

OUR 50 YEAR SEEDS OF 7-27-1973 LOVE WILL OUT LIVE US !



Fellowship together



THE BRIDE OF MY LIFE



Serving one another



Walking in harmony



Painting of our car getaway



Spreading the Light
of His Love



Every married couple has a story to share. Yet even so few of close friends know their story. Our story was bundled with joy sharing our 50 year journey. God awarded us with 3 children 6 grandchildren. Through all the beautiful highs and difficult lows God has bonded our commitment even more.

THANK YOU FAMILY FOR HELPING US CELEBRATE: JENNY & JARED PARSLEY, DANIEL & NIKKI BURGHER, MARY MCKINNEY



Stephens Family



United two families together as one



church family



church family



church family

MARRIAGE

THE FRIST AND GREATEST INSTITUTION ON EARTH UNDER ATTACK

“Let us rejoice and be glad and give him glory! For the wedding of the Lamb has come, and his bride has made herself ready.” Rev. 19:7

“Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word, and to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless. In this same way, husbands ought to love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. Eph. 5:25-29



Our **March 2023** newsletter highlighted our celebration of our 50th year. We thank all those who celebrated with us July 29th our wedding anniversary! The correlation in marriage is a **mystery and marvelous institution God installed on earth to reflect our bride relationship with Christ.** Our wedding story presentation has caused Nancy and I to better appreciate what God honors above everything else in His world: Christ as our bridegroom displayed in human relationships in marriage. It is the highest and holy reservation of oneself to another human being in an unconditional relationship God intended from the beginning. What a gift of the very basics of human personalities and behavior! **It reveals to us the very reason why we're on earth; preparing as His bride for an eternal relationship with Him as the Creator of heaven and earth.**

As necessary as relationships we all desire, they are under constant attack. Why?

1. The Prince of this world, Satan, has a jealous revenge of our intimate relationship with God, and a husband /wife marriage relationship.
2. Our nature gravitates to selfish motives of **“What's in it for me?”** Two major attacks we face in America.

DELAYS In the 70's, age 20 to 22 was a national average of marriage. Now 2020's 28 to 30+ is now the average. Washington DC, and California are the least likely to get married and a shorter duration of marriage.

DISTORTIONS there is an increase in legalized same sex marriage since 2015. Oregon, California, Nevada, Florida, New York, and Washington DC have the highest percentage of married same sex couples quadrupling in the past decade. Yet their unseen **death rate is between 40 and 50 years old.**

DECLINES Marriage has taken a back seat yielding to cohabitating together. It is an epidemic across America. Justifications: risky economic stability, demographic shift away from God, fears threat of divorce and financial instability with lingering consequences, or other priorities that precede starting a family.

ILLUSTRATION: The real estate, auto industry or any purchase are very strict about signing papers **“before ownership” of the house, car or any item.** Yet in relationships with “selfish motives” this does not apply to people cohabitating together. The assumption is **no promissory signatures required (Convenient love), just move in together. That's it!**

In business terminology that is stealing. In God's relationship terminology that is stealing from another human being. But God's surveillance cameras and records in stolen property or people, will backfire in charges of robbery and “late fees” that is higher than they ever intended to pay and longer they intended to last.

EXTENDED STAY MOTELS are full of these arrangements. It is a spiritual deathtrap that takes years to recover. Living existence in a 2 or 300 Sq Ft. room with children for years eats away at ones self image, future stability, and a deep longing for legal relationship of love, respect, purpose or goals to reach.

Their recovery is also very costly. I do see slow changes towards marriage and stable relationships. Yet in the midst of focusing on recovery, they are bombarded and discouraged with constant struggling setbacks financially, emotionally, and spiritually.

We sincerely appreciate your prayers in our weekly follow ups by phone or in person. The seeds of truth in marriage planted WILL SURFACE in God's timing.

GWINNETT COUNTY COURT HALLS, I witness late term marriages (with children), remarriages, adoptions, and divorces. **Again the unspoken undercurrent motivation: “What's in it for me?” “If this relationship doesn't pan out, I simply leave avoiding any consequences.”** They missed the whole point of marriage:

DYING TO SELF AND FOCUSED ON THE OTHER PERSON