Visitation

Intro: The importance of visitation cannot be overemphasized. It is the life blood of a congregation. When a church stops visiting, it will soon die. We are about to enter a new era of our visitation program. First let us discuss visitation itself.

I. THE NEED TO RESTORE

A. Mat. 18:11-14 “For the Son of man is come to save that which was lost. 12 How think ye? if a man have an hundred sheep, and one of them be gone astray, doth he not leave the ninety and nine, and goeth into the mountains, and seeketh that which is gone astray? 13 And if so be that he find it, verily I say unto you, he rejoiceth more of that sheep, than of the ninety and nine which went not astray. 14 Even so it is not the will of your Father which is in heaven, that one of these little ones should perish.”

B. We are the only one’s who can do this.

1. God, Jesus, nor the Holy Spirit will do our job for us, even though they desire our salvation.
2. Gal. 6:1-2 “Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted. 2 Bear ye one another’s burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ.”
3. Jam. 5:19-20 “Brethren, if any of you do err from the truth, and one convert him; 20 Let him know, that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins.”

II. THE CHARGE OF ELDERS

A. The elders are to watch for us.

1. Acts 20:28 “Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood.”
2. Heb. 13:17 “Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you.”

B. In watching for our souls they are going to ask us to visit one another.

1. We might feel uncomfortable at first, but do it anyway (think how uncomfortable Christ must have been on the cross).
2. We might want to make excuses; Luke 14:16-24 “Then said he unto him, A certain man made a great supper, and bade many: 17 And sent his servant at supper time to say to them that were bidden, Come; for all things are now ready. 18 And they all with one consent began to make excuse. The first said unto him, I have bought a piece of ground, and I must needs go and see it: I pray thee have me excused. 19 And another said, I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I go to prove them: I pray thee have me excused. 20 And another said, I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come. 21 So that servant came, and shewed his lord these things. Then the master of the house being angry said to his servant, Go out quickly into the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in hither the poor, and the maimed, and the halt, and the blind. 22 And the servant said, Lord, it is done as thou hast commanded, and yet there is room. 23 And the lord said unto the servant, Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled. 24 For I say unto you, That none of those men which were bidden shall taste of my supper.”
3. Make time to do it.
III. THE BODY
A. Paul often likens the church to a physical body.
   1. Rom. 12:4-6 “For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not
      the same office: 5 So we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of
      another. 6 Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, whether
      prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith;”
   2. 1 Cor. 12:12-31
   3. Eph. 4:16 “From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that
      which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every
      part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love.”
B. The physical body cares for its members.
   1. If one is weak, other parts of the body help it to become strong.
   2. If one is sick, we go to the doctor.
C. We should likewise care for the spiritual body.

IV. REASONS FOR VISITATION.
A. To have compassion
   1. Mat. 9:36-10:1,6 “But when he saw the multitudes, he was moved with compassion on
      them, because they fainted, and were scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd. 37
      Then saith he unto his disciples, The harvest truly is plenteous, but the labourers are few;
      38 Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth labourers into his
      harvest. 10:1 And when he had called unto him his twelve disciples, he gave them power
      against unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all manner of sickness and all manner
      of disease.... 6 But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.”
   2. 1 John 3:17 “But whoso hath this world’s good, and seeth his brother have need, and
      shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?” If
      this is true of the physical, how much more the spiritual.
B. To Rebuke
   1. 2 Tim. 4:2 “Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort
      with all longsuffering and doctrine.”
   2. Acts 8:22 “Repent therefore of this thy wickedness, and pray God, if perhaps the thought
      of thine heart may be forgiven thee.”
   3. Anyone in sin (whether a wayward Christian, or alien) needs to be rebuked.
C. To Encourage
   1. Col. 4:8 “Whom I have sent unto you for the same purpose, that he might know your
      estate, and comfort your hearts;”
   2. 1 The. 3:2-3 “And sent Timotheus, our brother, and minister of God, and our fellow-
      labourer in the gospel of Christ, to establish you, and to comfort you concerning your faith:
      3 that no man be moved by these afflictions; for yourselves know that hereunto we are
      appointed.”
   3. 1 The. 5:14 “Now we exhort you, brethren, warn [admonish — ASV] them that are unruly,
      comfort [encourage — ASV] the feebleminded, support the weak, be patient toward all
      men.”
D. To be a good example
   1. Mat. 5:13,16 “Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith
      shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden
      under foot of men.... 16 Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good
      works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.”
2. 1 Tim. 4:12 “Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity.”

Conclusion: Let each one of us join in the program and be an active participant.