



49 Day Devotional Guide

Glenville New Life Community Church &

Calvary Presbyterian Church

WEEK 4: Fanatic or Fair Weather Fan

*You will receive a weekly devotional guide to use during the 49 days of
Insanity for*

Introduction to 49 Days of Insane Devotions for Christ

Devotion is described as an act of prayer or private worship, that the act of devotion is being dedicated and loyal. This 49 day devotional guide is written to assist us in our private prayer and worship times. Over the course of the next 49 days our challenge is to seek God in new and exciting ways, to position ourselves to hear from God and to become uniquely devoted to God in ways that we haven't experienced before. This devotional guide is written by everyday people of our church. When we began this effort, I thought, is it insane to believe that our God can allow us to write down our thoughts, feelings, and prayers, in such a way as to inspire and help each other?

We believe that with God all things are possible, even us, everyday regular people writing down a weekly devotional guide. This task too is a part of our transformation, trusting that God can use us to make a difference in the lives of others. We pray that as you enter into your private prayer and private worship that you will use this devotional guide to enhance your time with God. As you reflect upon each daily devotion ask God questions such as; what changes do I need to make, where do I need to grow, and where can I be of service to you Lord?

We thank you ahead of time for sharing in this journey of 49 days and we look forward to seeing the transformational power of Christ in your life. We pray that you share this devotion with others in your life and that if you are able you would write down your own thoughts, feelings, and prayers inside of this devotion over the next 49 days.

Pastor Toby, Pastor Rick, and Pastor Kellie and

The Insanity Team Member

PRAYER REQUESTS INSANITY FOR CHRIST 49 DAYS TO TRANSFORMATION

PERSONAL

OTHERS

CHURCH

COUNTRY

WORLD

Week 4 Fanatic or Fairweather Fan

- Remember to dress as a FAN for Christ. Wear your favorite t-shirt, scarf, or pants that show that you are a fan for Christ!
- Begin every day by saying, “Good morning God. What is your plan for us today?”

Day 22

As I was reflecting on what is total devotion to Christ, what popped up in my mind was this past Men’s Day, when the messages were on Stepping Up to The Plate, and Playing to Win. In one of the messages, Billy Warner spoke of the definition of a fan, which comes from the word fanatic. A fanatic is a person marked or motivated by an extreme, enthusiasm, as for a cause. It means excessive enthusiasm and often intense uncritical devotion.

Born and raised in the great National Football Hall of Fame City of Canton, Ohio, over the years, I have been a fan, enthusiastically devoted to my High School Alma Mater, the Canton McKinley Bulldogs football and basketball teams, and the crazy rivalry we had against the Massillon Tigers. Pep Rallies, parades, face painting, decorating the school, our cars and the community. Whew! What excitement! What Crazy Fun!

Then I went on to being a fanatic for the City of East Cleveland’s Shaw High School teams, band, and cheerleaders. I would cheer so loud and joyously for the team and for Samantha and Anita at the games, that sometimes they would look up in the stands and give me a: “Not so Loud mom, not so loud” look. But their friends began to ask them, to go up and ask me: “if I would please say their names too, and cheer for them”. I guess that they noticed that I was fanatical, and motivated by an extreme, enthusiasm, and yes, I was more than glad and happy to call out as many of their names with pride, love and joy as I possibly could. And I also called on others around me to be fanatical for them and their efforts too. But even ever so more importantly, MORE FANATICS Are NEEDED for CHRIST! We must all determine to be “Insane for Christ” in our daily lives. Like take for instance Mark 3:20-21....

Then he went home, and the crowd gathered again, so that they could not even eat. 21 And when his family heard it, they went out to seize him, for they were saying, “He is out of his mind”.

True enough; the family of Jesus probably felt embarrassment by the zeal of what they saw as a religious fanatic in the family. Does that sound familiar to any of you? Maybe that’s what you have been for many years to some who belong to you. But you know it’s not only unbelievers who sometimes look on Christians insane fanatics in the family – but if you are on fire for God, or have a desire to be on fire for God, many may see you as a fanatic, go ahead..... Become “an Insane, sold-out fanatic” for Jesus Christ anyhow!

And let us pray that we will not be ashamed of who we are. Pray that we will let our light shine in a darkened world. Pray also that as we let our light shine, the lost will come to see the truth and turn to the Savior.

Have fun! Have faith! Be Insane! Go Church! Go God! (PTGM)

Daily Thoughts & Prayer:

Day 23

Day 24

To me a fair weather fan is someone who is there when the times are good and when they are rough or a storm is starting, they aren’t anywhere around or undependable. I’ve had plenty of times that I have been a fair-weather fan in the case of following Christ and

remaining faithful. For example, I recently started reading daily devotionals. Although, I made up my mind to continue through with these devotionals and read Christian inspired books, it has been hard for me to stick to it. I have tried to open my book millions of times and said, “nah I’ll get to it later”. As well as, reading the devotional for about a week straight then stopping because I would rather watch a movie or go out to eat. It seems like when things are going good and you have no struggles, it is easier to remain faithful and be in the spirit and have a good experience at church. For example, I got blessed with the job I wanted, I went from getting a welfare check to getting a bi-weekly income that almost doubled my previous income. Although, I was blessed I still found it hard to remain a faithful thither. It seemed like the amount that was being asked of me was extremely high. What I had not realized was that he had blessed me with more because I remained faithful with little.

