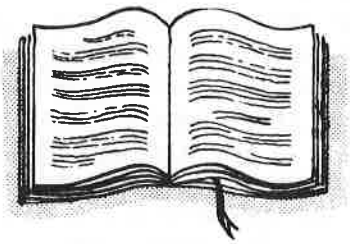
The Christian Courier



November 1984

A Glorious Church

"Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, And gave himself for it; that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the Word, that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish." Ephesians 5: 25-27.

In this text of scripture is described a wonderful institution, which the apostle describes as a glorious chruch; and so it is. There are three outstanding points in this scripture, we shall notice seperately.

First: Jesus loved the church and gave himself for it. That love, (John 3:16) that Jesus had for the church, staggers our power of thought The price paid was stupendous; "and gave himself for it, which he hath purchased with his own blood." Acts 20:28. What a value Christ placed on the Church. No one who beholds what divine love was shown, and the awful price paid, could be respectful to God and Christ and speak a disrespectful word of the church.

A father or mother might forget their children under extreme circumstances, but our loving Heavenly Father and His Son never forgot us when we were lost and steeped in sin.

Second: The church was to be sanctified and cleansed. Whatever it means to be "sanctified" and "cleansed"a, we shall see later. But it was to be done "with" the washing of water "by the Word". We can see at glance that this "washing" of water "by the Word" is the point where "sanctification and cleansing" takes place. So it is important to know exactly what the Holy Spirit through Paul, meant when he said "with washing of water by the Word".

Third: But in all of this, Jesus had a definate purpose, and that purpose is expressed in the next verse: "That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be Holy and without blemish."

There must be something abnormal about men and women who do not love and respect an institution like that. God, the architech of the universe, Jesus our loving Saviour,loved it with supreme love and placed a stupendous value on it....The death of the Lord. How dare we disrespect it, or value it less? Could we be respectful to the archetech of the church? Yes, and its builder, and call it a "non-essential"?

No, indeed, God and Jesus would not have loved "nothing" so much; neither would Jesus have paid sush an awful price for "nothing", a "non-essential".

We know what it means to be, "not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing". We also know what it means to be "holy and without blemish". Such dazzling beauty of character is not hid from our vision. This is the church in its finished state; when they step off the shores of time and are ushered into eternity to dwell in that home Jesus has gone to prepare for them.

Since the church is to be "sanctified and cleansed" with an act called "the washing of water by the Word"; we might ask the question, cleansed from waht? How?

"But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellow ship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son, cleanseth us from all sin." Here it is plainly stated that the blood of Jesus Christ, His Son, cleanseth us from all sin; but let us not overlook the condition upon which this cleansing is done. "If we walk in the light as he is in the light:" Then we have the blessed assurance that "the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all sin." 1 John 1;7

But what is the light we must walk in? Psalm 119:105, "Thy Word is light". So we see to walk in the light is to walk in his Word. Or to walk in the light of His Word, which are one in the same thing. So when we walk in, or according to God's Word, the blood of Christ cleanseth us from all sins.

What is sanctification and how it it accomplished? Exodus 19:2 We see Mount Sinai "sanctified" by placing bounds about it..so, here it means to "set apart." Isiah 8;13, "sanctify the Lord of hosts himself..." This could not mean for the people to make God holy, for He is already holy. But since in this instance the "sanctifying", is something for the people to do: it could only mean for them to set the Lord of Hosts apart in their hearts above everything. This is borne out by 1 Peter 3:15, "But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts."

Speaking concerning the priesthood, Exodus 13:2 says, "sanctify unto me all the firstborn..." And in the 12th verse we have, "That thou set apart unto the Lord all that openeth the matrix." So we see that sanctify and set apart are used interchangably in these two verses. Then to sanctify, is to set apart...with reference to us: to be set apart to a Holy calling.

How are we sanctified or set apart, and cleansed with the washing of water by the Word? We will make no guesses, but lets see what the Bible says. We are not left to guess at just what is meant by the Word in the New Testament times. Peter tells us, "this Word which by the

gospel is preached unto you". 1 Peter 1:25.

But where is water in sufficient quanity to be called a washing found in the Gospel? Baptism...baptism is described as a burial, Romans 6:3-6; Colossians 2:12. Baptism is in water. Acts 8:36. So baptism must be the washing of water by the Word.

