

CONNECTING COUPLES TO CHRIST AND THEIR SPOUSE

Glen and Shawn Solberg | Serving Couples in Central Arkansas

Prayer Requests to Share

REAL, LASTING CHANGE: Please pray for each couple the Lord brings to Abiding Marriage - that they would not see just temporary change, but real, lasting transformation in their individual relationship with God and in their marriage relationship.

ABIDING MARRIAGE BOARD: We are still seeking a 5th and final member for our Board. Pray for God's direction and leading to find this person!

NON-PROFIT PAPERWORK: Please pray that God would give us extraordinary favor in getting these legal requirements approved. The attorney is saying likely 4-6 months. We are praying for approval by year-end!

CALEB AND TAYLOR: Our youngest son, Caleb is getting married to a wonderful young lady, Taylor, on December 19th. Please pray for this young couple as they start their marriage journey and life together!

FIRST LOVE & COMMUNITY: That we would never lose our "first love" for Jesus Christ and the pursuit of a deeply abiding relationship with Him. And after that, we would continue to make it a priority to be deeply connected to Christ-centered community in and outside of our local church.



We are **THANKFUL** for You!

We made it to your mailbox...and you opened our letter up!!

Shawn and I are thankful for YOU because you are our **Ministry Partners**. The ones who give financially. The ones who pray consistently. The ones who allow us to serve here in Central Arkansas helping couples connect with Christ and with each other. And we could not do this without our Ministry Partners!

God officially "birthed" Abiding Marriage as of August 1, 2021, so we are entering our third month as a ministry. Still learning a lot about running a non-profit, but so very thankful for God's provision of folks to help us, including our Board of Directors and the staff at The Summit Church.

Thanks for taking a few minutes to read our prayer requests on this page, and for praying for one or more of them. Hope you are encouraged by the rest of our October update. God bless y'all!

REFLECTION: A Plant Grows by Ed Welch from CCEF

Somewhere a plant grows—a stalk of wheat, an ear of corn—and this assures us that our God reigns.

We have so much to do, so many worries, so little money, so many hardships. We pray about these things, yet before we complete a sentence we are off solving our problems or fretting about what could be. If only Jesus' words would slow us down so we could listen and consider the realities of our Father's care. It certainly would be nice to consider birds and lilies (Matt 6:25-34).

When my father-in-law was dying of cancer, a bird showed up at his window. It perched there for much longer than a bird should perch, and sang loud and long. Until he died, my father-in-law's way of warding off anxiety was to consider the bird. Sheri and I have a large picture of a sparrow in our house as a way to remind us of both her father and our Father.

Today, consider a plant. Somewhere, in your backyard, or in Iowa, or in an irrigated California desert is a plant that is growing. It is growing because our Father gives us food at the proper time (Ps 104:27). While we are worrying about tomorrow, God grows that plant, and that plant will eventually be our bread.

Somewhere a plant grows, and that plant is undisputable evidence of God's love and care for us.

Re-shared from CCEF's Website: <https://www.ccef.org/reflection-plant-grows/>



Bible Verses for This Month

"Therefore I tell you, do not be anxious about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink, nor about your body, what you will put on. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing? Look at the birds of the air: they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? And which of you by being anxious can add a single hour to his span of life? And why are you anxious about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin, yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which today is alive and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will he not much more clothe you, O you of little faith? Therefore do not be anxious, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' For the Gentiles seek after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them all. But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you. "Therefore do not be anxious about tomorrow, for tomorrow will be anxious for itself. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble. Matthew 6:25-34

Vertical Relationship: How's Your Abiding? Part 2

Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in Me. I am the Vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in Me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from Me you can do nothing. John 15:4-5.

In our September update, we shared the above passage and then asked the question, "What does it mean to abide in Jesus?" And if you know what it means to abide in Jesus, the next question may need to be, "How am I doing at daily abiding in Jesus?" Well we continue this month with Part 2. If you missed Part 1, just type rebrand.ly/sept-update into your browser to read it.

Part 2: To Truly Abide, We Need to grow our Christ-centered Community

We believe that God designed us to be *dependent* on Him and *interdependent* on others. This means God never intended there to be any "Lone Ranger Christians". We are made for connection with others. He created the New Testament church so that Christ-followers would have a place to to be loved, to grow, and to serve.

One of the things Shawn and I see consistently in talking with couples is a lack of real Christ-centered community. They may attend church regularly, or be involved in a small group or Bible study, but they never really go "below the surface" with folks they see in those activities. Or they may have been hurt by a previous church experience and never really re-engaged with Christ-centered community again. For a multitude of reasons, people are isolated from others that God can and will use in their lives to help them grow in abiding in Him.

So, here's a few questions to help us all assess where we are: 1) Are you in "below the surface" relationships with other Christ-followers? 2) Do your conversations consistently center around things of God's Kingdom? 3) Are there others in your life that are challenging you to truly follow Christ? 4) And are you challenging others you know to grow in their walk with Jesus?

And yes, I can hear someone saying, "Glen, this has been hard during this crazy season of COVID-19!" I would agree. Whatever rhythms we had in our lives prior to March of 2020 were greatly disrupted by COVID. But please **do not believe for a minute** that God does not have provision for your need for community. We must fight against the enemy of our souls that wants to keep us isolated and disconnected from the community God created us to thrive in.

So, just like last month, rather than just think about what you might do for growing your Christ-centered community, we are encouraging you to take a faith step: Email Glen at least ONE ACTION STEP you are committed to doing to grow in this way. We look forward to hearing from you! We are always encouraged by what you share! Glen's Email is at the bottom of this page.