

In Pursuit of Eden . . . or Gethsemane?

A Thought From Reny:

As Easter approaches, it's good to pause and reflect on why we pursue the things we do this side of heaven. I remember a pastor saying "some of you are trying to find your Garden of Eden when you ought to be looking for your Garden of Gethsemane."

That enlightening statement has stayed with me through the years. Frankly, I'm much more drawn to Eden! It seems so ideal and full of God's presence, right? But it was in the Garden of Eden that man first rebelled and fell – utterly and completely. Yet it is in Gethsemane that we find the beginning of restoration through Christ's agonizing decision to surrender to the cross.

Gethsemane: the uncomfortable and unpopular place where we fight the inevitable battle within - but not alone. Our loving Father so patiently reminds us to abandon our pursuit of Eden and trust Him in Gethsemane. So we look to the cross with joy and gratitude.

Have a Joy-Filled Easter!



photo: Cary's first testing of C2Me, Hong Kong, March 2019

My experience with "Oneighty" began several weeks ago with the introduction of a new discipleship course, "**Creation to Me**" (**C2Me**). This course has 130+ Sign and Say steps and takes students from creation to their current life.

I designed it to 1) give believers a sense of being a part of the grand epic that is way bigger than just the individual, and 2) link their own life within that epic. I am currently training eight group leaders who in turn teach about 45 young adult professionals and students from our Hong Kong church.

These students are quite different than the minimally educated pastors I usually train and that is where the experiment part begins! As a young professional in Hong Kong, one group leader is little more than a year into her journey of following the Master. But her motivation to understand God's Grand Narrative is high. When asked if memorizing 130+ steps seems boring or daunting, she replied "No! I'm really pumped--genuinely excited to be a part of this." C2Me connects the parts of the story she previously knew, but didn't understand how it all fit together--and she is eager to find out!

The privilege is mine as I learn to give others a tool to benefit their hearts, while teaching them to transfer truth to a variety of education levels.



photo: Antique books in Omagh, N. Ireland

Andra-Got-What? Research Insights From Cary

Perhaps you already know about pedagogy, the study of methods and activities of teaching (which often refers to teaching children.) But what is andragogy?

Andragogy: The theory, methods and activities involved in teaching adult learners.

(Cambridge Dictionary online)

As I research the field of andragogy, one thing I've gleaned is that teachers of adults cannot hide behind being older, more experienced in life, or bigger in size than the students. Those things will not win respect with adult students. In fact, I often find my students are collectively more experienced in understanding and in life than I am. This is particularly true when teaching church leaders in another culture. In many ways, they are the experts, not me. So what do I do? How do I build respect as a teacher?

First, I strive to humbly and unobtrusively **unleash the value of the students**. I make their experience my ally by building into my teaching, exercises and activities that draw out the expertise of the students. Even when they don't recognize what I am doing, they respond positively. It is very effective to blend their pool of experience with the specialized training I bring.

Second, I **build a platform of respect**. This requires "knowing my stuff". I must know my content well, set an example of using that content in the context of life, and provide relevant examples. This allows a relaxed presentation and gives me freedom to concentrate on the students and their learning, not on my notes and teaching methods. I find extending this preparation beyond content to also include how I deliver the content and cast vision, inspires my students to transfer that content to others.

This is part of what I am learning about andragogy. **Pray for my continued study in this, as well as other disciplines that speak strongly to my desire to transform minimally educated leader training!**

Have you found ways to subtly highlight and harness the experience of adult students? How do you earn respect and inspire them to transfer to others what you've taught them? **I'd love to learn from your experiences!** You can write to me at caclif@gmail.com.



MAPGlobal
— MINISTRY ADVOCACY PARTNERS —

"... a whole group of new friends."

We've enjoyed working with MAP Global and appreciate their desire to provide excellent support from the office. Recently, we received this sweet message from Tina:

“I love seeing your support coming in and I get the honor of praying over each person that is partnering with your ministry. I feel like I have a whole group of new friends.”

We hope all of you sense the love for you (and prayers), too!

Current Prayer Requests & Praises

- **PRAY for these countries** as we continue to correspond, explore, and wait on the Lord: *South Africa, Paraguay, Myanmar (Burma)*.
 - **PRAY for MAP Global** as they work hard to grow well and to serve us and you in this ministry.
 - **PRAY spiritual warfare prayers** for our individual soul health, marriage, family and our involvement in our church as we seek God's role for us at The Vine for Hong Kong and beyond.
 - **PRAY for our 2019 third and fourth quarter finances.** If you have been following our work for some time and have not yet committed financially, please pray and consider whether this may be the time to begin?
 - **PRAY for the new Community Group** we will lead in our home beginning in May.
 - **PRAISE for the current training** of young adults with the new C2Me discipleship course. **PRAY they will embrace** its practical and versatile application and particularly for anyone God may ask to “do more” with what they've learned.
 - **PRAISE for a pastor training** scheduled in June, **PRAY for preparations** currently underway.
 - **PRAISE for three NEW financial partners in March!** We are honored to work together.
 - **PRAISE for new soulmates.** Cary enjoyed a refreshing and encouraging retreat in March with two godly men. In May, Reny will host women serving cross culturally during the Velvet Ashes Retreat.
 - **PRAISE for many of you who regularly pray for us.** We love hearing from you and knowing how to pray for you, too. May God bless you abundantly!
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CLIFTONS

CARY & RENY