He wants all of us-our lives are a living sacrifice for Him.
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FOLLOW-UP

In the 70's and early 80's I invite some outstanding men and women to come speak in citywide crusades in Warner Robins. The most well-known of these were David Wilkerson, pastor of Times Square Church and outstanding prophetic voice to America, although he did not want people calling him a prophet, and Nicky Cruz, New York gang member who was brought to Jesus by David Wilkerson, who later wrote about Nicky's conversion in the book "*The Cross and the Switchblade"*. Wilkerson was tragically killed in a car crash in 2011 but continues to have a profound impact in America due to his books and tapes.

Even in those early times I was very interested in follow-up, after the people came down to the altar and accepted Christ. This was a big responsibility, as the meetings were held at the Warner Robins Civic Center which seats 1002 people. We had to turn people away from Wilkerson's meetings because there simply was no room. Most of the churches did an outstanding job following up on the people who came down for ministry.

My friend Mac Watson, also with the Lord, use to say to me, regarding deliverance: "Charlie, you don't lead someone through deliverance and then push out to the street but must follow-up with these people." He compared deliverance ministry with a woman having a baby, saying

we don't push a woman in a hospital wheelchair out to the street right after she has a baby and say, "So long! Have a good life!" *Follow-up* was and has been and is very, very important to me.

Because of the overload on our deliverance ministers, it is impractical and unfair to expect them to follow-up. They know the job they have to do, and the Church needs to take up the responsibility of following up and discipling these believers newly set free. Those who go through deliverance must know not only *how to be free*, but also *how to stay free*. They need accountability and also a prayer partner, and they need to be in regular attendance at a local church and under the authority of a good, Bible teaching pastor. Those who do not stay in the Word and under the spiritual covering of a local fellowship rarely "make it."

We are basically told, by Jesus in the Great Commission, to stay connect to new believers: Matthew 28:19-20: ***"Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe the things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age."*** *Amen.* He wanted believers to "follow-up" on those who were baptized. One of the Apostle Paul's goal was to follow up and ground new believers in the faith. (Colossians 1:27-29: *To them God willed to make known what are the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles: which is Christ in you, the hope of glory. Him we preach, warning every man and teaching every man in all wisdom that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus. To this end I also labor,*

striving according to His working which works in me mightily.)

Peter warned in 1st Peter 2:2 that new believers should have a consistent devotional life and be fed the milk of the word so that they could mature and grow. (1st Peter 2: 1-3: *Therefore, laying aside all malice, all deceit, hypocrisy, envy, and all evil speaking, as newborn babes, desiring the pure milk of the word, that you may grow thereby, if indeed you have tasted that the Lord is gracious.*)

The writer of Hebrews tells us that we need to be part of the family of God in a local Christian body. (Hebrews 10:24-25: *And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works, not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much more as you see the Day approaching.*)

We know that satan seeks to destroy those in the faith. (1st Peter 5:8-9: *Be sober, be vigilant, because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour.*) And we know that mature Christians need to follow up on weak Christians and help them overcome. (Galatians 6:1-2: *Brethren, if a man is overtaken in any trespass, you who are spiritual restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness, considering yourselves lest you also be tempted, bearing one another's burdens and so fulfill the law of Christ.*)

To wrap up these lesson I want to encourage you to follow up with people who come to Christ through your ministry or are brought to a place of deliverance through your ministry, and I want to tell a true story. I once talked to a junior high school boy who was living on the Air Force

base. He was led to salvation through a man who spent a lot of time with the young man, helping him and witnessing to him until the older man gained the younger man's trust. The young man really was "pumped" by all this attention from the older man, who was a sincere believer (not a pastor), who led many, many people to Christ. However, once the boy accepted Christ the older man abruptly dropped him and went to someone else. I know those who win souls are called wise in the scripture (Proverbs 11:30b: *And he who wins souls is wise.*) I understand that different people have different callings, but this young man was confused and suffered a lot of rejection over this and lost his passion for the Lord. I do think, however, that the older man should have followed-up with this young man and only gradually pull back. At the least, he could have asked someone else to step in and disciple the boy.