

Interview Continued

Why did you take EfM twice?

After taking the Zoom class for Year 4 and experiencing learning and sharing across all four years and meeting people from around the country with different backgrounds and thought processes, I was hungry for more. My daughter had expressed interest in EfM and I told her about the Zoom classes with Ken Kimsey. (My daughter lived in Orlando at the time and had been unable to find an EfM class near her house.) She contacted Ken and he accepted her into his next year program.

I, in the meantime, was feeling that I had not learned enough about Year 3, The History of Christianity, and thought maybe I should repeat it for my own edification. I then signed up for Year 3 with Ken's Zoom class. This time we had the same people as before, (policeman, nuclear scientist, Deaconate participant, the Air Force dependent in Germany); but we also had added a pig farmer from Michigan, a college professor from Tennessee, an ecologist studying the Amazon in Brazil, a lawyer in D.C., an aerospace engineer and me... a very diverse group! I felt that I got so much more out of the exchanges of ideas that I decided to repeat years 1,2, & 4, hence finishing a second set of 4 years. During that second series, my husband became very ill with Non-Hodgkin's Lymphoma and Leukemia and died in 2021. I found the group to be very supportive and the discussions to be therapeutic.

A comparison of Zoom and in-person courses:

Both methods of presentation were good and well worth doing. I did find the Zoom to be more enlightening, but I do not know if it was the mixture of educational backgrounds & places, or that I was repeating the courses and delving deeper into the material. I also was experiencing life-changing events with the death of my husband. During this time, I also went on a second pilgrimage to Israel looking at the country and religious sites through the lens of EfM.

Which area of study did you most take to mind and heart?

This question is very difficult to answer. I guess it was the History of Christianity since this was what spurred me to repeat Year 3. (I also have to say that I thought there was enough material in Year 3 to be a 2-year course on its own.)

What would you tell someone who thought 4 years was too much of a commitment?

I would repeat the things that were said to me when I expressed these thoughts myself. I would say that they could take one year and see what it's all about and decide if they wanted to continue. Also, I might recommend the new one-year "overview". I do not know much about the contents of the new one-year course. This is something about which I need to read and learn.

Say a word about the new curriculum that marks the 50th anniversary of EfM:

Just as I related in the previous response, I have not had an opportunity to examine the new curriculum. In just looking over the textbooks in the Cathedral Bookstore, I see that two of the standard textbooks have been replaced: the Collins book on the Old Testament and the MacCulloch book of the History of Christianity. Again, I need to read and learn about these changes.

Anything else:

When I first enrolled in EfM (back in 2014), I thought I was getting into an in-depth Bible study, but I quickly found EfM to be so much more than that. EfM reshaped my thinking. I learned so much about the Bible, History, Theology, and most of all about myself. The self-reflections, spiritual autobiographies, and other exercises and studies lead me to a fuller understanding of Christ's mission. It led me to join Daughters of the King and made me feel the need to reach out to others to spread God's word. Hopefully, by helping to coordinate the EfM program, I can fulfill this desire to help others increase their understanding.