

(Note: revised from an earlier column.)

'July 9, 1972'

I have many memories of that day. It was HOT – just as hot as it has been in Henry County lately. It was a Sunday afternoon wedding – you don't see many of those now. All the men in the Thomasville (Alabama) Baptist Church wore ties – you don't see that much anymore either. The reception was at the American Legion and no alcohol was served – and that's certainly become a rarity. My daddy, 'Sport Money', was the 'best man' and he'd never worn a tux - neither of us knew if the bow tie strap went over or under the pleat wing collar. But it didn't matter. I was getting married.

Uncle Bob married us - as he had so many in the Money family. As he, Daddy and I waited in a room behind the Baptistry, my mind drifted back 17 months. At that point I was almost six years into a four-year B.S. degree - going to school and working every day after class. Every time I'd run out of money, I'd take a quarter off, come home to drive a pulpwood truck for Daddy and, when I'd saved enough, I'd go back to Tuscaloosa for another quarter. I was not only broke but I was burned out. I had thoughts of quitting school and joining the army. I was cutting a third of my classes and asking a guy named Tony to answer roll for me. Tony had repeatedly asked me to go out with his wife's best friend and I always told him I was not into blind dates. He finally told me he'd no longer answer for me if I didn't go out with her that weekend. I asked him three questions: what's her name, is she pretty, and what time should I be there? His answers: 'Karen ... yes ... 6:00.' He was right. She was very pretty on that first date in February, 1971. And she was beautiful when her daddy walked her down the aisle on July 9, 1972. She still is today.

During every 'Walk to Emmaus' weekend there's a Friday morning talk entitled 'Prevenient Grace.' It's defined as 'the grace that comes before' – generally in advance of any true knowledge of Christ and all that He offers. God allowed His 'prevenient grace' to walk with Karen down the aisle at 3:00 on that Sunday afternoon. When Mr. Crow placed her hand into mine, he looked at me as if to say, 'you're about to receive the best gift you will ever have.' I know now exactly what he meant. I often wonder where I'd be now had it not been for that blind date.

For the first 40 years of our marriage, Karen worked full time and late into the night after she got home. We learned to do without...to sacrifice the 'now' for 'tomorrow'. Even back when we had four children ten years old or younger, we were always in church - EVERY Sunday. That was a given. Those who know her best can affirm that a clean home is near the top of her list. She's an excellent cook, an outstanding 'value shopper' and an extremely hard worker. But most of all she's an exceptional mother and grandmother - and a loving wife. I still carry the guilt of not being there nearly enough to help more when our children were small. She's always been a disciplinarian. She can still be very strong-willed (like her father)! And I've never known her to compromise her convictions. Marriage is not always easy. It must be Christ centered. That was her rule from day one. And she's taught me how to love unconditionally...just as Christ loves us.

For the past twelve years, she's enjoyed doing the things that bring her the most joy – being with our children and their families - especially the eleven grands. She's always sought the quiet, simple life - reading, cleaning, baking for others (she's prepared desserts that have been given away at every county commission meeting since 2013) and caring for a very undeserving but most appreciative husband.

The wife of former Dodger manager Tommy Lasorda once accused him of loving baseball more than he loved her. His response was 'but I love you more than football or hockey'. Happy 52nd anniversary, Karen. I love you very much. Even more than baseball.

30 Day Review:

- **Probate cases in May: four wills probated, two administrations, three final settlements, eight miscellaneous hearings, three guardianships, one involuntary mental commitment, two name changes and nine marriage certificates recorded**
- **If your last name begins with 'L' or 'P', July is your month to renew your tags.**
- **June 12 – attended Governor Ivey's signing of the local bill regulating field parties**
- **June 13/14 – attended the Community Development Conference in Prattville**
- **June 18 – enjoyed a private helicopter tour of Fort Novosel**
- **June 19 – Juneteenth holiday**
- **June 20 – June commission meetings**
- **June 24 – HCHR board meeting**
- **June 25 – free employee wellness screening – (98 of the 106 Henry County employees were screened at the Herndon Building)**
- **June 28 – Wiregrass Forum breakfast – Ozark**
- **June 30/July 3 – Alabama Probate Judges Summer Conference – Orange Beach**

Dates to Remember:

- **July 10 – 'Leadership Henry' steering committee meeting**
- **July 12-15 – NACO Conference – Tampa – (no one for Henry County will be attending)**
- **July 18 – July Administrative meeting – 9:00 – Herndon Building**
- **July 18 – July Commission meeting – 11:00 – Annex Building**
- **July 26 – Wiregrass Forum breakfast - Ozark**