

OUT LIVING the Valentine season

That is why a man leaves his father and mother and is united to his wife, and they become one flesh. (Genesis 2:24)

This is the most powerful, amazing institution in the entire world. And even more amazing for me as a court hall chaplain is the joy of witnessing this miracle every week in Gwinnett County court halls.

Each couple (some with beautiful bouquets) I meet has a **unique story** of how and where they met. By my own personality I am just nosy enough as to how they both met. That really opens them up in smiles with a stranger they have never met. Then the privilege and joy of counseling and praying with them before they say their wedding vows!

So often I warn them there will be storms, physically, mentally, spiritually, emotionally, and financially. But for one reason only - to appreciate each other more keeping them huddled together till the storm passes by.

During this special Valentine month, **I want to share with you, my friends our 2017 Valentine's Day.** I felt so impressed to pen this while Nancy was whisked away to the x-ray room with double pneumonia at Eastside Hospital.

"Happy Valentine Day to you, my sweetheart Nancy. Today our new



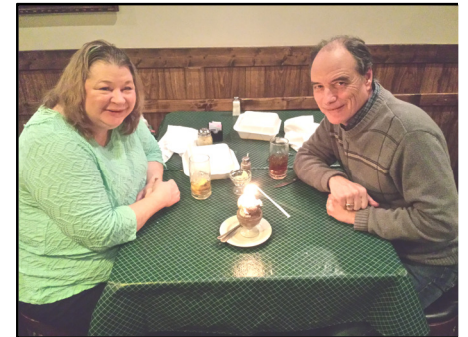
*suite 358 at Eastside Hospital fresh out of ER! While you are going for x-rays, I just wanted to tell my friends you are the **best gift ever to me** in sickness and health, richer or for poorer, for better or for worse, till death transfers us to heaven.*

These few flowers on your bedside table will blossom and shortly fade away, but your beauty will never fade to me. I am so sorry this hospital suite wasn't out best intention for Valentine's Day, but God doesn't mess up with any one of us even with your double pneumonia. I now realize more than ever before how precious every breath is.

So dear, I refuse to take your breath for granted, or mine, or anyone reading our newsletter right now. That moment last night watching you for every gasp of breathe at an 80 point oxygen was pricking my heart with a

*flashback of 43 years in our marriage. Oh, the brevity of life! Why do we intentionally expect another breath? Probably it is too many miracles back to back. You are the **BEST GIFT to me.**"*

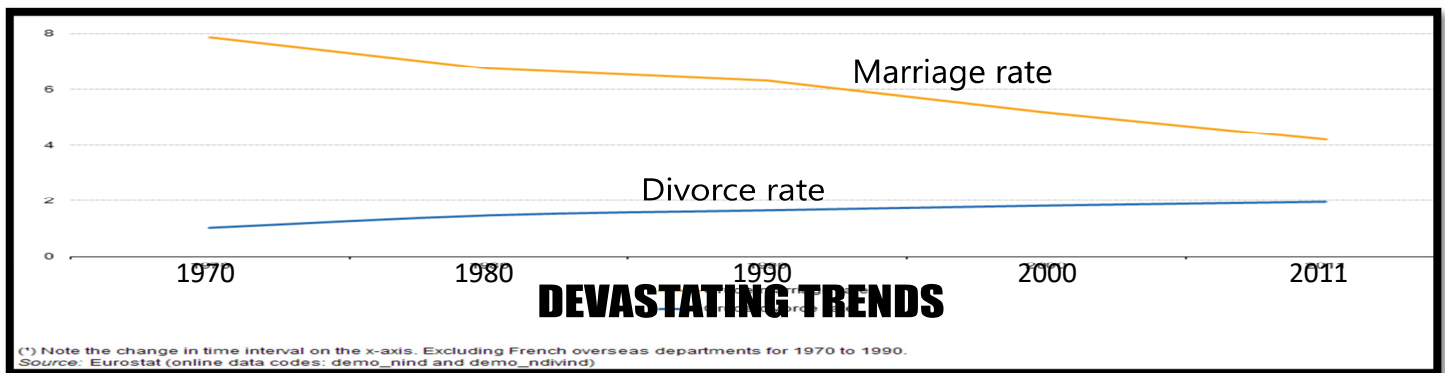
So our dearest friends, thank you for your prayers for my bride that God will heal her completely and reveal to us a fresh look at how fearfully and wonderfully we all are made.



