

# F.O.L.L.O.W.E.R.S.

VS

## Fans

(Learn)  
LIFE LESSON

The characteristic we're focusing on today is learning or being a learner. Now from a technical standpoint, when it comes to being a follower of Jesus, or one of His disciples, what we're actually agreeing to as followers, is to being a student of Jesus, or a learner of His teachings or His will. For instance, the Greek word for "disciple" is *mathētēs*, which comes from the root word *manthanō*, which means "learn". So when Jesus called any fan to follow Him and be a disciple, He was actually calling them to learn from Him as they spent time with Him. For example, look at how Jesus called Matthew...

📖 **Matthew 9:9 (NLT)** *As Jesus was walking along, he saw a man named Matthew sitting at his tax collector's booth. "Follow me and be my disciple," Jesus said to him. So Matthew got up and followed him.*

➔ **In your own opinion, do you think it would have been easier to be a follower of Jesus back then, or now? Why?**


Similar to Matthew, all of Jesus' other followers/disciples, left something behind so that they could spend their time with Jesus learning from Him, where fans did not. And thanks to Matthew, we too can learn what Jesus taught. For instance, here are a few of the things Matthew wrote down...

📖 **Matthew 5:21-42 (NLT) Teaching about Anger** *"You have heard that our ancestors were told, 'You must not murder. If you commit murder, you are subject to judgment.' But I say, if you are even angry with someone, you are subject to judgment! If you call someone an idiot, you are in danger of being brought before the court. And if you curse someone, you are in danger of the fires of hell. So if you are presenting a sacrifice at the altar in the Temple and you suddenly remember that someone has something against you, leave your sacrifice there at the altar. Go and be reconciled to that person. Then come and offer your sacrifice to God. When you are on the way to court with your adversary, settle your differences quickly. Otherwise, your accuser may hand you over to the judge, who will hand you over to an officer, and you will be thrown into prison. And if that happens, you surely won't be free again until you have paid the last penny."* **Teaching about Adultery** *"You have heard the commandment that says, 'You must not commit adultery.' But I say, anyone who even looks at a woman with lust has already committed adultery with her in his heart. So if your eye—even your good eye—causes you to lust, gouge it out and throw it away. It is better for you to lose one part of*

*your body than for your whole body to be thrown into hell. And if your hand—even your stronger hand—causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away. It is better for you to lose one part of your body than for your whole body to be thrown into hell.”* **Teaching about Divorce** *“You have heard the law that says, ‘A man can divorce his wife by merely giving her a written notice of divorce.’ But I say that a man who divorces his wife, unless she has been unfaithful, causes her to commit adultery. And anyone who marries a divorced woman also commits adultery.”* **Teaching about Vows** *“You have also heard that our ancestors were told, ‘You must not break your vows; you must carry out the vows you make to the Lord.’ But I say, do not make any vows! Do not say, ‘By heaven!’ because heaven is God’s throne. And do not say, ‘By the earth!’ because the earth is his footstool. And do not say, ‘By Jerusalem!’ for Jerusalem is the city of the great King. Do not even say, ‘By my head!’ for you can’t turn one hair white or black. Just say a simple, ‘Yes, I will,’ or ‘No, I won’t.’ Anything beyond this is from the evil one.”* **Teaching about Revenge** *“You have heard the law that says the punishment must match the injury: ‘An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth.’ But I say, do not resist an evil person! If someone slaps you on the right cheek, offer the other cheek also. If you are sued in court and your shirt is taken from you, give your coat, too. If a soldier demands that you carry his gear for a mile, carry it two miles. Give to those who ask, and don’t turn away from those who want to borrow.”*

- ➔ **What is a summary of Jesus’ teaching on anger?**
- ➔ **What is a summary of Jesus’ teaching on adultery?**
- ➔ **What is a summary of Jesus’ teaching on divorce?**
- ➔ **What is a summary of Jesus’ teaching on vows?**
- ➔ **What is a summary of Jesus’ teaching on revenge?**

If we’re paying attention, Jesus wanted those early followers to learn (as well as us) that anger is murder, lust is adultery, divorce is devastating, vows are foolish, and lastly, revenge against evil is not ours to execute, just compassion. And those are just a few of the examples of Jesus’ teachings that those first followers were expected to learn and then pass on to those they were discipling. For instance, here’s what Jesus said in His “great commission”...

