



# Not a Fan: Becoming a Completely Committed Follower of Jesus

*Kyle Idleman*

[Download now](#)

[Read Online](#) 

# Not a Fan: Becoming a Completely Committed Follower of Jesus

*Kyle Idleman*

## **Not a Fan: Becoming a Completely Committed Follower of Jesus** Kyle Idleman

Are you a follower of Jesus? Don't answer too quickly. In fact, you may want to read this book before you answer at all. Consider it a 'Define the Relationship' conversation to determine exactly where you stand. You may indeed be a passionate, fully devoted follower of Jesus. Or, you may be just a fan who admires Jesus but isn't ready to let him cramp your style. Then again, maybe you're not into Jesus, period. In any case, don't take the question---Are you a follower of Jesus?---lightly. Some people don't know what they've said yes to and other people don't realize what they've said no to, says Pastor Kyle Idleman. But Jesus is ready to clearly define the relationship he wants with his followers. Not a Fan calls you to consider the demands and rewards of being a true disciple. With frankness sprinkled with humor, Idleman invites you to live the way Jesus lived, love the way he loved, pray the way he prayed, and never give up living for the One who gave his all for you.

## **Not a Fan: Becoming a Completely Committed Follower of Jesus Details**

Date : Published June 1st 2011 by Zondervan (first published May 6th 2011)

ISBN : 9780310331933

Author : Kyle Idleman

Format : Paperback 215 pages

Genre : Christian, Nonfiction, Christian Living, Religion, Christianity, Faith

 [Download Not a Fan: Becoming a Completely Committed Follower of ...pdf](#)

 [Read Online Not a Fan: Becoming a Completely Committed Follower o ...pdf](#)

**Download and Read Free Online Not a Fan: Becoming a Completely Committed Follower of Jesus  
Kyle Idleman**

---

## From Reader Review Not a Fan: Becoming a Completely Committed Follower of Jesus for online ebook

### Joseph Fountain says

*...the grace of God doesn't simply invite us to follow...it teaches us to follow.* ~ Ken Idleman from Not a Fan

The premise of this book is nothing new – The distinction between being a nominal Christian and being a committed follower of Jesus. I'm certain there are thousands of books on the subject.

Ken Idleman's approach, which you might infer from the title, contrasts being a "fan" of Jesus with being a follower.

He defines a fan as: an enthusiastic admirer. It's easy to be a fan, quite another thing to be a committed follower.

My full review: <http://100greatestnovelsofalltimeques...>

---

### Jason Lilly says

I am not a fan of Jesus. This book is so powerful and so convicting, I felt uncomfortable reading it. But that is exactly the point. Christianity has become too comfortable and too safe. Christians view following Jesus as getting saved, attending church services, praying before meals and before bedtime, reading some devotionals, listening to Christian music. These things are great, but what truly defines being a follower of Jesus is sacrifice. Jesus demonstrated pure love by giving up his life and all he asks in return is that we give him our lives. This book will stir something. It might make you angry and you may not take anything it says seriously, but I urge you to take its message to heart. Jesus doesn't want fans. He wants followers who will truly follow him. The best section of the book is the final one, "following jesus -- wherever, whenever, whatever" but it will make you squirm.

Readers of this book also recommend Radical: Taking Back Your Faith from the American Dream That is next on my list.

---

### Julie says

One reviewer sadly commented after reading this book, "I guess I don't measure up." I would like to encourage her by saying "Of course, you don't. None of us 'measures up.' We are all sinners and that is why Jesus had to do it all. He loves you even though he knows you don't measure up."

I am afraid that for some readers this book may teach that there are two kinds of Christians--lazy pew sitters and radical foreign missionaries. Each chapter ends with an inspiring example of someone who is living the Victorious Christian Life. Now don't get me wrong. I love these stories, but I wonder how they speak to a humble Christian whose vocation may not take them to the deserts of China or the jungles of Burma. It's wonderful to want to serve God. Should you do it because the clock is ticking? Should you do it because you know 'God expects more from you'? It seems to me that the author implies that human will power is the

difference between being a fan and being a follower. We can be obedient, but the power is all on God's side of the equation. Don't let this book steal your joy and hope!

---

## Eric says

5 Stars

Excellent book. Kyle Idleman does a great job presenting Biblical examples of what Christ meant when he called people to follow him.

