



NEW HEART BEAT DEVOTIONS

“A fan really does nothing but blow hot air.” Charles Stambaugh

Are You A Fan?

“Merriam-Webster, the Oxford dictionary and other sources define “fan” as a shortened version of the word fanatic. Fanatic itself, introduced into English around 1550, means “marked by excessive enthusiasm and often intense uncritical devotion”. It comes from the Modern Latin fanaticus, meaning “insanely but divinely inspired”. The Great American Baseball Scrapbook attributes the term to Chris Von der Ahe, owner of the Saint Louis Brown Stockings in 1882. Von der Ahe sold tickets for 25 cents, hoping the many patrons would purchase his beer; the low-ticket price helped him lead the stats in attendance. He called the fanatics filling his stands “fans”.¹

“Did you know that 73 percent of American men and 55 percent of American women watch NFL games on television? The NFL drew 17.79 million people to live games in 2016. Statistics estimates the North American professional sports market (which includes segments gate revenues, media rights, sponsorships and merchandising) to be worth somewhere around \$73 billion. Sports fans represent a significant portion of the U.S. population. There is an article in the Washington Post that said team affiliation is more important to fans than social groups, professional affiliations, and even religious affiliations. And because of this, sports are inextricably tied to our emotions.”²

To be honest, I am not a sports fan. I do not have the extra money nor the time to watch sports. I do not understand why people are yelling from the stands or at the TV when it is not possible for the players to hear them. When the event is over, half of the people will always end up mad. I have seen that if the team or player continues to do poorly, the so-called fans will go to another. I have heard many fans complain a lot but I have never seen a fan leave the stands and go down to help their team win.

Jesus had thousands of fans. They would follow Him for His miracles and healing. They cried “Hosanna” and put palm leaves down when He entered Jerusalem. But just a few days later, they turned against Him and yelled “Crucify Him.”

Many Christians are just like those fans. They enjoy the music and holiday programs. They might play on the church softball team, in the praise band or have a Jesus bumper stickers on their cars. But they are not a true follower. They are just a Jesus fan blowing hot air.

Churches today are resorting to exciting music, programs, sports, community aid, buses, coffee, etc to boost their numbers. They push “Say, these words and you are a Christian.” But their prayer rooms are mostly empty. The turnover of members is high. There may be excitement for Christ in their service but lives are not being changed. Too many places spending their effort producing only Jesus fans.

I recently read “Not a Fan.” by Kyle Idleman.³ He is the pastor of the fifth largest church in America. He confessed that for years, he was committed to making Jesus fans. His book will make you look at your life to determine if you are fan or a follower of Christ. It will change your commitment.

Charles L Stambaugh



“Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.” Matt 7:22,23



[Watch this video.](#)

¹en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fan ²Theshelf.com/the-blog/sports-viewership ³cbn.com/are-you-fan-or-follower-jesus

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