



SERMON SERIES BY:
STEPHEN HERROD

MESSAGE 3:

ALL IN

PASSAGE: JOHN 6:66-69 ESV

66 After this many of his disciples turned back and no longer walked with him. 67 So Jesus said to the twelve, “Do you want to go away as well?” 68 Simon Peter answered him, “Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life, 69 and we have believed, and have come to know, that you are the Holy One of God.

MESSAGE GOAL:

The goal of this message is to emphasize the difference between mere discipleship and true discipleship in the context of following Jesus Christ. It highlights the importance of genuine commitment, faith, and understanding beyond seeking miracles, signs, or material blessings. The message aims to challenge individuals to fully embrace and obey the teachings of Jesus, even when faced with challenging or unconventional aspects, and to encourage a wholehearted commitment to a life in the Christ. Ultimately, it calls for a decisive choice between continuing in the teachings of Jesus or turning back to a former way of life.

INTRODUCTION

When it comes to professional sports, there are at least two types of fans: bandwagon fans and diehard fans. A bandwagon fan is

someone who supports a particular sports team only when they are doing well or winning. For example, there are many bandwagon Detroit Lions fans now that they are winning this year. Bandwagon fans “jump on the bandwagon” to associate themselves with the success of the team rather than being a loyal fan through it all. A diehard fan is extremely devoted and loyal to a particular sports team. Diehard fans support their team passionately through it all. For example, there are some diehard Detroit Lions fans that are not only supporting them now that they are winning but were also fans and expressed their support and loyalty in 2021 when the Detroit Lions had a losing record of 3-13-1. Diehard fans are known for their unwavering commitment and enduring loyalty.

This illustration is an aid for us to understand the reality of discipleship in the context of the Lord Jesus Christ. There are two types of followers of Jesus Christ: disciples and true disciples.

By definition, all of us listening are disciples in a sense, because we have expressed interest in the teachings of Jesus Christ. We are here today, listening to a sermon that is about the teachings of Jesus Christ. We come to this building or tune into the stream because something we have heard about Jesus has sparked our interest in Jesus. All of us, in a sense, are disciples of Jesus

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because something has sparked our interest in Jesus and has led us to take initial steps towards Jesus. However, not everyone that is a disciple of Jesus is a true disciple of Jesus. There is a distinction between a disciple of Jesus and a true disciple of Jesus, and John's narrative surrounding the miracle of feeding the 5000 helps us to know the distinction. John's gospel records the miracle of Jesus feeding well over 5000 people with 2 fish and 5 loaves of bread, and Jesus noticed something peculiar about some of those people that were following him. After feeding all of those people, John 6:26 records that Jesus said to them you are following me, not because you saw the sign, the KJV erroneously reads "miracles" but that is not a proper translation of the Greek word σημεῖον, which is better translated as signs. They certainly saw the miracle (in fact, their stomach digested it) but they failed to recognize the sign of the miracle! Now the meaning of "sign" in this gospel is that it points beyond the physical, concrete reality to revelation. It provides insight to who Jesus is. In fact, the purpose of signs, and miracles and wonders for that matter, was to provide insight to who Jesus is. The miracles, the signs, and the wonders were not designed to be the means to an end, not the end itself! The miracles, the signs, and the wonders that Jesus performed were designed to point people to the reality that He is Jesus, the Christ! Jesus said to those disciples, in other words, that many of you are not following me for me, but you are following me for the miracles, signs, and

wonders. The problem was, and even is for some disciples is that some disciples are not following Jesus for Jesus, but are only following him for the miracles, signs, and wonders, when the purpose of the miracles, signs, and wonders in the first place, were to point disciples to Him, and who He really is.

