

MAC

Building Awareness

by Pat MacPherson

Building one's awareness of God is a major focus for MAC Ministries. It's part of the method that I commonly use in helping someone position their lives to respond to the invitation to "abide" in Christ. Much of my time spent with others is used to position others to become aware of their need for Christ which usually starts with just building awareness.

Recently, I had a conversation with someone who for the past few months have been meeting with. It was a great reminder of how God uses MAC Ministries. This man can attest that building his awareness of Christ, has allowed him to see a change in his inner driver (or heart).

Our conversation went something like this: "Pat, I keep wondering how long it will take until I get to the next level in my walk with the Lord?" My response came out before I could articulate an answer..."You're already there."

"I appreciate your encouragement, and I know that you've said this before, but I'm not seeing the results that I'm looking for yet." I replied, "Look inward for the results. You have a changed driver that I can see clearly."

Our conversation reminds me of something I read from one of my favorite authors, Watchman Nee. He shared that many of us are constantly praying to enter that room that is occupied by the Lord when in fact we're already in the room.

This is a common thought pattern with many men that I spend time with. This gentleman made an intentional decision to seek me out because he wanted to grow in his faith but did not know how to take that next step. What resulted was a commitment to meet weekly and spend time looking at Scripture and other readings to ultimately help him "know" the Lord better...not just "know about" the Lord.

To help explain what I see, I asked more questions to help him reflect on his journey over the past year. For example, I asked him

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about his prayer life. "How many times a day do you find yourself intentionally praying?" He said, "several" with a sense of excitement.

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Mexico Update by Pat MacPherson

Back in September, I had the joy of taking 22 people to Monterrey, Mexico to host a soccer camp for 5-11 year olds in the community of Renacimiento. Not only was it the largest group of folks that has ever gone with me to Renacimiento, but it was also the first time that a group of middle school and high school aged youth joined us...eight in all, including three of my own.

It was one of the most exciting trips in the past 6 years because of the energy of our youth and the anticipation of those (16!) who had never been to Renacimiento before.

Having my three children, Mary (12), James (13), and Liam (16) on this visit allowed

them to encounter the wonderful people of Renacimiento and enjoy the blessing of connecting with the people I have known for years. Several of the kids in Renacimiento immediately started asking James and Liam about hockey because I have been showing pictures of my family to them over the years. Amazingly, it took about 15 minutes for my children to quickly bond and engage with the other kids.

To give you a sense of the trip through the eyes of the youth, I asked my 3 kids to reflect on why they thought God had them go to Renacimiento. I'm excited to share their thoughts.

From Mary:

Since I was six years old, my dad has been going to Mexico. I would always see pictures of him from his travels and I'd always wonder what it was like to go there. So, in September, I finally got to go and it was an amazing experience.

From the moment I arrived, I knew that God had put me there for a reason.

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Mary and Yesi

Mexico Update, continued from cover

Immediately, I had a special connection with many of the children. When we would go out on the soccer field, there would always be a few kids sitting on the side of the field, just watching. Since, I'm not a soccer player, I decided to start hanging out with these kids. That's when I met Yesi, who approached me with an American football and motioned that she wanted to play catch.

Yesi and I became fast buddies. Although Yesi did not speak English (nor I Spanish), we quickly connected and over the next two days became close friends. I came to understand, what my dad has been telling me about relationships, that they are a gift from God. And Yesi was a gift from God for me and I'm eager to see her again when I



James and Jair

return. I am also aware that God may keep Yesi and I friends for a long time and possibly eternally.

From James:

God brought me down to Renacimiento to start relationships that will hopefully last a lifetime. As soon as I arrived, I realized this wasn't going to be a one-time trip. The unconditional love that the people at Casa Samuel showed me was truly incredible.

One of the reasons we went there was to bring joy to them, but I felt like they gave me more joy than I gave them. Especially through my friend Jair who I had been pen pals with since second grade. In September, I finally got to meet Jair face-to-face. It was such a blessing to meet him and we quickly became friends. I experienced joy and peace during those days with Jair that only our powerful God can bring us.

From Liam:

Going to Mexico helped me gain a better perspective towards life. The people that we met, have very little in comparison to what most of us Americans however they remain joyful because of their strong faith in God.



Liam and Michael

It also made me realize how fortunate I am to live in a real house, sleep in a bed, eat three meals a day, etc.....the things that I take for granted all the time are things that not everyone has the opportunity to receive.

Also, Pastor Eva reminds me of a Bible story where a woman is giving a small tithe compared to the larger tithing amounts given by the men in the church. Then Jesus shares that she is giving much more than all the others because she is giving all that she has and not giving from the overflow. Pastor Eva, who does not come from a wealthy background, devotes her whole life to the people of Renacimiento because God has put it on her heart to do so. We need more Pastor Eva's in this world!

