



THE PRESS

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THE EPA CONFERENCE MAGAZINE FOR YOUNG ADULTS

HAPPY HOLIDAYS,...

So much has happened since our last issue. It's amazing how our lives are constantly changing- new jobs, new homes, and new additions to our families. Of all the things that have changed, I thank God for being the one thing that remains the same. He is always faithful and fair. And for some reason, he sees fit for us to be exactly where we are today. I was reminded the other day that it's because God's not finished with us, yet. I don't know about you but that makes celebrating the New Year so much sweeter.

In preparation for a more holy and Christ-like start to 2016, this issue seeks to encourage you to live a life worth lived, let God in at all times, and to faithfully and financially trust God. As you reminisce about the years past, remember to praise God for all He's brought you through and remain faithful because He's not through with you.

ENJOY,

Krystl Johnson -Editor

Letting God In

David Piltz || How well do you let God in? It's easy when there is time and no stress, right? But what about when you're busy, or stressed, or tired, or _____ well you can fill in the blank! I've learned that the times when I am the busiest or the most stressed are when I let God in the least. And it's in those exact moments that God desires to be the closest to me. Can you relate? Can you feel that in those moments God is standing right next to you with outstretched arms? **On Page 2** are five lessons I've learned in how to Let God in!

A Life Worth Lived

Aaron J. Smith || What have we done with manhood and womanhood? In a recent prayer-devotional time I utilized the moment to be in silence and gather a picture of the maturity for a Christian male in today's culture. It is riveting. Without a sociological and psychological study, one can gather information just from mere eyesight within stores, restaurants, and churches of how today's manhood is not what it is supposed to be. Usually, people will often say, "Like it once was". However, the 'once was' is not adequate to pinpoint of what it should be.

When we are growing in becoming people (men and women) of God, we often hear the voices of our childlike life. In a conversation from a father to his son about becoming a man, John Eldredge writes the following:

"Yes, I'm surprised how much I still do myself. It's embarrassing how often it happens, really. There was once a wholeheartedness that was ours, back in our original life in Eden, which our souls somehow remember. But because of the war, because of a thousand different moments of disappointment, shame, or heartbreak, we are not wholehearted. There are young places within us still, there is a boy within, and it is the boy who often feels overwhelmed by the new mountain in front of us"

-Killing Lions pp.153

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Is YOUR GROUP Coming?

This annual gathering brings together young adults across the conference for fellowship, discussions around young adult ministry, and to meet with God in the twilight for a Spiritual Awakening.



Date & details coming soon on
[facebook.com/epaccyam](https://www.facebook.com/epaccyam).

Letting God In

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Letting God In Is Your Choice and It's An Easy Choice!

What a profound lesson this is. In fact, it's so profound that I rarely think about it during my day. Why is that? Do you experience the same thing? For me, it's a statement of how casually I let God into my life unconsciously. I know God is there but I'm not consciously aware all the time, except during times of prayer, church services, or ministry experiences, when I consciously know God is there.

During times of stress or business I may focus on God, but I don't focus on letting God in. Why is that? For me it's because I think if I focus on God I am letting God in. But the reality is that to let God in means I have to become vulnerable and humble in front of God. Something that isn't easy to do. Can you relate? Instead of letting the stress and business overtake me, I need to take that worry and turn it into the energy of letting God into every second of my life.

My challenge now is to let God in all the time. What about you?

Focusing On God Instead Of Life's Issues Isn't that Easy!

How do you focus on something that you can't see or feel every second of your life? It's easy, however to focus on what you don't have – especially when it's things like money, time, people, material objects, etc. What I miss in those times of stress and business is that I focus on what I don't have instead of the blessing of God in my life that I do have.

What a simple thing to focus on – the blessing of God in my life. But how often do I focus on that? Not often enough. You?

Discipline Is Good – But What Does It Really Do?

Discipline is one of those words that tend to have many interpretations to it. For some discipline is the strict letter of the law, for others it's the experience of the situation. Either way, don't worry about what discipline means but worry about what it does for you.

From my perspective, discipline should provide you a chance to become habitual. Habits have been associated with peak performance in individuals and organizations. Habits are rituals practiced all the time. So the discipline of letting God in should be my priority.

My challenge is to create the discipline of letting God in fully every day. What about you?

Society Does Not Embrace Letting God In – So How Can I?

Being a Christian is just one aspect of living life in our secular world. As Christians we live in a society and world in which God is never the ultimate focus as we need to work, take care of ourselves, deal with our families, and have fun. Yes as Christians, we realize and live in a way that God is in all of our life's focus – but the simple fact is that society doesn't suggest nor support that! So everywhere we turn whether it's music, movies, the mall, restaurants, etc. society doesn't embrace God so it's a challenge to embrace letting God in! The challenge is regardless of the judgments, thoughts and feelings of others to focus and realize letting God in means fully living out the resurrection in daily words, thoughts and actions. I can forget that when I am stressed, dealing with work, bills and others who just do not see things the way I do. And it's in those times that it's the hardest for me to let God in.

How about you?

Challenging Ourselves for God Should Be a Daily Experience

The biggest lesson I learned about letting God in is the lesson of challenging me for God. No matter how Godly we think we are, our role in the church, or our bible knowledge it seems that everyone needs to challenge themselves for God. This challenge should be a daily experience and the challenge should change daily. Every morning I need to take a moment and reflect on the challenge for that day for God. For it to be a challenge for me it's going to have to be *me not giving up, focusing on God, creating discipline, and embracing the root of why I am a Christian.*

It's going to be a hard road with lots of mistakes – but I feel I am ready to being the journey. What about you? ❖



David is a Certified Lay Minister and the Young People's Ministry Coordinator of the Eastern PA Conference.

