



Graceland

CBCSD Newsletter #33
July 17, 2022

"But the land you are crossing the Jordan to take possession of ... is a land of the Lord your God cares for; the eyes of the Lord your God are continually on it... (Deuteronomy 11:11-12)

In this issue, we continue discussing "Actions to Renew" within the church, introducing the new CBC ministries as well as sharing more about breakthroughs in ministry, testimonies for how God helps the church, and the brothers and sisters specifically leading a "renewed and transformed" life. Additionally, North Campus has a new place and time, and new ministries like NextGen and "Community Engagement" have become part of Main Campus. We hope that you will be inspired to be continually renewed by the Lord and glorify His name!

Actions to Renew II

NextGen Ministry at CBC Interview with Andrew Poon

By Emily Xu

Despite the negatives of the pandemic, God has worked out many changes for the better. One of these is the birth of NextGen, a ministry catered towards young adults. In this interview, Andrew Poon shares the origin and mission of NextGen, and the ways in which the Holy Spirit shaped the ministry and guided its leaders. (Responses edited for length and clarity.)



NextGen Opening Ceremony

Q: Andrew, could you please start by giving us a brief introduction of NextGen? What is it, how was it formed, and when did it start?

A: Certainly. Gloria, my wife, and I have been part of the Central Campus youth program since its inception. About 2 years ago in April 2020, a few students from UCLA, Berkeley and UCSD were back in San Diego due to the pandemic and they did not have a

place to worship and fellowship. So, we decided to form a college fellowship program for them. We started the fellowship with 6-7 college students. I want to give credit to my nephew Joseph Poon, who has been a faithful youth advisor at Central and was attending UCSD at that time. He has been instrumental in the launching of our college ministry at Central Campus. That's how it was started.

Andrew in Opening Ceremony



As time went on, we saw that God brought in several nonbelievers. This was quite surprising to us! Even when we had regular bible studies, those nonbelievers continued coming. So, we set up a core team of 6 people to help run the college fellowship program. I am very grateful for

them because they genuinely were willing to stick it out through the growing pain phase. Beginning September 2020, we started meeting in our house for a more consistent fellowship location. After a while, God continued to bring non-believers to our fellowship. In January 2021, we were averaging more than 20 people attending including 8-9 nonbelievers. We had a great time studying the book of Colossians. The Holy Spirit was leading us, and people enjoyed our gatherings. The core team met every week to pray and plan events under Joseph's leadership. That was the formative period of our college fellowship.

In summer 2021, I started having a discussion with Pastor Albert Lam about our college fellowship. Pastor Lam shared his vision of having a CBC-wide college fellowship. At the time, there was also a college fellowship at the Main Campus. Pastor Lam, Pastor Justin, and I had a few meetings, praying for God's guidance for whether it was the right time to have a joint college fellowship. A couple months later, Pastor Lam proposed we merge both college ministries into one. For the past few months, the CBC Council and Pastor Lam have been praying and discussing the need to form a NextGen congregation, consists of young adults and college students. I believe God had started to lay the groundwork for the NextGen congregation since early 2020.





NextGen_Advisors&Core

In September 2021, we birthed Hearth Fellowship, a UCSD Christian club which is part of NextGen. This was led by Nicholas Dai and Michelle Hwa. We are now an official UCSD Christian club where we can have activities on campus. Hearth Fellowship is not just for UCSD students; it is part of NextGen ministering to

young adults and college students. This is yet another important step for our NextGen ministry.

When we started two years ago, we did not know how this would turn out. While there were several churches in San Diego with strong college programs, I believe the Holy Spirit has been working in us and showing us His grace and mercy for His people. One thing is for sure – the Holy Spirit planted the seed, watered the ground, and continued leading us in spite of COVID challenges.

After many months of prayers and discussion, the NextGen congregation was launched on January 9, 2022. Pastor Lam gave a great message and blessing for this momentous event. NextGen is now officially a congregation for young adults and college students at CBC. The NextGen Sunday worship service is at 10:45am at Building 2.

Q: What's the mission and vision of this ministry?

A: NextGen ministry is modeled from the book of Acts 2:42-47. Our mission is to reach out and equip young adults and college students with the gospel through discipleship while impacting our communities with love, joy, and good deeds. Our vision is "a vibrant Acts 2 community impacting the world with the gospel."