 **Matthew 28:18-20 (NLT)** *“I have been given all authority in heaven and on earth. Therefore, go and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. Teach these new disciples to obey all the commands I have given you. And be sure of this: I am with you always, even to the end of the age.”*

- ➔ **Who is someone you’ve discipled, or are currently discipling? And what’s an example of something you’ve learned from Jesus that you’ve passed along to others?**

Not only did Jesus expect those first followers to go and make disciples in every nation, but He asked them to teach those new disciples what they had learned from Him. And the truth is, we’ve been asked to do the same thing! And by the way, we’re not just supposed to teach others what we’ve learned, we’re supposed to baptize

them as well. And the true meaning of baptism is something the disciples had to learn from Jesus, not from John the Baptist. In fact, John the Baptist had to learn the true meaning of baptism from Jesus. For those who don't know, before Jesus called any of the disciples, John was out baptizing people in the wilderness, and Jesus went to him to be baptized. Now out of fairness, John was baptizing people who were repenting of their sins and giving their lives over to **GOD**. So when Jesus came to be baptized, John resisted at first. But then look at what Jesus said..

📖 **Matthew 3:13-15 (NLT)** *Then Jesus went from Galilee to the Jordan River to be baptized by John. But John tried to talk him out of it. "I am the one who needs to be baptized by you," he said, "so why are you coming to me?" But Jesus said, "It should be done, for we must carry out all that God requires." So John agreed to baptize him.*

➔ **Based on what Jesus said, would you say that baptism required to be one of His followers? Why, or why not?**

This baptism of Jesus wasn't about Him checking a box that **GOD** the Father had created. What this was about, was Jesus choosing to surrender His own will and life plans over to **GOD**, just like what we have to do. Or in other words, baptism for everyone (including Jesus) is a symbolic demonstration of the death of one life, and the beginning of another. So when it comes to our baptism, we also shouldn't look at it as checking a box, but instead, as a symbolic demonstration of our ongoing choice to repent of sin, and live for the will and plans of **GOD**. In fact, look what Paul said to the church in Rome about this...

📖 **Romans 5:20-6:4 (NLT)** *God's law was given so that all people could see how sinful they were. But as people sinned more and more, God's wonderful grace became more abundant. So just as sin ruled over all people and brought them to death, now God's wonderful grace rules instead, giving us right standing with God and resulting in eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord. Well then, should we keep on sinning so that God can show us more and more of his wonderful grace? Of course not! Since we have died to sin, how can we continue to live in it? Or have you forgotten that when we were joined with Christ Jesus in baptism, we joined him in his death? For we died and were buried with Christ by baptism. And just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glorious power of the Father, now we also may live new lives.*

➔ **What do you remember most about your baptism (if you've been baptized)? If you have not, what're you looking forward to most about being baptized?**

Paul wanted those who were followers to remember that they had been baptized, and therefore, to live accordingly. So here's what we've learned today... First off, Jesus wants all who call themselves followers to spend time with Him learning His teachings. And like with those first disciples, there's no shortcut to this. Meaning, we need to be ready to leave some things behind so we can spend the proper amount of time learning from Jesus what His will and plans are. Next, Jesus wants

us as followers to teach others what it is that we've learned from Him, whether that's something about His teachings, or His will for us. And think about this, when we're telling others about what Jesus is teaching us or leading us to, it allows for **GOD** to convict them without feeling judged. And one of the most important things we learned today, is that baptism is not about checking a box that **GOD** created, but a symbolic demonstration of our death to this life, and the beginning of a new life in **GOD**. So if you've not been baptized, it's time to make that demonstration (unless you want to remain just a fan). For the real difference between followers and fans, is that followers learn, whereas fans, for whatever reason, don't. So for those who are followers, as we go about our lives this week, I'd like to suggest that we meditate on what Paul said to the followers of Jesus who lived in Rome...

