

“Fan or Follower”

Series: *Why We Hope*
(Part 3 of 3)

How to use this discussion guide: Discussion questions link directly to weekend lessons from New Hope Church. A copy of the Listening Guide is on the opposite page. Simply read and discuss the questions. For the “Explore” section, you will need a Bible.

Open: What are some differences between a being a “fan” and a true “fanatic!”

Explore: Read Colossians 3:1-17.

During the first century, many people believed following strict religious rules or ceremonies would lead to true knowledge of God. Paul wrote to remind the Colossians that true faith comes from being a follower of Christ.

1. Where did Paul tell the Colossians to keep their focus (vs. 1-4)? What motivation did Paul give for keeping their spiritual focus?
2. In what ways should our position in Christ affect our lifestyle (vs. 5-11)? Into whose image are we being transformed?
3. List qualities that the Colossians were called to “put on” (vs. 12-15). Which quality would you like to see more of in your life?
4. How does Bible study in a small group community fit into the equation of becoming more like Christ (vs. 16-17)?

Connect: Review key points from the lesson before answering the questions.

1. According to the lesson, God’s plan is to shape us into the image of His Son. How have you noticed God shaping your life over the past 3-6 months?
2. The first signpost of full devotion is to accept Christ. Who or what influenced you to take the first step?
3. Showing up at church gives us the opportunity to accept and encourage others. In what ways have you been encouraged at church? How can you encourage others?
4. After hearing the lesson, how would you define church membership? In which area (words, money, time) do you feel led to grow this year as a member?
5. Reaching-out means sharing your faith through words and deeds. Brainstorm ways your group could serve those in need in the months ahead.

Apply: Live it.

As a CARE Group: Ask group members to share where they are on the signposts. If possible, take one of the steps together (attend a baptism together, come to a weekend service as a group, or do a micro-mission together).

As an individual: Is there anything you feel may be keeping you from full devotion today? Talk with someone you trust about this and pray about your next step.

Listening Guide Notes

^[6] “When they had done so, they caught such a large number of fish that their nets began to break. ^[7] So they signaled their partners in the other boat to come and help them, and they came and filled both boats so full that they began to sink. ^[8] When Simon Peter saw this, he fell at Jesus’ knees and said, ‘Go away from me, Lord; I am a sinful man!’ ^[9] For he and all his companions were astonished at the catch of fish they had taken, ^[10] ... Then Jesus said to Simon, ‘Don’t be afraid; from now on you will catch men.’ ^[11] So they pulled their boats up on shore, left everything and followed him.” –**Luke 6:1-11 (NIV)**

“To those who love God and are called according to His plan everything that happens fits into a pattern for good. For God chose us to bear the family likeness of His Son.” –**Romans 8:28-29 (Ph)**

Signposts of Full Devotion...

1. Accept Christ: Baptism.

^[3] “What I received I passed on to you as of first importance: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, ^[4] that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures.” –**1 Corinthians 15:3-4 (NIV)**

“You have been buried with him by your baptism; by which, too, you have been raised up with him through your belief in the power of God who raised him from the dead.” –**Colossians 2:12 (NJB)**

2. Worship: Attendance.

When I show up at church I’m able to...

- a. Accept others unconditionally.

“Accept one another, then, just as Christ accepted you, in order to bring praise to God.” –**Romans 15:7 (NIV)**

- b. Be devoted to others personally.

“Be devoted to one another in brotherly love.” –**Romans 12:10 (NIV)**

- c. Encourage others continually.

“You should not stay away from the church meetings, as some are doing, but you should meet together and encourage each other.” –**Hebrews 10:25 (NCV)**

3. Membership: I support the church with...

- My words,

^[5] *“May the God who gives endurance and encouragement give you a spirit of unity among yourselves as you follow Christ Jesus, ^[6] so that with one heart and mouth you may glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.”*

–**Romans 15:5-6 (NIV)**

- My money,

“Each man should give what he has decided in his heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.” –**2 Corinthians 9:7 (NIV)**

- My time.

4. Connected and Growing: CARE Groups.

5. Reaching Out: Micro Missions.

“As the Father has sent me, I am sending you.” –**John 20:21b (NIV)**