At first, we didn't know exactly how God was going to lead this ministry. But we continued to maintain our mission which is to minister, equip, and disciple the future generations at CBC. We wanted to provide something different based on our target age group. During our challenging times, I was in awe of God's miraculous providence, where He provided co-workers for the NextGen (including Bowen Ouyang, Ezra Fu, and William SooHoo). Our Hearth Fellowship gradually became a college and young adult fellowship. Beginning Jan 2022, I started sending emails to all CBC pastors seeking additional coworkers. As always, God provided us with Pastor Agnes Chung as a NextGen Ministry Assistant. She is currently pursuing a PhD program in Marital and Family Therapy. She has many years of experience in youth ministry. In March 2022, we saw the need to solidify a young professional ministry as well, as God started to send few of them our way. One thing is clear: God has been preparing, providing, and equipping CBC with leaders as He is bringing people to join NextGen congregation.



Q: What's your core group?

A: The Core group are the student leaders of Hearth and NextGen. They plan and take care of everything, including worship, food, outreach events, and Bible study. Our current Core consists of Nicholas Dai, Michelle Hwa, Jasmine Jin, Michael Poon, Stephen Shen, and Daniel Chen.

Q: How about your meeting time and place?

A: Our Fellowship meeting time varies quarter by quarter as we adjust to the students' school schedule. Currently we are meeting on Thursdays 7 P.M. in Building 2 at Main Campus, serving the entirety of CBC. We also have been inviting high school seniors from Main, Central, and West campus to come on Sundays for worship and Mondays for fellowship.



Q: What would you like to say to our audience at CBC?

A: We want to intentionally disciple the NextGen members so they will be the light and salt for their community and become a model for our youths. Thank you very much for praying for us. We are in need of more co-workers in various areas (including Audio/Visual, providing rides from UCSD, providing snacks, setting and cleaning up, and discipling our college students). If God has put this ministry into your heart, we would love to have you partner with us.

For more information about this ministry:

CBC NextGen Worship and Fellowship Time and Place:
cbcnextgen.ctcin.bio

Andrew Poon's email contact: andrewgloria@gmail.com ◆



North Campus is "back in Business!"

By Pastor William Fu

On another typical sunny SoCal Saturday morning, the moving crew at North Campus finally got to embrace the long-awaited daybreak of a very atypical church relocation! Everyone's heart was filled with joy and happiness as they skillfully packed various items stored at the previous church location and moved to River Family Church, which has now become the new home for our Sunday worship.



