

HOSPITAL VISITATION

I. THE IMPORTANCE OF VISITING THE SICK

- A. Jesus expects it (Jer. 23:1-2; Matt. 25:36-45).
- B. Pastors and elders are specially gifted for visitation (James 5:14; Luke 9:2; 10:9).
- C. People can be unusually open during times of sickness.
- D. People will remember what happened in the hospital for a long time.
- E. It is a time of special opportunity to impart life to people and other family members.

II. PREPARATIONS FOR THE VISIT

- A. Dress appropriately.
- B. Take your wife or another person.
- C. Bring your Bible. Ask God for a word of comfort to share.
- D. Bring some flowers and a card from the church.
- E. Pray for sensitivity to that person.

III. THE VISIT ITSELF

- A. Be prompt, calling on them at the first opportunity.
- B. Handle yourself in a pastoral manner.
 - 1. Be thoughtful
 - 2. Be cheerful
 - 3. Be courteous
 - 4. Be tactful
 - 5. Be natural
 - 6. Be observant
 - 7. Be anxious to help
- C. Be brief, but not in a hurry.
- D. Be sensitive in conversation.
 - 1. Do not talk about yourself and your own problems.
 - 2. Do not talk over the sick person in their presence.

3. Do not make jovial remarks or comments about the body.
 4. Do not reprimand or scold the patient.
 5. Do not preach sermonettes.
 6. Do not change the subject if the patient wants to talk to you about something serious to them.
- E. Be prepared for various reactions to their condition.
1. Fear
 2. Anxiety
 3. Anger
 4. Doubt
- F. Do not overstep your authority.
1. Observe hospital rules.
 2. Co-operate with the medical instructions.
 3. Be supportive of staff and other personnel.
 4. Do not tell the patient what his feelings ought to be.
 5. Do not minimize the patient's condition.
 6. Do not give premature assurance or reassurance that you have no authority to give.
 7. Do not be presumptuous when dealing with contagious diseases.
- G. Other "dont's" for the pastor
1. Don't act as if their church attendance was the most important goal in their life.
 2. Don't sit on the patient's bed.
 3. Don't bore or scare the patient with stories of other sick people.
- H. Other "do's" for the pastor
1. Share a good word of encouragement from the Bible.
 2. Pray for them.
 - a. Anointing with oil
 - b. Laying on of hands

3. Make sure you have helped with any needs.

4. Be aware of other patients in the room.

IV. Follow-ups

A. Touch base with them every day.

B. Visit every other day.

C. Be prepared to assist them after they return home.

D. For long term stays provide new flowers from time to time.

