

NECESSARY ENDINGS

Getting to the next level always requires ending something, leaving it behind, and moving on. Growth itself demands that we move on. Without the ability to end things, people stay stuck, never becoming who they are meant to be, never accomplishing all that their talents and abilities should afford them.

- Henry Cloud, *Necessary Endings*

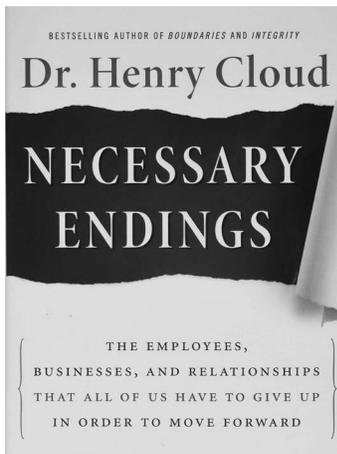
What do you as an individual need to bring to an end? What does your church need to release? What does your business need to cut loose?

Isaiah speaks of God-followers rebuilding the ancient ruins, being mighty oaks of righteousness. And in times of chaos, we discover what we are made of, we ask what foundations are needing preserving. For the past year, I've described the COVID-19 event, the racial conflict, the political turmoil as answers to personal prayer.

My concern for the wider church has been that we've elevated the main Sunday worship event at the cost of deep discipleship, as evidenced by mismatched actions and beliefs all around us. And with calls for campuses to suspend large gatherings and strident proclamations that don't provide a path towards reconciliation, we are given opportunities to see if Holy Spirit fruit lives in us. Recent events have given us opportunity to assess, reset, and rebuild.

At a recent prayer meeting for pastors, I experienced white and black pastors calling for repentance of placing our hope in political solutions, forgetting the power of Jesus' life, work and sacrifice and His promise of the Holy Spirit to equip and comfort. We hear these same themes rising up among Evana pastors and churches.

Perhaps I see this most in conversations around "returning to normal" or in proud proclamations that individuals and groups have never really abandoned "normal." To follow Jesus, we must expect change and growth, and that means ending some things. These recent events give us a chance to stay pivoted and on a potentially more faithful course.



Dr. Henry Cloud (of *Boundaries* fame) has offered another helpful text, *Necessary Endings: Employees, Businesses and Relationships That All of Us Have to Give Up in Order to Move Forward*. He roots his advice in the Ecclesiastical wisdom of "there is a time for everything" and the popular New Testament imagery of pruning.

Pruning is strategic. It is directional and forward-looking. It is intentional toward a vision, desires, and objectives that have been clearly defined and are measurable. If you have that, you know what a rose is, and pruning will help you get one of true beauty.

One, the pruning of new growth to direct resources towards healthy fruit and stronger limbs. Two, the pruning of diseased limbs that might contaminate the health of other parts of the tree. Three, the pruning of dead limbs that take up space for healthy growth and compromise the tree's integrity. These are hard prunings. Painful prunings. Each cut represents letting go of desires, hopes, legacy, and tradition. This doesn't mean we don't honor what is let go, but the path forward requires pruning.

Henry borrows from Jesus' many references to pruning, tending and fertilizing to help us accept endings as natural processes. He says,

First, accept life cycles and seasons; second, accept that life produces too much life, and third, accept that incurable illness and sometimes evil are part of life too. Taken

together, these three principles will help you to make peace with endings, so that when their time has come, you will be able to do what you need to do.

What does that that "time has come" look like for you and your church? What is at least one thing that you can prune to make more space for healthy growth? Is there Holy Spirit fruit in your conversations? Is a particular beloved ministry bringing people to Jesus? Does your new effort developed for the COVID-19 event need to be nurtured further as a "front porch" for visitors? And what needs to be laid aside in order for it to grow?

- Tyler Hartford, Director of Church Leadership

RE*GEN 2021

*"And no one puts new wine into old wineskins.
For the wine would burst the wineskins, and the wine and the skins would both be lost.
New wine calls for new wineskins."*

Our national Re*Gen 2021 biennial gathering will take place July 1-5, 2021 at Taylor University (Upland, IN). Worship with *Sing Love* and teachings will be held every morning and evening. Midday events include delegate sessions, seminars, learning labs, recreational activities, and more.

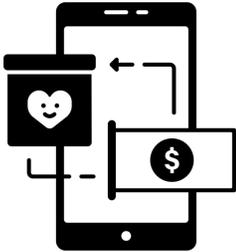


We are especially excited to introduce our speaker, Hannah Gronowski, the Founder and CEO of *Generation Distinct*, and a preacher, speaker and author. She is passionate about abolishing cultural complacency, unleashing lasting justice, and joining the wild adventure Jesus invites us all to live.

This event includes all ages. Middle school and high school groups should have a youth:adult ratio of at least 10:1. Children's programming will be provided during the delegate/small group session and the afternoon seminar.



Lodging is dorm style with sheets, blanket and pillow provided and shared bathrooms. Those with disabilities and families with more than two children will be given priority for the few apartments we have available. Upland, IN has several hotels nearby if you decide to stay off campus.



If you wish to join our work in supporting pastors and resourcing congregations from a distinctly evangelical Anabaptist faith perspective, consider clicking "Donate" on EvanaNetwork.org or send a contribution via mail.

- Matt Hamsher, Executive Director

Re*Gen Main Session Themes & Speakers

Thursday PM – New Wine for New Wineskins
Matt Hamsher, *Evana Network*

Friday AM – Our Past: Captives to Sin/Old Wineskins
Hannah Gronowski, *Generation Distinct*

Friday PM – Our Past: Captives to Sin/Old Wineskins
Marvin Lorenzana, *Eastern Mennonite Missions*

Saturday AM – Our Present: Salvation in Christ
Hannah Gronowski, *Generation Distinct*

Saturday PM – Our Present: Salvation in Christ
Gil Michel, *That Church Downtown*

Sunday AM – Our Future: Freedom in Christ/New Wine
Hannah Gronowski, *Generation Distinct*

Sunday PM – Our Future: Freedom in Christ/New Wine
Tyler Hartford, *Evana Network*

Monday AM – Sent Out: Not Trading New Wineskins for Old Wineskins
Wes Furlong, *Evana Network*

For more on Hannah, visit hannahgronowski.com

Registrations for the full week are available. If you wish to visit for a day or a single service, day passes will soon be available. To register, visit EvanaNetwork.org

Mission Minute

As a way to reinforce their 2021 theme of "Joy with God," Shore Church (Shipshewana, IN) created a series of free vinyl stickers for use on cars, mugs, computers and more. Encouraging members to take one for themselves and share another with their neighbors, the ministry seeks to spread the Joy of Jesus throughout their community and beyond. Thank you, Carl Horner, Nic Raber and the Shore Church community for this example of how to spread the Good News!

