

The common man / woman

God is calling the common man/woman off the bench to plant simple church expressions. They are emerging from all walks of life. I am a real estate appraiser and Suzy is a home maker (a waitress when I first met her). As I am typing this post in my office, Suzy is gathering with a group in the "upper room" of a local coffee shop. We have no formal training. We have never been to seminary or a bible college. Yet, the Voice of God is unmistakable in His pursuit of us for this journey. I want to make 2 observations about the current climate of leadership change.

- 1) Many professionally trained leaders are being required (by God) to learn how to be "common" again (I want to be clear that I HONOR those coming from this perspective). Many are exiting paid positions, reintegrating into workplace routines, and working thru paradigm shifts.
- 2) Many common believers are being required to step into arenas they were formally not welcome in (or comfortable with).

Each is being called out of their comfort zone and into an environment where God MUST be in charge for the work to move forward. Since I am not a trained professional I will defer discussion about the complexities of that journey to those working thru it. I can (and will) speak from the common man/woman perspective.

When Suzy & I first made this transition, God clearly gave us a "word". As I cried out to Him concerning our newly developing role, He gave us a two word phrase - "grant permission". Most believers have been trained to sit and observe. They know the stirrings of destiny in their hearts and are aware of their "bents" but are reluctant to "step out of their place". The restraining power of 700 years of church culture is a strong gravity to escape. It is in this context that Suzy & I find the opportunity to "grant permission" to common, every day believers whom God is "ekballing" into this stream of simple church planting. As these untrained leaders hear stories about others of similar background they are often brought to tears. It is as if a mountain of weight is lifted from them as they realize they are not alone and God is using other like them to build His Kingdom.

In global context there are stories like Debra Xu, a simple untrained woman who has planted thousands of churches through out China. Upon meeting Debra we were blown away (humbled) by her simple childlike faith and expression. She reminds me of a statement Jesus made at the home of Mary & Martha, "only a few things are necessary, really only One". Felicity Dales book, "An Army of Ordinary People" is both prophetic and a present reality. Ordinary people and simple practices are building blocks the Lord is using to build His church! Come on! Get off the couch and follow that leading that God birthed in you! You have permission....