

Are 'House' Churches a Fad?

In 2007, in the book *Small Is Big!: Unleashing the Big Impact of Intentionally Small Churches* (originally *The Rabbit* and *The Elephant*) which I co-authored with my husband, Tony, and George Barna, I wrote the following under the subtitle, "A fashionable fad":

"Another hazard we face is that of becoming fashionable, the latest phenomenon in church statistics, the trendy alternative to traditional church. There will always be people who hop onto the bandwagon because they want to be part of the latest thing, not because the Holy Spirit is leading them."

That has proved to be very true. When house church, or organic church, or simple church became a buzz word, many people jumped in. But, as I go on to say, if people don't truly live out the DNA, they will soon find that what they have is only a pale substitute for the real thing.

Thankfully, those days are over. We're no longer a fashionable fad.

I was very encouraged to read a recent blog post by entrepreneur and author, Seth Godin. (His blog is well worth following. He is able to clarify thoughts, especially about the digital age, in an extraordinary way.) The post is very short, and so I quote it in its entirety.

A fad is popular because it's popular. A fad gives us momentary joy, and part of the joy comes in knowing that it's momentary. We enjoy a fad because our peers are into it as well.

A trend, on the other hand, satisfies a different human need. A trend gains power over time, because it's not merely part of a moment, it's a tool, a connector that will become more valuable as other people commit to engaging in it.

Confusion sets in because at the beginning, most trends gain energy with people who are happy to have fun with fads, and it's only when the fad fans fade away (yes, I just wrote "fad fans fade") that we get to see the underlying power of the trend that's going on.

I believe we have moved from fashionable fad to Holy Spirit-inspired trend. Could it be "for such a time as this"?

Small is big! {eoa}

Felicity Dale received her medical training at Barts Hospital in London and worked as a family doctor before leaving to look after her own family of four children. She and her husband, Tony, pioneered a church in their medical college and later in London's East End. Co-founder of House2House Ministries, Felicity has authored three books, including *Small Is Big!* with George Barna and Tony.