



theridgechurch

Not a Fan LIFEgroup Study (April 12-May 17)

At some point in our life we have been a fan of a team, a band or of something. A fan is defined as an *enthusiastic admirer*. I get the great privilege of speaking to and praying with The Colony High School football team before each game. It is a real treat for me. Then my family and I go to the games. We are huge fans and we can really get into the games (especially me). There is a huge difference from me, a fan and a player. The players put in many hours of working out, practice, film study, game preparation and then actually play the game. There is a huge difference between being a fan and one who actually is playing the game. This is the same when it comes to our relationship with Jesus. Jesus does not want mere fans, but followers. He desires Luke 9.23 type of commitment.

Last year the staff, elders and I read Kyle Idleman's book, *Not a Fan*. We found it to be encouraging, yet a great challenge to each of us to truly be followers of Jesus and not mere fans. My desire is for each LIFEgroup to spend 6 weeks reading and discussing this book together and be challenged to look at our relationship with Jesus with fresh eyes, and see whether it's really everything that it could be. I pray as you take this journey through *Not a Fan* that you would deepen your relationship with Jesus and the relationships with the members in your LIFEgroups. Below is the plan for the 6 LIFEgroup gatherings. I have provided questions and discussion helps, but feel free to add your own questions for your group as you read.

Week 1: Introduction of *Not a Fan* study

This can be a great night of fellowship and connection, especially for those that might be new to the group for the study. Make sure everyone has a copy of the book or that they get one. They can get the kindle edition or the actual book on Amazon or they can find the book at local Christian book stores (Mardel, etc.). Let them know the reading plan and encourage them to read before each week's gathering.

Week 2

Read Chapters 1-3

1. What are you a fan of? Any local sports team? How would you define your fandom?
2. Briefly, discuss what you think the difference between a fan and a follower of Jesus is?
3. What are some fan characteristics that creep into our walk with Jesus?
4. What is the difference between making a decision for Jesus and making a commitment to Him? According to John 3 what are the measurements Jesus is not looking for, and what is He looking for? Can you make a decision to believe in Jesus without making a commitment to follow Him?
5. What is the difference between just knowing about Jesus and really knowing Him? How do we see this pictured in Luke 7.36-50? Read Matthew 15.8 and how Jesus spoke of the Pharisees.
6. What did you learn from the first three chapters?

Week 3

Read Chapters 4-7

1. What is your initial reaction when you read Luke 14.25-26? What does Jesus mean when He uses the word hate?
2. There were four questions given to help us define our relationship with Jesus. Which question of these four did you sense that God was most speaking to you about:
 - For what do you sacrifice your money?
 - When you're hurt, where do you go for comfort?
 - What disappoints or frustrates you the most?
 - What is it that really gets you excited?
3. On page 71 the author describes Sadducees and Pharisees and how they view religion. Would you say that you grew up with more of a Sadducee viewpoint, Pharisee viewpoint, or neither?
4. Refresh yourself with the girl on page 81 that wanted to stay and take the test. Who can relate to her? After answers are given, ask someone to explain why this mindset is so harmful to the gospel.
5. On page 83 is this statement, "we raised her in church, but we didn't raise her in Christ." What do you think the differences are, paint a verbal picture of both scenarios, a kid raised in church and how that differs from a kid raised in Christ.
6. "If you are depending on your own strength to follow Christ you will find yourself drained and defeated" is a statement on pg. 97. Give examples of times in your life when you have found that to be true, how do we fall into that trap? How can it be avoided?
7. On page 103 it says, "Many who assumed they were on the path to heaven will find out that heaven is not their destination." What do you do with that statement, what emotions and thoughts does it provoke in you?
8. What else did you find meaningful, powerful, confusing, or controversial from these 4 chapters? Discuss.

Week 4

Read Chapters 8-9

1. The author talks about John 3:16 and Luke 9:23, why do you think one verse is so familiar to Christians and even the world, and the other is so unfamiliar? Look closer at Luke 9:23 and what does each of the following mean?
 - *Come after Me*
 - *Deny yourself*
 - *Take up your cross daily*
 - *Follow me*
2. What do you think the people who were following Jesus would have thought when he made the invitation to Matthew the tax collector? How would you verbalize their objection?
3. Refer to Vegas story on pg. 136, can we celebrate some things in our group that fit that description, what are some things that we used to love, but now we don't want any part of because of Jesus?
4. What else did you find meaningful, powerful, confusing, or controversial from these 2 chapters? Discuss.

Week 5

Read Chapters 10-11

1. Assess what the following quote from chapter 10 means in your life: "you won't be able to take the path of following Jesus without walking away from a different path."
2. As you read the story on pg. 147 of the couple living together, do you think the author was too harsh or was he right on in your opinion?
3. On page 151 the author says, "you can't call Jesus Lord without calling yourself a slave." True or False? Is the idea of being a slave new to you, or different than what you thought when you became a Christian? What does it mean to be a slave of Jesus/
4. If you met someone who had never read the Bible at all, and they asked you what does it mean when a Christian says they need to "die to self daily", how would you answer?
5. On page 165 the author tells a story of a crooked pharmacist, reread that paragraph, do you think the American church is guilty of diluting the gospel? Why or why not?
6. What might *dying daily* or *taking up your cross daily* look like in your life?
7. What else did you find meaningful, powerful, confusing, or controversial from these 2 chapters? Discuss.

Week 6

Read Chapters 12-14

1. According to Luke 9:57-62, how would you define following Jesus?
2. Use examples on page 177 to help you answer this question from the book: Where is the one place you find it most difficult to follow Jesus?
3. How about that story of the missionaries Adoniram and Anne Judson? What did you think?
4. How would you finish the statement on pg. 182: *Saying yes to following Jesus meant saying no to...*
5. Following Jesus seems to involve Him interfering in your life. How has Jesus interfered with your life?
6. Why was Jesus so harsh with the excuses he was confronted with in Luke 9?
7. What did you learn from the story about William Borden? Remember him and his story when you buy Borden milk or drink it.
8. What else did you find meaningful, powerful, confusing, or controversial from these 2 chapters? Discuss.