

Talking Points

Just an Ordinary Man

Pastor Glen was no stranger to pain and loss in life. Twenty-six years ago, I, Gary Hoffman, was just a new Christian when I first crossed paths with Pastor Glen. I was part of a hand full of men whose lives were torn apart by separation of marriage. Along with Pastor Glen, I was involved in the early beginnings of support groups at Saddleback Church Lake Forest (SVCC). We met weekly on Tuesday nights in the old church office; we became known as the *Separated Men's Group (SMG)*.

Looking back thru the early years with Pastor Glen, it was very exciting times. It was like we were on this large life-raft and we were pulling men to safety, one man at a time. You would grab a man, and try to stop the bleeding, and go on to the next one, trying to get to as many men as possible. If a man fell off the life-raft, we would grab him again and pull him to back safety. Pastor Glen was there to mentor and encourage the *Separated Men's Group* in a practical, down to earth kind of way. Often, SMG men were new believers with their lives in shambles.

As I mentioned, Pastor Glen was no stranger to pain and loss in his life. He knew that when you're truly BROKEN, that's often when God can quickly do that "*triple-by-pass*" so to speak, in your life. That's where ALL the bricks of your life appear to be taken away, where you have NOWHERE TO RUN, NOWHERE TO TURN. It's just YOU and GOD! This is where you begin to understand PAIN and the FRUIT OF GOOD PAIN. Pastor Glen began to mentor us in the basics of this this God stuff, to a healthier pathway in life, learning to LET GO of CONTROL, and to begin to TRUST GOD in the MIDST of the STORM.

YES, it was exciting times in the mid-90's at Saddleback Church as Pastor Glen executive pastor and his team, took a few support groups to more than 30 thriving support groups in a few years. Other groups and ministries like Celebrate Recovery (born at Saddleback Church in 1991) were growing. The Saddleback Church counseling program was developed and born. The church's land was purchased; buildings were built, programs developed, as God used EVERYDAY ORDINARY PEOPLE to do His work. Pastor Glen had the ability and discernment to see where Saddleback Church needed to go, with the help of his amazing team!

Here's just one story about Pastor Glen and his keen sense of direction and purpose. As I was returning from a holiday trip New Year's Day in 1997, I pulled over to get something to eat from my favorite place to eat at the time McDonald's. Ordering my favorite healthy choice; of a ¼ Pounder with cheese and a fish filet sandwich. I remember like it was yesterday. I sat down.....and could hardly keep my pen on the paper, as all these words began to come out about the Separated Men's Group ministry that afternoon in that McDonald's in Stockton CA. Not knowing it, with noise all around me that afternoon, God used my hand to write some Godly inspired pages.

A few days later Pastor Glen popped into my office asking, "How was my weekend?" I shared my experience in the McDonald's. He said, "Can I see the pages?" He sat in silence and read parts of my handwritten pages, and waited for a minute or two. He asked: "Can I borrow these?" I said "yes."

I didn't see those handwritten pages for several months. Then one day, the Separated Men's Group handbook was typed up and the first draft was born; Pastor Glen took my starting work and moved it clearly forward! It's still used today; the SMG handbook has been re-written, however, it's basically the same. Pastor Glen had the vision to see where God was, and where Saddleback Church needed to go!

Pastor Glen, an ORDINARY MAN asked to do GREAT THINGS, TOUCHING and IMPACTING thousands of lives for ETERNITY! This ORDINARY PERSON, could be ME or YOU if we CHALLENGE and TRUST GOD to USE US for HIS PURPOSE!