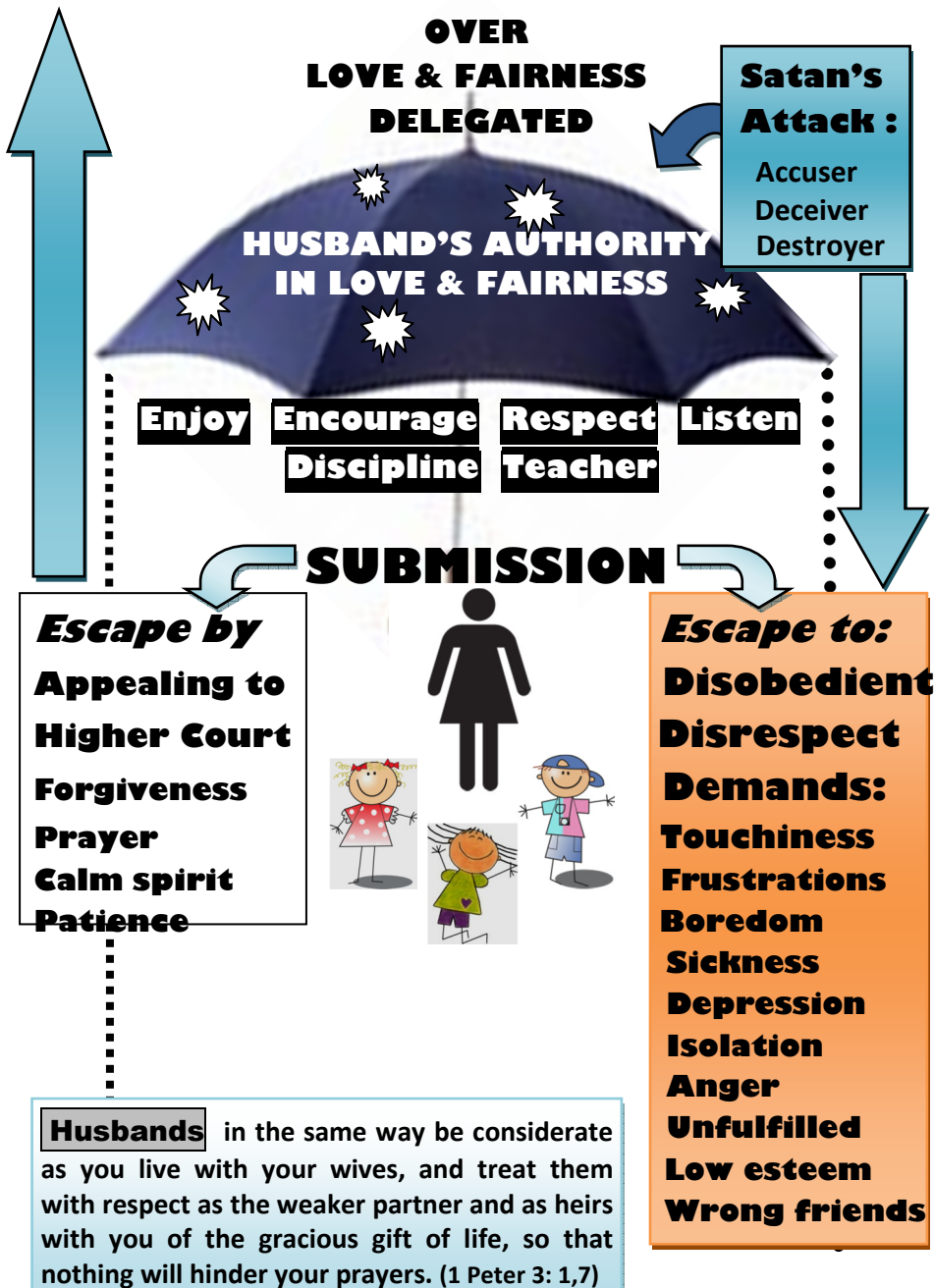
The biggest reality I face with couples at the court house is reminding them not only their vows of "I DO", but reminding them God is overseeing what no man can ever see, **"Why you say 'I DO'. Is it what's in it for me or what's in it for her!"**

Enclosed in this newsletter is my latest flyer designed to show couples God's perfect set up for marriage. With what I witness in our court halls, I had this gut feeling about the **devastating trends** against the institution of marriage. Satan **HATES** marriage. **He will twist it, compromise it or even get folks to ignore it.**

Marriage and Divorce rates, EU-28, 1970-2011 per 1000 inhabitants



God's Sovereignty and Authority



When you encounter families and couples struggling in their marriage, **please use this flyer** to help them see the big picture in their marriage.

God delegated to the husband his authority of LOVE and FAIRNESS. Satan hates this institution of marriage and is on an all out war against the family. Therefore his attack is to penetrate holes in his umbrella to eliminate Enjoy, Encourage, Respect, Listen, Discipline, and Teacher to his family.

The wife, as the responder, then has her choice to either escape by appealing to a higher court to God who designed marriage above her husband or escape to disobedient, disrespect or demands which in turn generates the this list to the left.

Satan's final attack against marriage is the epidemic of fornication. As noted to the chart above, the decline in marriages has significantly dropped. Couples have chosen to live together without a license, than to marry to each other under God's blessings. They chose a curse on their relationship. **DETENTION CENTER** is where I meet them.

Wives, in the same way submit yourselves to your own husbands so that, if any of them do not believe the word, they may be won over without words by the behavior of their wives, ² when they see the purity and reverence of your lives.