There is a discord, particularly in the American church, between what being a devoted follower of Christ looks like in the Bible and what it looks like now, in our lives. The New Testament is full of examples of people who gave up everything to follow Jesus. In our culture, we expect praise when we do God the favor of showing up to church 3 Sundays a month. Total commitment is now viewed as radical, instead of foundational.

The book goes through a number of different encounters from the Bible where Jesus interacted with different people, using them as examples of some of the same behaviors we can be guilty of today. Each example helped drive the overriding message home. Jesus doesn't want to be one of your top priorities. He wants to be, and must be, your first priority. Idleman is very direct, laying out exactly what the cost is of following Jesus and what that means for your life.

Not a Fan is one of the easier to read Christian books I've encountered. It's well written, in simple language with short chapters and a tendency toward sarcasm I quite enjoyed. It managed to convey a challenging message while being a very accessible read, something not easy to do. It's definitely a book I would recommend to other Christians as the message is one we all need to hear (me included) and hear again sometimes when we don't get it quite right.

---

## Jesse says

A good review of this book <http://thegospelcoalition.org/book-re...>

There are some good points and also some problems with this book. The author basically teaches the "surrendered life" which is nothing new. DA Carson's associate Andy Naselli wrote his doctoral dissertation about this movement called "Keswick" or "Higher life" sanctification and you can read a presentation of it here: <http://andynaselli.com/keswick-theology>

I was completely unaware of this model of sanctification until my early 20's when I started reading Romans and the rest of the new testament only to realize that I had an incorrect view. I had been taught that we can live with Jesus as merely our savior or we can totally surrender our life to Him and accept Him as Lord also. My high school youth pastor was Methodist and this view stems from the Wesleyan/Arminian viewpoint. Also Campus Crusade teaches this sort of thing and I heard the word surrender at every one of their meetings. Idleman mentions Bill Bright the leader of Campus Crusade as a hero of his.

Having and practicing this understanding will lead to problems and here are a few that Dr. Naselli points out.

A few problematic teachings of Keswick theology which all can be found in one degree or another in Not a Fan:

Disjunction: It creates two categories of Christians. This is the fundamental, linchpin issue. "Fan vs Follower"

Perfectionism: It portrays a shallow and incomplete view of sin in the Christian life. "Then I completely surrendered and now I live fully for Jesus" --seriously?

Quietism: It tends to emphasize passivity, not activity. "Let God do the work" -- I've also heard Charles Stanley teach this kind of thing and he is also mentioned in the book.

Pelagianism: (denial of the complete effect or noetic effect of sin on our will) It tends to portray the Christian's free will as autonomously starting and stopping sanctification. "You need to decide to become a follower" -- This concept is truly foreign to the new testament. It is God who works in you and you were bought at a price, therefore honor God.

Methodology: It tends to use superficial formulas for instantaneous sanctification. "You're now a fan, decide to become a follower" The sad thing is that many people may sell their house or empty their bank accounts to become followers and realize later that they aren't the rich young ruler and Christ hasn't called them to do something "crazy" for Him. I wonder why people haven't gouged out their eyes or cut off their hands since Jesus also requires this? Read the rest of the new testament if you want to know how to know God. Jesus sent the Apostles for this very purpose.

Impossibility: It tends to result in disillusionment and frustration for the have-nots. --Pretty self explanatory and I am sure many people felt this way after reading this book.

Spin: It tends to misinterpret personal experiences. --This is made clear in all of the personal accounts in the book. There are many things said that raise red flags, but the "God was laughing at me" one on page 278 is particularly troublesome.

Campus Crusade and other Wesleyan/Arminian ministries espouse this sort of "total surrender" which may work for a season to get you through college or a lull in your walk, but isn't a sustainable method for discipleship. This model of discipleship fails because it is based on an insufficient understanding of the total depravity of humans and how God definitively and progressively sanctifies the believer. We are saved fully when we believe and continue to be sanctified as we are empowered by the Holy Spirit to repent and become progressively conformed to the image of Christ.

The call to discipleship in Not a Fan is mostly good material. If you liked this book I would recommend continuing in your study of biblical sanctification and read J.I. Packer's book "Keep in Step with the Spirit" and then John Owen's "Overcoming Sin and Temptation". But most importantly read and re-read Romans and what the rest of the New Testament teaches about justification by faith alone and the work of the Holy Spirit in the life of the believer. Jesus and Paul whom Jesus sent are talking about the same discipleship and we can't separate their messages.