## **MEDITATION PASSAGE FOR THE WEEK**

*And so, dear brothers and sisters, I plead with you to give your bodies to God because of all he has done for you. Let them be a living and holy sacrifice—the kind he will find acceptable. This is truly the way to worship him. Don't copy the behavior and customs of this world, but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think. Then you will learn to know God's will for you, which is good and pleasing and perfect.*

**Romans 12:1-2 (NLT)**

# F.O.L.L.O.W.E.R.S vs FANS

**LESSON GOAL:** Help kids understand that following Jesus means to be his “student” and that we should keep learning as much as we can about him for the rest of our lives.

## **MEMORY VERSE:**

Anyone who has my commands and obeys them loves me. My Father will love the one who loves me. I too will love them. And I will show myself to them. |

**JOHN 14:21 NIRV**

## **LEARN FOR OURSELVES**

We'll never know all there is to know about God. But that doesn't mean we shouldn't keep learning. The more we know about God's word, the more we know about God - his character, his love for us, his plans for us and his commands for us. Never knowing everything helps us stay humble and remember that there's always more to learn, not just about God and the Bible, but about others and ourselves, too. And the more we know, the more we help others learn about him, which is exactly what Jesus asks of his disciples.

Often, being a student or disciple of Jesus means leaving something else behind. In Jesus' day, he asked his disciples to leave their homes and families and careers to follow him. If they wanted to be his disciple, they had to physically follow him from place to place to hear his teachings.

As Jesus went on from there, he saw a man named Matthew. He was sitting at the tax collector's booth. "Follow me," Jesus told him. Matthew got up and followed him. | **MATTHEW 9:9 NIRV**

Because of their sacrifice and obedience, we get to learn about Jesus' teachings. Many of his disciples (and their disciples) documented Jesus' words and their experiences, so we have access to Bibles in different languages, in paper books, digital version and even audio versions. We have churches and schools and podcasts and videos to teach us. While they had to abandon their lives, we can learn pretty much any time we want.

As a tax collector, Matthew was educated, and skilled at keeping records and paying attention to details. His chapter of the Bible is full of detailed accounts of Jesus' sermons. In one particular sermon Jesus taught thousands of people from a mountainside about many different subjects, including murder, divorce, vow (or promises) and more. In the last lesson, we talked about obeying God by loving our enemies. That was from this same sermon and right before that, we find what Jesus had to say about getting revenge:

"You have heard that it was said, 'An eye must be put out for an eye. A tooth must be knocked out for a tooth.' But here is what I tell you. Do not fight against an evil person. Suppose someone slaps you on your right cheek. Turn your other cheek to them also. Suppose someone takes you to court to get your shirt. Let them have your coat also. Suppose someone forces you to go one mile. Go two miles with them. Give to the one who asks you for something. Don't turn away from the one who wants to borrow something from you. |

**MATTHEW 5:38-42 NIRV**

Learning what the Bible says about how to treat others, help us to remember and obey so we can show Jesus' love to others.

## **LEARN FOR OTHERS**

Matthew also wrote about lessons that Jesus taught by his actions as much as his words. Like being baptized by his cousin, John the Baptist.

Jesus was teaching his disciples that being baptized was an act of faith and obedience to represent us choosing to give up our "old life" and beginning our new life as a follower. Baptism was so important to God, that Jesus chose to be baptized himself, and later commanded his disciples to go out into the world, teaching people what they had learned about God and baptizing them. It's called the Great Commission and it's a command to all of us:

So you must go and make disciples of all nations. Baptize them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Teach them to obey everything I have commanded you. And you can be sure that I am always with you, to the very end." | **MATTHEW 28:19-20 NIRV**

#### **DISCUSSION | REVIEW:**

- Spend some time reading through the Matthew chapter 5 together in a kid-friendly Bible.
  - What do you remember the most about this chapter? Why?
  - How would you describe a "blessing" after reading this chapter?
- How would you describe a "disciple" to a friend?
- What is one thing you learned today that you can share with a friend?

*\*\*Followers will be doing a baptism service in the next few months. If your kiddo is asking about baptism or has decided to give their life to Jesus and you're wondering if they're ready to be baptized, stop by the Parent wall near FC Kids and check out our Kids Baptism guide for some tips on how to know if they're ready. And don't hesitate to reach out to Tracy or Matt with any questions!*