



A Culture, Not a Job

There is an old saying. *“If it is everyone’s job then it is no one’s job.”* In other words, if you assign responsibility for a task to everyone then that task will probably not get done, because everyone will assume someone else will do it.

There can be some truth to that. Therefore, it is good to have certain members assigned “jobs” on Sunday morning: greeters, ushers, etc. But ultimately, for a church to be properly equipped to welcome visitors, *every member* needs to think of that as their God-given job too. *“Practice hospitality,”* St. Paul says (Romans 12:13). And he wasn’t talking just to greeters.

Maybe instead of thinking about welcoming visitors as a “job,” think of it as part of your culture. Every church has a culture — a *“this is how we do things around here”* mentality. Isn’t that true? If someone suggested moving the Christmas tree from the pulpit side of the church to the lectern side, inevitably someone would object, “Why, that’s just not how we do it around here!” Well, what would happen in your church if everyone thought of the following as “how we do things around here”?

- Every member made it part of his or her Sunday routine to learn the name of one person they do not know. And that member made it a goal to remember that name the following week.
- Instead of beginning worship by launching into the first hymn, the pastor would greet the people and then give them 60 seconds to greet one another. The pastor would instruct them, “Say hello to those you don’t know first.”
- Your members refused to leave a visitor standing alone either before or after worship. If a member was talking with a visitor,

that member understood that the only way he could walk away was if that visitor left or if he introduced that visitor to another member.

- Your members, rather than sitting in “their pew,” would look for and sit by worship visitors. That way, if the worship visitor seemed lost, the member could help the visitor find the page in the hymnal. (Or just use worship folders and eliminate this concern altogether.)
- Every leader in the church agreed that no church business would be discussed Sunday mornings. Sunday was *just* about two things: contact with the means of grace and getting to know people better. If business *had* to be discussed on Sunday, it would be discussed after everyone else had left.
- If a member made a good connection with a visitor, they would ask that visitor if he would like to grab some breakfast after church. Chances are the visitor will say no. But what an impression will be made!

What would such a church be like? One might say, “Such a church would be a lot of work! All this stuff takes time.” Yes. Such a church would be “a lot of work” *if* you view serving Christ and loving your neighbor as a chore... a burden... *a job*. But if Christ is your first love, then serving him even in the most difficult of circumstances will be a joy. And sharing your time and yourself with members and worship visitors will not be everyone’s job, but everyone’s delight.

We loved you so much that we were delighted to share with you not only the gospel of God but our lives as well.

1 Thessalonians 2:8

May God grant it.



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