

**Not a Fan: One of Many or Your One and Only?**  
**October 8, 2017**  
**Lynn Haven UMC**

**Introduction**

A large crowd was following Jesus. He turned around and said to them, “If you want to be my disciple, you must, by comparison, hate everyone else—your father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters—yes, even your own life. Otherwise, you cannot be my disciple.” (Luke 14:25-26 NLT)

These are difficult verses for many to comprehend. Hate my family? What is Jesus talking about? Are you prepared to bravely journey in truth along the Follower’s road to share your honest replies to the 4 questions posed in this week’s sermon? How you answer each one could reveal what may be competing with Jesus for your attention and affection.

**Digging Deeper**

**For what do you sacrifice your MONEY?**

- Loving the Lord is the same as hating money (and vice versa). Ouch. That stings a little right?! A lot of people find comfort in a fat bank account (or discomfort with an empty one!) But is that because it represents their ability (or lack thereof) to provide for their family and help advance God’s Kingdom? Or is it more closely connected to what they can accumulate with it? Have you ever felt money becoming an idol in your life? How were able to recognize it and what steps did you take to reign yourself in?
- Do you have a budget and know where your money goes each month? (If you are part of our FPU classes, you should by now!) Does your spending align with your values and beliefs? Is there anything you hope to change with regard to the top 3 areas in which you spend each month?
- Have you heard this riddle: What is greater than God, more evil than the devil, the rich need it and the poor have it? When little children were asked this question, almost all of them got it pretty quickly. Of course the answer is...nothing. Did you get it? Most adults struggle with that because we are seeking an answer for each scenario when there is no answer that would make sense in any of those categories. Unfortunately for some, money becomes the answer that fills in that blank. When it comes to money, true followers know that if God is your heart’s greatest treasure, you will radically give generous amounts of money to ministries, charities and to those in need rather than hoarding it for yourself.

**When you’re hurt, where do you go for COMFORT?**

- If our first response to suffering is to turn to anyone or anything else other than Christ, we may be following someone or something other than Jesus. Do you tend to get angry at God when something bad happens or do you trust in Him for support?
- Have you ever known someone who was faced with an unimaginable tragedy but was able to maintain their peace through the assurance of their faith? What did their faith teach you about God and His promises?
- Do you have a favorite verse that helps you cope in difficult times?

### **What DISAPPOINTS or FRUSTRATES you the most?**

- Read Habbakuk 3:17-19 (MSG). If things disappoint and frustrate us to the point that they begin to determine how we see ourselves and what kind of day we're going to have, they may have replaced Jesus as the love of our lives. Are you able to remain peaceful when things aren't going your way? True Followers understand their joy is not dependent on their circumstances. Can you think of someone who seemingly has it all but behaves poorly when faced with stressful circumstances? Can you imagine someone new to the faith seeing you react in such a way? Yes, we are all human, but discuss how that can make for a bad witness.
- If you don't already, try talking to God all throughout your days this week. If He is always on your mind, you might discover that He is equipping you with an attitude of worship in the face of minor inconveniences, major upsets and even joyous occurrences. Keep a journal of specific events and how turning your thoughts to God impacted your attitude. Consider sharing these observations with your group or accountability partner the next time you meet. As iron sharpens iron...

### **What really gets you EXCITED?**

- Followers of Christ get excited over what excites Him – seeing lost people saved. It is exciting to come sing His praises every Sunday morning, but we should also be thrilled when we find Him moving through His people on the streets, at the grocery store or anywhere you happen to wander. Have you ever heard of “getting the goosies”? It's when something causes your spirit to shake and gives you goose bumps all over. Have you ever felt this type of response to something you are confident was God moving in your midst? If you haven't, practice seeking Him everywhere and in everything and pretty soon that feeling of excitement you get from being in His presence will become addictive.

### **Conclusion**

Through his forceful language in the verses we read above from Luke 14, Jesus makes it very clear if you're not willing to disappoint some folks, or maybe even be laughed at because of your faith, you're really not ready to follow Him, so maybe it's time to “get out”. Fans make Jesus one of many, maybe even first of many. Followers understand and are willing to make Christ their one and only. Think long and hard this week about where Jesus stands in your ranking system. Ask the Lord to crowd out anything in your heart that is not of Him. Then ask yourself, “Is Jesus my one and only?”