

“Am I a Fan, Follower Or...?”

¹ Some time later, Jesus went up to Jerusalem for one of the Jewish festivals. ² Now there is in Jerusalem near the Sheep Gate a pool, which in Aramaic is called Bethesda² and which is surrounded by five covered colonnades. ³ Here a great number of disabled people used to lie—the blind, the lame, the paralyzed. ⁴ ⁵ One who was there had been an invalid for thirty-eight years. ⁶ When Jesus saw him lying there and learned that he had been in this condition for a long time, he asked him, “Do you want to get well?” John 5:1-6 (NIV)

Most conversations usually stumble over the point of **religion** (believing) versus **relationship** (knowing God).

I. Am I a **fan** of Jesus?

- A. Fans **believe** in God. (James 2:19)
- B. Fans are **skilled** in seeing the **flaws** in others. (Matthew 7:3-5)
- C. Fans are inclined to choose **convenience** over **commitment**. (Matthew 8:21-22)
- D. Fans think things are **just fine**. (John 8:33)

II. Am I a **follower** of Jesus?

- A. Followers **recognize** that this relationship starts with a **commitment**. (Luke 18:18-22)
- B. Followers realize that true **living** comes through **dying** to self. (Luke 9:23)
- C. Followers realize that this is an eternal journey. (Luke 5:10b-11)
- D. Followers discover the importance of **community**. (Eph. 4:15-16)

III. Am I a **friend** of Jesus? (John 15:14)

- A. Friends recognize that God desires an intimate relationship with us. There is a hunger in our hearts for the same. (Isaiah 55:1-2, John 5:39-40 Message, Phil 3:13-14)
- B. God makes His intention clear from the beginning. The Hebrew word for “knowing” is **yada**.
- C. Friends grow through experiences of blessing and loss.

Conclusion: What it is that you **want**? (John 5:9)

Small Group Questions

- 1. At this point in your journey with God, can you pinpoint where you are on the continuum of fan, follower or friend?
- 2. What is it about us that continually pulls us back toward being only a “fan”?
- 3. What can you do with others to help you grow as a follower or even friend of Jesus?
- 4. Do you find yourself longing to go deeper with God and wondering what to do next? Why or why not?