Building a Living Faith by Bill Garvin

Pat invited me to participate in a bible study in the early spring of 2016 and have been attending weekly since then. Being new at Marietta Community Church, I was grateful for the opportunity to meet with other men from the church. Finding a place to connect with others within a church is not always easy, but this has been a great fit.

Why spend time with a small group of the same men each week studying a book of the bible one chapter at a time? Because I can't think of a better way to build a fellowship with believers who trust and share common experiences reinforcing our ability to grow as disciples in our relationship with Christ.

As leader of the group, Pat brings a presence to our time together which puts others at ease and generates a free and open discussion of the verses read each week. He also brings a living faith to the small group study which offers each attendee the chance

to interact and grow through participating and applying what has been discussed. What makes Pat so welcoming is his willingness to be a leader, but relate as a professional, a father, a husband, and a sinner saved by grace.

Pat is a respected friend who leads with authority from his knowledge of the bible and willingness to share his understanding gained through personal experience. He also helps remove some of the fear about speaking up during a bible study. He acknowledges each comment or question and keeps each member engaged by giving a chance to read a verse or bringing the text to life through personal experience.

Through the small group bible study Pat provides the opportunity for men to build a living faith in Christ through the study of God's Word.



Katherine, Bill, Jackie, and Abigale

Chairman's Update *by Scott McLain*

As the year 2016 comes to a close I realize I have served on the Board of MAC Ministries for close to a decade now. It has been a blessing to watch and discern God's will for this ministry that has branched out from relative humble beginnings in Marietta to activities in Atlanta and even Mexico. I was introduced to Pat, as a matter of fact, during the first "branch" movement into Douglas County.

While Pat has spoken in many churches of multiple denominations, and in multiple countries, my favorite part of the ministry is Pat's ability to meet with individuals, one on one. During this "one on one" time Pat is able to walk with individuals as they work out their faith with God. While Pastors that preach in front of thousands often garner much attention, it is in these personal relationships that a faith so often grows and flourishes. As it turns out, that while the ministry has certainly grown, it is still able to act small and a bit humble; I believe that is a good thing - a very good thing.

That is also why the year end matching fundraiser excites me. While it is true that this fundraiser provides a significant amount of the annual funding for Pat, more importantly it provides a unique opportunity to present the ministry to people that may not be familiar with the depth of the work Pat does. Some of these introductions lead to prayer opportunities, some to donations for the ministry, and some lead to deeper relationships. And all of these outcomes point to our need for dependence on Jesus, whose birth we are preparing to celebrate.

In this season of giving thanks I am thankful above all for our Savior, Jesus. I am also very grateful for those that have supported the ministry this year and in years past, both through prayer and through

donations. My consistent prayer is that God continues to provide for this ministry and that He blesses those that have blessed the ministry.

Wishing you a Merry Christmas on behalf of the Board of Directors,
Scott McLain
Chairman of the Board, MAC Ministries

Theo the dog, Tricia, Kayla, Cameron, Leah, and Scott.



Pat with Tod Miller and Bill Watson delivering gifts for three adopted families (8 kids) at our alma mater, Bells Ferry Elementary School

Building Awareness, *continued from cover*

"Three months ago, how many times a day did you find yourself in prayer?" "Rarely", he commented, "and six months ago, I would go weeks without thinking about God. One area of help that you have provided has been my awareness of God throughout my day. I now, find myself aware of God's presence on a day-to-day basis therefore I'm seeking Him more each day."

My friend is starting to notice that decision making (not just on the big things in his life) is different these days. He has seen a change in his approach to everything especially (and most importantly) to his relationships as a husband, father, manager, and child of God.

Again, building awareness is not the end-goal, it's actually, just the beginning, but it's

importance cannot be ignored when we're trying to reach that next level of growth. I don't always get to have these clear glimpses into the work that God is doing through this ministry, so you can understand the excitement that I have in getting the opportunity to witness an awakening!!

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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

"But in your hearts revere Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect"

- 1 Peter 3:15

This year I celebrated a BIG birthday. In the church, it would be called a "Jubilee Year." Pat invited friends and family from all over the country to surprise me throughout the day. He and best friend worked together to plan an amazing party. It was all I could have asked for – and all I had to do was show up as the guest of honor! I loved having so many of my dear friends and family in the same room at the same time. It reminded me of what heaven might be like.

At one point in the evening, one of my younger sisters spoke of all the ways that I inspired her as we were growing up.

Everything from being a good student, to experiencing a successful career and then going on to create a loving marriage and family. This was especially meaningful because I think that she is quite exceptional in all of these areas.

However, if there were one thing that I would hope I inspired in my sister, and all of my loved ones, it would be my confidence as a Child of God. I want people to be encouraged by my belief in Jesus Christ and moved by the light of the

Holy Spirit that shines from within me. My birthday wish is that all of those friends and family that surrounded me to celebrate my birthday would long for eternal life with God, Our Father in Heaven. The celebration would never end!



Celebrating Bridget's 50th birthday: Liam, Mary, Pat, Sean, Rose, Bridget, and James