Overall I found the theology of this book very contradictory at many points. Here a few examples:

On page 63 Idleman says that "Nicodemus must humble himself to become born again" --he goes on to say that being born again is really up to Nicodemus, yet Jesus and the rest of the New Testament make it very clear that the second birth or regeneration is 100% an activity of God and initiated by Him and not us. Read John 3,7,10 and Ephesians 1-3 if you aren't sure about this concept.

On page 64 he says (speaking about a fan) that "he made a decision to believe, but not a decision to follow" --this also presupposes that sanctification is basically up to us and our will to surrender or follow. It leaves out that it is God who saves and sanctifies us including our will and effort. The same Holy Spirit that grants you faith also grants you repentance and the desire to know God and repent. Saving faith that is of the Holy Spirit is a faith that trusts and obeys. There is no such thing as the person on page 263 who has "received the gift of the Holy Spirit, but isn't being filled with the Holy Spirit". This is another teaching of the Higher Life or Keswick theology that subscribers like Bill Bright and Charles Stanley teach. These men have been great men of the faith, but teach a non-biblical method of sanctification.

Maybe the most problematic error is this one. ABSOLUTE SURRENDER

-- I am all for living your life as a living sacrifice and self-denial. As long as we realize that our repentance and sanctification requires our effort. We put sin to death by the power of the Holy Spirit, but we are commanded to actively do it. "Let go and let God" is a recipe for disobedience to God. Our surrender is never complete and to think otherwise is just self-deception. I do recommend going to the above link and reading the presentation on Keswick Theology. It will be helpful in putting these things in biblical perspective.

This is also a good article on the subject: <http://www.peacemakers.net/unity/carn...>

---

## Tanara McCauley says

Got your church T-shirt? Your "Jesus is my co-pilot" bumper sticker? What about your WWJD bracelet?

Bible? Check! Some verses memorized? Check! Personalized tithe envelopes? You know this maaan!

Okay, okay. Now what about Jesus? You've got all the paraphernalia--the outward stuff that clothes you with the Christian image--but do you really have Jesus? Are you a fan, or are you a follower?

Uhhhhhhh.....what you talkin' bout Willis?

Willis isn't here. But if you want to know what I'm talking about, pick up Kyle Idleman's Not a Fan: Becoming a Completely Committed Follower of Jesus. Idleman uses an in-your-face and step-on-your-toes approach to distinguish between professors of Christ who are merely fans, and followers of Christ who are all in.

Kyle addresses several indicators of fandom. In short, they know about Jesus but don't know Him, they praise Him with their mouths but their hearts are vacationing in self-ville, or in Kyle's words, "They want to be close enough to Jesus to get all the benefits, but not so close that it requires anything from them." Followers, however, don't just put Jesus first. He is it. He is all. There is no competition.

Because the book is non-fiction and the theme very specific, it's difficult for me to review it in-depth without giving away too much. What I can say is that it will challenge readers to do a great deal of self-reflection. It is written in such a way that, fan or follower, you cannot walk away from it without digging deep inside to see where your loyalties lie, whether they are divided, or even if somewhere along the way they've shifted.

Most of the time Idleman addresses the reader as if he/she is already a fan. Some might sit a little straighter at such presumption, but calm down. Following Christ is a daily calling, not a one time deal. And every

opportunity to search the heart and “see if there is any wicked way” in it (Psalm 139:24) is time well spent. Remember: followers of Christ welcome a righteous rebuke, we don’t refuse it (Psalm 141:5).

If you’re a fan and you’re happy right where you are, my guess is Kyle’s message will seriously offend you. If you’re a fan but no longer want to be, it’ll challenge you to bolt out of the stands, suit up, and get to the business of living like a true follower of Jesus. If you’re already a follower you’ll identify if and when you tend to have seasons of fandom, or whether there are compartmentalized areas of your life where your spiritual weapon of choice is a set of frilly pom poms.

Where this book is concerned, I have to say I would qualify as a fan of the book. I am “an enthusiastic admirer” of the message and the style of writing. I laughed (hard), I cried (loud), and when I put it down I started calculating how much it was going to cost me to get one in the hands of way too many people. I found the personal testimonies particularly powerful. I gave it five out of five stars.

When it comes to Jesus, however, I am not a fan.

---

## Lorrie says

This is a thought-provoking book. A lot of what he said made sense; still, I'm left somewhat confused. I completely understand the concept of fan versus follower; I've personally known many 'fans' in my life. But for the true believer, I feel that this book may have him question his salvation. 'Good' some may say, but God wants us to rest assured that we belong to Him, not worry sick about it.

