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## Let the Wind Blow

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# LET THE WIND BLOW

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**T**hese days, we are so programmed that God couldn't break in if he wanted to. During times of worship in many churches, the schedule of songs and hymns is so rigid that nothing, not even God's Spirit, can interrupt. . . . If God could lead the Israelites for 40 years in the wilderness, can't he lead us through one meeting, one praise-and-worship time, without a line-up? A basic sign of revival is that the wind is allowed to blow where it will.

We don't need technicians and church programmers; *we need God*. He is not looking for smart people, because he's the smart one. All he wants are people simple enough to trust him.

According to 1 Corinthians 14, if meetings are governed by the Holy Spirit, the result for the visitor will be that "the secrets of his heart will be

laid bare. So he will fall down and worship God, exclaiming, 'God is really among you!'" (vs. 25). This should be our goal. When a visitor comes in, there should be such a mixture of God's truth and God's presence that the person's heart is x-rayed, the futility of his life is exposed, and he crumbles in repentance.

## A God Called Success

Just as the Israelites were warned not to mingle with the Canaanite gods called Baal or Asherah, we must beware a god of our time called Success. Bigger is not better if it comes at the expense of disowning the

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\* *Jim Cymbala is Pastor of the Brooklyn Tabernacle in New York. This article is excerpted from his book, Fresh Wind, Fresh Fire (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondervan Publishing House), pp. 132, 134 and is used with permission.*

truth or grieving the Holy Spirit.

Imagine a basketball court with hoops five feet off the ground. The free-throw line is three feet away. I've just made 884 free throws in a row.

My wife walks out to watch and says, "What are you doing?"

"I'm playing basketball. See, here's the ball, and there's the hoop on a backboard. The lines are all marked and everything."

Carol would say, "No, the hoop is supposed to be 10 feet high, and the line is supposed to be 15 feet away. *That* is basketball. What you're doing

is nothing more than a charade."

We have a lot of markings that look like Christianity these days, but we have drastically revised the parameters. People have lowered the standards in a vain attempt to make churches look more successful than they really are. The sermons have to be uniformly positive, and the services can't go longer than 60 minutes. Even then, church is inconvenient to some, especially during the football season. Showing up at church is such a burden that soon people will be faxing in their worship! □

## THE GREATEST ROAD SHOW

**I**t was the greatest evangelical road show of all time. Everybody came. People on the side of the road to beg, to die or just to watch the world go by all got in the act.

Blind beggars, lepers, pickpockets and magicians, tumblers and acrobats, hustling prostitutes, venders of food aromatic and vile, idle soldiers, slaves in yokes and chains, and freckle-bellied folks of every color clotted the way.

Rubes and scholars and lesser messiahs and zealots, along with spies from the Pharisees, jostled the usual thick gruel of village and townspeople under the almond trees for a view of Jesus, and cupped their ears to hear that clear penetrating voice piercing the glittering air as the sun caught dust particles in the ebbing heat of the afternoon. . . .—*William A. Emerson, Jr., The Jesus Story.*