

## 7 Things That Will Keep Visitors From Returning

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By Wayne Goff

I found an article on the internet that listed seven things that would prevent visitors from returning to the local church. From observation and experience, I can guarantee you that they are sound, strong warnings. I will list the seven things that the writer named, with a comment or two about some of them:

1. **Refuse to see me.** Visitors are easy to spot because they are new faces and appear a bit confused and/or lost. Be sure to acknowledge their presence!
2. **Don't offer me a smile.** How many of us have ignored a visitor and refused to even smile at them? But indeed, this author mentioned that some who sat on the same pew wouldn't even offer a smile. Sad!
3. **Neglect offering me help.** Visitors might need help finding a classroom, a restroom, or the right place to sit. Whenever Emily and I visit, I make sure to ask where I can sit without taking someone's seat. The best answer I've been given? "Just sit anywhere! We're glad you're here." (I suppose the person who lost their seat will just have to tough it out for a service!)
4. **Abstain from introducing yourself to me.** This isn't just the job for a deacon, an elder, or even the preacher! Try being a friend! "A man who has friends must himself be friendly..." **Proverbs 18:24.**
5. **Forget that I'm a person who wants to be known, just like you.** "It always amazes me how much I can learn about a person in less than a minute's time," said the writer of the article. People usually want to be known, appreciated, and understood. So reach out and ask about the person.
6. **Ignore my boundaries.** Sadly, some people are introverted or very private people and they don't want to answer your questions. If so, then be respectful and leave them alone. (Personally, I always hate this because I want people to be a part of our congregation. But I respect their wishes. **AWG**)
7. **Forget my name.** Do not forget the names of visitors who return repeatedly! Write their name down, and put it in your Bible or class book. I know for a fact that visitors appreciate being remembered. (I know, I know.... I'm working on remembering names!)

**THE BOTTOM LINE:** Take an *interest* in visitors. Try to make them *feel welcome and important*, because they are. Treat them like *you would wish to be treated* when you visit another congregation.

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