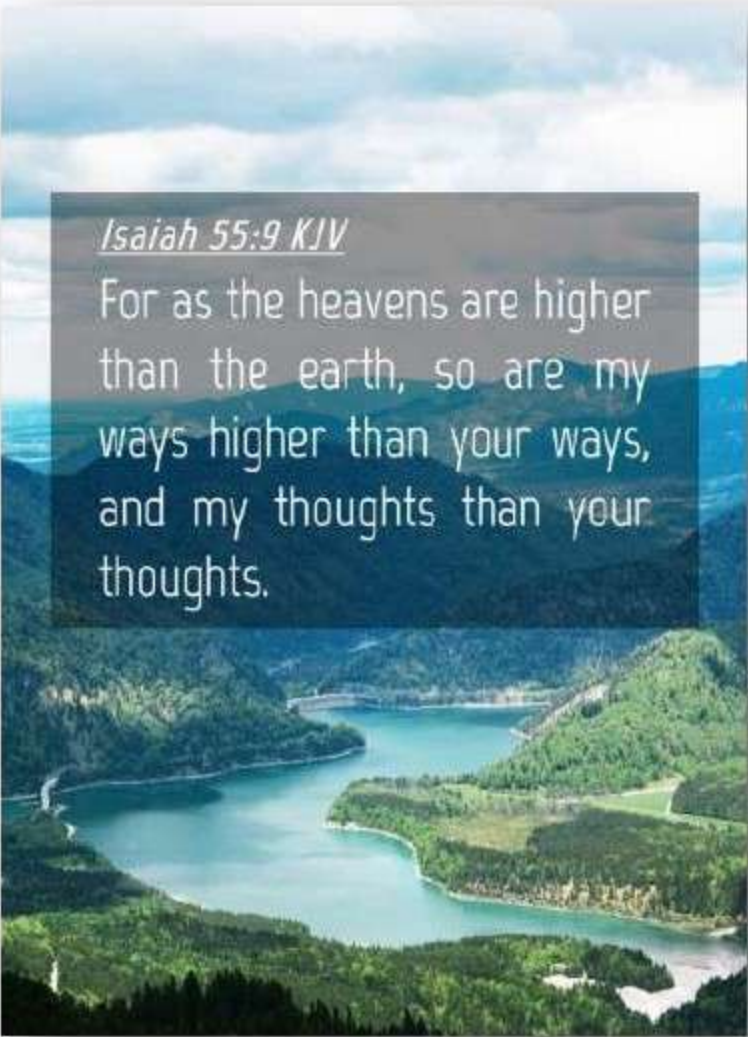
Moving Group



The 13-year history of North Campus is filled with blessings like what David described in Psalms 65:11: "You crown the year with your bounty, and your carts overflow with abundance." When North Campus was first established in 2009, God made Valley Bible Church home to our Sunday worships at 3pm every Sunday. When that venue had to be sold to provide funds for church ex-

pansion, God performed another miracle and made New Community Church of Vista home to our 2pm Sunday worship. At the end of 2020 when Covid was still in full swing, this venue was offered up for sale to accommodate their church mission. A new committee was formed in the beginning of 2021 to help identify a new church location. This committee was tasked to find out if we could go back to on-site worship after July 4 at the current location and was also expected to network with various churches, Christian schools, and charter schools in the vicinity to hopefully lease a space for worship on Sunday mornings. For a third time, God extended His merciful hand and made on-site worship a reality at 1:30 PM at New Community Church of Vista. However, we were not able to make any progress securing a space for Sunday morning worship. Like what David had experienced and described in Psalms 62:5: "Find first, O my soul, in God alone; my hope comes from Him."

The congregation at North Campus has been praying long and hard for a venue that can accommodate Sunday morning worships, yet



Isaiah 55:9 KJV

For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.

“God’s ways are higher than our ways.” With the sale of New Community Church of Vista and the need for on-site worship, we were compelled to pray even more earnestly. God reminded me of His faithfulness through a sister’s testimony of how she was able to miraculously find her mom’s tiny hearing aids in the grass by the roadside. God also led me to get in touch with a pastor that I met only once three years ago when I visited a store owned by a brother. Indeed, “God’s ways are higher than our ways!” The pastor (Matt) I got

in touch with told me they happened to have been praying for someone to lease their space on Sunday mornings as their church has been conducting Sunday worship outdoor in the garden for a long time. We visited the venue 5 times with different brothers and sisters and prayed in the sanctuary to confirm that this was indeed God’s doing. This was further confirmed when Pastor Matt and his wife Amy told us in earnest that “the relationship between us is not like that of landlord and tenant, but reciprocating and supportive Church families dwelling in God’s territory.” With the help of the Holy Spirit, they accepted the rent amount we proposed without any hesitation.

The North Campus spent the whole month of March in prayer and at least one brother or sister would

pray for a smooth move and transition. We were able to have a Sunday morning worship on April 3 for the first time in 13 years!

Pastor Matt’s wife Amy greeted every brother and sister from North Campus by the entrance to the Sanctuary. Even more people showed up on April 17 for Easter worship and the celebration of both the 13-year anniversary and the relocation. Praise God, North Campus is “back in business”, just like Isaiah 55:12a proclaimed, “You will go out in joy and be led forth in peace.”



Easter Worship



Community Engagement

By Ben Tse, Cantonese Congregation

Due to the pandemic, our normal social lives almost came to a complete pause starting spring 2020. All church gatherings and Happiness Groups turned to online meetings. How could we keep the community engaged when we couldn't even see people in person? How could we serve our community? Yet the Community Engagement Ministry was able to provide an environment with harmony instead of pressure, where friends, colleagues, and neighbors could connect through a variety of activities and build relationships. Those serving the church enjoyed teamwork, established outreach platforms, and connected the church with the community.