I John 5:13 - These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God.

The key word in this passage is 'know'.

I realize that many, in fact most (if you believe the surveys), of the American population identifies with Christianity, but without having any idea of what being a Christian means. I'm sure they fill up many a church pew every Sunday. This book would be a God-send for these people. They are indeed the fans that the author refers to in his book.

I just worry that the true born-again believer in Jesus Christ and His finished worked on the cross will be left wondering if they need to do more. Or because they didn't obey God's calling 20 years ago to go to the mission field, that they aren't truly a follower of Him.

It's a very touchy subject. And it will be frightening indeed to hear God say to some who thought they were Christians because of their 'good works' to hear from Him "Depart from me; I never knew you" (Matthew 7:23). But we have to be very careful not to cross the line into works-based salvation.

---

## Fayette says

I had to wait for quite awhile for this book to trickle down to Bookman's, so I was really happy to see it the last time I was there. This is a quick read with challenging thoughts for those of us who have spent a lifetime trying to figure out the equation. Man + Faith In Christ = not quite enough? Idelman's examples of

"following" seem to set up a new list of to-do's. Or not to-do's. I consider it done, and not by me. It's not my intention to get into a spiritual debate here...but I will spend some time discussing this book with people I know. It is worth reading and worth recommending. I've already recommended it to several people.

---

## **Trinity Irwin says**

"Not a Fan" by Kyle Idleman was truly an incredible read.

Idleman shares short stories from his own spiritual walk to help guide us through our own. His outlook on our journey as a Christian is quite inspirational and really helped to direct me. One thing that I really drew from the book was that what we have with God isn't "religion" but a relationship, and we often get the two confused. We often find ourselves so used to the "rules" of being a Christian that we've conformed to being the everyday fan instead of a true follower.

This book opened my eyes to many things that I was doing in my own life.

Luckily for me, I read this with a group of people and was able to collaborate on it with fellow believers.

I recommend this book for anyone whose looking to further strengthen their relationship with God and how they view it.

---

## **Lori says**

I read this book because my son's girlfriend gave it to him. It's just another book written by another well meaning believer who thinks he has the "to-do list" of an A+ believer in Jesus Christ. In reality what he is spreading is not the Christian way of life but religion. His list includes not having sex, working in soup kitchens, going on mission trips, etc... All these things are fine if they are produced BECAUSE we have a spiritual life. They should never be presented as what we will do as evidence we are a "follower".

In addition all these books have one thing in common. They tell you to surrender, commit (or recommit), give your life to Jesus and/or Jesus must be the Lord of all. But they never tell you how to surrender, how to make Jesus Lord of all--they only give you a list of things you will be doing IF you have surrendered, etc...

Christians spend way too much time reading someones book or listening to someones personal experience than building their own. You've got to have your own personal relationship with Jesus Christ.

You need to KNOW Christ!!! Knowing all about someone is completely different than knowing them. Think about it. You can know all about a friend of a friend because they are always talking about their friend. You can imitate the person you have heard everything about--saying the same things, doing the same things, being in the same places--but you don't KNOW them. And, even scarier--they certainly don't know you!!!

Once you have believed the gospel message your spiritual life begins. It begins and ends with Christ. He is the author and finisher!! He doesn't begin the process and then turn it over to you. We are told to "grow in the Grace and Knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ".

How do you grow in the Grace and Knowledge of Jesus??? By getting to know Him.

How do you get to KNOW Him? Just like you get to know anyone else. You spend one on one time with

Him on a daily basis!!! Pick up your Bible and really study the letters within its pages. Begin your study of Scripture with prayer (confess you sins to God the Father). Diligently search the Scriptures and ask God to help you understand His Truth. It's God Truth that we need!!!! (THIS is the true meaning of surrendering. Setting aside your previously conceived idea. Setting aside your human viewpoint of what you think you already know. Surrendering your thoughts and ideas to the absolute truth of God's viewpoint!!! If you will approach God's word, the Bible, without your own ideas, your churches ideas, pastors ideas, your friends and families ideas and surrender your mind to be filled with the Absolute Truth of God's word--God's view point- you will be amazed at the new found confidence you will find in Christ. This!! This grace oriented approach to God's word!! This!! This is what it means to surrender!!! If you will surrender you mind to the viewpoint of God, you will be blessed beyond measure in your soul!!!)

