



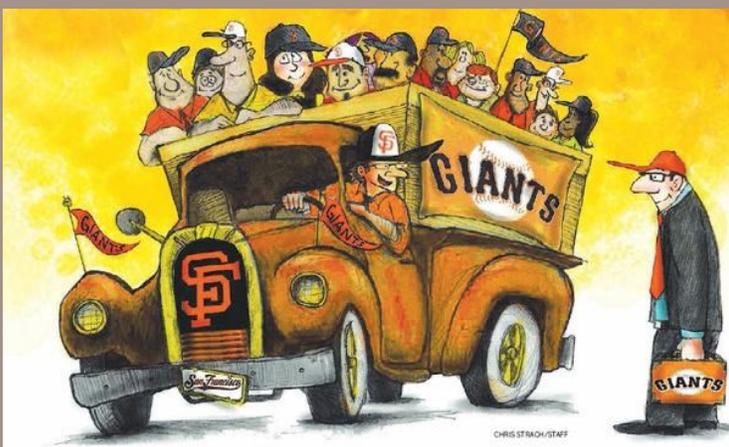
PARKSIDE LIFE NEWS

The weekly newsletter article
of Parkside Chapel

NOT A BANDWAGON FAN!

By Ron Story
Community Life Pastor

I am a fan of sports. I know... a big surprise to many of you! As a young boy, I grew up in the Bay Area, loving to play baseball, football, and basketball. (Not soccer and hockey, as they were not considered real sports in my world in the 1950s and '60s.) I became a fan of Bay Area professional teams in the late '50s when I went to my first San Francisco Giants game at Seals Stadium in 1959 and saw Willie Mays and Willie McCovey hit home runs, plus I received an autographed baseball from Giant's catcher, Hobie Landrith!



I regularly had mysterious stomach aches on school days when World Series games were played. The 49ers, Warriors, Oakland Raiders, and Oakland A's also soon became a regular part of my everyday life as I

became an avid player, watcher, listener, and daily reader of box scores. Over the past 60 years, I have remained a true fan of my Bay Area teams. I follow my teams through thick and thin, winning years and losing years (of which there have been many). I am not a fair-weather or bandwagon fan!

I was reminded of the term "bandwagon fan" by Pastor Nigel in one of his messages at the Men's Retreat this past weekend. A "bandwagon fan" is a person who chooses to follow a team closely only when it is doing well. When that team is winning, they are an excited follower. However, when their team is not doing well, they lose interest. That kind of "fair weather" or "bandwagon" fan is not a true fan.

Our theme for the men's weekend was, "True Disciples." Pastor Nigel mentioned the term "bandwagon" as an example of times we might be occasional disciples rather than true disciples. Contrary to sports fans, we tend to be bad weather disciples rather than fair weather. We jump on the discipleship bandwagon not when we are winning but rather when we seem to be losing in our lives. When things are going well in our life, we can often shift to "cruise control." When life is good, we don't always see the need for diligence in prayer, Scripture study,

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worship, and fellowship. On the other hand, when the going gets tough, we jump back on the bandwagon to follow Jesus more closely. Is it any wonder why God allows or brings struggles into our lives to grow us as true disciples?

**"COUNT IT ALL JOY, MY BROTHERS,
WHEN YOU MEET TRIALS
OF VARIOUS KINDS, FOR YOU KNOW
THAT THE TESTING
OF YOUR FAITH PRODUCES
STEADFASTNESS. AND LET
STEADFASTNESS HAVE ITS FULL EFFECT,
THAT YOU MAY BE PERFECT
AND COMPLETE, LACKING IN NOTHING."
JAMES 1:2-4**

**"BUT THANKS BE TO GOD,
WHO GIVES US THE VICTORY THROUGH
OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST.
THEREFORE, MY BELOVED BROTHERS,
BE STEADFAST, IMMOVABLE,
ALWAYS ABOUNDING IN THE
WORK OF THE LORD,
KNOWING THAT IN THE LORD
YOUR LABOR IS NOT IN VAIN."
1 CORINTHIANS 15:57-58**

I don't know about you, but I don't want to be a bandwagon disciple ... only committed to following Jesus when life gets tough. My desire is to be a true fan, a true disciple of Jesus, daily following, watching, listening, reading, practicing, and growing in my relationship with Him! Over the years, my sports teams have won numerous football super bowls, many baseball World Series, and several basketball championships, but all five teams fall short most years. My experience of being a true fan, follower, and disciple of Jesus has been far more rewarding as He promises the ultimate victory every day!



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