Jesus said, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." Of course a saved person would be cleansed from his sin. Also when he is saved, he is sanctified or set apart. Paul tells us in 2 Timothy 2:21, "if a man therefore purge himself form these, he shall be a vessel unto honor, sanctified, and meet for the Master's use, prepared for every good work." So when a person believeth and is baptized, saved: He has purged himself from his sins and is sanctified and meet for the Master's use. Notice it was with the last act commanded, Baptism, that the sanctification and cleansing took place. The only thing in the Word that is a washing of water by the Word.

Again in Acts 2:38, on the day of Pentecost Peter told the people, "Repent and be baptized everyone of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins..." Here again it is by baptism, the washing of water bya the Word, that the people were cleansed from thier sins. In verse 41, he says, "Then they that gladly recieved his word were baptized; and the same dsy there were added unto them about three thousand souls" NOTE "Added unto them;" in other words "set apart with them" or "sanctified". So again we see that "with the washing of water by the Word." people are sanctified and cleansed.

In Acts 22:16 Paul was told, "Arise and be baptized and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord." Here, too, in baptism (the washing of water by the Word) Paul was saved, cleansed, sanctified.

This glorious church, Paul tells us in 2 Corinthians 11:2, is a "chaste virgin" presented unto Christ. But remember it is by this washing of water by the Word we are sanctified and cleansed, that he might present unto himself a glorious church not having spot, or wrinkle or any such thing but that it might be Holy and without blemish. Ephesians 5:25-27.

Hence before the washing of water by the Word, baptism: they were unsanctified, unwashed, unclean, unholy, spotted, wrinkled, blemished. A lot of preachers want the Lord to have this kind of Bride. For they want the Lord to accept people before they are sanctified and cleansed with the washing of water by the Word. But the Lord himself commanded baptism. Matthew 28: 18 - 20.

Let us then obey our Lord as he has directed that we may "with the washing of water by the Word," have all these blemishes removed. Not by baptism alone. But with baptism preceeded by faith, Hebrews 11:6: repentance; Acts 17:3 and confession, Acts 8:36-37: and Romans 10: 17. Do you want to be a part of this glorious church? Let us them remember God meant everything He has commanded. We have no right to add or to take from God's Word: Revelation 22:18-19. "For I testify to every man who hears the prophesy of this book, if any man shall

add to these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this Book. If any man shall take away from the words of the Book of this prophesy, God shall take away his part out of the Book of Life, and out of the Holy City, and from the things that are written in this book." Let us make sure of our inheritance by obeying the Lord in all His commandments. Then all will be well with us in that great day.

In love of the truth.
Ken Harper - Penn Valley, Ca.

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Yakima, Washington

Now therefore fear the Lord and serve him in sincerity and in truth; and put away the gods which yor fathers served on the other side of the flood, and in Egypt; and serve ye the Lord. And if it seem evil unto you to serve the Lord, choose you this day whom ye will serve; whether the gods of your fathers served that were on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell. But as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord. Joshua 24: 14-15.

In this passage, there is a central focus. A group of people are forced to choose between two opposing views or ways of life. One choice is to follow in the evil ways of those before the flood and the evil influence of those in Egypt. The other choice is to serve the Lord. Joshua laid no middle ground; it was one choice or the other. Any student of the Bible woulds surely say that Joshua made the right choice. We also make the same choice: to serve the Lord.

Let us parallel with a continual problem in the church. When one is added to the body of Christ, he or she has made a choice. To leave the world with its fleshly pleasures, which were on the other side of baptism (likened to the flood) with the proclamation on our lips, "I will serve the Lord." It is not long however, till some begin to yearn for their previous worldly pleasures, much as the Israelites yearned for their past pleasures in Egypt. Now, rather than serving the Lord, they want to compromise with the Lord. The end result is a desire to try to serve both. Rather than Joshua's strong stand, it becomes a delusion similar to the serpent's when he said, "Ye shall not surely die." Gen 3;4.

Christ said, "He that is not with me is against me; and he that geathereth not with me scattereth abroad. Matt. 12:30 Christ speaks through John in Rev. 3:15,16, "I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot. So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spew thee out of may mouth." Can middle ground be found in these two verses?" I can find none. James 4:4 Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that friendship of the world is enmity with God? Whosoever, therefore, will be a friend

of the world is the enemy of God.

Romans 8:7-8 "Because the carnal mind is enmity (hatred) against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God." Verse six says, "For to be carnally minded is death..." Again, middle ground cannot be found if we are to be pleasing to God. IT is clear that God demands our total loyalty, not just lip service and not half-heartedly, but complete allegiance.

