



SMALL GROUP STUDY GUIDE

February 5, 2023
“Fan or Follower?”



OPENING PRAYER

Heavenly Father, thank you for the generations of Christians who were not just fans but followers of your son. Today we ask that you would teach us how to engage with your activity in the world through the local church. And Father, wherever this study lands with each of us, would you give us the wisdom to know what to do with what we hear and then give us the courage to do it. We pray this in the matchless and powerful name of Jesus. Amen.

SCRIPTURE PASSAGES

Matthew 16:13-18 (NIV)

¹³ When Jesus came to the region of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, “Who do people say the Son of Man is?”

¹⁴ They replied, “Some say John the Baptist; others say Elijah; and still others, Jeremiah or one of the prophets.”

¹⁵ “But what about you?” he asked. “Who do you say I am?”

¹⁶ Simon Peter answered, “You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God.”

¹⁷ Jesus replied, “Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah, for this was not revealed to you by flesh and blood, but by my Father in heaven. ¹⁸ And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it.

1 Corinthians 12:27 (NIV)

Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it.

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INTRODUCTION

Most people are fans of Jesus and they like his teachings. Very few people have anything negative to say about Him. However, we are not just called to be fans of Jesus, we are called to be his followers. So, what does it take to be a follower and not just a fan?

Followers of Jesus engage in the life and mission of the local church. Here are three ways you can participate in that: Look for "Come sit with me" opportunities. Listen for the three "nots" and be ready to invite someone (not in church, not going well, not prepared for life circumstances). Participate in a small group and volunteer. If you're grateful for your local church but not engaged, now is the time.

QUESTIONS

1. In what stage do you find yourself in terms of being engaged with a local church? What makes you say that?

Passive Consumer |-----| *Engaged Participant*

2. Read Matthew 16:13–18 on page 1. What stands out to you?
3. If it's true the church in America is in decline, what would it take to reverse that trend? Would you say you're currently helping reverse that trend? What makes you say that?
4. Our mission is to inspire people to follow Jesus. We do that by engaging people with the life and mission of a local church. Here are three ways you can participate in that:
 - a. Look for "Come sit with me" opportunities. Listen for the three "nots" and be ready to invite someone (not in church, not going well, not prepared for life circumstances).
 - When was the last time you asked someone to come sit with you? What happened?
 - Do you have any hesitations in asking someone to come sit with you? If so, what are they?
 - b. Participate in a small group.
 - If you are in a group, is it time to consider leading one? Why or why not?
 - If you're not currently in a group, would you consider joining one? If not, what are your hesitations?
 - c. Volunteer.
 - Do you volunteer at your local church?
 - If so, talk about your experience doing that. If not, what are your hesitations in volunteering?

FINAL APPLICATION

What can you do to engage more in the local church?