

Sent. Going?

READING

Jonah 1, 3

Isaiah 6

Luke 10

Romans 10:14-15

Your church can either do what it can to attract people to it, or it can go out to where the people are.

There is a lot of talk these days about being “missional” vs being “attractional”. They are pretty catchy jargon words, but really what they are on about is this:

Your church can either do what it can to attract people to it, or it can go out to where the people are.

Many of the big “mega” churches seem to work on the attractional model. They have great music, snazzy preaching, and usually big fancy buildings. When small churches try to copy that model they usually fail. Their music isn’t up to that kind of professional standard, their preaching is faithful to the Bible but the preacher is more comfortable standing at a solid lectern with his Bible than walking around on stage with an almost invisible microphone. And the building.. well, don’t get me started. It’s usually some run down, drafty old church building with old style plumbing, hard seats and no heating.

For most churches, attractional just isn’t going to work.

And it might surprise you that it’s not meant to. Yeshua didn’t tell the church to attract, he told us to go.

Yeshua told us “Go and make disciples”. Just like he did. Just like he was told by his own father.

Yeshua was sent. Yeshua went.

We were sent. But we very rarely go anywhere. Instead, the modern Western church has a better idea.

Instead of going, we stand around in a big huddle, and we jump up and down, waving our arms in the air and shouting out to the lost, “Come over here. It’s fun. Come and join us.”

I don’t necessarily mean literally, but so many churches seem to just stay with each other and try to attract non-Christians to come and join them. We do sausage sizzles, or English lessons, or bowling nights for teens. Just to get them in the door. (And then we can force them to listen to a 5 minute devotion and they will want to become Christians too.)

How is that working for your church? Successful?
I doubt it.

Yeshua sent us, but we didn’t go. We stayed. And we tried to attract them to us instead, like we had a better idea.

Jonah had a better idea when he was sent too. He ran away.

I’m sure you know how that worked out for him. In the end he realised that if God sends you... Go. Now.

Jonah was sent. Jonah went. (eventually).

Isaiah didn’t say, “Here I am, make me attractive.” He said, “Here I am, send me.”

God isn’t looking for Christians or churches who are willing to do things which have nothing to do with the gospel just to get people to come in the door.

By all means offer free English lessons to the members of your church if they need them.

But seriously? Giving people free English lessons on the condition that they listen to a short devotion at the end? What does that say about the value you put on the message you are giving them?

Christian teens need fun group activities. And if they like bowling, then take them bowling. But don’t send a mixed message that if they listen to a message about Yeshua they will be rewarded with bowling!

Isaiah was sent. Isaiah went.

And the same for Paulus, Petros, Phillip, Barnabas, Silas, Timothy ...

Yeshua sent them. They went.

Same for us. We have been sent. We need to go.

Now, let me just add one more thing.

I am not in any way saying that we all need to go overseas as missionaries, or that we all need to be evangelists. In fact I quite passionately believe that we are **not** all evangelists.

[Not All Evangelists](#)

We are a team. The church is a team. We all have our roles. And when I say the church is sent, I mean that is our purpose, our mission, our focus for everything we do. As a team we need to be going. This will mean that some literally go. Others will stay and support. Others will train. Others will comfort. We all have our role, but that role has to fit in with the church’s mission to go.

And I don’t mean we have to go overseas. Go to your neighbourhood. Go to the people you work with. Go to your friends.

Go where they go and get to know them. Talk with them. Show them what real love is all about.

Get rid of that thinking that we have to get them to come to us. Let’s be imaginative with ideas about how we can go to them.

They don’t know Yeshua. They don’t know that they need to know Yeshua. And even if they did, they don’t know how to get to Yeshua from where they are at. Someone needs to go to them and to show them the way. Your church needs to be willing to do that.

If your church is willing to accept the command, and to make “go” it’s focus, it will be a very very different church than one which makes “attract” its focus.

If your church is already like that, then fantastic. Get involved.

If it isn’t, then change your church. You don’t have to be in a leadership position to lead.

Start going. Talk with your friends. Get them going.

Talk with your church leaders. If they won’t change and they just want to be

“attractional”. Then don’t just go, ... leave. Seriously, find another church which is focused on going, and join them.

Go.

Now.

(Or watch out for really big fish).