

# Questions and Expectations of Visitors

## The “A” Plan

The following ten values represent things visitors/guests need. Some points might seem to overlap, but each item represents a crucial contact point.

1. **Attention.** It begins in the parking lot. A special place for visitors to park. A greeter(s) in parking areas to welcome and provide directions and information.

2. **Acceptance.** There should be no hesitation to accept visitors regardless of what they are wearing, how they look, or their station in society. A stand-off attitude turns visitors off.

3. **Affirmation.** Every visitor must feel affirmed as a person of worth and value in the sight of God and the local church. Attitude and actions send a message to visitors on how they are valued. Affirm visitors—care, courtesy, positive conversations, Christ-like loving conduct.

4. **Awareness.** “We are aware of your presence. We see you! You are special! We express our love to you! We want you to feel a spirit of welcome. We have made plans for you.”

5. **Action.** From greeters to those who distribute bulletins, ushers, and church members, there should be action that reflects we are anxious to serve you, we have made preparations to make you feel welcome, we honor you.

6. **Answers.** Be ready to give answers—directions to restrooms, nursery, classrooms, sanctuary, coffee counter. Be ready also to give answers about the order of worship and spiritual customs of the local church.

7. **Alternatives.** Make visitors feel relaxed. They don’t have to stand when most everyone else is standing or to sing when others are singing. Create a spirit of freedom. “We want to meet your needs in an atmosphere where you don’t feel boxed in.”

8. **Activities.** Provide information about activities—nursery care, programs for children, Bible classes. Don’t try to force visitors to be separated from their children or to participate in certain church traditions. Here again, display a spirit of “We want you to feel relaxed and that we want you to feel comfortable in a new setting.”

9. **Appreciation.** Show appreciation and expectation—a welcome center, recognition without feeling conspicuous, and a special keepsake gift.

10. **Anchor.** There must be something to hold visitors to the church. A special “meet the pastor” after church is an anchor. A follow-up card or telephone call is an anchor. Connecting visitors with a friend is an anchor. A “get-acquainted” meal is an anchor.

All ten values are qualities visitors look for and things that will influence their decision to return. Prepare a checklist and make sure your church is on the cutting edge of impacting and assimilating visitors.

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