

So the Revival Meeting/Conference/Event Is Over. What Happens Next?

Discipleship is a process, not an event.

When I read the story in this issue about Stadium Worship and how pastor Tommy Deuschle and others orchestrated events that focused on Jesus rather than a church or ministry (see pp. 36-40), I recalled asking Tommy, "Now what? What happens next?"

I met Tommy at Oral Roberts University. He was a student in the College of Business and attended my entrepreneurship class. God helped us develop a strong bond that included our entire family. I learned about life in Zimbabwe through the eyes of this son of a powerful missionary preacher. Later, Tommy invited my wife and me to Zimbabwe, where we worked in revival ministry, cholera camps and orphanages. We think back on our time there with fondness and keep the people of Zimbabwe in our daily prayers.

Tommy's gifts are plentiful and significant. But I never doubted his first love was to impact the kingdom of God as he died to self. His approach was always to turn the spotlight away from himself and to the purpose of the ministry. I doubt we will ever see his name on any ministry or event. He is an employee of the kingdom of God.

My relationship with Tommy has grown because of what God is doing through us for the good of the kingdom.

Enduring relationships emerge when we focus on what God is doing for others through us. When we see Him at work for the good of others, it sustains us and builds our faith to continue.

We don't think, *What can this relationship do for me? What can I get out of this?* We only see what God is doing and how He calls us to join the work.

More importantly, ministry expands beyond an event or divine appointment. That question, "What happens next?" must be an ever-present thought. After the last person leaves the stadium, we must be thinking about the many people who return to their homes with a changed heart but a present reality. After the first touch from Jesus, how do we impart the second?

As we meet with others, we often develop an internal to-do list for the next step. We think of a thoughtful deed, a note to write or a call to make. When we capture one of these ideas, we have surely heard from the Lord about what to do next. I believe this nudge from Him is what helps us remain intentional about sustaining relationships.

The art and acts of feeding a relationship are not limited to what we can accomplish on our own. Can you think of a better action than to intercede for the people we see during the day? When we pray and minister to people at church on Sunday, do we take action on Monday?

When I think of the enormous impact made at stadium ministries, I consider the Parable of the Sower in Matthew 13:1-9 and Mark 4:1-9. My heart hurts when I read about the bad things that happened to many of the seeds. But I love reading about all the seeds that took root and grew: "But other seeds fell into good ground and produced grain: a hundred, sixty or thirty times as much" (Matt. 13:8).

But what about the seeds left to scatter in the wind with little chance to germinate? What about those scorched and smashed by the circumstances of life? During large ministry events, many seeds are planted. Relationships are launched. Possibilities are created.

I think about the call to "Go therefore and make disciples"

(Matt. 28:19a). The call to make disciples is not a one-and-done experience. It requires engagement and intentional follow-up. We must work hard to develop systems that improve the quantity and quality of follow-up with new connections.

I sent Tommy this text after one of his stadium events: "I will pray for the Holy Spirit to follow up with each person who was in the stadium."

At large events, it may seem impossible to follow up and develop relationships. Yet somehow, I believe the mountainside filled with 5,000 people who were fed by the disciples offered multiple opportunities to engage. Even without texts, Facebook or Instagram, the miracle buffet added souls to the kingdom of God.

Events allow us the opportunity to begin a process of connection. But it's prayer and Spirit-led engagement that tug at our heart to follow up and make disciples.

What happens next is up to me.

DR. STEVE GREENE is the publisher and executive vice president of the media group at Charisma Media and executive producer of the Charisma Podcast Network. Find his new book, Love Leads: The Spiritual Connection Between Your Relationships and Productivity, at , or at your local bookstore.

CHARISMA is the only magazine dedicated to reporting on what the Holy Spirit is doing in the lives of believers around the world. If you are thirsty for more of God's presence and His Holy Spirit, subscribe to CHARISMA and join a family of believers that choose to live life in the Spirit. [CLICK HERE](#) for a special offer.