In this age, there are false prophets and false teachers who have misled people to follow Jesus for the miracles, signs, and wonders, rather than to follow Jesus for Jesus, and as a result many turn to God only because they have been told that God will bless them materially and give them health. Because of this misleading, there are disciples who are seeking a material savior, rather than seeking the Lord Jesus Christ. Furthermore, beware of these false prophets and teachers who seek to drug you with a false imitation of miracles, signs, and wonders, deceiving you to come to service after service, not for a closer walk with Jesus, but to manipulate you and deceive you with an imitation of miracles, signs, and wonders! Child of God, let me remind you that the purpose of miracles, signs, and wonders, were to point you to Jesus the Christ and serve as proof that He is God, that he is Lord! Jesus has already performed miracles, signs, and wonders that prove He is God! Jesus has already died and resurrected that solidifies his claim to be the Messiah, you don't need any further proof, you already have proof! Save your money and your time! Child of God, the solution to your life is not found in

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miracles, signs, and wonders, but the solution to your life is found in the one that the signs, miracles, and wonders, pointed to, and that is Jesus Christ! The solution to your life is the redemptive plan of God that is found in Christ Jesus, and you don't need to sow any seed, give any money, do 10 laps around the church, to receive that, but if you repent and believe you shall be saved! If you continue in his word, you shall know the truth, and the truth shall set you free! That is the solution to all of our lives!

Disciples follow Jesus solely for the signs, the miracles, and the wonders, but true disciples follow Jesus for Jesus! Anybody here still following Jesus for Jesus? All we hear about is your next, your blessing, your car, your house, but what about Jesus? What about Him who came through the seed of a woman who has won the victory over the tempter and the enemy of mankind? Ladies and Gentlemen, Jesus is the answer for you today! Above him there's no other, Jesus is the way! Disciples follow Jesus solely for the signs, the miracles, and the wonders, but true disciples follow Jesus for Jesus! And let me build upon that: disciples follow Jesus for various reasons such as provision, or eternal life, and while those are benefits of following him, if that is the only reason you are following him, you are a disciple, but you are not a true disciple of Jesus Christ. A true disciple of Jesus Christ follows Jesus for Jesus! Matter of fact for the true disciple, if the Lord doesn't do anything else, he's already done enough, and for the true

disciple following Jesus is about believing his word and obeying his teachings! You see, to follow Jesus is to follow His word, because truly believing in Jesus cannot be separated from truly believing Jesus' words!

SERMON POINT

1. *WHAT MAKES YOU A TRUE DISICPLE OF JESUS CHRIST IS EMBRACING AND OBEYING THE TEACHINGS OF JESUS CHRIST.*

Now this helps us to understand why many people start out following Jesus, but very few continue to follow Jesus, because to truly follow Jesus is to truly follow His words, and the reality is the teachings of Jesus ain't everybody's cup of tea.

Verse 66 reveals that many of his disciples at that particular time turned back and no longer walked with him. They repented, turning towards his direction for a while, but ended up turning back and going back to their former ways.

Once again, many people start out following Jesus the Christ, but very few continue to follow Jesus the Christ.

You see, coming to church alone does not make you a true disciple of Jesus Christ. Church is a vehicle that can lead to true discipleship, and true disciples gather with the people of God for worship and building up, but just because you come to church does not mean you are a true disciple of Jesus Christ nor does it automatically make you a true discipleship of Jesus Christ.

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Tuning in the stream for worship and word does not automatically make you a true disciple of Jesus Christ.

Reading your bible does not automatically make you a true disciple of Jesus Christ. Hearing sermons does not automatically make you a true disciple of Jesus Christ. What makes you a true disciple of Jesus Christ is embracing and obeying the teachings of Jesus Christ.