When Pastor Lam and Pastor Edward shared this vision of community engagement with the deacons, we knew there was a need for this ministry. Through different talents, resources, time, and creativity from brothers and sisters, we encouraged and organized everyone to serve, so our neighbors would have a chance to hear about the gospel and know that Jesus loves them. We hold the principles "love God" and "love your neighbor" and through these, encourage everyone. "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind; and, love your neighbor as yourself." (Luke 10:27)

At the beginning of the year, we used "ministry of the fishpond" as a metaphor. I shared the following little poem at the Town Hall meeting at the Cantonese Congregation.

*Roads need not be far; the presence of determination
gains the distance.*

*Friends need not be many; open-hearted conversations
make it work.*

Rice need not be plentiful; some small dishes invite all.

*Seas ought not be deep; the existence of the Holy Spirit makes
all exuberant.*

This is a humble fishpond; the only ambition is outreach.

Although we may not know many, there is no fear of deception.

Freedom flies in our laughter, there is no need for rigidity.

Trust lies among us, cultivating our unspoken rapport.

We can tell jokes, sing songs.

There is no trouble in clashing, or pressure to perform.

*We gather for outings, meeting for basketball
weekends.*

*Someone says, "Bosom friends in the fishpond,
My Best are our neighbors."*



We tried different activities, like line dancing; Sports Ministry in the parking lot; one-on-one Q&A on taxes; collecting clothes, blankets, and medicine for the House of Ukraine; helping people in need, etc. Among all these, line dancing drew many who are fond of dancing. Brothers and sisters came to build community and for exercise, building physical strength. Meetings are on Monday night at church. Averagely 30 people attend, including many new friends. Everyone is filled with joy and many good relationships have been built.



Donation for Ukraine



As the pandemic is getting better and better, our ministry of community engagement continues to find and try new ways to help and serve communities. We not only help others, but also create opportunities for brothers and sisters to make use of their talents. We find new opportunities in this new norm. Many things are not in our plan, but the Holy Spirit delivers me to see God's plan. This is magical. All glory to God!◆

Actions to Renew - Re-establish In-person Happiness Group Gatherings

By Spring Happiness Group, Main Campus

When Covid ran rampant, how did two Happiness Group (HG) co-leaders - Wenzhong Zhao and Edcon Chang, become determined to accept and overcome numerous pandemic difficulties to re-establish in-person HG meetings that lasted for two months? Here is an excerpt from the interview:

From the Hearts of the Co-leaders: More Prayers, Experiencing God's Care, Protection and Presence

➤ **Wenzhong and Jenny Zhao** (participants of all six sessions of HG)

Because of the pandemic, the previous three HG sessions were all online gatherings. We felt that it was difficult for most of the seekers (BESTs) to open their hearts, and it was equally difficult for the co-workers to establish a relationship with them. Therefore, for the Happiness Seminar of the fifth HG session, we invit-

ed all the BESTs to come to our house to have a live viewing party. Everyone ate, chatted, sang, and watched the testimony of Suzanne Z. Shu. It was a very warm and joyful scene, and everyone was reluctant to part. We were moved by how well the gathering turned out and decided right away to open our home for in-person gatherings for the sixth session of HG.



➤ **Edcon and Alice Chang**



We regretted that the online HG gatherings felt somewhat distant for the BESTs during the past several sessions of HG. We missed the intimate interactions we had during in-

person gatherings before the pandemic. When Wenzhong and Jenny shared how they were moved to host in-person HG gatherings, we were more than happy to give them our full support. Seeing the spacious venue provided by Wenzhong and Jenny, how the co-workers were blessed with confidence and that the potential BESTs were also very willing, we were convinced that this was God's beautiful will.

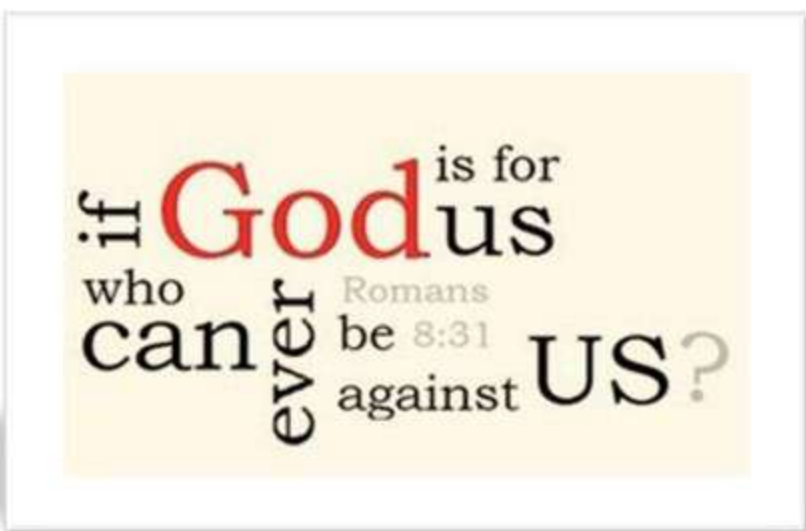
From the Hearts of the Co-workers: Despite Full Plates and Limited Time, the Grace of the Lord is Enough to Serve Happily

