Big Crowds, Hard Words
Why do you think Jesus chose to raise the bar for discipleship at the moment when "great crowds" were following Him? What does this tell us about His priorities?

Undivided Allegiance
Jesus says we must "hate" (love less by comparison) even family and our own life to be His disciple. How do you personally wrestle with putting Jesus above good but competing loves like approval, family, romantic peace, or reputation?

Good Loves vs. Rival Loves
Which of the four examples (approval, kid success, romantic peace, reputation) resonates most with your life right now? How might you re-order that love under Christ?

Carrying the Cross
In your own words, what does it mean to "carry your cross" today? How have you seen this lived out in your community, or in your own walk with Christ?

Counting the Cost
Jesus uses the image of a builder who "sits down and counts." Why is it important to "count the cost" before following Him? How might failing to do this affect someone's faith journey?

Illustration Check-In
Think about the student-athlete illustration (pep rally hype vs. 5:15 a.m. practices). Where in your faith life have you experienced the difference between enthusiasm and consistency?

The Two Kings
What does it look like to "surrender" to God as the stronger King in practical, everyday life? How do you personally struggle with surrender?

Renouncing Possessions
Jesus says we must "renounce" all we have. What does open-handed living look like for you right now: in your time, your money, or your talents? Where might God be calling you to "travel light"?

Diagnostic Questions

- What area of your life feels "off-limits" to Jesus?
- Does your calendar and budget show Jesus is first, or that He fits where He can?
- How do these questions challenge you?

Walking with Jesus This Week
What is one specific, concrete step you will take this week to live with undivided allegiance: whether that's saying no to a rival love, making a "travel light" choice, or drafting a personal "rule of life"?