

MAC

Discipleship! The heart of MAC Ministries

by Pat MacPherson

"Salvation is free, but discipleship costs all you have."

This is a quote that is repeated throughout my Intentional Discipleship and Intentional Leadership classes. It was shared with me one time long ago, I can't even remember who it was, as a quote from Billy Graham. Unfortunately, I can't even prove that Mr. Graham is the original source, however I like the tension that it can create among the many folks that I have had the pleasure of spending time with over the past 10 years.

I am currently in the process of wrapping up an Intentional Discipleship class at Roswell UMC and two Intentional Leadership classes, one at Marietta First UMC and

News

MEN ABIDING IN CHRIST MINISTRIES

modeling + multiplying discipleship

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10
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Eastminster Presbyterian Church. Both of these classes spend weeks discussing the word "discipleship" because of the ambiguity of the word.

For example, just defining the word "discipleship" seems to take several weeks. This is because so many times it is thought of as an "event" as opposed to a "process". The "event" thought process seems to quickly identify discipleship as the same as participating in a Bible study/small group or one's attendance to Sunday morning worship.

To examine this though process more

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closely, I usually ask those in the group, "is the average person in Sunday morning worship interested in growing their faith?"

Once we move past the discussion on what or who is the average person, I usually hear a similar response across the multiple groups that *continues next page*



Above: Pat with Tod Miller and Bill Watson delivering gifts for three adopted families (11 kids) at our alma mater, Bells Ferry Elementary School.



Right: Pat and Roberto meeting with the Eduardo Elizondo, CEO of Criotec, discussing the medical clinic. Just one of the many relationships that God has provided during the construction of the medical clinic.



Team meeting with Casa Samuel at the Los Vientos hotel.



Pat meeting with members of the San Pedro Rotary Club in Monterrey. Another blessed relationship that God has brought to Casa Samuel.

MAC Ministries' Intentional Classes *by Mark Kramer*

I heard about Pat's class on Intentional Discipleship through the Men's Ministry at Roswell United Methodist Church (RUMC). It was offered to us simply by email and I almost immediately said yes I want to participate. I have been passionate about discipleship for years (we are supposed to make disciples of all nations!), but not disciplined by anyone and certainly not as focused on making disciples as I'd like to be. I'm not sure why that is. Perhaps the church (in general, not a specific one) is too focused on programs and not processes.

So, I participated in Pat's class on Intentional Leadership last winter/spring and signed up for the class on Intentional Discipleship this fall. The way Pat leads is perfect for me. Rather than preaching or lecturing, Pat teaches through a small group discussion in which I feel very comfortable sharing my thoughts and hearing those of the others. Pat gets the importance of the process and the danger of just another program.

The main lesson I learned during the Intentional Leadership class was that to be an effective leader I need to serve and learn to wait. What? Are you kidding me? I want to do, do and do some more! But Pat taught

me the importance of "be"! Like "be still and know that I am God." One devotional we covered was "Waiting is not a Weakness." Isaiah 40:31 says, "But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength..."

We are about to finish our class on Intentional Discipleship. I have learned so much! For example, discipleship is a process. It should not become a program. I know I'm being repetitious, but I'm doing so intentionally for emphasis! I had lunch yesterday with a college sophomore. As he prayed he thanked the Lord for the mentor I've been to him! I was filled with joy as I listened to how he is pouring into the lives of 8th grade boys and is being poured into by an older college student who is his mentor!

Another lesson has been that I should not focus on growing my personal ministry or the church's in numbers or depth, rather I should focus on PBR (no, not Pabst Blue Ribbon), but prayer, the bible and relationships and trust God to do the rest! This is another example of focusing on "being" versus "doing".

Pat has done a great job of teaching us/ reminding us that small groups, one-to-one relationships and personal growth are much more effective in growing the church than



Mark with 2 week old granddaughter, Willow

programs intended to grow the church.

I encourage each one reading this to get involved in one of his "intentional" classes.

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I work with ... and that is "yes, the average person in church, wants to grow in their faith ... or at least wants something out of going to church."