- **Mingle Lee** was a "Happiness Baby" from the first session of HG. She is busy with her work at Qualcomm, as well as with taking care of her husband and daughter at home. But she still served wholeheartedly in HG and was even responsible for coordinating dinner preparation! She was a bit tight on time but was very happy to serve.

**HECTIC
BUT HAPPY**



- **Lydia Shi** was also a “Happiness Baby”. She was not used to speaking in public. She was therefore surprised that she was not scared when witnessing at HG, because she felt the Lord’s presence. Distance decreased when meeting face-to-face, and the feeling was more intimate. Although Ben and Sandy both work and have three energetic sons, they have participated at every session of HG. “It could be challenging, because I have to help cook dinner and also prepare gifts for the BESTs, but I am very happy to serve.”



- **Chunxuan Ye and Rebecca Cheung** were both worried when they were invited to be co-workers. “It’s not that I was afraid of COVID, but of being rejected. I was also worried about my lack of ability.” However, everyone had a good time together with delicious food and happy interactions; more bitterly, time couldn’t always be properly allocated, and more sourly, some of the BESTs did not accept Christ.

Worries About COVID:

- **Jenny:** I was full of confidence and joy for the in-person gatherings. But when I saw more than 30 adults and children gathered at the first meeting, I started to worry because the pandemic was still rampant. I had only one wish in my heart: peace and safety for the eight-week HG! So, in addition to praying fervently for the BESTs’ salvation, we also prayed every day for the health and safety of our entire HG family. Four weeks into HG, my daughter was



invited by her good friend to an overnight birthday party. There were three children in total. When my daughter came home, she learned that one of them had COVID, and she felt uneasy and helpless. What would happen to the fifth week of HG? All I could do at that time was to hold God’s hand and to open my mouth to pray for His help. Thank God! My daughter tested negative. While being grateful, I was also reminded that during HG, we need to avoid going to crowded public places. Protecting oneself also meant protecting members of HG. We also encouraged everyone to wear masks after meals. Thank God, all was well after eight weeks!

- **Mingle:** Worried about whether COVID will affect the invitation of BESTs.
- **Chuck & Jane Chang** were invited to accompany an acquaintance BEST. At first, they were a little worried when they heard so many adults and children were attending. After the first gathering, however, they were glad they had joined. Although preparing two dishes every week for HG was a bit challenging, the warm interaction at HG was very worthwhile and motivating.



Conclusion:

- Every leader and co-worker is willing to continue to participate in the next HG.
- Everyone experiences more prayer and God's faithfulness and protection.
- **Wenzhong** encourages everyone to do their best when they are moved, and to learn to rely more on God even in times of crisis.
- The biggest breakthroughs **Jenny** experienced were in urgent and vigilant prayers. Asking God to bless the whole HG family with peace and health is an essential part of everyday prayer.
- **Sandy** reminds everyone to prepare a script for the testimony.
- **Edcon** suggests praying more and having faith in God's plans. He is thankful for the opportunity to work with a group of like-minded brothers and sisters; it's truly a lot of joy.
- **Rebecca:** Don't fear, just believe. ♦



God's Great Work at Evangelism Explosion III Training

By Yan Li, Central Campus

"For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways," declares the Lord. (Isaiah 55:8) Our Lord has a blueprint in his heart that will unveil itself as we walk with him, step by step and always with perfect timing.

Last spring, CBCSD Central Campus held its first Evangelism Explosion III Training. A decade had zoomed by since it had the last training event. I was one of the lucky trainees. When I committed to the Lord more than ten years ago, I was attending a Seventh-day Adventist church; therefore, I wasn't really sure about my own salvation prior to this training, not to mention evangelizing to others. After I completed this training, I not only was assured of my own salvation and eternal life but also was able to bring friends and family to God through 20+ hands-on training/visitation sessions.

