

## Not A Fan

One of many or your one and only?

Luke 14:25-26

Remember what D.T.R stands for? (Define The Relationship) Jesus is about to have another one of those talks, but this time it isn't at night like Nicodemus, or at a table at the Simon the Pharisee's house. This time it's to an entire crowd of people.

At this time in Jesus' ministry he was very popular. People from everywhere were coming out in masses to hear him teach. Word had spread about the lame walking, the blind eyes seeing and let's not forget, the dead being raised from the dead! He didn't seem to mind that everyone was showing up to see something happen.

But there is a time when Jesus wants to talk about the relationship! Jesus draws a line in the sand to see where these people stand. What concerns Jesus the most isn't the size of the crowd but the level of commitment.

Jesus was about to separate Fans from Followers. Here is his opening line: 25-26 "IF anyone comes to me and does not hate his father and mother, his wife and children, his brother and sister-yes, even his own life-he can't be my disciple."

WOW!!! That doesn't seem to seeker sensitive at all!!

- Some teachers have tried to soften these words of Jesus by saying they were meant for a select few who were chosen to represent him.
- That theory would be ok except that's not what scripture says. Look at vs. 25; "Large crowds were traveling with Jesus..." The word crowd here means, "a large group of unidentified people." In vs. 26 Jesus said "If anyone," that's a fairly inclusive word. What Jesus says is true for anyone who wants to follow him.

- So the big question is, does Jesus really mean you have to hate your Momma? The answer to that in short is NO. Hating your family would contradict the other teachings of Jesus when he said in Matthew 5: 43 “ You have heard that it was said, Love your neighbor and hate your enemy. But I tell you: Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you.”
- So why the strong language? Maybe he was speaking to the traditions and culture of the times he lived in. Back then if you left Judaism and became a follower of Jesus, you would have been thought of as hating your family for doing such a thing. Some of you in this room may know what I’m talking about.
- Jesus is honest with the crowd about what it may cost to follow him. He let them know that following him might mean offending your parents or grandparents. It might mean being cut out of the will or even your family.
- When we compare our relationship with him to anyone else there should be no competition. See fans try to make Jesus just one of many. Some fans try to make him the first of many. But when Jesus defines the relationship he makes it clear; he wants to be your one and only period!!
- Fans say I love you. I am committed to you. But let’s not be exclusive.
- I want to ask you some questions and when you hear them write them down and answer them later because they will help you to see what might be competing with Jesus for your affection. Are you ready?
  1. For what do you sacrifice your money? The Bible says, “Where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.” What you spend your time and money on often reveals the true desire of your heart and shows who or what you are truly following!
- Money becomes a substitute for God because it promises to do for us what he wants to do for us.

- Matthew 6:24 Jesus said, “No one can serve two masters. Either you will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other.” How you spend your money tells a story about what matters the most.
  - Your bank account may very well offer the best evidence as to whether you are a fan or a follower.
2. When you're hurt where do you go for comfort? Do you go to your spouse, parents, the refrigerator? Do you bury yourself in work? Do all of these things take the place of Jesus?
- I have found that when someone goes through a difficult time or a painful circumstance, who or what they are truly following is often revealed. When our first response to pain or circumstance isn't to Jesus then our hearts are divided.
  - Illustration: A child's true love. He wouldn't have to stop and think; he would run into his mom's arms. The pain he experienced created an honest moment where his true affection was revealed.
3. What disappoints you the most? When we feel overwhelmed with disappointment it often reveals something that has become too important.
- Illustration: Dads suppose you take your son or daughter fishing. Let's say you didn't catch anything all day and your frustrated and mad. You haven't said a word in the car on the way home. Isn't that an indicator that the most important part of the trip for you wasn't spending time with your son or daughter but catching fish was?

- Taking that kind of stock helps us keep our affections in the right place.
- Lastly: Trying to follow Jesus part time or halfhearted is impossible. The relationship he wants with you requires your whole heart. And fans should know that his terms are not negotiable.
- Jesus continues to teach the crowd by saying in Luke 14:28-30. Suppose one of you wants to build a tower. Will he not sit down and estimate the cost to see if he has enough money to complete it? For if lays the foundation and is not able to finish it, everyone who sees it will ridicule him, saying, this fellow began to build and was not able to finish.”
- Jesus makes no apologies for his strong words. He wants people to be clear about what they are signing up for.
- I have one last question as we all stand this morning. If following Jesus cost you everything, would it still be worth it?