

Arriving Early

by Ted Gatza

*Then early in the morning all the people came to Him
in the temple to hear Him. – Lk. 21:38*

Arriving early for worship is something that many do not think of as being important. We might arrive early if it were hard to find a place to park or get a seat on the pew. But that's not always the case. It is understandable that some people are really trying hard to balance their jobs, homes, and then making it to the worship on time. Those that do are to be commended for their effort. It's not always easy, but it shows their dedication to the worship of God and the edification of the church. However, arriving early is important for several reasons.

It's important for our visitors. When we arrive early, we can be sure that visitor cards and packets are available and ready to hand out when they arrive. We also need to be available to hand them out and encourage the visitor to fill out the visitor card so we can follow up. We also need to ensure they have tracts that they can take with them when they leave. We need to make them feel welcome, and time spent getting to know them could lead to further visits, Bible studies, and possibly their conversion to Christ.

It's important to be ready to receive our visitors. When we arrive early, we can be sure that visitor cards and packets are available and ready to hand out when they arrive. Being available to hand them out and encourage the visitor to fill out the visitor card so we can follow up. Also, ensure they have tracts that they can take with them when they leave. We need to make them feel welcome, and time spent getting to know them could lead to further visits, Bible studies, and possibly their conversion to Christ.

It's important for orderly worship. There are times when something happens that prevents those assigned to assist in the worship from attending. These positions need to be filled as quickly as possible so that our worship can start on time and unhindered. Arriving early will help fill any vacancies before we start our worship. Also, those arriving early can help the teachers with last-minute needs for Bible classes so that nothing is lacking.

It's important for self-development. When we make the effort to arrive early, we start to understand how important the worship and the people are. We will soon begin to see ourselves as caretakers with a responsibility to the congregation and this will cause us to become better servants of the Lord.

It's important for the congregation as a whole. The Israelites were told to remember the Sabbath and keep it holy. Let us remember the Lord's day and keep it holy. When the members begin to realize the importance of early arrival, we become a stronger congregation. When we are there to greet our visitors, they will see our faith, and dedication. Early arrival sets our minds to proper worship with the love and joy we share with each other. And, above all, we show our love for God.