

New Spring Church: When the Gospel Isn't Enough Give Away a Harley

GREENVILLE, S.C. | BY JOSHUA COOK | JUNE 4 2013 |

New Spring Church is one of the mega churches in our state with campuses throughout South Carolina. They are an Evangelical church and give generously to non-profits throughout our state. Perry Noble is the Senior Pastor and while I don't care for the style, his messages and podcasts have personally ministered to my wife and I.

Having said that I feel that giving a Harley Davidson away in order to lure fathers to their Father's day service is way-over-the-top. What will the next gimmick be? Should the Church compete with Oprah?



As a former youth minister I understand the urgency of reaching “seekers” and the “unchurched”, but this sends the wrong message of the purpose of Christ’s Church.

As believers we are called to preach the Gospel, the Good News of what Christ has done for sinners. The power of the Holy Spirit is what draws men and women to God and nothing else can save them. The best marketing strategy cannot convert and change anyone’s heart.

However, many former pastors I know have dropped out of the ministry because they were disillusioned by church politics and “the system.”

For example, if a professional church consultant wants to help a minister plant a new church in a community they will conduct surveys in neighborhoods (wealthy neighborhoods) to discover what families are looking for in a church. The categories will be: music style, children’s programs, type of coffee, etc, and based on the survey results they will create a church that fits the community’s preference.

This strategy has nothing to do with God’s mission or Biblical teaching, but everything to do with a “relevant” marketing strategy to fill empty chairs.

This begs the question of what type of disciples are these churches producing?

If the Christianity presented at your church is just a mirror of your self-serving culture then it is not Christianity but something else. Furthermore, there is a direct correlation between churches compromising the Gospel and America’s moral and financial decay.

New Spring Church, however, is an outlier. While most mega churches preach an easy believing “Gospel” where nothing controversial is said, Pastor Noble delivers hard hitting and challenging messages.

I have never heard a Perry Noble message where he compromises the Gospel, but I saw red flags when I heard his church was giving away a Harley Davidson on Father’s day. If I was a member of the church I would prefer my tithe to be used to feed hungry children in Ethiopia rather than some middle class suburban dad.

What say you? Is this an over-the-top gimmick or a practical strategy to reach the lost?