



NOT A FAN **“Fan or Follower?”**

Luke 9:18-25

November 6, 2011 A.M. Service

What is a Fan? An Enthusiastic Admirer

What is A Follower? One Who Is Completely Committed

DTR (Define the Relationship)

How Would Your DTR Go?

Not a Fan, Secret Admirer, a Fan, or a Follower

Why Are You Here?

Jesus Response: To Have a Deep, Personal, and Intimate Relationship With You

Are You All In?

Selective Commitment or Total Commitment

It's All or Nothing

Jesus' Response: Total Commitment – The Cross

Have You Made It Your Own?

Is It Your Faith or Someone Else's?

Jesus' Response: I Want You Exclusively

How Do I Become A Follower & Not a Fan?

It's Understanding Believing With Your Head and Heart the ABC's of becoming a Christian

Then Following Him in a Relationship With Him for the Rest of our Lives!

- ✓ There is No Forgiveness Without Repentance
- ✓ There is No Salvation Without Surrender
- ✓ There is No Life Without Death
- ✓ There is No Believing Without Committing

Our Response:

1. Have you given your heart and life to Jesus Christ – Are You a Fan or are you a Follower. You can become a follower by accepting this free gift of God if you will by faith believe and surrender your heart and life to Him! It's as simple as ABC. **Admit** to God you are a sinner, **Ask** for His forgiveness, **Believe** Jesus is God's Son, **Confess** Him as Savior & **Commit** Your Life to Him as Lord for the rest of your life & being His fully devoted follower!
2. Have you asked Christ into you heart, but never made it public? Have you been baptized – identified with Christ & His church through Baptism? If not, you can make that decision today & be obedient & follow through & become a part of the Bethsalem Family. Step out and tell everyone, I am signing up for Duty!
3. Do you need a church home? – a proper foundation – without one a Christian is a soldier with no army to fight with him or to help him fight. Don't just attend – step over the line today and join this church family!
4. Encourage you to get into a Small Group either Sunday Mornings at 9:45 a.m. or Wednesday Nights @ 6:30 p.m. and pursue deeper and further this series of Not a Fan
5. Really take time to evaluate this week and over this entire series of whether you are a Follower or you are a Fan. Maybe you are a follower, but have slipped into the tendencies of being a fan – ask the Holy Spirit to identify those areas and begin to make changes that would reflect the fact that you are a follower of Christ!

NOT A FAN

“Fan or Follower?”

Luke 9:18-25

November 6, 2011 AM Service

Let me say again how glad we are that you are here today
Start a brand new series this morning that will last the next 6 Sundays.
Be involved in a small group – meet on Wednesday Nights & Sunday
Mornings – come to the foyer this morning to find out how to get it one.
This Series is entitled Not a Fan – perfect time of year to think about that.
Did something I rarely do last night – went to some small poorly attended
ballgame. **ILLUS: Fans of all kinds** – you could see them on TV or on
Gameday or almost any Saturday or Sunday you watch sports.

What is a Fan? An Enthusiastic Admirer

The word fan is defined as “an enthusiastic admirer.” We’re all fans of
different things, right? Many of us are sports fans. We watch the games.
We cheer on the team. Some of us own the jerseys of our favorite players.
If it is not football, it’s baseball, or shopping, or racing, or golf, or TV, fill
in the blank. We understand the concept of being a fan of sports. All of us
are fans of something

Football fans – Sits in stand cheers, paints himself, signed jersey on the
wall, flags for his car, knows all about the team, yet doesn’t know the
players, goes to all the games, yet never in the game, never breaks a sweat,
he yells and cheers, but nothing is really required of him. When seasons
go bad, he might boo, might not come to all the games. He is a fan

Ladies – maybe fans of some celebrity, keep up with it on TMZ, or
Entertainment Channel, know everything about her, but don’t know her.

So let’s make that connection with a question: Are you a fan or a
follower of Jesus? Now, some of you are wondering why I’d ask a
question like that. We’re all followers of Jesus, right? That’s why we’re
here. Don’t jump to your answer too quickly. Hear me out.

