

ALTAR COUNSELING MINISTRY IDEAS

THOUGHTS

1. Old Way

- Come forward during the service, a quick talk and then you are presented to the church.

New Way

- The new better way (I think) is for the pastor to give an invitation where he asks people to come talk with him or a counselor after the service is over. Then there is more time to talk without trying to rush and present them to the church. After they talk with someone, they are signed up for one or several New Member Classes. In the New Member Class, there is time to talk at length about salvation, baptism, growing as a Christian, joining a church, being part of a small group, and other topics. Many churches say that the New Member class is where many of their salvation decisions are made today. Remember that many people today did not grow up in church and they don't have a Biblical background. A New Member class gives them the opportunity to read the Bible, fill out some kind of workbook perhaps, have group discussion and ask questions. You can also start new Small Groups from those who attend the class.

2. I have seen counselors stationed at the front for people to talk with after the service.

I have seen churches have a Prayer Table or Information Table with altar counselors in the Foyer.

I have seen churches that have a Reception Room or a Prayer Room where people can go located somewhere at the front of the church near the Foyer.

3. I have seen churches just get the names and contact information of people interested in making a decision and then they have a deacon, or counselor call them later to set up an appointment for a visit at their home where they have quiet and appropriate time to talk and pray.

4. I have seen churches make the counseling ministry the responsibility of the Small Groups. In effect, when a person expresses interest during or after the worship service, the only way to take the next step is to visit a Small Group or Sunday School class where they are ready to help them and answer their questions and guide them to take the next step (pray to receive Christ, be baptized, join the church by letter, or whatever the need is.)

5. Every church website ought to have a list of decisions, or questions someone might be interested in, and a place to request more information and have someone contact them.

- If you want to join the church, give us your contact information and someone will contact you.
- If you want to be baptized,
- If you want to know more about how to have a personal relationship with Jesus,
- If you want to attend our next New Member's Class,
- If you want to know about our Life Groups/Community Groups/Small Groups/SS Classes and where and when they meet,

6. If you are streaming the worship service, below the VIDEO where people click, there ought to be an effort to communicate with the people watching ONLINE and give them ways to respond, make a decision, get more information and get plugged into a small group.

What Will The Altar Counselor Share With The Person They Talk With?

Discern Why They Wanted To Talk With Someone

1. “Why did you come today?” or
“Why did you contact us?” or
“What kind of information can I help you with?”
2. You might want to ask the two EE questions no matter why they came and then address their need and questions after that.

Share the Appropriate Information

1. Explain the Gospel (They are coming because they want to know more about Jesus and eternal life)
 - Ask the two questions
 - God’s love
 - Man’s sin
 - Christ death and resurrection
 - The meaning of faith, how to respond in faith.
 - “Would you like to thank God right now for His love, repent of your sins and ask Him to forgive you, ask Him to come into your life and begin to transform you as you follow Him?”
 - Give them the Gospel and the verses that go with it on a piece of paper to take with them.
 - Talk with them about baptism.
 - Help them get connected to a small group and introduce them to their teacher/leader.
 - Sign them up for the New Member Class or classes.
 - Explain how and when you want to introduce them to the church body.
2. Transfer of Letter
 - “Tell me about your faith story. How did you come to believe in Christ and ask Him to come into your life?”
 - Explain the process your church has:
 - Is there a New Member Class or a series of classes to attend first before they are presented to the church?
 - How and when you want to introduce them to the church body.
 - Sign them up for the New Member Class or classes
 - Help them find a small group or Sunday School class and introduce them to the group.
3. Coming for Baptism
 - Ask the two questions.
 - Explain the gospel and look for appropriate understanding.
 - If they received Christ at some other time, ask them to tell you about their faith story.
 - Give them the Gospel with Bible verses to take home with them on paper.
 - Sign them up for the New Member Class (one class or a series of classes).
 - Introduce them or help them choose a small group or SS class and help them get connected.
4. A Call To Christian Vocation
 - Set up an on-going coaching process with church leaders and the local Baptist Association.
 - Help them apply for scholarships with the church, the Association and the State Convention.
5. A Need for Someone To Pray With Them