

## Not A Fan

### Time for the D.T.R talk; (AKA, Define The Relationship)

For a young men involved in a romantic relationship, these letters are enough to strike fear in their hearts! She may be thinking commitment but he is thinking dinner. She may be thinking devotion and he is thinking putt putt. She may be thinking love ever after but he is thinking ice cream after dinner.

In every relationship, the D.T.R talk is inevitable but not eminent after a first date!! For example, saying to a young lady after your first date “I love you and God said you and I are going to get married,” is probably a bad Idea!!

But eventually every healthy relationship reaches a point when the D.T.R. talk is needed. Is it casual or is it committed? Have things moved past infatuation and admiration to deeper devotion and dedication?

Today we are starting a new series called “NOT A FAN.” During this series I want you to evaluate within yourself if you are a “FAN” or a “FOLLOWER.” So lets get started.

- The dictionary defines a Fan as: “An enthusiastic admirer.” A FAN knows everything about their favorite player and has seen them play countless times but they don’t truly know the person of the player. Example: I sat beside Jordy Nelson and Mason Crosby at a black tie event last week. I’ve seen them play many times on TV and at the stadium and can tell you things about them but that doesn’t give me the right to pull up a chair and strike up a conversation with them because I am a stranger to them.
- Jesus was never interested in having fans. When he defines what kind of relationship he wants, “Enthusiastic Admirer” isn’t what he had in mind. My concern is that many of our churches have gone from being sanctuaries to stadiums.

- The biggest threat to the church today is fans who call themselves Christians but aren't actually interested in following Christ.
- So what are the measurements that fans use to define the relationship with Jesus?
  1. Many use cultural comparisons. They look at people around them and feel like their relationship with Jesus is solid. Have you noticed that when we do that we put ourselves up against some one that is spiritually anemic?
  2. Another measurement fans use is a religious ruler. They point to their observation to rules and rituals as evidence that they are followers. Matthew 19:16-22 "Teacher what good thing must I do to get eternal life?" "All these I have kept, what do I still lack?"
- Notice how fast Jesus went to the D.T.R. talk. He got to the heart of it. Jesus essentially is saying. "Abandon everything that you are, and follow me."
 

WOW!!!
- So how does Jesus define what it means to follow him? Because whatever measurement he gives is what we should use.
  - Fans assume their good intentions make up for their apathetic faith.
  - So, with said, lets look at Nicodemus. He was faced with a decision or a commitment. John 3: 1-2
  - It's safe to say that Nicodemus was well known. He was part of an elite group called the Sanhedrin. He had been an admirer of Jesus for some time.

He was ready to take it to a whole new level, but it wasn't going to be easy, it never is, is it?

- Nicodemus had a lot to lose. What would people think if they found out that he was an admirer of this homeless carpenter turned rabbi from a nothing town called Nazareth?
- Being a secret admirer of Jesus cost you nothing, but being a follower costs a high price. It always does.
- In chapter 3 we read about his D.T.R. moment with Jesus. It begins with the time of day he went to see Jesus. Vs. 2 "He came to Jesus at night.."
- Think about it. Why would he visit Jesus at night? To avoid questions from others. He could follow Jesus without it impacting his job. Fans are happy to follow Jesus as long as it doesn't require any significant changes or have negative implications to their lives.
- Most of us wouldn't mind Jesus making minor changes in our lives but Jesus wants to turn our lives upside down. Fans don't mind a little touch up work, but Jesus wants to do a complete renovation. Fans are thinking a tune up and Jesus is thinking a complete overhaul!!
- Look at vs 3. Nicodemus realizes that he must humble himself and be born again into a whole new way of life!
- Jesus would not accept a relationship with Nicodemus where he simply believed. Jesus wanted him to follow.
- Jesus is saying, "Good you believe, but even the demons believe and tremble." He wants you to follow as well.

- If you read through the 4 Gospels, you will find that Jesus says “believe in me” about 5 times. But care to guess how many times he said “follow me?”  
About 20 times.
- I’m not saying following is better than believing. What I am saying is that the two are firmly connected. They are the heart and lungs of faith. You can’t have one without the other.
- Today I am about to invite you to believe and receive Christ as Savior but I am also inviting you to follow!!