There are lots of fans of Jesus – those who sit safely on the stands
cheering, but know nothing of the sacrifice and pain of the field. Fans of
Jesus who know all about Him, but don’t know Him. Fans often confuse
their admiration for devotion. They mistake knowledge of Jesus for
intimacy with Jesus.

And my concern is that our church can easily become a stadium full of fans of Jesus. And Jesus never cared about having fans. If you define a fan as an enthusiastic admirer, then fans were not important to Him. See, I think we can have a tendency to come together once a week and be fans of Jesus. We sit down in our seats and we open up our bulletins. We applaud at certain times and we leave somehow thinking that, as the fans, it was all done for us. We get in the car and we evaluate the sermon, and we kind of give the service and song selection a thumbs up or thumbs down. And we come back and do it again the next week with no interest in following him. You're big fans of Jesus. And being fans feels pretty good.

We can feel pretty good about ourselves because we're these great admirers of Christ. The only problem is, Jesus never cared about having fans. **Kyle Iddleman said, "The biggest threat to the church today is fans who call themselves Christians, but actually aren't interested in following Christ. They want to be close enough to Jesus to get all the benefits, but not so close that it requires anything."**

What is A Follower? One Who Is Completely Committed

And to look at Christ's invitation, we'll be using a verse that clearly lays out what it means to be a follower of Christ. It's [Luke 9:18-25](#)

There is no way to follow Jesus without him interfering in your life. Following Jesus will cost you something, it takes sacrifice. It always does. Convicted this week: What has it cost me – how has Jesus interfered in my life? **Quote: Page 31 – Most of us don't mind...**

DTR (Define the Relationship)

ILLUS: DTR clip from Kyle starting with "DTR..."

Over the next several weeks, I want all of us to examine our relationships with Jesus. Now I get the fact that for some of you this is kind of a first date, and you're not exactly sure what to make of any of this. Well, you can just kind of sit and listen. Maybe you're not ready for that talk yet. But I think many of us in this room need to have a DTR talk with Jesus. We need to define the relationship, find out where we stand with Jesus.

I think many of you welcome this DTR talk, because you are ready to move to a different level of commitment. You're ready to move past the casual and past the convenient into something more devoted, something more committed. So you're ready for this talk. Some of you are not,

because you kind of like the set-up you have with Jesus. I mean, He is a nice guy and you like church—it gives you something to do on the weekend. You kind of like what you have going, and this idea of being more committed, this idea of taking it to a different level? You get a little anxious. Maybe you even go into the “fight or flight” response. But what we want to do is define the relationship. Where do you stand with Jesus Christ? **How Would Your DTR Go?** Pull up two chairs and illustrate *Not a Fan* *Secret Admirer* *a Fan* *or a Follower*

So if we'll be honest with ourselves, if we'll really search our hearts and begin to define our relationship with Jesus, there are three questions for you to answer that will begin to help us determine if we are follower or simply a follower of Christ. **The first is this:**

Why Are You Here?

If you read through the Gospels, Jesus, at different points in His ministry, would draw a line in the sand and He would separate the fans from the followers. One such instance is in [John chapter 6](#). Jesus is in the height of His ministry and we read that large crowds were following Jesus. He was very popular. He was working the miracles. He was providing food from just five loaves of bread and a few fish, and a lot of people were in the crowd following Jesus. But Jesus, in verse 2, points out why they were coming. It just says they were coming “because of the miracles.” The main reason the crowds were showing up was because of the spectacle. They didn't care as much about the teaching, about the life changing lesson. They were there for the show.

So, why are you here? What is your because? Is it because your whole family goes here and has always gone here? Is it because you enjoy the music or the sermons? Is it because your friend dragged you here? (Good thing today by the way!) Is it because that is just simply what I am supposed to do? Keeps my parents, my wife or husband happy? I mean, that's great for a while, but at some point let's define the relationship. Why are you here? In that passage Jesus challenges the fans to a deeper, more intimate relationship with Him, and in verse 66 here is what we read: **“From this time many of his disciples turned back and no longer followed him.”** A lot of them went home because Jesus says, “Let's define what we've got here,” and what He offered isn't what they wanted. Notice too,

Jesus doesn't beg them to stay, water the message down a little to get them to come back, doesn't chase them down!

