

MAC News

modeling + multiplying discipleship

SPRING/SUMMER 2013

Discipleship in Mexico

Last month, I had the pleasure of taking my 20th trip to Monterrey, Mexico. This was not only the longest trip I had taken, but was also the largest group (18 in all) that has travelled to Mexico.

The trip consisted of three focus areas:

- Fourth Annual Soccer Camp for 150+ kids
- Second Annual Women's Retreat for 100 moms.
- Second Annual Handyman Trip which allowed our team to repair our friend Chino's home. What started out as a roof repair turned into a full-scale renovation for a home with dirt floors and blankets for the roof.

New for me on this trip was the opportunity to meet with the CEO of CrioTec, a Mexican HVAC company. The 15-minute meeting lasted 1 1/2 hours allowing us to share the vision for a community developed, organized, and sustained medical clinic that would serve Renacimiento and other like communities in the area. Upon learning of our goals, the CEO could not have been more eager to be a part of this mission and shared his gratitude for modeling to him the importance of letting God use us in providing for others. God has used this opportunity to open the door for other meetings in Mexico in our search for needed funding to complete the medical clinic.

I closed that day in fellowship with 15 men from the communities of Renacimiento and Santa Catarina. I started this group last September and I am happy to report that they are now meeting regularly on Friday evenings for Bible study. This is a unique group since they are comprised of two different socio-economic groups coming together as one to spur each other on in their walk with Christ. This type of gathering is typically counter-culture in Mexico.

I encourage you to read the enclosed article from Pastor Eva Zapata of Casa Samuel as well as the article "Hope for the Future" from the June 8, 2013 edition of the Marietta Daily Journal which can be accessed at www.mdjonline.com.

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Mexico Missionaries with Chino and family

Ministry Partner by Pastor Eva Zapata

In 2009 Pat arrived in the community of Renacimiento in Garcia, Nuevo Leon, Mexico and was touched by God at the sight of the situation in which the families of the community found themselves. He got closer and asked a question that opened the road to hope. The question was: How can I help Casa Samuel? The answer was prayer and on that day we met a man committed to the work of God, who, along with prayer, took action.

Pat has connected with men of all ages in Mexico, from children to adults, in relationships of friendship, partnership, and counseling that reflect the genuine love of God. This has impacted us the most, since through his example they have come to know the gospel of Jesus Christ. The image that Pat reflects in Casa Samuel is one of a father or big brother and many people in Renacimiento haven't known that love. They have been abandoned, abused or orphaned. Their parent's addictions or absence through search for work have limited time to be with their family.

The biggest impact that God has had through the life of our friend Pat, is with our volunteers. When he arrived our team of volunteers was formed only by women. Now, a group of men are committed to Casa Samuel and to the gospel of Jesus Christ. This has opened doors for us with local government officials and business people, who, inspired by Pat's example, have decided to support Casa Samuel.

Today 1,986 people in Renacimiento benefit from Casa Samuel and more than 500 in La Esperanza. Along with the word of God, we share food, values classes, and arts and crafts classes. Soon we will open a clinic that will benefit more than 5,000 people. None of this would have been possible if Pat hadn't asked the question: How can I help Casa Samuel?

Thank you Pat, my brother and friend. And thank you to your wife, Bridget, and your children who have shared your love with all of us.

MAC Ministries in Small Groups

In the 8 years of MAC Ministries, I've started more than 20 small groups. There has never been a group that I was more anxious about than the one I started this past March. This group of 12 – 15 men have been a part of my life for at least 30 years! I have known seven of these men since first grade and all of them since sixth grade. All of us graduated together from Sprayberry High School and what a joy it has been to see God bring us back together into fellowship. As one of the men said in our first meeting, "when I received a phone call from Pat (the first time in 20 years) inviting me to be a part of this group...although I had some reservations... I knew that this would be special. I had done everything else with this group but go deeper together in our

relationships with the Lord."

In one sense, we have all picked up right where we left off when we were 18; the friendships couldn't be more special.

But we have also realized the gift that has been given to us to become a part of each other's lives again. It has been humbling to take these relationships to another level. As Chip Kanour writes below, I (too) am truly blessed.



Small Group Community—25 years in the making!

