

# Invitation Etiquette

Dub McClish

There is no time quite so crucial in our periods of worship as when the Invitation of Christ is being extended. This is a time when souls are being urged and persuaded to become obedient to Christ. The proper atmosphere is so very important. During the invitation we are trying to get those whose lives are out of harmony with the Gospel, to make the emotional response, as well as the intellectual response, that is necessary to save their souls. We must do our very best to eliminate every distraction from the serious business at hand. A soul that is on the verge of responding, but who is discouraged from doing so by thoughtless behavior of those around him, may never be that near again. In fact, he may die and be lost because of our behavior. Everything the preacher, song leader and every other member of the church does should be calculated to encourage those who need to respond, to respond. **PLEASE** consider the following "invitation etiquette:"

1. Sing the invitation song with interest and meaning. It is pitiful to see so many who gaze around and make no effort at all to sing. It appears that such people are just bored by it all. Those who are ashamed of their singing could at least read the words silently.
2. Don't move around or allow your children to leave during the invitation unless there is some kind of emergency. That is, unless you need to respond. Then, by all means, move around sufficiently to come to the front. The devil can use innocent little children to detract people from responding to the invitation if we don't properly control them. It is sad to see more people going out the back door than coming to the front when the invitation is extended.
3. Wait till after the closing prayer to get ready to go home. Some folks are more interested in putting on a coat or picking up a purse than they are in the salvation of souls during the invitation song.
4. Don't talk, giggle, write notes, visit or elbow anybody during the closing remarks of a sermon or the invitation song. It breaks my heart to see this going on while I'm pleading for souls. Kids, such is not appropriate for anytime during worship, but if you just have to engage in horseplay, I'd rather you do it during the prayer than the invitation.

Try to put yourself in the position of someone who needs to respond. You're about ready to step out into the aisle when suddenly the lady next to you bumps you while struggling to get her coat on and the kids in front of you are talking and laughing. How would you feel?

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