

**Americans Open to Exploring New Ways of Experiencing God-3**  
**Barna Report, June 2009**  
**Summarized and posted by Bob Young**  
**May 2010**

A Barna report which suggests that Americans are more and more inclined to find and practice faith outside the structures and context of traditional churches can be understood better by becoming aware of some things that are already happening in our society and in our world. [The report is available at [www.barna.org](http://www.barna.org)]

**Changes Are Already Happening**

Barna suggests that what we are seeing is a spiritual makeover already taking place in America. About 7% of adults attend a house church in a typical month, seven times more than a decade ago. The number of people who rely upon marketplace ministries for spiritual experiences is about half of the number who attend a conventional church service during a given month. Millions of adults are increasingly reliant on faith-based media for religious experience and expression. These represent a major realignment of religious behavior in just the last decade. The rapid growth of the house church or simple church movement is especially significant.

A new book, co-authored by Barna and simple church pioneers Tony and Felicity Dale (*The Rabbit and the Elephant*), discusses the growth of the simple church movement and describes home-based churches as one place people are seeking faith experiences that are dynamic and genuine. *The Rabbit and the Elephant* describes the experience of the Dales in initiating a house church and explains what they have experienced and learned in the process. Major points in the book include the following.

- how simple churches and conventional churches grow in different ways and with different methods
- the forms of accountability which help simple churches function
- facilitating and measuring success in a living, organic environment
- the different types of leadership required in conventional and simple churches
- the outreach and reproducibility models that characterize simple churches