Believing or Following by Chip Kanour

I have truly been blessed my entire life. I have parents that have always shown love and support and a wonderful sister whom I respect and love dearly. I have been surrounded by friends that have always made me a better person and have been there for me through thick and thin. These friendships continue to grow today, even at the age of forty-five and after thirty-eight years of knowing each other! God has kept me in good health, except for the extra weight I am carrying, and that is definitely not his fault. When I thought it could not be any better, God blesses me with a wonderful and patient wife and two incredible kids. You would think after receiving all these blessings that my relationship with God and his Son Jesus Christ would be strong. Unfortunately, that was not the case.

Two years ago I lost my seventeen year old nephew to a self-inflicted injury. I think about him every day and I miss him. I also hurt every day for my sister, brother-in-law and nephew that are trying to make sense of this tragedy. When this happened, it affected me so, that I had a hard time finding any meaning to life. I had hit bottom and was going through the motions of everyday life and just trying to cope. I could not

find much meaning in any day to day tasks.

I have known Pat Mac my entire life. It was about six months after my nephew passed that my wife ran into Pat and his family at Chic-Fil-A. Pat asked how I was doing and she said, "Not Well." Pat called me that same week and asked if I would go to breakfast with him. I agreed to meet Pat and we talked like the old friends we were and shared a few tears as well. Pat listened to me and shared some of his thoughts and added any comfort he could. Pat would introduce scripture to me every week that he believed would help me. As we continued to meet and catch up, we would read scripture along with other Christian authors. While doing this, the same recurring theme seemed to come up. Yes, I attend church, but not on a regular basis. Yes, I pray every day. However, I needed to look honestly at where my personal relationship with Jesus Christ was. It is a struggle every day, but with the Lord working through Pat and letting us get together to share and discuss, I am in a better place.

Pat Mac and I have been meeting now for almost seven months. At the end of last year, he mentioned getting our old high school buddies together to start a

Bible study group. After two months of phone calls and e-mails, Pat was able to pull it together. We have a group of 10+ guys that I look forward to seeing every week. It has been a blessing to see how the Lord is working through them and their families. We discuss our daily struggles and how we can work through them and how to be the Spiritual Leaders of our homes. We are reading the book Man in The Mirror by Pat Morley and discussing scripture that coincide with the chapters we are reading. We also discuss how Christianity is under attack maybe more than ever before in our society. That is why it is more important than ever to meet to strengthen our relationship with Christ and do his work.

It has taken me awhile, but I believe I am finally starting the relationship with Jesus Christ that I need and want. The Lord working through Pat and his ministry is making this possible. I am proud of what Pat, through the ministry, is accomplishing with men on a personal basis, through Bible study groups and the work in Mexico. It is a true blessing. It has made a difference in my life and I am now committed to Pat and MAC Ministries personally, spiritually and financially. I encourage everyone to do likewise. It will not only help you personally, but it also strengthens our entire community when we do the work of the Lord.

Being Intentional with Discipleship

From January through April, I facilitated the *Intentional Discipleship* class at FPC Marietta. The class consisted of 17 leaders in the church who met weekly on Monday mornings. Using a discussion platform, these men allowed me to challenge their view and approach to discipleship, as well as introduce them to new filters/lens on how to apply discipleship to their own lives and to the church.

I couldn't have asked for better engagement and discussion. In my absence, the last meeting was hosted by one of the pastors at FPC to

observe the results of our class. It was clear that the approach to *Intentional Discipleship* opened the door for growth in two areas: 1) applying the Great Commission to all areas of our lives, not just in the four walls of the church and, 2) understanding that no one is exempt from the Great Commission as the commission is for all!

Many thanks to Neel McSwain, who shares his personal experience with *Intentional Discipleship* below.



Intentional Discipleship Class at First Presbyterian Church of Marietta

Intentional Discipleship and the Challenge Ahead

by Neel McSwain

As you may relate, I am busy; my time is a precious commodity. Like many men, I am constantly getting pulled from so many different sources. Pat has been reaching out to me for the last 8 years, but there never seemed to be time for anything more than a quick breakfast or coffee in the church hall. In December, Pat invited me to a class he was teaching EVERY MONDAY at 6:30 AM for 12 WEEKS! I looked for an excuse, trying to again protect my time but something told me to say "yes". I believe that something was the Holy Spirit.

The class, called *Intentional Discipleship*, was facilitated by Pat using the book *No Man Left Behind* by Pat Morley, the founder of Man in the Mirror. This book is essentially a resource on how to start and sustain a thriving, disciple-making men's ministry. That ministry must be about first making disciples. Pat was very emphatic reminding us that Jesus did not tell us to "just" be disciples but to make disciples...How did I miss that?

