

# Summary

This sermon explores the difference between being a cultural Christian and being a true disciple of Jesus. The pastor distinguishes between three types of people who encounter Jesus: listeners, fans, and disciples. While many Americans claim to be Christian, the message challenges whether they are truly following Christ's teachings. Using John 8:31-32, the sermon emphasizes that true discipleship requires holding to Jesus' teaching, which leads to knowing the truth that sets us free from the slavery of sin. The pastor warns against being merely a 'fan' of Jesus who wants salvation without transformation, and instead calls for genuine discipleship that involves spiritual hunger, commitment to Christ's teachings, and a life that reflects His character. The message concludes with the sobering reminder from Matthew 7:21-23 about those who claim to know Jesus but are not truly known by Him.

## Intro Prayer

Heavenly Father, we come before You this morning with grateful hearts, knowing that You love us and desire good things for us. As we gather together in this small group, we ask that You would open our hearts and minds to receive what You have for us today. Help us to be hungry and thirsty for Your righteousness, Lord. Give us the courage to examine ourselves honestly and the wisdom to grow in our discipleship. We pray that You would speak to each of us in the way we need to hear from You. In Jesus' name, Amen.

## Ice Breaker

What's one hobby or activity that you're truly passionate about, and what makes you so committed to it?

## Key Verses

- John 8:31-32
- Matthew 7:21-23
- Romans 6:12-14
- Matthew 7:2-5

# Questions

- What do you think is the difference between being a 'fan' of Jesus and being a 'disciple' of Jesus?
- The pastor mentioned three types of people in Jesus' crowds: listeners, fans, and disciples. Which category do you think best describes where you are in your faith journey right now?
- Jesus said 'if you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples.' What does it mean to 'hold to' or 'abide in' Jesus' teaching in practical, everyday terms?
- How can we avoid the trap of wanting 'salvation without sacrifice' or 'a crown without a cross' in our Christian walk?
- What are some areas of spiritual slavery or bondage that Jesus wants to set us free from today?
- The sermon mentioned that many people want to be saved by Jesus but don't want to be transformed by Jesus. Why do you think transformation can be challenging for Christians?
- How can we cultivate spiritual hunger and thirst for righteousness in our daily lives?
- What does it look like practically to examine ourselves and ensure our character matches that of Christ?

## Life Application

This week, identify one specific area where you've been living as a 'fan' rather than a 'disciple' of Jesus. Choose one of Jesus' teachings that you need to hold to more faithfully, and take concrete steps to abide in that teaching through daily prayer, Scripture reading, or practical obedience. Ask God to increase your spiritual hunger and help you move from cultural Christianity to authentic discipleship.

## Key Takeaways

- There's a significant difference between cultural Christianity and true discipleship
- Jesus wants disciples who hold to His teaching, not just fans who want salvation without transformation
- True freedom comes from being set free from the slavery of sin through Jesus' truth
- Discipleship requires spiritual hunger and thirst for righteousness
- We must examine ourselves to ensure our character reflects Christ rather than judging others

# Ending Prayer

Lord Jesus, thank You for calling us to be more than just fans - You've called us to be Your disciples. Help us to hold fast to Your teachings and to hunger and thirst for Your righteousness. Set us free from any areas where sin still has power over our lives. Transform us from the inside out so that our character truly reflects Yours. Give us the courage to examine ourselves honestly and the grace to grow in Christlikeness. May we be disciples who make disciples, showing the world what it truly means to follow You. In Your precious name we pray, Amen.