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Jasper Mall Revival Draws 1,130 a Night as 17 Are Baptized in a Cattle Trough

A true story of faith under pressure. Read the first half below, then continue online.

KEY SPIRITUAL TAKEAWAY

"You can't do a tent meeting, not today,"

(Transliterated from the original Hindi.)

They had gathered only to pray. When prayer itself becomes the target, faith is proved not by words but by staying.

The Story - Part One

Twenty-five Churches of Christ turned a Jasper, Alabama, shopping mall parking lot into a revival ground for five nights in October, drawing an average of 1,130 people a night and baptizing 17 people in a cattle trough donated by a farm store. The meetings, called "Come and See," filled three tents in a town of 15,000 - and on some nights the crowd reached 1,251, with nearly 5,000 more watching online. It was the dream of one cattle farmer, Brandon Glover, who had carried it since he was four years old.

A preacher friend had warned him it could not be done. "You can't do a tent meeting, not today," the friend told Glover, saying that kind of evangelism was too costly and too difficult to work in the modern world. Glover, 52, a member of the Liberty Church of Christ who works in industrial construction and runs a cattle farm and a fabrication shop, decided to try anyway.

"We've got to get out of the building. We've got to go where the souls are," Glover said.

"People didn't want to go to church, but they still want to study the Bible." The tent, he added, had always been a dream.

For years, Glover had wanted to hold a revival to honour Max Barker, a longtime elder of the Blackwater Macedonia Church of Christ, 18 miles northwest of Jasper, where Glover used to worship. Barker died amid the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, and the two men had spent hours reminiscing about the tent meetings of their past. For Glover, the memories went back to a big, classic red-and-white tent he remembered from when he was four.

He had already been testing the idea in smaller rooms. Glover began holding an annual gospel meeting in his fabrication shop, and it started drawing about 200 people. That meeting grew out of weekly Bible studies in the Glover home, which had grown to 50 or 60 people.

Planning for the tent meeting began in earnest in January. Glover set a goal of 400 people, twice as many as his fabrication shop meetings, and estimated that tents, chairs, generators, lights, food and advertising would cost around $60,000. Liberty, which has about 100 members - the majority of them new Christians - could not afford that on its own.

"We just committed to do it, whatever it took," Glover said. "And when people started hearing about it, they're like, 'Hey, I want in. I want to be part of it.'"

The Turning Point - What Happens Next

The story reaches a life-changing moment that changes everything -- and what seemed like the end is only the middle. Two reports disagree on the numbers, and one question is left unanswered: will the CCTV footage ever come out? Read the full story to find out what happens next.

PERSONAL REFLECTION & DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. When gathering to pray carries a real cost, what keeps a community coming together anyway -- and what would keep you coming?

2. The pastor's sister shielded him with her own body and fainted under the blows. What does costly, self-giving love look like in your own family or church?

3. When justice is delayed and a complaint is withdrawn under threat, how do believers hold on to truth without giving in to fear -- or to hatred?

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