As believers we need to become preoccupied with the person of Jesus Christ!! We need to stop putting our focus on doing things that others can see and start doing things they can't see. Grow in Grace. Grow in the Knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ. Being the genuine article is what its all about--it's not about producing the works that give the desired human appearance. Our spiritual life is about who and what we are IN Christ. When we grow IN Christ, the light of this relationship will be seen by others. The radiance of Christ IN YOU will be evident in ways that you can not even imagine. Others will be touched by your words and actions in ways that you will likely never even know about.

All you have to do is approach the Word of God through prayer, confessing your sins to God then it's just a matter of diligently studying and rightly dividing the Word of Truth. The Holy Spirit will help you discern what is Truth and what is not. Through this process, which is the hidden transformation of your mind, you will develop a massive spiritual root system (completely unseen) that will carry you through all the storms of life with incredible stability in Jesus Christ. By doing so, you will become a vessel in which Jesus Christ is clearly seen!!!

All the glory, praise and honor to our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ!

If you want to read more.....please see Message 29 in this thread:  
<https://www.goodreads.com/review/show...>

---

## **Beyond the Pages says**

Not A Fan is a bold, in-your-face book that aggressively packs a punch. It confronts anyone daring enough to ask the question, "Am I a fan or am I a follower?" From the jump, the book holds nothing back, and it asks the reader to define her relationship with Christ. It will challenge, affront, influence, and very definitely impact you as a Christian.

Rating: 5/5 Stars \*\*\*\*\*

---

## **Jerry says**

An excellent look at what it **really** means to follow Jesus! I recommend this to all Christians!

---

## Morgan Duplechin says

I don't usually read many non-fiction books just because I get bored of them really easily and I never seem to learn anything. Every now and then I'll come across a non-fiction book that is just so amazing I want to buy it for everyone and force them to read it (which I absolutely would do if I could). Kyle Idleman begins the book with a question. Are you a fan or a follower of Jesus Christ. Most Christians would answer that question without a second thought but as Idleman gets more in depth I began to question the priorities in my life and I gained a very different viewpoint from what I had before. Whether your a Christian or not I think this is a book for everyone and if you haven't read it yet you should!

---

## Erin says

There were some points in this book that I did not agree with, but at the end of the day, it did make me question where the priorities in my life were. However, I do need to say that I would not give this book to a new Christian. The theology is a little confusing. I am, of course, basing this opinion on what I have learned and truly believe. I do believe that we are saved through the grace of God through belief in Jesus as our savior. I am not a big expert on the Bible, but I think it says somewhere in there that we aren't saved by our own works, but by the grace of God. This doesn't mean that I believe that you can just let yourself go because God will forgive you anyway. I just really believe that this belief that we are saved through grace causes people to want to change and live the life that Jesus would want us to live. There was one point in the book where Idleman said he received an email from someone who read his book that thanked him for the message and let him know that he was trying to be a follower of God. This was not an appropriate response, according to the author. The appropriate response was that he should die to himself to become a follower. While I kind of agree with this statement, I have to say that I don't like Idleman's approach at all. He is a very, "If you don't do this, you're not a follower" kind of author. He focuses TOO MUCH on things we should be doing (when, once again, our works prove NOTHING to Jesus). I don't feel like I need to sell all of my possessions for Jesus accept me as His child. I'm sure Idleman would say that that means I'm not a true follower, but he is not present in my actual relationship with God. Being a follower of God, to me, means listening for His word and then doing our best to obey what He asks us to do within the boundaries of our own individual relationships with Jesus. Some people may need to sell all their possessions or do some other drastic thing if that is TRULY what God is calling them to do. Idleman talks a lot about sacrifice and that if we aren't denying ourselves or are somehow uncomfortable with life, than we aren't a true follower of God. Here's the thing, though. God loves a cheerful giver. Jesus sacrificed Himself because he loved us. He gave Himself up for our sake because he WANTED to, not because God was making Him and not because someone told Him He didn't love God if He didn't do it. Selling your possessions to prove that you are a follower of God means nothing if your heart isn't in it. And God calls us each to do different things; has gifted us with different skills for fulfilling His purpose. In the beginning of the book, Idleman talks about Jesus saying that on the day of Judgement, he will not recognize some people who claim to be of the faith. But if you search your heart, you know if you really know Jesus. I am just terribly wary of anyone who spends too much time focusing on the works of man. Also, the fact that he divides his book into two sections, the first seeming to do with belief and the second with works, makes it hard to reconcile the fact that the two go hand in hand; a fact that he gives glancing notice to. But after true belief comes a true desire to live in a way that is pleasing to God. It takes time to get to know God, His word, and what He would expect. But this comes from a deep desire to please God and not some kind of desire to prove that you are "not a fan".