I have also noticed that when in a storm or when certain friends come around, you start to lose focus and become distracted. When this happens, it is more like going through the motions when at church. You don’t really get anything out of the service or the message. You just hear blank words. For example, I have a group of friends I call “family”. The one thing that I had to realize was that when I’m around them, I start to stray away from church and the things that I love. I begin to start going to the club, drinking, and listening to music that I would not listen to if I were not with them. The one thing that I have learned throughout my journey is that no matter the situation in your life, don’t be a fair weather fan. What may help is to focus more on the good things going on in your life than the bad. Remember, there is always someone out there that has it way worse than you do. Some songs that have helped me to understand this is *Tamela Mann’s You Deserve My Praise*, *Tamela Mann’s Joy of the Lord*, and *James Fortune & FIYA’s I Owe All*. Two scriptures that relate to this topic are Revelation 3:15;¹⁵ “*I know your works: you are neither cold nor hot. Would that you were either cold or hot!*” and Luke 9:23-27;²³ *And he said to all, “If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me.”*²⁴ *For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will save it.*²⁵ *For what does it profit a man if he gains the whole world and loses or forfeits himself?*

²⁶ *For whoever is ashamed of me and of my words, of him will the Son of Man be ashamed when he comes in his glory and the glory of the Father and of the holy angels.* ²⁷ *But I tell you truly, there are some standing here who will not taste death until they see the kingdom of God.*” If you’ve ever had any fair weather friends, you know how it feels when they turn your back on you. How then do you think Jesus feels when you do this to him? (TR)

Day 25

We learned on Men’s day 2012 that a fanatic is a person marked or motivated by an extreme, enthusiasm, as for a cause. It means excessive enthusiasm and often intense uncritical devotion. Hailing from Canton, Ohio, all my life, I have been a Browns, Indians, and Cavs fan. And the definition for a fanatic holds true of my family and me concerning these Cleveland teams.

Through thick and thin, the ups and downs, I, my family, the Canton family, and many others have continued to be “crazily” faithful. I remember, rather recently, when we were going through the “LeBron James crisis”, Tina Williams and I, assisted by P.R and Susan, went, downtown to the first returning game of LaBron to Cleveland, and with signs in hand pleading with other fans as they arrived; to show character and dignity in receiving the “now Miami Heat’s LaBron” back to play Cleveland, as God and the world watched on. We received a few “Way to Go!”, “That the right Spirit!” as well as some Jeers. (Some of the Jeers, I won’t share. But statements like: Where do these Nuts come from? And descriptions like: “Crazy”, were loudly pronounced about us.)

Yes, indeed, through thick and thin, the ups and downs, I and many others have continued to be “crazily” faithful. And as I reflect on what is Insanity for Christ, I think we need more “crazy people” for Jesus – more fanatics. So, why is it that many of us jeer the idea of becoming sold-out fanatics of Jesus Christ? Satan is doing everything he can to silence the church. He is threatening to harm us if we stand up and speak out. He is leading us to believe that true biblical Christianity is too radical and needs to be watered down. He is telling us to stay silent and to keep our light hidden from a dark and dying world.

Pray for yourself and for our church family, and for the Body of Christ, that “Insanity for Christ” would become a reality. Pray that we would experience Holy Ghost Boldness, and Joy, and that this joy would become contagious throughout our church family.

Let’s become Bold, Joyous, Insane sold-out fanatics for Jesus Christ! Hallelujah, Amen! (TGM)

Daily Thoughts & Prayer:

Day 26

You know when your mom is talking to you and you are doing something; you know you’re on your phone or occupied in another way. So you are only half way listening. You hear your mom, but you are not fully listening to her. Then after she’s done talking, you stop, and actually think about what she said and you realize that she probably just said something important. Well, once when my mom was talking I realized she said something very important, “it’s either God or the world,” “it’s either all or nothing.” “It’s not God and a little bit of the world,” “it’s not a little bit of God and all of the world.” And “it’s definitely not half and half!” Well, that’s what it is to be a fan for Christ. If you’re watching a basketball team, you can’t really be a fan for both teams at the same time. That would look odd, if you were at a game with say the Cleveland Cavaliers and the Baltimore Celtics. Would you run to one side and cheer for the Cavs then run to the other side and cheer for the Celtics. That’s what a fair weather fan is. Whoever seems to be winning is the team that they are on. No real loyalty. Well, with God It’s either all or nothing, even when the team doesn’t seem to be doing that well. We can’t just halfway listen to God, we are either in or out. Let’s join God’s team! (JW)

Daily Thoughts & Prayer:

Day 27

Don't Miss Out On What Really Matters! Matthew 23:23-24 (NLT)

²³ “What sorrow awaits you teachers of religious law and you Pharisees. Hypocrites! For you are careful to tithe even the tiniest income from your herb gardens,^[g] but you ignore the more important aspects of the law—justice, mercy, and faith. You should tithe, yes, but do not neglect the more important things. ²⁴ Blind guides! You strain your water so you won't accidentally swallow a gnat, but you swallow a camel!

