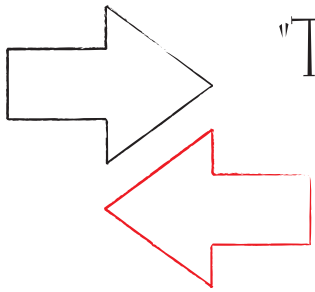


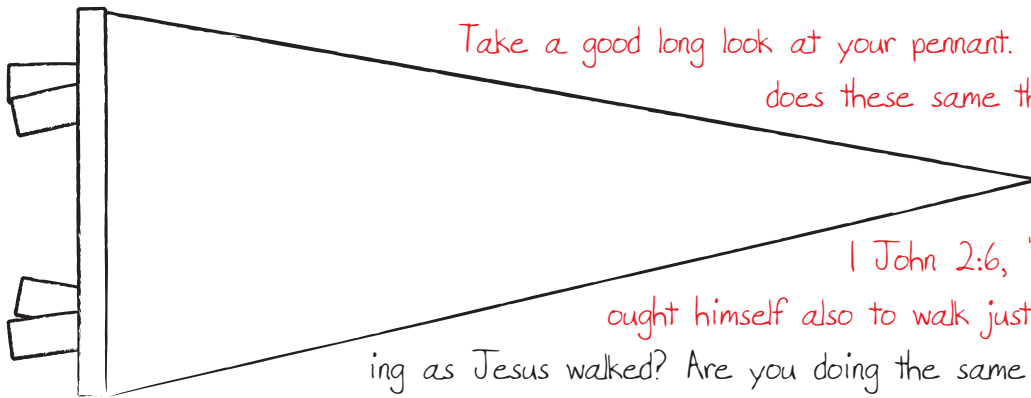
Follower or Fan



"Then He said to them all, "If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me." Luke 9:23 NKJV

Welcome friends! Get ready for a life-changing study that challenges you to define whether you are a follower or a fan of Jesus. Followers get in the game while fans merely sit on the bleachers. This study is based on a teaching that God has used to drastically change my life titled "Not a Fan" by Kyle Idleman. While this study isn't affiliated with Kyle Idleman's work, what follows are my teaching notes + activities that God has used to rock my world. I believe He'll do the same for you. Let's do this!

We'll start with a creative exercise. Decorate the pennant below as if it were Jesus' pennant - celebrating all that He has done past, present, future. Go ahead + do it now!



Take a good long look at your pennant. A follower gets in the game and does these same things. (A fan, on the other hand, only cheers from the bleachers for Jesus.) We are told in 1 John 2:6, "He who says he abides in Him ought himself also to walk just as He walked." Are you walking as Jesus walked? Are you doing the same things you drew in the pennant?

Now let's take a look at some of Jesus' first followers.

"Then He said to them, "Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men."

Simon Peter + Andrew → They immediately left their nets and followed Him." Matthew 4:19-20

"Going on from there, He saw two other brothers, James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother, in the boat with Zebedee their father, mending their nets. He called them, and immediately they left the boat and their father, and followed Him." Matthew 4:21-22

What do you notice about how Simon Peter, Andrew, James + John responded to Jesus' call to follow Him?

Have you responded in a similar way?

For more, read Matthew's "follower" story in Luke 5:27-28

FolloweR or Fan

Let's take a deeper look at Luke 9:23, this time from the Amplified translation. We'll break the verse down into three parts and reflect on each part. Write your answers in each corresponding box.

Thank you Holy Spirit for leading us into all truth as we go deep with this verse.

And He was saying to them all, "If anyone wishes to follow Me [as my disciple], he must deny himself [set aside selfish interests]..."

Selfish interests that I have already set aside

Selfish interests that I need to set aside

"...and take up his cross daily [expressing a willingness to endure whatever may come]..."

"Crosses" I have willingly endured

"Crosses" God may be calling me to endure

"...and follow Me [believing in Me, conforming to My example in living and, if need be, suffering or perhaps dying because of faith in Me]."

How I have conformed to Christ's example

Ways I still need to grow in conforming to Christ's example

Well, I said we'd go deep and I wasn't kidding! Let's take a look at one final Bible verse.

"For what is your life? It is even a vapor that appears for a little time and then vanishes away." ^{James 4:14b} NKJV

Wow, what a sobering Scripture. As followers of Christ, we only have a short time here on Earth to represent Him before we "vanish away." With that in mind, for our last activity write your own one sentence epitaph. Thinking about how we want to be remembered can help us start living that way right now - it can help ensure we're a **follower** rather than just a fan.

My epitaph: _____

Thank you for joining me and may we press forward in the faith as we **follow** Him!