And it may be time for some people just to go home (it would appear some already have!), because you've come for a while and you understand things and yet you're coming in more for the miracles, more for the show, more for what Jesus can do for you. And He wants there to be a point where you define the relationship. Why are you here? Because why? For Jesus, His because *Jesus Response: To Have a Deep, Personal, and Intimate Relationship With You* He wants us to them love Him the same way that He loves us!

Are You All In?

Jesus' Response: Total Commitment – The Cross

Being a follower of Jesus requires complete commitment. A follower of Jesus will do whatever it takes to follow Jesus. They're absolutely loyal, completely committed.

On the whole, we don't do too well with absolute commitment, do we? I think that we prefer selective commitment. *Selective Commitment or Total Commitment* Simply put, we customize Christianity. Oftentimes, we look at our relationship with Jesus and say, "I'm going to follow Jesus, but I'm going to kind of pick and choose the areas in which I will follow Him." So you say, "Well, I'll follow Jesus, but don't ask me to forgive the person that hurt me. I'm not going to let go of that resentment. I'm not going to let go of that bitterness. I deserve that." And, "I'll follow Jesus, but don't talk to me about my money. I work hard for that money." "I'll follow Jesus but don't tell me to abstain from these sexual desires. I can't help the fact that I have these desires. Don't ask me to abstain. I'm a follower of Jesus, but that won't stop me from getting what I want." So it's this customized Christianity that says, "Well, I follow Jesus, but only in the areas that are comfortable, only in the areas that I agree with. I'm a Christian but I'm not all in."

Well, then you're not a Christian. You're just a fan. There is not an option of selective commitment. It's not a possibility. There is no bargaining, no bartering, no finagling. When you decide to become a follower of Christ, you've got to go all in. *It's All or Nothing*

And fans, they don't like the idea of going all in. They're not wild about having to make sacrifices, or about having to deny themselves of something they desire or crave.

Have You Made It Your Own?

Is It Your Faith or Someone Else's?

Many of us started going to church because of a parent. Mom made you. Dad said you had to. There wasn't an option. Or maybe you started coming because of a boyfriend or girlfriend, or a spouse. You came because they like it when you come. You came because it appeases them.

For those of us who grew up in the church, or who attend church in order to appease a significant other or relative, it can be really easy to become a fan. We keep coming to appease someone else, and pretty soon we get into the flow of things. We know most of the songs, and we even recognize the stories or the teachings, and we're kind of fans of Jesus. But that can be the most dangerous situation to be in. If your faith isn't your own, if you aren't pursuing a relationship with Jesus, and you keep coming week after week and begin to create a "faith" that was someone else's in the first place, you're just numbing yourself to the real thing. You'll become numb to real faith, comfortable with a few songs and a few favorite verses, none of which requires any sacrifice or personal change.

You have to make your faith your own. Jesus isn't looking for a relationship between you, your mom, and Him. He's not looking for a relationship between you, your wife, and Him. He's looking for a relationship with you. That may be one of the reasons Jesus said these words in [Luke 14:26](#), "If anyone comes to me and does not hate his father and mother, his wife and children, his brothers and sisters—yes, even his own life—he cannot be my disciple." This is not about your mom or dad. This is about you and Jesus. *Jesus' Response: I Want You Exclusively*

So begin to search your heart these next few weeks as we ask, "Are you a follower of Jesus, or are you a just a fan?"

ILLUS: Nicodemus Turn to [John 3, 7:50-53; 19:38-42](#)

Maybe you are like Nicodemus, you have been looking, searching, trying to find the answer, or maybe this morning it simply just all makes sense,

and the Lord is working in your heart and you say, you know, I am not even a fan, or maybe you are a secret fan or admirer, or you are a fan, but you understand clearly this morning that He is not calling us to be His fan, but His Followers! Remember back to [John 3](#) and then [Luke 9:23](#) It's all or nothing, He will except nothing less. Are you ready? Here's how

How Do I Become A Follower & Not a Fan?

It's Understanding Believing With Your Head and Heart the ABC's of becoming a Christian

Then Following Him in a Relationship With Him for the Rest of our Lives!

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