---

## Clark Goble says

I was fortunate to read Idleman's book immediately after Tozer's *The Pursuit of God*. I say this because "Not a Fan" is the perfect counterpart to Tozer. Idleman challenges the reader to identify themselves as a follower of Christ or a mere fan and presents the argument that many who identify themselves as the former are actually the latter.

Idleman presents a wonderful argument against the "cheap" Christianity that runs rampant in the Church and encourages his readers to "get to a place where following Jesus is so important to them, that if they lost everything it would still be worth it" (p. 66).

This book causes the reader to reflect upon his own faith. In my case, I was convicted in several areas of my life. I was able to recognize those parts of my life that I simply wasn't prepared to surrender to Christ. It's a simple concept really. When Christ asks us to give up everything to follow Him, what is the one thing you would refuse to let go of? This may be a simple concept but is difficult in practice. If Christ isn't what we hold most dear, we are a fan – not a follower.

While Tozer's book placed in me the desire to pursue Christ daily, Idleman's gave me a practical vision of what such a pursuit entails.

This book will certainly be added to my list of recommended reading.

---

## David Cooke says

This book really challenged me to examine the commitment level of my relationship with Jesus. It was a thorough scriptural examination that also included great testimonials that demonstrated the profound difference between being a fan and being a follower. I found myself alternating between discomfort and joy as I looked closely at my heart and my life to determine whether I was truly a follower of Jesus. I welcomed the examination and the call to reflection. It served as a wonderful call to action in my commitment to my relationship with Jesus.

---

## George Hunger says

This book by Kyle Idleman is easy to read and written in a casual context that many people will no doubt relate to. He calls Christians to examine their walk with Christ, separating fan from follower. He holds the bar high and does a great job calling people to being completely committed to the call of Christ. For this I gave it two stars...but many may be asking why I didn't rate the book higher.

As I read the book, I kept wondering when he was going to address the source of man's problem and the only viable solution to his problem: the nature of sinful man and becoming born again. In his effort to describe what a completely committed follower of Jesus looks like, Kyle overlooks the fact that man is inherently evil, depraved, and lost without God. He fails to adequately address man's problem with sin and then challenges us to make a mental decision to "try harder" and become more committed through an act of the will... rather than stating the Biblical requirement for new life in Christ, which is becoming born again.

The Bible is clear that one must be born again to enter the kingdom of God. In order to do this, they must

first face the fact that they are in need of God's saving grace. No mention of Biblical repentance, no mention of becoming a new creation in Christ, no mention of regeneration or getting a new heart with new desires to please God. For this reason, the book was found lacking. Without true Godly repentance and being changed from the inside out, all attempts at reform are simply external behavior modification. This oversight by the author was disappointing.

---

### **Miss Me. says**

This book is excellent for anyone who's sick and tired of the mundane Christian life. This is a book that encourages you to not just claim to be a Christian, but to be a follower of Christ's teachings. Anyone can say that they are a "Christian" but to actually live a life that emulates who God truly is.

I was hoping for a Francis Chan type of teaching from this book. But even though this book wasn't an in depth challenge to me, it did serve as a good reminder of what it means to be a Christian.

I recommend this as a gift to one who is still seeking what it means to follow God and it's not being a "fan" of the "stories". But it will disturb and perturb anyone who can say, "I'm am a good person!". This book forces someone to realize that our definitions of our own personal morals never measure up. And if it upsets you, then might I suggest you ask yourself why and then match your reasoning to the Word. If it doesn't match, then someone is wrong and I can almost guarantee that it isn't God.

---

### **Michelle says**

There are couple things that were said that I didn't completely agree with, but overall, I feel this is a great book to get you really thinking about your relationship with God. Am I "all-in"? Am I committed? Am I a fan, or an "enthusiastic admirer," that is running lukewarm for Christ, instead of on fire?