Want to connect with YPM? (814) 883-0118 || dpiltz@epaumc.org



God, Do I Trust You?

Tamara Wims || There are many ways to show your trust in God. You can follow the instructions found in the Bible, remain faithful during the difficult times in your life, and continue to live as a follower of Jesus Christ. I would like to share with you about how tithing is a way I show my trust in God.

The lyrics to a song by William McDowell say: "My life is not my own, to you I belong, I give myself, I give myself away". At times I have to remind myself that I am not my own. I live my life to fulfill a divine purpose and to please my creator. When making decisions in my life I use what I have learned over the years from messages, worship, and my studies. I have also learned valuable lessons from personal experiences. When I was younger I learned about giving, but now I can say from my own life experience, that my tithe is one way that I say, "I trust you".

My tithing says "God I trust you" and I acknowledge that you are my provider and my sustainer. Everything I have is because of you being at work in my life. You are the source and the common denominator of all of my blessings. For that I am grateful, humbled and in awe of you. There is no other being worthy of my trust.

The practicality of this article is that I acknowledge my earnings as something that God has blessed me with. I am a steward over what He has provided to me. In making my financial decisions I am mindful that giving to the up building and teaching of God's kingdom is of importance. There are numerous monetary responsibilities pulling at me, but if I believe that God is the very source of all that I have, why wouldn't I make it a priority to take a portion and give it to the spreading of the gospel? Sometimes the act of giving takes discipline and a strong will. We don't always have enough in the bank because tough financial times happen to everyone. But it is especially in the hard times that after I give, I am truly blessed. In those moments God reminds me of why I trust Him. He has never failed to provide me with what I am in need of. I know these words to be true: "It is more blessed to give than it is to receive" (Acts 20:35b).

A Life Worth Lived cont'd

I lived the life of complacency and being stagnant. *I made an art of uselessness.* The more I had become smug and dull about anything in life, the more I accelerated in becoming nothing. I saw mountainous visions of what I could be in life and wanted and desired the easiness of the swamp life (much like Shrek's first life). But why? It's easier to live in the swamp and make things somehow meaningful because you can alter what you perceive of it. A mountain is a different story. It stands tall and the world sees it. When you go for the mountain, people watch. When you go for the swamp, you can be king and it's easy to do it. For years now I've taken the time to be single in life because I desired to move towards the mountain and I wanted to stand on it and be able to proclaim not just to God that in my weakness He is most definitely strong but to those around me, I've made it. To the people in the swamp, it's much better. Our culture has simply forgotten the importance of singleness and exchanged it for the *pleasures* of singleness, not the life and mission behind it. Where purity, commitment, life-building are not primary.

In the recent years of life, *I've learned to make life an art of usefulness.* In God's sight we are truly never useless and the moments we spend in despair are always used for good. But compared to where God has brought me, I lived too much of life with lack of vision, no goals, and no evident fruit. As Wesley would say, "Have they fruit?" I had none. God used 'bad fruit' to be a witness but how much more could I be if I would simply live a life of *fruitfulness*?

I'm still journeying on the mountain and on a trek of finding who God has created me to be, the kind of man He's planned for me to be. There's days I look behind my shoulder and find happiness. I'd rather go to that lives in the swamp rather than the joyfulness on the mountain. I so want to place God within a box and take Him with me. But that's not how it works. I desire the place on the mountain where I'm a part of God's heart, not where I squeeze Him into mine.

Have you spent too many years at the dividing line between swamp and mountain? Have you journeyed backwards? Stop asking Jesus to be a part of what you want to do and be a part of what He's calling you to be (Eph 2:10). When you're asked the question: "Have you fruit?" Proclaim the ways God is working with and for you to make Him known and lending a hand to those who need it either by a soup ladle at a soup kitchen or a hand held of prayer and comfort. Make your life an art of usefulness where God's presence and light shines from the way you trek the mountainous vision He's given you. ❖

Have an announcement or something to share? Submit it to THE PRESS at youngadultministries@epaumc.org

Holiday Cafés

RESOLUTION MIXER

FRIDAY DECEMBER
4TH
8:30PM-12:30AM

ENON TABERNACLE
BAPTIST CHURCH (WEST)
230 W. COULTER ST
PHILADELPHIA, PA 19144

Open Mic, Food, Music, & Discussion

NEW YEAR'S EVE OPEN MIC

THURS DECEMBER
31ST
9:00PM-100AM

ST. DANIELS UMC
FD JONES CENTER
315 EDWARDS ST
CHESTER, PA 19013

2 Comedians, Food, Music, & Twilight Prayer



Waging War Bible Study is back to encourage you and equip you with tools to reclaim the life and relationship you desire to have with Christ.

In a presentation of the I AM Statements of Jesus, this new season will challenge the world's distortion of who Jesus is by using the truth written in John's Gospel to affirm that Jesus remains who he claims to be- not only in the scriptures but, also, in your life.

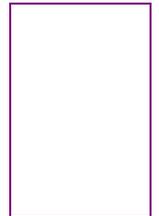
Ready to Meet God in His Word?

- Season 2's Library is now available at <http://www.epaumc.org/ministry/youngpeoples/>.
- For FREE COPIES of the CD & DVD contact us at youngadultministries@epaumc.org.



YOUNG ADULT MINISTRIES

UMC-EPA CONFERENCE OFFICE
P.O. Box 820
Valley Forge, PA
19482-0820



**Brought to you by:
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Chair: Aaron J. Smith || youngadultministries@epaumc.org

Mission: To create a sense of connectivity and community among young adults and to encourage the pursuit of a life of discipleship, as taught by Jesus Christ.