

Overcoming the Fear of Starting

No. 1

Have you ever climbed a mountain? Perhaps you've stood perched in starting blocks as a starter's pistol raised into the air. If you have, do you remember the sensation in your gut? The one where the anticipation of what is seconds away causes life to slow down to a timeless moment. For some this moment is one where you feel most alive, because you have a drive to compete. The adrenaline and endorphins from competition followed by the satisfaction of completion at the finish line makes for a good day.

But there's one more part of that feeling of being at the starting line...the fear of starting. One never knows with complete certainty the outcome of what lies ahead. No one can guarantee a perfect climb or race. Furthermore, there's often pain that will be felt and endured in order to finish. The uncertainty of what is about to occur and the unknown pain leads to overwhelming fear.

For some of us we don't do these type of things. We don't like that feeling in our gut. The fear of starting is too much, so we never stand in the shadow of the mountain or step up to the line. There is no 3, 2, 1...go. We simply stay away from what will lead to uncertainty and pain...this is the fear of starting.



My presumption is that there are more born-again believers desiring to start something new for the Lord whether it is an initiative or a church plant than are actually doing it. As I've proverbially stood at the face of the mountain (church planting) I've got a feeling in my gut. I'm not sure what all lies ahead or how much pain there will be to endure. I've had this feeling before and Lord willing I will have this feeling again, but what is to be done about this feeling?

In one of John Maxwell's organizations they have a phrase, "Jump and build your wings on the way down." This phrase was born out of their experience that for a lot of us we never accomplish what we set out to, because we're afraid to start. Their solution...jump or to say it another way, start and figure it out along the way. Initially, I found the simplicity of this answer dissatisfying especially as someone who is frequently told that I'm a "planner." As I've ruminated on this



phrase I've found the simplicity of the solution more and more satisfying. What are your thoughts? Feel free to share them with me at gerad.hall@gmail.com.

Although the fear of starting is not the only fear, it is a significant stumbling block. Next month we'll look at another fear. We'll consider the fear of resources.

*Pastor Gerard Hall
Church Planter, Quad Cities Area*