It is important that I say embracing the teachings of Jesus Christ, just as much as obeying the teachings of Jesus Christ, because verse 60 reveals that one of the reasons some of his disciples turn back is because they find some of his teachings too hard for them to follow. For example, Jesus taught in the synagogue at Capernaum that He was the bread of life. Bread is a basic dietary item, and a person can survive on just bread and water for a long time. When Jesus said, I am the bread of life, he was first making the claim that He was God, because when Moses asked God, who shall I say sent me, the Hebrew records God's response as "Eh-he'yeh asher Eh-he'yeh," and the Septuagint Greek records it as "ἐγώ εἰμι," while both in English means "I am." When Jesus said, "I am the bread of life," He was saying He is the same one that revealed himself to Moses and sent Moses! Then, to equate himself with bread, Jesus was telling them that he is essential for life. Apart from the Lord Jesus Christ, we are living to die and dying to live, because there is no true life apart from Him, according to Him.

You see, that message was a challenging revelation for those deeply entrenched in a different understanding, having learned divergent beliefs throughout their lives. And I urge you not to let pre-existing notions or teachings hinder your commitment, for too much is at stake. Too much is at stake for us to be stiff-necked, stubborn, and unwilling to shift when God says shift. Many disciples refrain from embracing the teachings of the Lord Jesus Christ due to conflicting beliefs deeply rooted in their hearts, but church too much is at stake for you to allow those conflicting beliefs to lead you astray! You must uproot any teachings misaligned with Jesus Christ and let His teachings take root in your heart so that you may be free!

Now there was another teaching that was hard for those disciples that day. Jesus taught that unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you. Now if you hear this teaching and perceive it in the natural, it sounds like cannibalism, because Jesus says unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you. But to eat his flesh and drink his blood is to recognize that his sacrificed body and precious blood was shed for the remissions of many sins! You see, it is foolish to some for someone who claims to be a messiah, for someone who claims to be God to be crucified on a cross and for his sacrificed body and shed blood to atone for many sins because crucifixion was shameful, but true disciples believe because they realize that God chose the foolish things

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of this world to confound the wise (1 Corinthians 1:27), and the message of the cross is foolish to those who are perishing, but for those who are being saved, it is the power of God (1 Corinthians 1:18).

Now after seeing those disciples turn back from following Jesus, Jesus posed a question to the twelve, that is a question for you also, and that question is: Do you want to turn back as well?

Simon Peter answered him, “Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life, ^{and} and we have believed, and have come to know, that you are the Holy One of God.”

Beloved, you are faced with the decision to continue in his teachings and hold on to his teachings or turn back to your former life. There are some of you out there who are in the category of disciples, but not yet true disciples and I say to you that your life in Christ is much better than the life you are currently living, so instead of having one foot in and one foot out, embracing both a worldly lifestyle and Godly lifestyle, I implore you to GO ALL IN, and commit yourself fully to the Lord Jesus Christ and his teachings. Jesus said it like this according to John 8:31-32, “If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.” Friend, the freedom that you long for is found in fully committing yourself to the Lord Jesus Christ and his

teachings. The freedom that your soul so desperately desires is found in fully committing yourself to the Lord Jesus Christ and his teachings.

Beloved, there is no true discipleship without a discipleship. May you go all in, and fully embrace the person, work, and teachings of the Lord Jesus Christ.

In the game of poker, when a player goes all in, they bet all their chips on that single hand. They risk everything for that hand that they were dealt. And I say to you today, go “all in” with your commitment to the Lord Jesus Christ and His teachings.

QUOTES BY STEPHEN HERROD

“To follow Jesus is to follow His word, because truly believing in Jesus cannot be separated from truly believing Jesus’ words!”

“Too much is at stake for us to be stiff-necked, stubborn, and unwilling to shift when God says shift.”

“Not everyone that is a disciple of Jesus is a true disciple of Jesus. There is a distinction between a disciple of Jesus and a true disciple of Jesus.”

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“Child of God, the solution to your life is not found in miracles, signs, and wonders, but the solution to your life is found in the one that the signs, miracles, and wonders, pointed to, and that is Jesus Christ!”

“Disciples follow Jesus solely for the signs, the miracles, and the wonders, but true disciples follow Jesus for Jesus!”

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