

“The Upside Down Way of Jesus”
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Introduction: When Jesus taught He made some pretty controversial points. He mentioned ideas and statements that would have made those listening quite uncomfortable: “Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you,” “If someone strikes you on the cheek, turn the other cheek as well,” “It’s hard for a rich person to enter the kingdom of heaven.” The reaction of the crowds in His day would have been similar to the reaction of people today. We are left sarcastically asking the question, “Wait...what?!” As we begin this new series, *The Upside Down Way of Jesus*, we are going to unpack several statements that Jesus makes and how contrary they are to the way we see things. We will look at Luke 14:25-33 to begin our study of Jesus’ upside down way.

1. Are You a Fan or a Follower? Jesus does not want fans—people who know all the songs, have the bumper sticker, and can turn to the right book without being told where it is located. The size of the crowd isn’t what mattered to Jesus. What mattered to Him was the commitment level of the people. Do we come to church appreciating the teaching of Jesus (fan) or do we come practicing His teaching (follower)?
2. Following the Upside Down Way of Jesus Requires Complete Commitment. Many say, “I will follow Jesus but don’t ask me to tithe, don’t ask me to abstain, don’t ask me to forgive.” The list goes on. It is all or nothing with Jesus. We cannot pick and choose the areas we want to obey.
 - a. Jesus didn’t leave open the possibility of selective commitment where we say we’re a follower of Jesus but pick and choose only certain areas.
 - b. May God forgive us if we focus so much on trying to keep all the fans happy that we miss out on the opportunity to make followers of the next generation.
 - c. When our kids grow up and define Christianity as keeping a moral code instead of being a follower of Christ, they will end up walking away from both.
3. Following the Upside Down Way of Jesus Requires a Personal Sacrifice. Verses 26 and 27 should make us a bit uncomfortable. It is a very difficult saying to stomach. With these words Jesus shows how serious He is about having followers instead of fans.

4. Following the Upside Down Way of Jesus Requires Total Allegiance. Verse 33 sums up the entire section, “In the same way, any of you who does not give up everything he has cannot be my disciple.”

Conclusion: Jesus’ statements are straight-forward and to the point. He does not care how many people show up on Sunday morning to clap and awe at His teaching. Jesus is concerned with those who commit to doing what He says and do their best to live it out each day. As we continue this series – as upside down as His saying may seem – we will see that, in order to be first we will be last, in order to live we will die to ourselves, and in order to be free we will become slaves.