




SIX STEPS TO

LOVING YOUR CHURCH

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Six Steps to Loving Your Church
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INTRODUCTION

Some of us really love our churches, some of us aren't so positive, and for many of us that feeling can change from week to week.

This six-session program is about how to love your church whether you're feeling enthusiastic about it or not. It's about the mindset we take with us as we go to church each week, and how that mindset is expressed in a multitude of ways, big and small. In particular, it's about the part that we all play as God's people in loving, serving and building each other up, Sunday by Sunday. We all have a ministry—the ministry of the pew.¹

Over the six sessions of the course we will cover subjects such as:

- our current attitudes towards church, and how they are expressed
- what the Bible says about the meaning and purpose of church
- what it means to love our church and the people who go there
- how we can be active encouraging servants before, during and after church, rather than just consumers or spectators.

Each session contains a mix of discussion, Bible study, video input and prayer, along with simple exercises to help you put the ideas into practice on Sunday.

Our prayer is that the fairly simple and practical ideas in this training program will change the way you think and act at church, and bear fruit in the lives of those around for years to come.

Colin Marshall and Tony Payne
August 2013

1. This phrase goes back to a widely read article that Colin wrote in 1994 for *The Briefing*. You can read it here: matthiasmedia.com.au/briefing/library/1855

SESSION 1

WALKING INTO CHURCH

Getting started



Video: How do you walk into church?

Notes on video



Discuss: Your church

1. What sort of things do you normally think about as you walk into church?
2. What do you really love about church at the moment?
3. What do you find hard (if anything) about church at the moment?

4. When the New Testament Christians walked into church, they weren't walking into a purpose-built religious-looking building. Mostly they were walking into someone's home. How do you think this would have affected the way they thought about walking into church?

5. What do you think *God* is thinking about as you walk into church?

6. Read Ephesians 5:25-27 and 1 Corinthians 3:10-17. What do these passages teach about God's attitude towards the church?



Video: What is God thinking?

Notes on video



Discuss: A different walk

1. What struck you most from the video about God and the church?
2. What difference would it make, do you think, if you were to pray as you walked into church?
3. Think about the people at your church:
 - Who is new in the past 12 months? Do you know why they came to your church?
 - What do new people tend to do at the end of your church service?
 - Have any of the regulars been absent recently? Do you know why?

4. Think about your own habits at church:

- Where do you normally sit? Why there?
- Who do you normally speak with?
- What do you tend to do after the meeting finishes?



Prayer

Close the session with a brief time of prayer, giving thanks for your church and for God's great love for us.



Assignment

This coming Sunday, don't sit in your 'normal' seat (if you have one). Pray about where to sit, and sit next to someone different.