing to become more like Jesus in every area of life, while a fan of Jesus simply admires or respects his message. In other words, just because someone promotes Jesus doesn't mean he has the godly wisdom and attributes to lead others.

CLOSING QUESTION – (SATURDAY DEVOTION)

Review the materials from this week and spend some time considering the questions below. Be prepared to share with your small group on Sunday. Take a few minutes and pray for your small group and for your small group leader.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SERMON BASED SMALL GROUPS

1. Use the sermon notes you have taken along with this handout to discuss the sermon with your family in your home as part of your daily devotions.
 - We would love to hear about conversations you have in your home around the table with your family – how is the Bible impacting your daily lives?

2. Use these resources to help you apply the sermon in your daily life, at work, school, home, at Walmart and Waffle House, etc. Remember, sermons aren't events to be attended. The Word is not for information, it is for transformation. The sermon is meant to be obeyed.
 - Talk with your family about how to successfully apply the sermon in your daily life. Look for “teachable moments” when real life events happen and discuss how we should react and respond according to Scripture.
 - When you are successful at applying Scripture in a real-life situation, share it with one another.

3. Use these resources and your daily experiences with your small group the following week; discuss what God showed you through applying the sermon; discuss how you have grown, and areas you are struggling and want the small group to pray for you in and hold you accountable.
 - Be a confidant for your fellow class members. Don't' ever let a matter of prayer become a morsal of gossip. Be trustworthy and watch how God uses your integrity and faithfulness as a group to help you grow closer to Him and to one another.