I gained knowledge and insight that will surely help me on my faith journey and

hopefully allow me to be a contributing force in revitalizing the men's ministry at my church. I have to say that what I thought I knew about men's ministry was at best, all wrong. As an elder at my last church, I was charged by the pastor with starting a men's ministry/group. I wish I had had the tools available from this class then. It was doomed from the start and quickly became a Saturday morning breakfast club with a touch of prayer and a quick devotion. It didn't last. Starting a men's ministry is not quick nor is it easy. I learned from the book and from Pat that it has to have support from the pastor, a cadre of leading, Godly men, each doing a lot of hard work, and up to 10 or more years of time.

"You cannot make a disciple out of a man you do not have a relationship with."

I would say that the most important thing I learned was that a men's ministry, in order to make disciples, is all about relationships. That is, one-on-one relationships. You cannot make a disciple out of a man you do not have a relationship with.

We also have to have a real one-on-one relationship with God. Pat likes to say that we must get to truly know God not just know about Him. That means disciplined reading of the Word and prayer. This really hit home with me as my Bible reading and prayer life are not where I would like them to be.

Finally, I now face two challenges: first, I have to personally keep moving down the continuum to a more "deep," mature relationship with Jesus Christ and second, I have to help the leading men in my church take the next step and not let the "high" we got from this class subside before we put it to practice.

For myself, I need to read God's Word and pray with more discipline. I need to develop more one-on-one personal relationships with the men in my church. With our men's ministry, we had our first meeting with the intention to revamp a ministry to **all** men. One that will walk with **all** men, help **all** men grow, help **all** men know God, and build manly relationships for the Glory of God.

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We're on the web!
macministries.net

MAC Ministries Fundraising
 by Scott McLain, Chairman

I consistently give thanks to God for all of our ministry partners. Some give because they see a real need for husbands and fathers to be devoted disciples of Jesus. Others are passionate about the missionary work the ministry is doing outside Monterrey, Mexico. And, still, others simply love Pat and Bridget and want to support their family as they follow God's call on their lives. No matter how we may worry, wonder or doubt, God provides.

Be assured that the MAC Ministries Board consistently attempts to discern God's will in fundraising opportunities. As some or any of these come to fruition I will keep you all abreast of them. But in the meantime I continue to give thanks for the ongoing support of our partners and am praying for more of them.

Ongoing Ministry Needs:

- 96,97 and 901 HP print cartridges and printing paper are needed for the MAC office!
- Postage Stamps
- Gas Cards (Sams Club or QuikTrip)
- Office supply gift cards
- NIV Study Bibles for gifts.

A Note from Bridget's Heart

At this stage of my life, most of my conversations surround the activities of children. Recently, a friend shared with me how they were searching for different education options, as the schools in their neighborhood were not providing the academic rigor that they feel their children require. I understand. We all want "the best" for our children, whether it comes to education, friends, activities or behavior.

Pat and I often reflect on what is best for our children. Sometimes I find, it is hard to know how to discern what is THE BEST opportunity for our kids. And I often ask myself HOW do we evaluate what is best for our children? Is it the school with the highest test scores? Is it the team with the most number of wins? Is it raising

the child who never fails to call me "ma'am?" And what if our child isn't at "the best" school, or on "the best" team? What does that mean?

This got me thinking: how do we as parents provide the best chance for our children to love the Lord our God above all things and love our neighbors as we love ourselves? Shouldn't that be our highest priority—above school, sports, and friends? How do we evaluate our children's spiritual superiority? *Ouch. That sounds really presumptuous.*

Is it when our 7 year old claims Jesus as his Lord and Savior? Is it when our 14 year old professes faith through confirmation? Or are these kids just following the leader—doing what is

expected of them? These are certainly outward signs that indicate our child has accepted the "faith of their fathers." But even some of these children go astray.

I can only tell you what we continue to do for our children. We place them in God's care. Every day. We have to do it each and every day with every decision we make for them. Our children will not know how much we love God—above all things— unless we are showing them how to do it. Even when we don't feel like it. Even when we don't really like "them."

The world is happy to show you what is best for your children. Just make sure that you are the one showing your children what **God** thinks is best.



Mac Kids at Cousin Nancy's Wedding



Mary Em and James in Spring Musical—Annie



Pat and Bridget on Galveston Beach