

MAC News

Leading Men to Live a Life of Significance in Christ

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Lean Not on My Own Understanding

Sometimes, my one-on-one meetings really take my energy. I get frustrated when the men I meet with aren't ready to trust God. It sometimes makes me lose trust in God. I wonder if God is willing to show Himself to this man in a way that is so obvious that the man can't help but surrender.

Even when I can see how powerful God is at work in someone, like when a man makes the decision to follow Jesus, I hesitate. I know first-hand that he will be facing adversity in the days and weeks to come. I've experienced this enough in my own life where I make a decision to lay my burden at the cross and I expect that God will just release me from the difficulties and trials.

Do you know what I mean? Have you felt this way?

It can be really difficult to keep saying "trust in the Lord" week after week after week. Especially when it doesn't feel like it's getting any better.

It's during these times that I make myself embrace Proverbs 3: 5-6; "Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understandings. Acknowledge Him in all your ways, and He will make your paths straight." Like many of us, especially the man mentioned above, our backs are up against the wall. It's hard to trust God because He doesn't seem to be meeting my expectations. But if I wait humbly on the Lord and just trust then I start to see things differently.

But, most of us don't want to be told to trust and wait.

I'm walking with a man who has lived off his savings for the past 18 months and it's out, with nothing on the horizon for the future. Another is struggling to believe that there is any hope for his marriage to mend. In situations like this, sitting still and waiting is not something that comes easy to me, or the men I meet with. Read any of the Psalms and you will quickly see that it takes great strength to wait and trust. Though its through this waiting and trusting that you see God is molding, shaping, and sharpening our core. And then I'm grateful that my lack of understanding did not interfere.



I thank the Lord for continuing to use this Ministry in making disciples.

- Pat

**Merry Christmas and Happy
New Year
Love, The MacPhersons**

A Note from Bridget's Heart

"Many waters cannot quench love, nor will rivers overflow it; If a man were to give all the riches of his house for love, It would be utterly despised." Song of Solomon 8:7

Pat and I celebrated our 12-year anniversary at the end of November. Our anniversary was the Sunday after Thanksgiving. Pat forgot. Well, that's not really true. He remembered around 12:30 PM when he was in a meeting at church. He came home and apologized for forgetting. It was okay with me. Really.

You see, I'm a happily married woman. I truly believe that God has blessed me with a great marriage, and the perfect partner in Pat. Don't get me wrong; he does things that bug the daylights out of me. I'm sure that I return the favor in equal measure. But, for the most part, I am sincerely joyful when he walks in the room.

I was telling Pat how I felt and really trying to figure out why I felt so strongly about our marriage. Not to be rude, but I told him that I didn't think that it was specifically because of him or anything that he does or doesn't do. Pat understood. I thought that it might be that I just have low expectations for a marriage; therefore making it easy for our relationship to meet those expectations. That can't be right either.

More than anything, I think that God wants me to be content in my marriage. He wants me to delight in my husband. This is His gift to me. And, equally important, I accept that gift from God.

My marriage is just one of so many examples of the gifts and blessings that God has bestowed upon me. There is nothing that I will find under our Christmas tree that is worth more.

Men Abiding in Christ Ministries

Pat MacPherson
PMB #104
1000 Whitlock Avenue, Suite 320
Marietta, GA 30064
Phone: 770.655.1711

****If you prefer to receive this newsletter via e-mail, please notify me at pat@macministries.net**

MAC MINISTRIES IS CALLED TO SERVE GOD BY:

- *Partnering with churches to build sustainable ministries for men.*
- *Discipling and coaching church leadership teams to develop a vision and purpose for intentionally growing their men.*
- *Launching and developing environments where relationships can be fostered with each other and with the Lord.*

MINISTRY UPDATE

- **FUNDING:** I want to thank you for your part in helping enable this Ministry to serve. Your faithful giving is instrumental in sustaining this Ministry. I am excited about the new opportunities ahead of us for 2010 and ask that you continue to support this Ministry financially.
- Continued needs: HP Model 96 & 97 print cartridges for office printer; postage stamps; copy paper; and gasoline vouchers. Portable Overhead Projector needed for upcoming seminars/speaking engagements.

GOD AT WORK THROUGH MAC MINISTRIES

Over the past four years, my family and I have endured some of the greatest spiritual and professional challenges of our life. Though we have confidence in God's calling as we pursue our work in ministry, the stress can be overwhelming. When things get rough and my coping mechanisms are not as they should be my wife has one piece of advice. "You should go to lunch with Pat."

As a prayerful supporter of MAC Ministries, I am aware of the impact Pat's larger programs have on the body of Christ. My work affords me the opportunity to speak to ministers from different churches and I hear first hand testimonies of the change in the culture of men's ministries within congregations. I have seen large groups of men gather for the discipleship that is fostered in MAC. This ministry enjoys success in all of its programs and endeavors large and small.

But when you say MAC Ministries to me, I am always drawn back to that table where Pat sits across from a brother in Christ and offers his wise counsel and accountability. Men too often shy away from the personal connections that we desperately need. Whether for reasons of pride or fear, it can be difficult to look to the man next to us and say, "Brother, I need some help." God is faithful to fill those needs in our lives and for that reason He has placed a special calling on Pat.

I can't explain why I'm so comfortable with him. I have thought about it quite a bit since he asked me to write about what MAC Ministries has meant to me. Perhaps it is my certainty that all he wants is to see me abiding in Christ. The successes and failures of my life as measured in this world are merely a part of a greater story where God is working to draw me to Him, and that is the lens through which Pat works to understand the lives of the men that God sends his way. Pat's goal is to encourage us to put God first and trust that our Lord will take care of our lives. It is long term thinking at its best, and in a world where we are all judged superficially more often than not; it is a vision that we could all use more.

My wife is the person other than God who loves me most, and when she knows that I am struggling she is the one that reminds me that working with Pat helps. She is right, and my personal and professional ministry are stronger because of the work that Pat does. Make no mistake, Pat is working for the kingdom of God at those tables, and it is work that is desperately needed.

Jay Watts
Vice President of Development & Communications
Life Training Institute

Men Abiding in Christ Ministries in action!

- Christian Leadership Concepts every Monday morning at FPC Marietta
- **January 9-10** Overnight Retreat for small group.
- **January 15** New CLC small group launches.
- **February 27-28** Eastminster PC men's retreat
- **April** Gringo Soccer Camp, Monterrey, Mexico