At the beginning of this book, I would answer wholeheartedly that I am a follower of Christ. In all honesty, this book revealed to me that I'm not 100% completely committed. When I'm honest, I put other things before God. Not all the time, but sometimes. Do I surrender all? Do I die to self everyday? It's sad to say the answer to these questions is . . . no. I can be full of pride, I can be selfish, I can be judgmental. I'm a sinner, but I love the Lord with all of my heart! I am in awe of God, the gift of His son, His sacrifice, His love for me, and His amazing grace. I believe that Jesus is the answer to everything. But have I fully committed myself to following Him? No. This book has shown me that I need to step it up, because I'm not as "on fire" as I thought I was. I don't want to be lukewarm. I don't want there to be a disconnect between what I believe and what I do.

As I mentioned, there were some things I didn't completely agree with. When Kyle mentions things like, "We looked at our finances and figured out what changes needed to be made so that our offering to God was more than our house payment" (page 60), that came across a little unrealistic to me. I don't believe that our offering has to be more than our house payment to be a fully committed follower. Maybe that's not his point, but that's how it came across to me. Also, when he mentions things like adoption, missions trips, and foster parenting, I know he was giving examples of things one can do as a follower of Christ, but it came across to me as . . . if you're not doing these types of things, maybe you're not really following Christ the way you should. I don't believe that God calls everyone to serve in the same way, so maybe He has called me to something "smaller," I need to be faithful in that place, and not feel like less of a follower because I'm not going on missions trips, or adopting a child, or being a foster parent. On page 206, he lists some questions

where he asks things like, "Have you exchanged following Jesus for a job that pays really well? Have you exchanged following Jesus for a house that has all of the upgrades?" My immediate thought was, can't someone have a good paying job and a nice house and be completely committed to God at the same time? Of course, I would say absolutely, yes. So these things threw me a bit, and maybe I misinterpreted what he was saying. Bottom line, as Christians we have to put Him first above all else. He needs to be our one and only. And when He calls us to do something, we need to be willing to say yes . . . "wherever, whatever, whenever."

I appreciate the fact that this book makes one really take an honest look at their relationship with Christ. I appreciate that it has made me reevaluate what I've been doing, and it's given me the push that I need to go deeper in my relationship with Christ, and that's always a good thing.

Since I've finished this book, it's really got me thinking. Honestly, I'm confused. Is it truly black or white? Is it really fan or follower, and no in between? I know that God doesn't expect perfection. We are human, and we do fall short of the glory of God. I feel like there are times that I'm just not going to get it right. Does that mean I'm not a completely committed follower? Isn't that where grace steps in?

I know that He wants all of me, not 50%, not 90% . . . all of me. I get it, and I'm ready to pick up my cross, and follow Him.

EDITED on DECEMBER 29, 2011 to add:

This book has really got me thinking, and for a while doubting my commitment. I want to add this:

Am I committed? Yes. 100%? No. And I'm not making excuses, but it's just not realistic to think that I could be 100% \*anything\* all of the time. That would be perfect, and none of us can be that. I am saved by grace though faith in Jesus Christ. My "works" are the fruit of my belief. They don't secure my salvation. My salvation is sure, because I put my faith and trust in Christ for the forgiveness of my sins. What Jesus did on the cross was the "perfect" sacrifice. I can't do anything to earn it or deserve it. But most certainly through the power of the Holy Spirit in me, I will do the will of my Father in Heaven -- keeping my eye on Jesus, and following Him -- the perfect example of how we are to live our lives. Will I fall short? Will I miss the mark (sin)? Absolutely. I don't believe that this lessens my commitment.

Like I mentioned in my review, this book has encouraged me to go deeper in my relationship with Christ. It has reaffirmed what I already knew -- that I often put other things before Him, and I need to change that, and go deeper in my commitment.

---

## **Matthew says**

This book's popularity is well-deserved. The text has just the right amount of quotable lines (that have you reaching for your pen to copy them down) but not enough to seem gimmick-driven. The examples/metaphors are simple, effective, accessible. The occasional moments of humor are genuinely funny (and never distract from the message of the text). The arguments are supported/spotlighted with quotes from Scripture. The narration is appropriately confessional, encouraging, yet challenging.

You get a sense that Kyle Idleman is the kind of guy you would want to grab coffee with because you'd feel like he cared and you'd respect him, even if you got into a disagreement. This is grace-filled writing.

But the strongest recommendation I can give this book is that I have seen it impact the lives of people in my

community; this book has challenged many to re-evaluate their devotion to Christ. Mini-faith-crises like that are good if they pull us deeper into a relationship with Christ, yeah-ah.

---