But when I change the question to "does

the average person in Sunday morning worship interested in becoming a disciple or a follower of Christ?" there seems to always be a hesitation before answering. And after more discussion, I usually receive the same answer and that is "no, the average person doesn't want to become a disciple or follower of Christ."

I share this with you because this answer reflected exactly where I was 13 years ago, before an individual started meeting with me for breakfast every Tuesday morning. Through these meetings, I started to get a better understanding of what is a disciple, and why the sacrifice associated with being a disciple was not a debilitating sacrifice, but a sacrifice that ushered in a "new" life.

In the Intentional Leadership class, I ask "when did the "Disciples" become disciples?"

Again, the discussion that results is moving however I have discovered different trains of thought on this. The arrived answer is usually, "that the Disciples became disciples when they agreed to follow Christ (or when they answered His call to follow Him)." Now, clearly we see that they were not perfect in this following nor did they stop growing, however, they were disciples who had entered into the process of discipleship.

The Disciples that we get to know in the Bible were intentional and decisive in following Jesus. It was not a default decision that they made because they saw the opportunity that was before them. It's not easy being a follower of Jesus, but it is very doable and my desire to be used to spur that man in the pew next to me to be more intentional in their decision to follow Jesus is at the core of MAC Ministries. For it's a relationship and similar to your most important relationships, it takes energy and perseverance to position that relationship to grow you.



MacPherson family at North Georgia State Fair, Sept. 2015

Chairman's Update by Scott McLain

"Growing men in their relationships with Christ is the visible result of the work God is doing through MAC Ministries, from Marietta to Mexico." I pulled this quote out of an old planning document for the Ministry, but it is as true today as it was three years ago when that document was written. Despite Pat's consistent presence in Mexico, his more recent curriculum development and delivery, and the many "one-on-one" discipling relationships Pat maintains, MAC Ministries remains a "ministry of availability." The support structure of the Ministry allows Pat to be available in many different ways. But my favorite facet of the Ministry is simply Pat speaking the Word of God directly into the hearts of men (and women). As the prophet Isaiah declared "my word be that goes out from my mouth; it shall not return

to me empty, but it shall accomplish that which I purpose" (Isaiah 55:11).

Whether you are a current financial supporter of MAC Ministries or not, will you consider participating in our year end Matching Fundraiser? All new and unpledged donations in the month of December up to \$20,000 will be doubled! Although the Ministry benefits from many faithful donors that give throughout the year this fundraiser provides a significant portion of the Ministry's annual income. I hope that you will prayerfully consider helping to make this fundraiser a success this year.

And may your Christmas be Merry and your New Year safe.

*Scott McLain
Chairman of the Board
Men Abiding in Christ Ministries, Inc.*



At the beach: Scott, Kayla, Leah, Cameron, and Tricia

10 Years with MAC Ministries by Scott Ebert

As we approach the 10-year anniversary of Men Abiding in Christ Ministries, I took the opportunity to look back at the impact God has had through the Ministry. I have been a member of the Board since its inception and I have had the opportunity to serve as Treasurer, Chairman, and now as a Director. When Pat began to contemplate God's calling to this Ministry, he asked several individuals to join him in launching the Ministry and to serve on the Board. The initial group included Lee Radford, Jim Ford, Rob Roux, Andy Tatnall, John Merrick and David Hines. I had accepted Christ as my

savior later in my life, and as Pat walked with me in my early Christian journey, he asked if I would join the Board to assist in the launch of the Ministry. As the opportunity to serve the Lord and the Ministry arose, I initially was hesitant as I was being called outside my comfort zone. However, after prayer and discussions with Pat, and with a chance to share the gifts the Lord had provided me, I agreed to serve the Ministry.

Over the 10 years, I have reflected upon the impact that God has had not only on the Ministry, but also on individuals, groups and churches in our community and the people in Renacimiento, Mexico. In all ways, God's hand can be readily seen impacting these individuals through the Ministry. Our dependence on God to provide for the Ministry, and dependence on God to guide the direction of the Ministry have been a testament that, "God is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine..." The Ministry's dependence on God has significantly grown over the past 10 years. Many Board meetings have ended with prayers seeking God's direction for the Ministry, and in each circumstance, God has been faithful. This has been a significant growth experience for me – handing our prayers, concerns and questions to God and seeking His direction rather than relying singularly on myself.

