

MAC

The Grand Opening! by Pat MacPherson

Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding. Submit to Him in all your ways, and He will make your paths straight.

Proverbs 3: 5-6

This verse was the basis of the words I addressed to all who gathered back in April for the Grand Opening at the Casa Samuel Medical Clinic (Casa Samuel Salud) in Renacimiento, Mexico. Although the Clinic has been running seven days a week since July, 2016, we wanted to gain a few months of operations before hosting such a big and wonderful event.

I chose this verse with the emphasis on “trusting the Lord” and “not leaning on my own understanding” because it gave guidance to our decisions over the three years it took to construct this medical clinic.

It was August, 2013, I had just arrived in Monterrey with my pastor to show him the foundation for the clinic and introduce him to the Casa Samuel team that we had been partnered with since 2009. As we approached the construction area, my jaw dropped as the foundation was almost five times larger than what I expected. Somewhere along the way, a decision had been made to NOT build a small cinder block building with two examination rooms, but to build a much larger two story clinic containing eight examination rooms, a training room, a triage room, a pharmacy, ambulance garage and entrance and many other needed resources.

Needless to say, the vision for this clinic had changed. Standing there looking over the construction site, I experienced a peace and conviction that God had bigger plans for this community and that I needed to trust God and not lean on my own understanding. I was excited!

Well, that was until later that night after

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dinner when I was informed that all the seed money had been invested into the foundation and that we needed an estimated \$200,000 to complete the clinic. This was difficult to process. I felt like a huge weight was placed on my shoulders, yet Pastor Eva had good news in that two meetings had been scheduled for the next day in Monterrey with folks who wanted to hear about this project.

I went to bed that night

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Ribbon Cutting at Grand Opening at the Medical Clinic at Casa Samuel

Developing Intentionality by Pat MacPherson

“I’m embarrassed to bother you with this, but I didn’t know who else to talk with. Something has been bothering me lately that I’ve found hard to articulate. I want to make some changes in my life, but I’m not sure where to start. The primary change needs to be in how I think about God. Well, maybe not so much on how I think about God, but just thinking about God. I’m embarrassed to say this because I’ve been going to church all my life but it really doesn’t seem to impact my day-to-day.”

“I’m becoming more and more aware that I don’t even think about God that much. In fact, so many areas of my life—especially at

work, don’t reflect what I confess to believe. It seems like I have this personal agenda to keep God out of certain areas of my life, but deep down, I know that’s not what it’s about.”

“Does this make sense?”

“Yes, it does!” These comments are not uncommon in the life of MAC Ministries. In fact, it is the very reason God calls me to ministry. The men that I meet with, whether in small groups or one-on-one, are responding to the Holy Spirit at work in their life.

It’s usually a subtle and evolving awareness that builds over time and one of the greatest dangers with most men, is the tendency

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The Grand Opening, *continued from cover*

repeating: "Trust in the Lord, and lean not on your own understanding."

By the end of the next day, two organizations had committed to over \$100,000 in capital and resources to help the building. It was such a blessing to see God at work in these meetings building unity and momentum in the vision that started to unfold before us that day.

For the next two years, the Lord directed our paths as people from all over Monterrey got involved. Legal experts, government officials, and two local doctors and clinicians (the staff), and the Sierra Madre Rotary Club of Monterrey all became part of the network that enabled the clinic to open.

As the clinic started becoming whole, we knew it was time to host a public celebration. The planning was done, a contingent of folks from Marietta, GA travelled to Monterrey over Spring Break to say thanks and kick-off a "new beginning" at Casa Samuel Salud.

On that day back in April, over 100 guests including local and state dignitaries, local church leaders, local and city wide business



Thank you to Sara Bretch for translating.

owners, and the citizens of Renacimiento gathered to celebrate the building of the clinic in which the community worked together to create. It was overwhelming and exceeded all my expectations.

So, why did it exceed all my expectations, especially after watching God for two+ years build a network of people throughout all corners of Monterrey to build this clinic?

It's hard to articulate, but as different people spoke and shared testimonies about the process that we all experienced through the construction of the clinic; as different plaques of recognition were awarded; as we enjoyed fellowship at an elaborate celebration dinner at the home of the



Jorge Garza and Pat

President of the Sierra Madre Rotary club; there was one thing that all of us knew, "That the Lord was with us." Genesis 37:50



Pat speaking at Grand Opening

Developing Intentionality,

continued from cover

to suppress the awareness, as opposed to responding. Fortunately, we have a God that loves us too much to just let us brush Himself aside.

It's usually in this "building awareness" stage that I get connected. My goal is to help the other person recognize the source of this awareness so they can build a platform from which they can respond.

I have met with men that become subtly aware of their need for dependence on God.

At other times, the men I meet with have experienced a catastrophic, life-changing event that brings them to their knees at the foot of the cross. Whether it's a gnat flying around their head, or they've been whacked by a 2x4, my goal is guiding men to turn the event into a process of developing intentionality.

I recently connected with a man who was experiencing an onslaught of difficulties. His reaction, his fallback, was to compartmentalize these struggles, and then create an action plan to fix each one.