If you want a harsh reality check, read all of Matthew 23! Jesus confronts the scribes and Pharisees on missing the mark. Their focus was on upholding the letter of the law – even if it meant making up some laws or rules to make them appear better on the outside and not necessarily the inside. Wow, did they miss the point. How many times have you felt you missed the mark with your spouse, child(ren), job, family members, a project, or homework – not alone Jesus?

Ask yourself: Are you following Jesus or following the rules?

I would like to think I am following Jesus but true reflection reveals otherwise. My first reaction to a problem most times is not seeing the bigger picture or showing mercy but what rules have been broken and what consequences should be expected. Being in ministry and especially youth ministry, there have been plenty of times I felt that I have missed the point because my focus has been on upholding or keeping the rules at the expense of showing the love, grace and mercy of Christ – just as He has shown me time and time again. Rules are important to Jesus too but not when those rules take your focus off of building a relationship with Him. Many of us have been taught all *about* Jesus. Often times it is through the guilt of disappointing and being rejected by others that we try to keep up with as many rules and guidelines as possible. We think we only need to look good on the outside when we are

screaming for help and comfort on the inside. When we fall, the guilt and shame tends to take the rule abiders far away from church and Jesus.

During this initial 7 weeks of Insanity*, my prayer is to be able to answer the question posed above with certainty that I am following Jesus!! This is an area God has been dealing with me on for some time now. As a mom, youth bible study teacher, and choir director – I want to be able to show the youth I encounter how to get to *know* Jesus for themselves. This can only happen if I reacquaint myself with Him. It’s good to understand facts about Jesus and be able to quote a few scriptures here and there. But when you know Jesus – whew – you have now begun to see what really matter! You go from being a follower of the rules to a follower of Jesus! (JWD)

Daily Thoughts & Prayer:

Day 28

Matthew 6:25-

²⁵ “Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothes? ²⁶ Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they? ²⁷ Can any one of you by worrying add a single hour to your life^[e]?

²⁸ “And why do you worry about clothes? See how the flowers of the field grow. They do not labor or spin. ²⁹ Yet I tell you that not even Solomon in all his splendor was dressed like one of these. ³⁰ If that is how God clothes the grass of the field, which is here today and tomorrow is thrown into the fire, will he not much more clothe you—you of little faith? ³¹ So do not worry,

saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘What shall we wear?’³² For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them.³³ But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.³⁴ Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.

What will I wear? This is a question that I ask myself every day. As I stand in front of my dresser drawers or in front of my closet, looking at the same clothes that I see every day. I always ask myself in I I wonder in some way or fashion, what will I wear? Before I can answer the question of what will I wear, I think about what will my day be like? I look out the window to see what the weather is like. I check the calendar to see what day it is. I look at my schedule to see what activities I have to participate in. I take many things into consideration, then I still ask myself the question, what will I wear? After years and years of getting dressed it would seem like this should be an easy answer. However, every day I, along with many others ask ourselves, questions like what will we wear, what will we eat, where will we go, what will we do, how much money will we need, and many other questions.

But the scripture from Matthew tells us do not worry about what we will eat, drink, and wear. My question becomes how do we not worry? Although, we know that God will provide for the birds and the animals, surely God will provide for us. The worry and concern about today and tomorrow do not disappear. So, what are we supposed to do? This scripture says to us, “seek God’s Kingdom and God’s righteousness and all these things will be given to us.” Seek God’s Kingdom. What does it mean to seek? Seek is defined by the Encarta English Dictionary as to search for something, to strive for something, or to ask for something. To search, strive, and to ask; when thinking about these words in relation to God’s Kingdom, seek God’s Kingdom and God’s righteousness, means to search for God’s Kingdom and to search for God’s righteousness, to strive for God’s Kingdom and to strive for God’s righteousness, and to ask for God’s Kingdom and to ask for God’s righteousness.

A fanatic for a sports team often does these three things. They search for the place where the team is at. They strive to be where the team is at and they ask many questions about the team. Fanatics never give up until their questions are answered and they are as much a part of

the team as they can be. As fanatics for Christ, how do we search, strive, and ask? It begins with our daily question or daily prayer. Good morning God, what plans do you have for us today? It's like standing before God's closet and saying, "I'm here, what will clothes are we wearing today, what food are we eating today, and as a result of what we are wearing and what we have eaten, where are we going today? Notice the word we? As fanatics for Christ, each day we wear what Christ wears. Each day we eat what Christ eats and each day we walk where Christ walks.

That's a different way to think about our day. And a reminder to us all to put on our whole armor of God, another way I like to say this is to put on my team uniform for Christ. A sports player never goes out to play a game without their complete uniform. However, we as Christians go out all the time having left our helmets, our shields, our shoes, we don't even carry a ball and yet we think we are playing the game. Let's pray today that as fanatics for Christ, that we are all able to join the team. (PKS)

Daily Thoughts & Prayer:
