

RETENTION REVIVAL

A Step-by-Step Growth Plan to Keep
80% of Your Visitors Coming Back



RETENTION REVIVAL | DAVID OLUWASEUN

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Introduction – Every Visitor Matters to God

When a new person walks into your church, it is not by chance.
God sees them. God loves them. And God cares about what happens next.

This book is about that “next step.”

Many churches pray for growth. They pray, “Lord, send people.”
But often, people do come... and then they disappear.
They come one Sunday, and you never see them again.

This guide will help you change that.

Why People Come Once and Never Return

Some people come to church because they are in pain.
Some are looking for answers.
Some are lonely and just want a place to belong.

But many times, they do not come back. Why?

- They did not feel **seen**.
- They did not feel **loved**.
- No one really **spoke** to them after service.
- No one **remembered their name**.
- No one **checked on them** in the week.

So they think, “Maybe this place is not for me.”
They walk away, still carrying the same pain and questions.

Jesus told a story about a shepherd who had 100 sheep.
One sheep got lost.
What did the shepherd do?

He **left the ninety-nine** and went to look for the one.

“Suppose one of you has a hundred sheep and loses one of them.
Doesn't he leave the ninety-nine in the open country
and go after the lost sheep until he finds it?”
(Luke 15:4, NIV)

If one sheep matters this much to God,
then **every visitor** who walks into your church also matters.

God's Heart for New People in Your Church

New people in your church are not just “numbers.”
They are not just “crowd.”
They are sons and daughters that God loves.

The Bible says:

“Do not forget to show hospitality to strangers,
for by so doing some people have shown hospitality to angels
without knowing it.”
(Hebrews 13:2, NIV)

God wants His house to be a place of:

- **Love** – where people feel safe and cared for
- **Welcome** – where no one feels like an outsider
- **Family** – where lonely hearts find brothers and sisters

Jesus said:

“By this everyone will know that you are my disciples,
if you love one another.”
(John 13:35, NIV)

When we love new people well, we show them Jesus.
When we care for their **souls** and their **lives**,
they can feel God's heart through us.

What This Book Will Help You Do

This book is a simple, step-by-step guide for pastors and church leaders.
It will help you build a **Retention Revival** in your church.

By God's grace, this guide will help you:

1. **Understand why visitors don't return**
You will see the common mistakes many churches make,
and how to avoid them.

2. **Make visitors feel loved from day one**
You will learn how to welcome them in a warm, simple way, so they feel at home.
3. **Build real friendships with new people**
You will see how to assign a friendly team member to walk with each new person.
4. **Show care in practical ways**
You will learn how to help visitors in normal life issues—not just in church, but also at home and in the community.
5. **Pray for visitors by name and by need**
You will learn how to ask, “How can we pray for you?” and then pray with power and love.
6. **Train your follow-up team well**
You will see how to build a strong, loving team that knows what to do and how to do it.
7. **Create a simple plan to keep visitors coming back**
You will have a clear path from first visit to true belonging in the church family.

This guide is not only about **keeping people**.
It is about **making disciples** and **caring for souls**,
just like Jesus, the Good Shepherd.

How to Use This Guide With Your Team

Do not read this book alone.
Share it with your leaders and workers.
Let it become part of your church culture.

Here are some simple ways to use it:

1. **Read one chapter at a time**
 - In your workers’ meeting
 - In your pastors’ or leaders’ meeting
 - In your follow-up or evangelism team meeting

2. **Talk about it together**

After each chapter, ask:

- “What can we start doing this week?”
- “What should we stop doing?”
- “Who will be responsible for this step?”

3. **Pray over the names of visitors**

Keep a simple list of new people.

Pray for them by name.

Ask God to touch their hearts and keep them strong.

4. **Take small, steady steps**

You do not need to change everything in one day.

Start with what you can do now.

Add more steps as your team grows.

5. **Review and improve**

Every month, sit with your team and ask:

- “How many new people came?”
- “How many came back?”
- “What went well?”
- “What can we do better?”

As you use this guide, remember:

You are not just building a system.

You are caring for souls that Jesus died for.

Every handshake.

Every visit.

Every phone call.

Every prayer.

All of it matters to God.

And as you walk in love and wisdom,
you will see **Retention Revival** in your church—
not just more people in the seats,
but more hearts close to Jesus.

Chapter 1 – Love at First Visit: Making New People Feel Truly Welcome

In the introduction, we saw that **every visitor matters to God**.
Now, let's talk about what happens on **that very first Sunday** when they walk into your church.

Think of this chapter like we are sitting together, just talking.
You are a pastor or leader.
You love God.
You love people.
You just want to know **how** to make visitors feel truly at home.

Let's start from **Day One**.

What New Visitors Really Feel on Day One

Imagine you are going to a church for the first time.
You do not know anybody there.
You do not know where to sit.
You do not know how things are done.

How would you feel?

Many new visitors feel:

- A little **afraid** – “Will they accept me?”
- A little **shy** – “I don't want to look foolish.”
- A little **lost** – “Where do I go? Where do I sit?”

Some are even fighting tears inside.
Some came with heavy problems:
marriage issues, money issues, health issues, or deep sin.

The Bible says:

“Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened,
and I will give you rest.”
(Matthew 11:28, NIV)

Jesus is calling them to rest.
But many times, they will **feel His love**
first through **your welcome**.

So, the question is:

What do they feel in the first 5 minutes?

Loved... or alone?

Simple Ways to Show Real Love From the Door

You don't need a big budget to show love.
You just need **intentional hearts** and **simple actions**.

Here are some simple ways to show love from the door:

1. **Have people ready before service starts**
 - Greeters should be at the door early.
 - They should be smiling and watching for new faces.
2. **Open the door with joy**

A simple, "Good morning, you're welcome!"
can calm a fearful heart.
3. **Look into their eyes**

Don't just wave and look away.
When you look kindly into their eyes, they feel seen.
4. **Ask short, kind questions**
 - "Is this your first time with us?"
 - "How are you today?"

The Bible says:

"Above all, love each other deeply,
because love covers over a multitude of sins."
(1 Peter 4:8, NIV)

Love at the door does not have to be deep words.
It can be **small acts** that say, "We are glad you are here."

Warm Words: How to Greet Without Being Awkward

Some church workers are shy.
Some are afraid to say the wrong thing.
That is okay. We can learn together.

Here are a few **simple, warm lines** your team can use.

- “Good morning, sir/ma. You are very welcome.”
- “We are happy to have you with us today.”
- “Thank you for coming. My name is _____. What’s your name?”
- “Please, let me help you find a good seat.”

Things to **avoid** saying:

- “Is this your first time? Are you a member anywhere?” (in a sharp tone)
- “Why are you late?”
- Jokes that can shame them, like “Ah ah, you finally came!”

Remember:

Kind tone + simple words = warm welcome.

The Bible says:

“Gracious words are a honeycomb,
sweet to the soul and healing to the bones.”
(Proverbs 16:24, NIV)

Teach your team to use **gracious words**.
Soft. Simple. Sweet.

The Power of a Smile, a Name, and a Handshake

Sometimes, it is the **little things** that stay in people’s hearts.

1. **A Smile**

A true smile says, “I am happy to see you.”
Even if you do not say much, your smile speaks love.

2. **A Name**

When you ask, “What is your name?”
and then you **repeat it**,
you show that they are not just a number.

For example:

- Visitor: "My name is Chinedu."
 - Greeter: "Chinedu, you are welcome. I'm so glad you are here."
3. Later in the service, if you see them again and say,
"Chinedu, hope you are comfortable?"
it touches their heart.
4. **A Handshake (or Gentle Touch if Culture Allows)**
A firm but gentle handshake can calm nerves.
In some cultures, a light touch on the shoulder or arm is okay.
Always be respectful, especially with women and young people.

Jesus often **touched** people when He healed them.
His touch showed care.
We must be wise and gentle, but we can also show warmth.

Creating a Safe, Clean, and Calm Church Space

Welcome is not only about words and smiles.
The **environment** also speaks.

Ask yourself:

If Jesus walked into the building,
would He feel that we prepared it with love?

Here are some areas to watch:

1. **Clean entrance**
 - No scattered dirt or trash at the doorway.
 - If possible, sweep before people arrive.
2. **Clean chairs and pews**
 - Dust the seats.
 - Arrange them neatly.
 - Remove broken chairs from visitor areas.
3. **Toilets and restrooms**
 - Make sure they are clean and smell okay.
 - Have tissue and water, as much as possible.

4. **Calm sound**

- Music should not be too loud at the door.
- Inside, test microphones to avoid harsh noise.

5. **Safe space**

- Ushers should help with parking and movement.
- No pushing or shouting at people.

The Bible says:

“But everything should be done in a fitting and orderly way.”
(1 Corinthians 14:40, NIV)

Order and cleanliness help visitors feel safe and relaxed.

A Short “Welcome Flow” for the Whole Service

Let’s make it very simple.

Here is a **basic welcome flow** your church can follow from the time the visitor arrives until the end of service.

1. At the Gate / Door

- Greeter smiles and says, “You’re welcome.”
- If they see a new face, they ask kindly, “Is this your first time here?”

2. Inside the Hall

- An usher helps them find a good seat.
- If they came alone, a friendly member can sit near them.

3. During the Service

- At the right time, the MC or pastor greets all visitors:
“If today is your first time worshipping with us,
please wave your hand where you are.”
- Church claps warmly, but not in a way that embarrasses them.
- A short welcome message is given from the front
(we will write a sample soon).

4. After the Service

- A follow-up worker or friendly member goes to say hello personally.
- If your church uses **visitor cards**, they can gently ask for their name and contact.
- They can invite them for a short “Welcome Corner” or small talk where you give a light drink, if possible.

This simple flow helps visitors feel:

- **Seen**
- **Loved**
- **Important to God** and to the church family.

Sample “First-Time Visitor” Welcome Script

You can adjust this to fit your church style, but here is a **simple script** you can use from the pulpit.

“Praise the Lord.

If today is your first time worshipping with us here at [Church Name], we are very happy to see you.

Please, wherever you are seated, just wave your hand.

[Allow them to wave. Church claps briefly.]

Thank you. We want you to know that you are not here by accident. God brought you here because He loves you.

As a church, we have been praying that God will send us people to love, and today, you are an answer to that prayer.

Church, please help me say, ‘You are welcome!’

After the service, we would like to meet you for just a few minutes, to know your name and to pray with you. Please don’t rush away.

Once again, you are warmly welcome. God bless you.”

This kind of welcome:

- Lifts their heart
- Reminds them God loves them
- Shows them that your church **planned** for their visit

As you and your team put these simple steps into action, you are not just being “polite.”

You are showing the **heart of Jesus** to every new person.

You are saying, with your smiles, words, and actions:

“You matter to God, and you matter to us.”

In the next chapter, we will go deeper into how to build **real friendships** with visitors so they don’t just feel welcome for one day, but start to feel like **family**.

Chapter 2 – Friends, Not Strangers: Building Real Connections Fast

In Chapter 1, we talked about **love at first visit**—
the smile, the welcome, the clean space.

But welcome is only the **first step**.
For a visitor to **stay**, they need more than a friendly door.
They need a **friend**.

Let's talk about how to turn visitors
from strangers into friends, **quickly and gently**.

Why Visitors Stay Where They Find Friends

Think about your own life.
Where do you like to go again and again?

Most times, it is the places where you have:

- People who **know your name**
- People who **ask about you**
- People who **miss you** when you are not there

Church is the same.
Visitors don't just stay because of good preaching.
They stay where they **find friends**.

The Bible says:

“A man who has friends must himself be friendly,
but there is a friend who sticks closer than a brother.”
(Proverbs 18:24, NKJV)

Jesus is that Friend who sticks closer than a brother.
But He often **shows His friendship**
through **you** and your church members.

When a visitor finds even **one real friend** in your church,
their heart thinks, “I belong here.”

The “Friend on Purpose” Idea: Assigning a Helper

Now, here is a simple but powerful idea:

Don’t wait for friendship to “just happen.”

Make **friendship a plan**.

We can call it the “**Friend on Purpose**” idea.

This means:

For every new visitor,
you **assign someone** from your team
to become their **Follow-Up Friend**.

Not fake friendship.

Not forced friendship.

But **intentional care**.

How it can work:

1. A new visitor comes.
2. A greeter or usher quietly notes their name and basic details.
3. The leader assigns one person:
“Brother Samuel, please be a friend to this new brother.”
4. From that day, Brother Samuel watches out for him,
talks with him, sits with him if possible,
and checks on him during the week.

This visitor now has **a face**, not just a crowd.

He knows, “In this church, someone is for me.”

How to Choose the Right Team Members for Friendship

Not everyone is ready to be a Follow-Up Friend.

That’s okay. We must choose **wisely**.

Look for people who:

1. **Love God and love people**
They may not be perfect, but they truly care.
2. **Are gentle and respectful**
They listen more than they talk.

They do not push or control people.

3. **Can keep things private**

When a visitor shares a problem,
they do not go around gossiping about it.

4. **Are not too busy to follow up**

They have time to send a message, make a call,
and stop to greet the visitor on Sunday.

5. **Are patient**

Some visitors are shy or slow to open up.
Good friends do not rush them.

The Bible says:

“Be completely humble and gentle;
be patient, bearing with one another in love.”
(Ephesians 4:2, NIV)

This is the kind of heart
a Follow-Up Friend should have.

What a Follow-Up Friend Should Say and Do

A Follow-Up Friend does not need big grammar.
They just need **simple, caring words** and **small actions**.

Here are some things they can do **on Sunday**:

1. **Introduce themselves**

“Hello, my name is [Name]. I’m glad you came today.”

2. **Ask the visitor’s name and repeat it**

“What is your name?”

When they answer, say it again:

“Nice to meet you, Chiamaka.”

3. **Show interest without pushing**

- “Do you live close by?”
- “How did you hear about the church?”

4. Offer help

- “Can I help you find a good seat?”
- “Do you know where the toilets are?”

5. Check on them after service

“How was the service for you?
I hope you were blessed.”

If your church uses **visitor cards**
and the visitor is willing to share contact details,
the Follow-Up Friend can say:

“If you don’t mind, we’d love to keep in touch,
just to check on you and pray with you.
You can fill this card, but only if you are comfortable.”

During the **week**, a Follow-Up Friend can:

- Send a short message:
“Hi Chiamaka, this is [Name] from [Church].
Thank you again for coming on Sunday.
I pray you have a blessed week.”
- Ask gently:
“Is there anything you’d like us to pray about?”
- Invite them:
“We would love to see you again this Sunday.”

The Bible says:

“Therefore encourage one another and build each other up...”
(1 Thessalonians 5:11, NIV)

A Follow-Up Friend is there to **encourage** and **build up**
one person at a time.

Helping Visitors Find Their Way Around the Church

Being in a new place can feel confusing.
You do not know where anything is.

A Follow-Up Friend can make things easy by:

1. Showing them key places

- “This is where the toilets are.”
- “Children’s church is over there.”
- “If you need help, you can find an usher here.”

2. Explaining simple things

- How the service normally runs
- When praise, worship, and sermon usually start
- When they take offering, and how (without pressure)

3. Answering basic questions

- “What time does midweek service start?”
- “Do you have small groups / house fellowship?”

Imagine how relaxed a visitor will feel
when someone walks with them and explains things.

They will think,
“These people really want me here.”

Inviting Them to Sit With You (and Why It Matters)

One very powerful, very simple act is this:

Invite the visitor to sit with you or near you.

You can say:

“Would you like to sit with me so you don’t feel alone?”

If they agree, great.

If they prefer to sit alone, respect that too.

Why does this matter?

1. It removes fear

They don’t feel like a stranger in a strange crowd.

2. It makes it easy to guide them

You can show them when to stand, sit, read, sing.

3. **It allows gentle support**

If they look confused or lost,
you can help quickly and quietly.

Jesus often **sat and ate with people**.

He did not stay far away from them.

“Now the tax collectors and sinners were all gathering around to hear Jesus.”
(Luke 15:1, NIV)

He let them come close.

We can do the same by **sharing a seat and space**.

Turning One Visit Into Ongoing Friendship

So how do we move from “one visit”
to a growing, real friendship?

Here is a simple path:

1. **First Sunday**

- Welcome at the door
- Follow-Up Friend introduced
- Visitor sits with someone friendly

2. **Same Day After Service**

- Short, personal chat
- “Thank you for coming. We are glad you came.”
- If they allow, collect simple contact details.

3. **Within the Week**

- One short message or call:
“We are happy you came. We are praying for you.”
- Ask if they have any prayer need.

4. **Second Visit**

- Follow-Up Friend looks for them.
- Greets them by **name**:
“Chiamaka! Good to see you again.”
- Maybe introduce them to one or two more friendly members.

5. **Third Visit and Beyond**

- Invite them to a small group, class, or team (later chapters).
- Keep checking on them, but not in a controlling way.

Step by step, they move from:

Visitor → Regular Attender → Friend → Family.

The Bible says:

“Carry each other’s burdens,
and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ.”
(Galatians 6:2, NIV)

Real friendship means we care about their burdens,
not just their seat in church.

As you build this “**Friends, Not Strangers**” culture,
your church will no longer feel like a place
where people just pass through.

It will feel like **home**.

In the next chapter,
we will talk about how love is not only shown in church,
but also in **practical help**—
hands that help at home, in the community,
and in daily life.

Chapter 3 – Hands That Help: Showing Care in Everyday Life

In Chapter 2, we talked about **friends, not strangers**.
We saw that visitors stay where they find real friendship.

Now we will go one step deeper.
True friendship is not only **talk**.
True friendship also brings **help**.

This chapter is about **love in action**—
how your church can show care in **everyday life**,
not just inside the church building.

Love in Action: More Than Just Words

It is easy to say, “We love you.”
But real love is seen in what we **do**.

The Bible says:

“Dear children, let us not love with words or speech
but with actions and in truth.”
(1 John 3:18, NIV)

This means:

- Love is not only a greeting.
- Love is not only a smile.
- Love is also **helping hands, open hearts, and kind acts**.

When a new member sees people from the church
help them in a real problem,
they feel, “These people truly care.”

Seeing Needs at Home and in Daily Life

Sometimes, the needs of people
do not show on their faces in church.

They may dress well, smile, and say, "I'm fine."
But at home, there may be:

- No food in the kitchen
- A sick child
- A house that needs cleaning
- No money for transport to church

How do we see these needs?

1. **By listening**

When you sit and talk with them,
you may hear small hints:

- "It has been a hard week."
- "I have been very tired."
- "Things are tough at home."

2. **By visiting**

When a Follow-Up Friend or small group
visits a new member at home,
they may see what is really going on.

3. **By asking gently**

"Is there any way we can support you this week?"

The Bible says:

"Carry each other's burdens,
and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ."
(Galatians 6:2, NIV)

To carry someone's burden,
we must first **notice** it.

Practical Care Examples (Cleaning, Food, Rides, Support)

Let's make this very simple and real.

Here are some **practical ways** your church can help, especially with new visitors or members.

1. Helping with cleaning

Imagine you visit a new brother on a Saturday morning.
You see him sweeping and washing alone.
You can say,
"Let me help you for a few minutes."

Maybe you help sweep one room
or wash a few plates.
This small act speaks loudly:
"We care about your life, not just your offering."

2. Bringing food

If you notice a family is struggling,
your team can gather a little money
and bring a small food package.

- Rice, beans, garri, oil, etc.
You can say,
"This is just a little gift from the church,
to show that God sees you."

3. Giving rides to church

Some people want to come to church
but do not have money for transport.
A Follow-Up Friend who has a car
can pick them up sometimes.
Or members can contribute small amounts for transport.

4. Helping with children

- Helping a single mother carry a baby during service
- Giving used but clean clothes for children
- Helping with school items if God provides the means

5. Emotional support

- Sitting and listening to their story
- Calling on a hard day just to encourage them
- Standing with them during a funeral, sickness, or crisis

Jesus did not only preach.
He also **fed the hungry, touched the sick,**
and **comforted the broken.**

“When he saw the crowds, he had compassion on them...”
(Matthew 9:36, NIV)

Compassion moves us to **do something.**

How to Offer Help Without Making Them Feel Small

While we want to help,
we must be careful not to make people feel **ashamed.**

Here are some gentle rules:

1. **Be respectful**

Offer help, don't **force** it.

“If you don't mind, we would like to...”

2. **Be private**

Do not shout their problems in front of others.

Give help quietly.

Jesus said:

“...do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing.”
(Matthew 6:3, NIV)

3. **Use “we,” not “you”**

Instead of, “You are suffering, you people have nothing.”

Say, “We just wanted to show you some love,”

or “We are family; we support one another.”

4. **Give as a gift, not as control**

Do not make them feel they must obey you

or stay in your church because of the help.

Help them because **God loves them**, not to **own** them.

5. **Listen to what they actually need**

Maybe they don't need food now;

maybe they need advice or prayer or just a listening ear.

When help is given with **honor**,
hearts open instead of closing in shame.

Balancing Spiritual Care and Physical Care

Some people may ask,
“Should we focus on spiritual things
or physical things?”

The answer is: **both**.

Jesus cared about **souls** and **bodies**.
He preached the Word.
He healed the sick.
He fed the hungry.

The Bible says:

“Suppose a brother or a sister
is without clothes and daily food.
If one of you says to them,
‘Go in peace; keep warm and well fed,’
but does nothing about their physical

what good is it?”

(James

Chapter 4 – Praying With Power:

Personal Prayer for Every New Visitor

In the last chapter, we talked about **hands that help**—
cleaning, food, rides, and support.
That is **love in action**.

Now we will talk about another strong way to show love:
prayer.

New visitors do not only have physical needs.
They also have **spiritual** and **emotional** needs.
When we pray for them, and with them,
they feel the heart of God in a very deep way.

Why Personal Prayer Makes People Feel Seen

Many people come to church with hidden pain.
They may smile on the outside,
but inside they are crying.

When someone looks at them and says,
“I would like to pray for you,”
it tells them:

- “God sees you.”
- “You are not alone.”
- “Your problem matters to God and to us.”

Jesus often stopped for **individual people**:

- The blind man calling from the road
- The woman with the issue of blood
- The Samaritan woman at the well

He did not only speak to big crowds;
He cared about **one person at a time**.

The Bible says:

“Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you.”
(1 Peter 5:7, NIV)

When we pray personally for visitors,
we help them cast their cares on God.

Asking, “How Can We Pray for You?” With Care

A simple but powerful question is:
“How can we pray for you?”

But we must ask it with **care** and **wisdom**.

Here are a few tips:

1. Ask in a quiet, safe moment

Not in front of the whole church.

It can be:

- After service, at a corner
- During a small group
- On a call during the week

2. Use gentle words

- “If you don’t mind,
is there anything you would like us to pray about?”
- “Is there one thing you want God to do for you this week?”

3. Respect their choice

If they say, “No, I am fine,”
do not push them.

You can just say,

“Okay, that is fine. We still thank God for your life.”

4. Keep it short and clear

If they share, listen well and repeat it back:

“So you want us to pray for your job?”

This shows you understood.

When you ask with love,
many people will open their hearts.

Using Friendship to Discover Real Prayer Needs

Your **Follow-Up Friends** (from Chapter 2)
are in a good place to know real prayer needs.

Why?

Because they:

- Talk to the visitor
- Visit or call them
- Hear small details of their life

For example, during a chat, a visitor may say:

- “I have been looking for work for months.”
- “My mother is very sick.”
- “My marriage is shaking.”

A wise Follow-Up Friend can say:

“Can we pray about that together?”

Then they can also let the follow-up or prayer team know,
so more people can pray (in a respectful, private way).

The Bible says:

“Therefore confess your sins to each other
and pray for each other so that you may be healed.
The prayer of a righteous person
is powerful and effective.”
(James 5:16, NIV)

Friendship opens the door.
Prayer brings the power of God
into that open door.

Team Prayer Times for New Visitors (Weekly Plan)

If you want **Retention Revival**,
your follow-up work must be **full of prayer**,
not just planning.

Here is a simple **weekly prayer plan**
for your follow-up or workers' team.

1. Before Sunday Service (15–20 minutes)

- Gather the team.
- Pray over:
 - All new visitors from last week (by name if possible)
 - People God will send this Sunday
 - The greeters, ushers, choir, and pastor
- Ask God to touch hearts and draw people to Himself.

2. Midweek (one chosen day, 20–30 minutes)

- On WhatsApp call, in person, or at church.
- Read out the names of new visitors.
- Pray for their:
 - Salvation
 - Jobs
 - Families
 - Health
 - Inner healing

3. During Small Groups or House Fellowships

- Ask your small group leaders to add new visitors to their prayer time.

You don't need long, loud prayer all the time.

What you need is **faithful, loving, regular** prayer.

Praying in Person vs. Praying From a List

Both are important.

Praying in person means:

You pray with the visitor right there.

- After service
- In their home during a visit
- On the phone

Example:

“Lord, we thank You for Chidi.
You see his job search.

Please open the right door for him.
Give him favor and strength. In Jesus' name, amen."

This kind of prayer makes them feel:

- "God sees me now."
- "They care about me now."

Praying from a list means:

Your team gathers the names and needs
and prays over them when the people are not there.

Example:

- You have a list: "Joy – healing for her mother."
- During team prayer, you say,
"Lord, please heal Joy's mother. Encourage their family."

This kind of prayer covers them in the spirit
throughout the week.

Use **both**:

- In-person prayer for closeness
- List prayer for consistency

Following Up on Answered Prayers

One very strong way to build faith and connection is this:

Check back on the prayers you prayed.

For example:

- Last week, you prayed for a job.
- This week, you send a message:
"Hi Mercy, we prayed for your job last week.
How is it going now?"

If God has answered, celebrate with them:

"Wow, thank God! We give Him praise!"

If the answer has not come yet, encourage them:

"We will keep praying. God is faithful."

The Bible says:

“Rejoice with those who rejoice;
mourn with those who mourn.”
(Romans 12:15, NIV)

When you rejoice and mourn with them,
they feel like **family**, not just visitors.

Also, sharing testimonies (with their permission)
can encourage the whole church.

Keeping a Simple Prayer Journal for Your Visitors

To make sure you don't forget people and their needs,
you can keep a **simple prayer journal**
for visitors and new members.

This can be:

- A small notebook
- A simple Google Sheet or Excel document
- A page in a follow-up file

What to write:

1. **Name**

- “Name: Emmanuel Okafor”

2. **First visit date**

- “First visit: 12 May 2026”

3. **Main prayer request**

- “Prayer: looking for job; mother is ill.”

4. **Who is the Follow-Up Friend?**

- “Friend: Brother Tunde.”

5. **Updates and answers**

- “20 May – got an interview.”
- “10 June – got a job. We thanked God together.”

This journal helps your team:

- Pray with focus
- Remember names and stories
- See what God is doing over time

When you look back after some months,
you will see many small and big answers.
This will build your faith and your team's joy.

As you pray with power for every new visitor—
not just in general, but by **name** and by **need**—
you are doing more than “follow-up work.”

You are joining Jesus, the Good Shepherd,
in caring for His sheep.

In the next chapter,
we will look at how to build and **train**
a strong follow-up team,
so that all this love, help, and prayer
becomes a **culture** in your church,
not just a one-time project.

Chapter 5 – Trained to Care: Raising a Strong Follow-Up Team

In the last chapters, we talked about:

- Welcoming visitors with love
- Becoming real friends
- Helping in daily life
- Praying with power

All of this is beautiful.

But here is the truth:

One person cannot do it alone.

Not even the pastor.

To care well for visitors,
you need a **team** that is **trained**.

Why Good Hearts Are Not Enough – Training Is Needed

Many people in church have good hearts.

They love God.

They love people.

But sometimes they:

- Talk in a way that hurts others
- Share private things they should keep quiet
- Forget to follow up
- Don't know what to say to a new visitor

It is not because they are bad.

They just **have not been trained**.

The Bible says:

“And let us consider how we may
spur one another on toward love and good deeds.”
(Hebrews 10:24, NIV)

Training is one way we **help one another**
to love better and to serve better.

A strong follow-up team is not built by chance.
It is built on **purpose**, through **teaching and practice**.

Who Should Be on the Follow-Up Team (and Who Shouldn't)

Not everybody should be on the follow-up team.
And that is okay.

People who SHOULD be on the team:

1. **Loving and humble people**
They are not proud or harsh.
They love to help others.
2. **People who can keep secrets**
If someone shares a problem,
they do not run around telling everybody.
3. **People who will show up**
They come to church often.
They attend meetings.
They can be trusted to follow through.
4. **People who are teachable**
They are ready to learn,
to be corrected, and to grow.

People who should NOT be on the team (for now):

1. **Gossipers**
Those who like to talk about others' problems.
2. **Very rude or harsh people**
They may chase visitors away with their words.
3. **Very proud people**
They may use follow-up to control or show power.

4. **People living in open, serious sin**
They first need help, healing, and discipline.

This does not mean we reject them as people.
It just means this **particular work**
needs **safe and stable** workers.

Core Skills Every Worker Must Learn

Every follow-up worker needs some **basic skills**.
Let's look at three very important ones.

1. Listening Well

Many times, people do not need long advice.
They just need someone to **listen**.

Listening well means:

- You give them time to talk
- You do not cut them off
- You look at them and pay attention
- You do not rush to judge

The Bible says:

“Everyone should be quick to listen,
slow to speak and slow to become angry.”
(James 1:19, NIV)

In training, teach your team to:

- Ask simple, open questions:
“How have you been?”
- Keep quiet and let the person answer
- Nod, and show they are hearing them

2. Speaking Kindly

Words can heal.

Words can hurt.

A follow-up worker must learn to speak:

- Softly
- Slowly
- With respect

The Bible says:

“A gentle answer turns away wrath,
but a harsh word stirs up anger.”
(Proverbs 15:1, NIV)

Train your team to avoid:

- Insults
- Shouting
- Sharp or mocking comments

Teach them to use phrases like:

- “I understand.”
- “God is with you.”
- “We are here for you.”

3. Respecting Privacy

Visitors and new members may share deep things:

- Family problems
- Money issues
- Secret sins
- Painful past stories

Follow-up workers must **never** use these stories as gossip.

They must learn **confidentiality**.

Explain it this way:

“Whatever they tell you in private
is not for your friends.

It is between them, you, God,

and maybe the pastor or leader
if help is needed.”

The Bible says:

“A gossip betrays a confidence,
but a trustworthy person keeps a secret.”
(Proverbs 11:13, NIV)

A trustworthy follow-up worker
is like a safe box.
People can share, and know it will be kept.

Teaching Love, Respect, and Confidentiality

You can have a simple teaching time
with your follow-up team on these three things:

1. Love

- We see visitors as people God loves.
- We treat them the way we would treat Jesus.

2. Respect

- We do not look down on anyone
because of their clothes, accent, or money.
- We speak gently to old and young.

3. Confidentiality (keeping things private)

- What they share stays with us.
- If we need to tell the pastor to help them,
we do it with care, not noise.

You can even make a **short promise**
for your team to say together:

“By God’s grace,
I will love people,
respect people,
and keep their stories safe.
I will serve like Jesus.
Amen.”

Simple Monthly Training Plan for Your Team

Training does not need to be complicated.
Here is a **simple monthly plan** you can use.

Week 1 – Teaching (30–45 minutes)

- Pick one topic:
 - Listening well
 - Speaking kindly
 - Respecting privacy
- Read 1–2 Bible verses.
- Explain with examples.
- Allow questions.

Week 2 – Prayer and Review (20–30 minutes)

- Pray for visitors by name.
- Ask workers:
 - “What went well this month?”
 - “What was hard?”
- Encourage one another.

Week 3 – Role-Play Practice (30–45 minutes)

- Act out real-life situations (see next section).

Week 4 – Testimonies and Planning (20–30 minutes)

- Share good stories of how God helped visitors.
- Plan visits, calls, and special care for next month.

This way, every month your team:

- Learns
- Prays
- Practices
- Plans

Role-Play Ideas to Practice Real Situations

Role-play is when people **act out**
a situation to learn what to do.
It is like **rehearsal** for real life.

Here are some simple role-play ideas:

1. Welcoming a shy first-time visitor

- One person acts as the new visitor.
- Another acts as the greeter.
- Practice how to say “You are welcome,” ask their name, and help them sit.

2. Listening to a problem

- One person shares a hard story (made up).
- Another practices listening and not interrupting.

3. Praying with someone after service

- Practice asking, “How can I pray for you?”
- Then pray a short, simple prayer.

4. Handling a rude or angry person

- One person acts angry or upset.
- Another practices staying calm and kind.

After each role-play, discuss:

- “What did we do well?”
- “What can we do better next time?”

This helps the team feel **ready**
for real situations with real people.

Making Training a Normal, Ongoing Culture

Training should not be a “one-time” event.
It should be part of your **church culture**.

Here are ways to keep it going:

1. Set a fixed day and time

Example:

- First Sunday of every month,
30 minutes after service.

2. Keep it simple and short

People are more likely to come

if they know it won't be too long.

3. **Involve different leaders**

Let other mature leaders sometimes teach,
not only the pastor.

4. **Celebrate growth**

When a worker does something well,
thank them in front of the team.

- “Thank you, Sister Ada,
for how you followed up with that family.”

5. **Pray for your team often**

Ask God to fill them with love, wisdom,
and the Holy Spirit.

The Bible says:

“Now it is required that those
who have been given a trust
must prove faithful.”
(1 Corinthians 4:2, NIV)

Your follow-up team has been given a **trust**:
the souls of new people.

Through regular training,
you help them become more **faithful**,
more **skilled**, and more **like Jesus**
in the way they love and care.

As your team is **trained to care**,
your church will not depend on one or two people.
You will have a **whole group** of loving workers
who know **what to do, how to do it**,
and **why it matters** to God.

In the next chapter,
we will bring everything together
into a simple **journey plan**—
a clear path to move visitors
from first visit to full family in Christ.

Chapter 6 – Walking the Journey: A Simple Plan to Keep Visitors Coming Back

In the last chapters, we learned how to:

- Welcome visitors with love
- Make real friends, not strangers
- Help with real-life needs
- Pray with power
- Train a strong follow-up team

Now we will put everything together into **one simple journey**.

Think of it like a **road map**:

From **first visit** to **full family** in the church.

This chapter will help you and your team know **what to do next**, step by step.

The Visitor's Path: From First Visit to Family

Every visitor is on a **journey**.

They don't become family in one day.

Here is the path we want them to walk:

1. **First Visit** – They come and feel loved.
2. **First Week** – They receive kind follow-up and prayer.
3. **First Month** – They start to connect with people and groups.
4. **Long-Term** – They feel like part of the family and begin to serve.

Our job is to **walk with them** on this path,
not leave them to walk alone.

The Bible says:

“Two are better than one,
because they have a good return for their labor:

If either of them falls down,
one can help the other up.”
(Ecclesiastes 4:9–10, NIV)

Visitors need someone to **walk with them**
and help them up when they feel weak.

A Clear 4-Step Follow-Up Journey

Let’s break the journey into 4 clear steps
that your team can follow.

Step 1 – First Visit

Goal:

Make them feel truly **welcome and safe**.

What should happen:

- Warm greeting at the door (Chapter 1)
- A Follow-Up Friend is quietly assigned (Chapter 2)
- Help them find a good seat
- Kind welcome from the front during service
- Short personal greeting after service
- If they agree, collect simple details (name, phone, area)
- Ask gently if there is anything to pray about (Chapter 4)

At this stage, they should go home thinking:

“Those people were kind to me.

I think I can go back there.”

Step 2 – First Week Contact

Goal:

Let them know you did not forget them.

Within the first 2–7 days, your team should:

- Send **one short message** or make **one short call**:

Example SMS/WhatsApp:

“Hello [Name], this is [Your Name] from [Church Name].
Thank you again for worshipping with us on Sunday.
We are happy you came.
May God bless your week in Jesus’ name.”

- If they shared a prayer request, mention it briefly:

“We are praying for your job situation.”

- If led, invite them back:

“We would be glad to see you again this Sunday.”

This simple contact shows:

- “We remember you.”
- “We care about your life.”

The Bible says:

“Encourage one another daily...”
(Hebrews 3:13, NIV)

The first week is the best time
to send that **first encouragement**.

Step 3 – First Month Connection

Goal:

Help them move from “visitor”
to “someone who is starting to belong.”

During the first month,
your team can:

1. Greet them by name every Sunday

- “Good to see you again, Mary!”

2. Introduce them to 1–2 more people

- “Mary, this is Sister Joy. She is in our women’s group.”

3. Invite them to one simple next step

Examples:

- A welcome class or “New Believers” class
- A small group or house fellowship near their home
- A short welcome meeting after service with tea and biscuits

4. Visit them at home (if they agree)

- A short, respectful visit to:
 - Greet them
 - Pray with them
 - See how they are doing (Chapter 3)

By the end of the first month,
they should feel:

- “These people really know me now.”
- “I am not just a number here.”

Step 4 – Long-Term Belonging

Goal:

Help them become **part of the family**,
not just a face in the crowd.

Over time (after some weeks or months),
you can:

1. Invite them into a small group or unit

- House fellowship
- Prayer group
- Youth group
- Women’s or men’s fellowship

2. Help them find a place to serve

- Ushering
- Choir (if gifted)

- Technical
 - Children's ministry (after proper checks)
 - Outreach team
3. **Teach them the basics of the faith**
- Salvation
 - Prayer
 - Bible reading
 - Holy Spirit
 - Baptism, etc.
4. **Talk with them about membership** (if your church has this)
- Explain what it means
 - Let them choose freely

The Bible says:

“So in Christ we, though many, form one body,
and each member belongs to all the others.”
(Romans 12:5, NIV)

Long-term belonging means
they see themselves as part of the **body**,
not just visitors in a place.

How to Track Who Came and Who Returned (Easy System)

You do not need complex software.
You just need a **simple record**.

You can use:

- A notebook, or
- A simple table in Excel or Google Sheets

Sample columns:

1. Name
2. Phone number
3. Area / location
4. First visit date
5. Follow-Up Friend (who is assigned)
6. Second visit date (if they return)
7. Notes (prayer needs, visit done, etc.)

Each Sunday, one person from the team can:

- Add new visitors
- Mark who returned
- Share updates with the team

This will help you see:

- How many visitors came
- How many came again
- Who needs extra care

Jesus said:

“I am the good shepherd;
I know my sheep and my sheep know me.”
(John 10:14, NIV)

Tracking names helps you act more like a **shepherd**,
not just a speaker.

Giving Each Visitor One Clear Next Step

When people have too many choices,
they often do **nothing**.

So for each visitor,
give **one simple next step at a time**.

Examples:

- “This Sunday: just come again. We’d love to see you.”
- “Next week: join us for our Welcome Class after service.”
- “This month: visit the house fellowship near your home.”

You can ask yourself:

“What is the best next step for this person right now?”

Then focus on that one.

This makes it easy for them to say **yes**
and continue on the journey.

Involving the Whole Church, Not Just the Pastor

For Retention Revival to last,
it cannot depend only on the pastor
or only on the follow-up team.

The **whole church** must carry this heart.

Ways to involve everyone:

1. Teach from the pulpit

- Preach on love, welcome, and care.
- Show that every member can love newcomers.

2. Give simple instructions

- “If you see a new face, please greet them.”
- “Don’t only sit with your friends. Look out for visitors.”

3. Share testimonies

- Tell stories of how good welcome and follow-up changed someone’s life.

4. Pray together

- Let the whole church pray for new visitors and new converts.

The Bible says:

“From him the whole body, joined and held together
by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love,
as each part does its work.”
(Ephesians 4:16, NIV)

Each part has a work.

Greeters, ushers, choir, members in the pew—
everyone can play a part in loving visitors.

A 30-Day Action Plan to Start This System Now

Let’s make this very practical.

Here is a **simple 30-day plan**

to start this visitor journey in your church.

Week 1 – Prepare

- Choose your follow-up team (even if it is just 3–5 people).
- Share the vision:
 - “We want to keep at least 80% of our visitors.”
- Teach them briefly from Chapters 1–3.
- Create a simple visitor record book or sheet.

Week 2 – Start the New Welcome Flow

- Put greeters at the door with clear roles.
- Begin assigning a Follow-Up Friend to each visitor.
- Start using a simple first-time visitor script in service.
- Record all visitors’ names and contacts (if they agree).

Week 3 – Follow-Up and Pray

- Send first week messages or calls to last Sunday’s visitors.
- Hold a short team prayer time for them.
- Start planning one small connection step (like a Welcome Corner after service).

Week 4 – Review and Improve

- Meet with the follow-up team.
- Ask:
 - “How many visitors came?”
 - “How many came back?”
 - “What worked well?”
 - “What was hard?”
- Adjust your flow where needed.
- Thank and encourage the team.

At the end of 30 days,
you will already see **better order**
and **more connection** with visitors.

If you keep going for 3 months, 6 months, 1 year,
you will begin to see **deep change**:

- More people staying
- More disciples growing
- More hearts healed

As you walk this simple journey
from **First Visit** to **Family**,
remember:

It is not just a system.
It is a way to show the heart of **Jesus**,
the Good Shepherd,
to every person He sends to your church.

Step by step,
smile by smile,
call by call,
prayer by prayer—

you are building a church
where visitors become **family**
and where God's love is **felt**,
not just **heard**.

Bonus Chapter – Love Outside the Walls: Outreach and Community Care

All through this book,
we have talked about loving people **inside** the church:

- Visitors
- New members
- Their families

But God also wants us to love people
outside the church walls.

This is where **outreach** and **community care** come in.

Why Your Town Should Feel Your Church's Love

Your church is not just in your town by chance.
God put your church there for a **reason**.

The people on your street,
in your market,
in your schools and offices—
they should be able to **feel God's love**
through your church.

The Bible says:

“You are the light of the world.
A town built on a hill cannot be hidden.”
(Matthew 5:14, NIV)

If our light only shines inside the building,
the world outside stays dark.

When your town feels your church's love, they may say:

- “This church is a blessing to us.”
- “They care about our area.”
- “If I need help or prayer, I can go there.”

This breaks hardness and opens hearts
toward the Gospel and toward your church.

What Is Community Development for a Church?

“Community development” may sound like big English,
but it is simple.

It means:

Helping your community become a better place to live.

For a church, this can include:

- Making the area cleaner
- Helping people feel safer
- Supporting the poor, sick, or weak
- Adding beauty and care to places people use every day

You are not trying to do everything the government should do.

But you are saying,

“Because we are here,

this place will be a little more like **God’s heart.**”

Fun and Simple Outreach Ideas for One Day or Weekend

You don’t need a big crusade.

You can start with **one day** or **one weekend**
of simple, loving outreach.

Here are some ideas.

1. Cleaning Streets or Markets

Pick a street, road, or small part of the market.

Your church can:

- Sweep the gutters
- Pick up trash
- Clear small blocked drainage (if it is safe)
- Put trash into proper bags or bins

Wear simple T-shirts if you have them,
smile, and greet people as you work.

You can say:

“We are from [Church Name].
We just want to help keep our community clean
and show God’s love in a simple way.”

This shows that you don’t only **use** the community
but also **serve** it.

2. Visiting Schools, Hospitals, or Prisons

Your team can also plan short visits to places like:

- Nearby primary or secondary school
- Local hospital or clinic
- Prison or correctional center (with permission)

You can:

- Take small gifts (books, pens, snacks for children; soap or toiletries for patients or inmates, if allowed)
- Sing simple songs
- Share short words of hope
- Pray with people who want prayer

Jesus said:

“I was sick and you looked after me,
I was in prison and you came to visit me.”
(Matthew 25:36, NIV)

When we visit such places,
we are visiting **Jesus** in a way.

3. Fixing Small Things in the Neighborhood

Look around your area.

What small things can your church help fix?

Examples:

- Painting a dirty wall by a school or clinic (with permission)
- Repairing a small broken bench in a public place

- Helping to fill potholes with stones or sand (where safe)
- Planting flowers or small trees in front of the church or on a street corner

These small acts say,
 “We care about how our community looks and feels.”

People will notice,
 even if they don’t talk at first.

Showing God’s Love With Gifts and Service (As You Have Resources)

Important point:

You should only do what your church can **truly afford**.

Do not put the church into heavy debt just to impress people.

The Bible says:

“For if the willingness is there,
 the gift is acceptable according to what one has,
 not according to what one does not have.”
 (2 Corinthians 8:12, NIV)

So start **small and sincere**.

Gifts and services can include:

- Simple food packs for a few families
- Free medical check-up day (if you have health workers)
- Free tutoring for children in your church and street
- Sharing used but clean clothes

Always connect the gift to **God’s love**, not to pride.

You can say:

“We are doing this to show that God loves you
 and has not forgotten you.”

This way, it is about **Jesus**, not about your church name.

How Outreach Breaks Fear and Resistance to Church

Some people are afraid of church.

Some think,

“They only want my money.”

“They will judge me.”

“They will laugh at me.”

But when they see church members
sweeping streets,
painting walls,
caring for the sick,
helping the poor—

Their hearts begin to **change**.

They may think:

- “These people are different.”
- “They really care.”
- “Maybe this church is safe for me.”

The Bible says:

“In the same way, let your light shine before others,
that they may see your good deeds
and glorify your Father in heaven.”
(Matthew 5:16, NIV)

Your **good deeds** outside the church
can open the door
for people to glorify God
and later enter the church family.

Turning Outreach Guests Into Sunday Visitors

During outreach, some people will say:

“Thank you.”

“God bless you.”

and go their way.

Others may show interest:

- They talk longer.

- They ask where your church is.
- They ask about service time.

Your job is to gently invite them,
without pressure.

You can say:

“We are from [Church Name].
We meet on Sundays at [time] at [place].
If you don’t have a church you attend,
we would be happy to see you.”

Have simple flyers or invite cards ready,
with:

- Church name
- Address or simple map
- Service days and times
- A short line like:
“You are always welcome. Jesus loves you.”

When they do come on Sunday,
your **follow-up system** from this book
should receive them with love:

- Warm welcome
- Friend on purpose
- Practical care
- Prayer and training

Outreach brings them to the **gate**.
Good follow-up brings them into the **family**.

Planning a “Community Love Day” With Your Follow-Up Team

Let’s make this easy to start.

You can plan a “**Community Love Day**”
with your follow-up team and other willing members.

Step 1 – Pray and Choose a Focus

- Ask God: “What does our community need most right now?”
- Choose **one** simple focus:

- Cleaning a street
- Visiting a school
- Sharing food packs with a few homes

Step 2 – Form a Small Planning Group

- Include:
 - A leader
 - 2–5 follow-up workers
 - 1–2 other passionate members

Step 3 – Set a Date and Time

- Pick one day or a part of a weekend.
- Make sure it does not clash with major events.

Step 4 – Plan Materials and Roles

- What do you need?
 - Brooms, trash bags, gloves?
 - Small gifts, tracts, or invite cards?
- Who will do what?
 - Who will lead prayer?
 - Who will talk to people?
 - Who will take names of those who show interest?

Step 5 – Announce to the Church

- Invite members to join.
- Explain clearly that it is not for show, but to **love the community**.

Step 6 – Do the Outreach With Joy

- Start with short prayer.
- Go out with smiles and respect.
- Be kind to everyone, even if they refuse help.

Step 7 – After the Outreach

- Meet as a team.
- Thank God.
- Talk about:
 - Who did you meet?
 - Did anyone show interest in church?
 - How did it feel?

- Add any new contacts to your follow-up system.

Over time, you can make
“Community Love Day”
a regular part of your church life—
maybe once a quarter or twice a year.

As you love people **outside** the walls,
and care for them **inside** the walls,
your church will shine with the heart of Jesus.

Visitors will feel it.
Your town will feel it.
And most of all,
God will be pleased.

Because this is His heart:
that His children carry His love
into every home,
every street,
every school,
every market,
and every heart
that is ready to receive Him.