I brought the training material with me to China last June after the conclusion of my training. When we presented our "five loaves of bread and two fish" to God, He paved the way for the training program in China. I experienced how amazing our God is as I was getting the training materials ready. Of all the random printing shops I could have walked in, God led me to one owned by a Christian! I ordered 30 copies of the materials before anyone signed up and that was the exact number of Chinese trainees registered. There were also 6 trainees in the U.S. 5 group leaders (Brian Wang, Xiy-ing, Fang Wan, Kathy Zhang, and me) from the Evangelism Explosion I training became the trainers for Explosion II. We joined our efforts in our walk with God, complementing each other's skillset,

and supported each other in every way possible in fighting this spiritual war. Praise God! We were able to complete 109 visitations during Explosion II. 85 people we visited decided to believe in God and of those, 15 were reiterating their beliefs from before. 20 people were baptized virtually and only 27 people have not decided yet.




The Evangelism Explosion II training session was indeed very fruitful! We got another 17 graduated group leaders, 6 of which reside in the U.S and have already committed to serving in Explosion III which is scheduled to start soon. Another 9 newly minted group leaders will devote themselves to Explosion IV which is geared more towards trainees in mainland China. We also got 3 newly graduated trainers from Explosion II who will be doing the teaching for Explosion IV. Praise God Almighty! May all the glories be to Him !



We are currently in the throes of getting things ready for Explosion III in North America and Explosion IV in China. Brothers and sisters, the spiritual war is already on! When we carry out the great mission and spread the good news to all nations, God will perform miracles along the way and the Holy Spirit will come upon us and empower us to be the witness of God's beautiful work. ♦

A.T.N.T. -Build Christ-Centered Fellowship

By Michael Hsu, Main Campus



God speaks to us in Hosea 4:6, "My people are destroyed from lack of knowledge. Because you have rejected knowledge, I also reject you..." This verse has revealed to us modern-time Christians the important part "learning" plays in our spiritual growth.

In order to help the coworkers better understand God's will and to also serve Him better, trainings on fellowship ministry were conducted in the beginning of this year and lasted for quite a few months. From the outset, Pastor Gong laid out a four-pronged approach with the acronym A.T.N.T. that stands for Activity, Team Building, New Blood, and Training. Some brothers and sisters may have never heard about this acronym before, yet the principles behind these letters are mentioned quite frequently in the Bible. It summarizes the gist of how God builds up his disciples and serves as a quick roadmap for brothers and sisters to follow.

If our church is likened to the body of Christ, our fellowships would be the skeleton that supports and prepares God's people for works of service so that our spiritual home can be built up and strengthened. Ephesians 4:12-16 describes the fellowships as supporting ligaments that join the whole body together. If one part becomes ill,

the other parts will suffer too. Therefore, we should not take fellowship ministry lightly. On the contrary, we should emphasize the training of fellowship which will directly impact the health and foundation of our fellowship ministry.

Sunday worships aside, fellowships are where our spiritual lives happen. We are Christians 365 days a year, not just 52 days. When Jesus Christ was on earth, He spent time with his disciples every day and called upon them to become a team to carry out the great mission and reap the fruits of the good news. One prerequisite of such successful ministry is the healthy fellowship Jesus built. Healthy fellowship leads to healthy outreach ministry. On the other hand, an unhealthy fellowship may not be able to provide the nutrients needed to strengthen people's faith and may even turn people away from their beliefs. What a scary thought! That's more reason for fellowship training so that we would know how to serve according to God's will and not our will, as well as avoid doing busy work only to find that it's not in line with God's will. This training is a great reflection of the love and protection from our church family.

The "new blood" approach was included in the fellowship training. Emphasis was placed on recruiting and developing new coworkers. The growth of a church is likened to our body that needs a constant supply of new cells. In the Bible, Paul discipled Timothy to become his successor. We should model after Paul and find our own Timothys.

A.T.N.T was such a fun training program. If the opportunity arises, please attend as well; it equips you with so much knowledge and is by no means regrettable. ♦



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<https://graceland.cbcsandiego.com>