While that method had worked for him

before, because of the growing awareness of God's call on his life, he actually needed to go deeper and uncover the bigger problems. What he discovered was a desire to become "honest" in every area of his life.

As adults, this is not an easy thing to turn-around. However, developing intentionality to go deep with the Lord is always the starting place. The goal I encouraged this man to pursue was to rediscover Jesus on His terms and not on the assumptions and old habits of this man's past. We began down a path that would help him come to "KNOW" God as opposed to just "KNOW ABOUT" God.

Chairman's Update *by Scott McLain*

In my personal walk I have found nothing more effective for discipleship than a (very) small group of people devoted to seeking Him, together. My pastor recently made a comment to me on this point that resonated with me. He remarked that he had found nothing to be more effective in advancing one's walk with Christ than one on one mentoring – an even smaller group!

There are two significant challenges to widespread one on one mentoring throughout His church. First, individual mentoring is somewhat grassroots and organic by nature. Intellectually we tend to create "programs" to spread our strategies through larger groups of people, but mentoring is very non-programmatic! Second, being a mentor can be somewhat intimidating to many. "Am I knowledgeable enough to mentor?" is a common concern. Finding enough mentors for all of the growing disciples appears to be a daunting task!

I recently moved forward despite these concerns and started meeting with a friend that desires to grow in his walk with Christ. I was immediately comforted with the confirmation that our time together is helping to advance me in my journey as well as him in his. I am sharing some knowledge and encouragement with him just as he is with me. And the Holy Spirit is guiding the entire process. What a relief that is!

One Biblical example of one on one mentoring comes from the letters of Paul. In those letters we read Paul's instructions and exhortations to his young pastor protégé, Timothy. An example in our midst is Pat's life work – meeting with men that desire to know Him a little better. While Pat is a modern day "Paul" to many men, he has also filled the role of Timothy to multiple "Paul's" in his life; men that devoted some time to helping Pat grow in his dependence on the Lord.

The "formula" for mentoring does not have to be difficult. A good starting formula can be this – open your Bible, read it together and discuss it. In 2 Timothy 3:16 Paul implores that "all scripture is... profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness."

I have found my "Timothy" (who is also a part-time "Paul" to me!). Have you found yours?

Scott McLain
Chairman, Board of Directors
Men Abiding in Christ Ministries

The greatest encouragement that I can give to any of the men that I meet with is a focus to stay in a place that requires dependency on the Lord. Being reminded of our humility and the burden that draws us nearer to God is the path to take.

This takes intentionality. It is not a natural reaction for men when responding to the Lord. But it's the necessary response. It is not natural for men to be patient and wait upon the Lord, but it leads to "abiding." When we abide in God, in all areas of our lives, we achieve the peace, joy and abundant life that Jesus promises.

Developing intentionality, when awareness has given us a reason to pause, is my passion within Men Abiding in Christ Ministries. I can't do it alone, and most likely, you can't either. Therefore, I encourage you to pray and seek out relationships that spur intentionality.



Bridget and Pat at Bryce Canyon National Park



Children with GrandBob and Nana on July 4th on the Square!



Mary Emmalyn, Rose, Liam, Sean, and James in Zion National Park

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A Note From Bridget's Heart by Bridget MacPherson

But like the Holy One who called you, be holy yourselves also in all your behavior; because it is written, "You shall be holy, for I am holy."

1 Peter 1: 15-16

If you ask any parent to finish this sentence, "I just want my children to be _____," nine times of ten you'd probably get the answer – "happy." Now, this isn't a scientific survey, I'm sure there's a million ways to answer that question. I could answer it differently given the day, the child, the circumstances. Words like "clean" and "kind" and "quiet" also come to my mind. But when you think about what you want for your child's life, most parents would probably answer, "happy."

Early on in our parenting experience, Pat and I were taking a class with our small group, just trying to get a handle on the responsibility that God entrusted us with. One of the pieces of wisdom that stuck in my brain was the goal that we set for our children. It stuck with me because it goes against what the world tells us we should expect for

our children. Instead of answering the question from our perspective as a parent, think about God's goal for your child's life.

How would God answer the question, "I just want my child to be _____." Is "happy" the word that pops into your mind? Maybe. But is that what God tells us in the Bible – "Kids, I just want you to be happy." NO! He makes them build boats, wander in the desert for 40 years, drop their livelihoods to follow a stranger, even die on a cross as a sacrifice for the world. So how would God answer that question?

In the class we took, the facilitator suggested that a parent's primary goal for their child should be the pursuit of holiness, not happiness. In other words, as a parent, what can I do that allows my child be who God created them to be? What can I do to help my child pursue a life of holiness, a life set apart for God?

Here's the thing, I don't always know the answer for what action I'm supposed to take when it comes to raising our children, but I am certain of the end goal. When we are faced with what seem to be the really big decisions that we make for and with our children rather than ask, "Does it make you happy?" Try asking, "Does it make you holy – set apart for God?" My hope is that the answer becomes more clear, the discipline becomes more fruitful and that my child becomes more holy – not by my standards or the standards of the world, but by the standards of Our Father, who art in heaven.



Celebrating the marriage of Mora and Seth Walsh (Bridget's sister) in Zion National Park