**“This Thing We Call Worship” Series – Week 1 (What is Worship?)**

**Jersey Day/Super Bowl Sunday**

**2/5/17**

Good morning everyone! As you all know, tonight is one of the most well-known and massive sporting events in the world. Now, some of you will care who wins tonight and some of you won’t…some of you will just watch the commercials or half-time show…and some of you will just show up at someone’s house and eat a ton of food. Regardless, this game will be watched by MILLIONS of people!

For many of these people, they will have a great morning and a great week…they will be over-the-top excited and happy because their team won! However, the opposite is true as well. There will be a ton of people who will be sad and miserable because their team DIDN’T win. Some people will be in the middle and might be happy or sad, but it won’t be to either extreme like the other two groups of people I mentioned.

Guys, I believe that the Super Bowl is one of the biggest worship services of the year. That probably sounded really weird and you’re probably like, “What do you mean a worship service? It’s just a game!” We could go on a big debate about whether or not God cares about a meaningless sporting event, but this game will still be a place where fans of either team cheer, scream, gasp, yell at the referees (even through their TV!), sweat, and pace/walk around the room. It’s like their whole life depends on this game.

**These people will give complete control or surrender their happiness/well-being to the result of a game. A GAME! That’s why I believe it will be a worship service. Here’s what I mean…**

Worship is defined as “respect or adoration for a god.” I think we all know that. However, worship is also defined as “excessive admiration for something or someone.” I think the fans I described earlier would fit this definition because a “fan” is defined as “an enthusiastic admirer.” Fans are way up when the team wins or life is good; way down when they lose or when life is bad. Think about it…companies will spend millions and millions of dollars for a 30-second commercial tonight just so they can get more business and make more money. For many people, the Super Bowl can be an object of worship.

**I believe the Super Bowl can teach us a lot about God and worship, in particular. We are starting a brand new series called “This Thing We Call Worship” and today’s message is kind of an introduction into the series. Here’s our first THP!**

**THP: Worship is complete surrender to God!**

**The question I want to pose to each of us today is are we a FAN of Jesus or are we a FOLLOWER of Jesus? Check out this video from Pastor Kyle Idleman…**

**(Leaders Note: Show “Not A Fan” video)**

That video should really challenge us to examine our relationship with God. Are we fans or followers of Jesus? A fan of Jesus will be really excited about his or her faith one minute and then the moment something goes wrong or becomes difficult, they fade away…just like many sports fans. Have you ever heard the phrase “fair weather fan”? It’s just an expression for someone who only roots for their team when they’re doing well, but if they stink, they don’t really cheer for them. I think that applies to many Christians today.

However, as the video said, a follower of Jesus…a true worshiper of God…is someone who is completely surrendered to God. Even when life is hard, they are still willing to follow Jesus. It’s much harder to be a follower than a fan. Here’s an interesting story from the New Testament to illustrate my point. It comes from Mark 10:17-27:

*“As Jesus started on his way, a man ran up to him and fell on his knees before him. “Good teacher,” he asked, “what must I do to inherit eternal life?” “Why do you call me good?” Jesus answered. No one is good—except God alone. You know the commandments: ‘You shall not murder, you shall not commit adultery, you shall not steal, you shall not give false testimony, you shall not defraud, honor your father and mother.” “Teacher,” he declared, “all these I have kept since I was a boy.” Jesus looked at him and loved him. “One thing you lack,” he said. “Go, sell everything you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me. At this the man’s face fell. He went away sad, because he had great wealth.*

*Jesus looked around and said to his disciples, “How hard it is for the rich to enter the kingdom of God!” The disciples were amazed at his words. But Jesus said again, “Children, how hard it is to enter the kingdom of God! It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for someone who is rich to enter the kingdom of God.” The disciples were even more amazed, and said to each other, “Who then can be saved?” Jesus looked at them and said, “With man this is impossible, but not with God; all things are possible with God.”*

Jesus knew the one thing this man was not willing to give up to be a follower. He was definitely a fan: he kept all those commandments Jesus mentioned since he was a boy. However, he loved money…he loved it more than God. That’s why he was so sad when Jesus asked him to give it up and follow Him.

Now, this doesn’t mean we have to give away all our money to be a Christian…but, I think we can fill-in-the-blank with things we don’t want lose. Maybe for you…in order to be a Christian, you need to stop hanging out with a certain friend or group of friends. Maybe you need to spend more time using the words you say to build people up instead of tearing them down. Maybe it’s spending more time reading your Bible or in prayer. Maybe you need to make a deeper commitment to your faith and coming to church on a regular basis and not just because “you have to.”

**The Super Bowl is a game, but your life is not a game. This is real stuff. Are you going to live your life as a fan and only worship or surrender your life to God when things are good, or are you going to be follower of Jesus through thick and thin? As we start this series on worship, we need to make sure we examine our hearts and commit to our THP: being true worshipers; completely surrendered to God. Let’s pray!**