A family torn apart / welded together

It all started when I was eleven with a deteriorating relationship with my father not wanting to play sports by video games. His discipline was severe from spankings to struck in face and head even a dress shoe.

I was hurt mentally and physically not knowing what I had done for him to despise me. Maybe adopted or illegitimate the source of his anger. My pain feelings turned to loathing and school became by refuge / reprieve from my life at home. But really never had any true friends or a place to belong.

One night after getting in trouble, mom took my phone. When Dad found out, he was very angry slapping and hitting me in the face yelling. I had enough and slapped him back in a rage as a 11 year old six feet 120 lbs. He in turn was choking me screaming "I'll kill you!" as I tried to fight him off. Mom was screaming for him to stop while my brother pulled him off me. But he still punching me and yelling as I ran out of the driveway. He told me not to come back.

I left in hysterical emotions. My brother and his best friend followed trying to persuade me to come back but refused. SO overcome too much at once, I tried to throw myself into oncoming traffic. They stopped me.

Unable to convince me to return home, they left. No place to sleep, I eventually went home waited at the street then forced myself to go inside. I was reported to police as a runaway. They understood family issues well and left.

After returning from school next day, Dad took me to the park to talk saying he wasn't going to give me physical punishment anymore. **"You don't bother me, and I don't bother you."**

Though my heart wasn't in it, I decided for football in high school hoping then my Dad and I's relationship would get better. Band was my passion.

High school was the years of more time with my brothers friends older than I and older class mates.

One day on Christmas break, one of his friends introduced me to marijuana which made me feel cool and common with upperclassmen. This lead to alcohol on occasion basis. At 14 years, it turned into habitual marijuana and liquor. But it gave me confidence helping me with my peers at school.

For four years, I continued drugs escalating to Xanax, MDMA, and even hallucinogens ACID. Communication with Dad and even Mom deteriorated to almost nothing – just living in a building.

During senior year, I felt a belonging with a lady I loved that consumed all my time, efforts, and finances. I gave up healing my relationship with my parents to leave and start a new life with her.

Since the Navy part **Delayed Entry Program** wasn't until 2016, I started working myself ragged trying to make money to leave home. That lead to more Xanax pills with more stress. I lost 20 lbs in two weeks at one point.

One day at work my job caught on fire removing all my source of income. Then my want for money took me to a place changing me into a person I am ashamed to

have become. For the "love of money" I had forsaken all my morals and beliefs. I sent my finance' to become an exotic dancer and almost took my parents lives in a drug induced stupor.

Before I knew it was seventeen in jail for two counts of aggravated assault with intent to murder. I was put on suicide watch dorm here. On that bare mat on the floor, wondering how I had fallen so far. I just knew that I would now be alone in life. **No one would want to be associated with me after what I had done.**

SO I prayed to God for forgiveness and asked Him for mercy, but told Him that I would accept whatever punishment would come my way for my life was His. I didn't care what happened to me as long as my parents were okay.

Five days later, **my parents came be to see me.** I couldn't look at them because of their injuries I had caused on them

Then something amazing happened. They both told me that they LOVE ME and had forgiven me and going to support me no matter what. **At that moment I knew that God was REAL** and gives us far more than we deserve.

Next 11 months were many trials, tribulations, and tests bring me closer to God. Through classes for my drugs and anger I have a better relationship with my parents ever. My understanding of His purpose for my life is the best. I am content and thank Him for allowing me to fall that I could rise and learn to love and serve.

God's Amazing Redemptive Grace in JANUARY

We thank you in advance

knowing your every prayer and dollar will keep us on the front lines to confronting men and women with the

sanctity of MARRIAGE and FAMILY

Bridge the Gap Ministries, Inc.
PO Box 1051

Snellville, GA 30078

(770) 601-0265

We're on the Web! Look for us

bridgethegapministries.org

"For this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was LOST, and is found.' And they began to celebrate."

Luke 15:24

Celebrate with us all those who prayed for forgiveness and salvation. Please pray for each name as they face the opposition because of their new faith in Christ alone. Pray they not lose heart in spiritual warfare.

Maria Zunmiga
Christian Carrizales
Phillip Crabtree
Andrew Zuniga
Felix Geiger
Jack Campanale

Michael Farez
Paul Casinii
Will Jamison
Cania Laro
Qurién Reese
Joseph Luthi

David Lopez
Darrell Spencer
Mayra Ruiz
Reginald Cassell
Aaron Swims
Malik Thomas

OUR VISION is to Bridge the Gap between the justice system and the mercy of God to effect lasting change in individual lives and families of incarcerated persons with the Gospel of Jesus Christ, so that they rejoin our community as (law-abiding, good, or honorable) citizens. Justice and mercy meet at the cross. The name is taken from Ezekiel 22:30, where God says, *"I searched for someone to stand in the gap . . . but I found no one."*

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