While where the Ministry has invested its

time has changed over the 10 years, what has not changed is that the Ministry's purpose is to serve the Lord wherever God has led it. While at its inception, we contemplated and prayed about the direction, Men Abiding in Christ has always been a "ministry of availability." The strength of the Ministry is the ability to follow the direction God provides. In 2005, the Ministry's focus was on serving individuals and then eventually groups and churches in the Atlanta area. Today, in addition to these areas of service, the Ministry is leading individuals to serve the Casa Samuel community in Mexico. In the Ministry's infancy, the Ministry's vision did not include serving communities outside of the Atlanta area, but that was not what God had planned. Wherever God has led the Ministry to serve, the Ministry has abided to God's calling. The Ministry's strength is its ability to meet individuals and groups where ever the needs are. In the words of the prophet Isaiah, the Ministry has answered God's call time and time again saying, "Here I am Lord, send me."

Providing the Ministry the opportunity to meet the needs that God has called has also been made possible by your prayer and financial support. The Ministry has been blessed by your support over a remarkable 10-year journey. As we head into the Advent Season, we prayerfully ask for your continued support to provide for the Ministry's unique position to go where God calls.



Scott enjoying the mountains

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Will you help us multiply disciples?

MAC Ministries is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization funded by individuals and churches who value this ministry in the community.

We invite you to participate in supporting this ministry through your financial contributions:

- online through Paypal at www.macministries.net
- Send a check payable to MAC Ministries at the address above

A Note From Bridget's Heart by Bridget MacPherson

Let us rejoice and be glad and give him glory! For the wedding of the Lamb has come, and his bride has made herself ready.

– Revelation 19:7

This October, I was blessed to be intimately involved with the celebration of two marriage events. The first was my parents' 50th wedding anniversary. And the second was the wedding of my best friend from college. Each of these celebrations was a true witness to the power of a God-centered marriage. The first, time-tested and the second, filled with great hope.

My parents, Joe and Mary, celebrated 50 years with so many friends and family just as it began – at church. As they renewed their vows, my Dad looked at my Mom in the same way I can imagine he did half a century ago – with a delightful kind of love that has helped them buoy many stormy seas. No one could have told them back then the ups and downs that they would endure. The one constant throughout, their anchor in a storm has been their faith in God. Their love for one

another is strengthened and held secure by the love of Our Heavenly Father.

Now my friend Kathy met Joe about nine years ago in Sunday School – yes, at church! I've known Kathy for almost 30 years and I can tell you, many prayers have been prayed for her husband Joe – even before we knew who he was! I know it's not always easy to be the single friend in a world of married couples. But Kathy always knew that God had someone special picked out just for her. She would say, "I'm one day closer to meeting my husband." As she deepened her faith in Jesus Christ, her dependence on His plan for her grew stronger. On a beautiful, blue sky Texas afternoon in October, God's plan was revealed as the Minister pronounced them

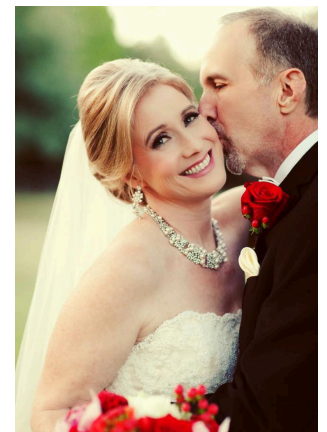
"Man and Wife."

As joyful as these two events were, I have walked side by side with friends who have struggled to repair a broken relationship only to end in painful divorce. Yet, I am still amazed at the faith that endures in the hope of eternal love given freely by a loving and merciful God.

Gratefully, we can all rejoice, no matter what box we check for marital status. For God promises that we will all be made new, given "fine linen, bright and clean to wear" for our eternal wedding supper of the Lamb!



Joe and Mary celebrate 50 years



Kathy and Joe, October 17, 2015