



Devotional Study Guide Journal



March 20th

Message Vs. Format

Sincere organizations of just about every type (educational, religious, business, social) constantly seek to improve the services they offer and to more sharply communicate their message. This is a good thing.

Many groups will consider changing *how* they present the material. If most communication is done in a large group setting, they might change to a smaller group gathering to make things more intimate. Or they might make the gatherings more casual to communicate a willingness to be more authentic. There is nothing wrong with this, of course.

However, what if the problem isn't the method but the message?

Since we teach Scripture, let us consider this topic in a church setting. Let's say a pastor senses things are not as they should be in his congregation, so he decides that meeting in homes is preferable to larger meetings and he jumps through the hoops to make the change. People may initially like the format change, even benefit from it socially, but what about the actual message itself?

"Faith comes through hearing and hearing by the word of Christ." I think it is fair to say, "*Change* comes by hearing the word of Christ." But if the same law-based teachings are taught in the new setting, true change will not happen. If the same message is, "This is what is wrong with you and this is how to change yourself," people will not be transformed. But if we teach of Jesus and what He accomplished FOR us on the cross, lives will be transformed.

That correct message will transform us no matter what format we use because our hearts are not changed by format but by hearing the message concerning Jesus. If the true message concerning Christ is being taught, the sheep will be fed, no matter what method is used.

