

**Articles and Sermons :: The Right and Wrong Way to Grow - Jim Cymbala**

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As we think about the purpose of Multiply and the command Jesus gave to go and make disciples (Matt 28:18-20), there's always the temptation to adjust our message in order to attract more would-be followers of Christ. However, the goal of making disciples will not be accomplished by our own ability or ingenuity.

Pastor and author Jim Cymbala gives us a healthy reminder that the call to spread the gospel is a call to remain faithful to its message:

“The apostles weren't trying to finesse people. Their communication was not supposed to be 'cool' or soothing. They aimed for a piercing of the heart, for conviction of sin. They had not the faintest intention of asking, 'What do people want to hear? How can we draw more people to church on Sunday?' That was the last thing in their minds. Such an approach would have been foreign to the whole New Testament.

Instead of trying to bring men and women to Christ in the biblical way, we are consumed with the unbiblical concept of 'church growth.' The Bible does not say we should aim at numbers but rather urges us faithfully to proclaim God's message in the boldness of the Holy Spirit. This will build God's church God's way.

Unfortunately, some churches now continually monitor how pleased people are with the services and ask what else they would like...

We have no permission whatsoever to adjust the message of the gospel. Whether it seems popular or not, whether it is 'hip' to the times, we must faithfully and boldly proclaim that sin is real but Jesus forgives those who confess.

God nowhere asks anyone to have a large church. He only calls us to do his work, proclaiming his Word to people he loves under the anointing and power of the Holy Spirit to produce results that only he can bring about. The glory then goes to him alone—not to any denomination, local church, local pastor, or church-growth consultant. That is God's only plan, and anything else is a deviation from the teaching of the New Testament.”

— Jim Cymbala, Fresh Wind, Fresh Fire, 124-125