But even ordinary man understands the folly of trying to serve two opposite causes. You perhaps have heard of the soldier duriing the Civil War who put on gray pants and blue jacket, hoping that he would be acceptable to both sides. He was not accepted by both sides but he was shot at from both sides. During times of war, some like to pass themselves as double agents. The agents figure that both sides need them for information and that they are safe from harm by either side. What they soon find, however, is that neither side trusts a double agent, and that agenyt is at the top of the treason list for both sides when the war is over. Some countries claim neutrality during times of war and are overtaken by; evil men because they had no bond with righteous men. Americans have roads with a left and right side, and a white line seperating both halves. Are we to assume that the safest place to travel is down the white line? Of course not; ;you will make both lanes of traffic angry.

After hearing the Word of God on the matter and considering ;common sense situations, how can Christians be caught in the predicament of placeing a foot on each side of opposing position and claim neutrality? Is that what Joshua did? Is that what God expects? Christ spoke plainly when he said, "No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon." Matt. 6;24.

In Love of the Truth,
Bro. Dan Ross

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"God be merciful unto us, and bless us; and cause his face to shine upon us; Selah. That thy way may be known upon earth, thy saving health among all nations. Let the people praise thee, O God; let all the people praise thee. O let the nations be glad and sing for joy; for thou shalt judge the people righteously, and govern the nations upon the earth. Selah. Let the people praise thee, O God; let all the people praise thee. Then shall the earth yield her increase; and God, even our own God, shall bless us. God shall bless us; and all the ends of the earth shall fear him."

Psalm 67

Broken Bow, Okalhoma
Article on Displeasing God

In Numbers 20: 8-10 we find that God told Moses to go speak to the rock and bring forth water, but Moses was angry with the people and said: "...Hear now, ye rebels; must we fetch you water out of this rock? It displeased God, and because of Moses's disobiedence, he was not permitted to enter the promise land, or to lead God's people over there. Yet we think, by the way we live, that God will be be better to us and let us go on over. In Duet. 8;13, the people lightly esteemed the rock of their salvation. We seem to do more or less like that also, and go on and displease God by our tradition of not doing what God has told us to do. In 1 Cor. 6;16-18, God's Word teaches us what to come out from. And Romans 12;1-2, Paul tells us: "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the merces of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be NOT conformed to this WORLD; but be ye TRANSFOREMED by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God." We can't seem to NOT TOUCH the unclean things of this world, because we find nothing wrong with it. Just as Saul could not see anything wrong with keeping the best of the sheep and cattle to offer sacrifice to God. 1 Sam. 15; 16-22. By disobeying, for the cause of sacrifice, God was displeased and took the kingdom from Saul and gave it to David. So we see that to displease God can affect all of God's people, and will keep us and our family from following after God and doing His will.

In Duet. 31;16 God told Moses that he would sleep with his fathers and the people would rise up and go a whoreing after other gods and strangers of the land, whither they go to be among them, and will forsake me, and break my covenant which I have made with them. "..and I will forsake them, and I will hide my face from them, and they shall be devoured, and many evils and troubles shall befall them; so that they will say in that day, Are not these evils come upon us, because our God is not among us." We also seem to forger that God did not spare the people that sinned. (2 Peter 2;1-6) and cast them down to Hell and saved those that obeyed. In Gen. 6th chapter, God destroyed all the world, save 8 souls, because of disobiedence: yet he saved those that were obedient. In Matt. 5: 13..."ye are the salt of the earth; but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted?" (Or if we stop living for Christ and stop being fishers of men, we too will become usless to God.) We will be good for nothing, "...but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men." And we will cause others to be lost too. Rev. 17th chapter, we find that great whore mystery Bablon in which is found the blood of saints and everything that will cause people to go astray. She rules over the Kings of the earth and in her is found every foul or unclean spirit and iniquities, and God said to come out or her my people and be not partakers of her sins. So if we remain in her we will be partakers of her sins. Just

("Displeasing God) continued
like in 2 Peter 2;12, there were false prophets among the people of old, and they led off the people and caused them to forsake God and disobey him. There will be false teachers among us and shall teach things they aught not to. Many shall follow their pernicious ways and displease God. Those scoffers (2 Peter 3:2) will walk after their ungodly lust and allure through the lust of the flesh those who have escaped from their false teachings. (2 Peter 2:18) The last estate of those people will be worse than the first. (2 Peter 2:20) for they have gone astray following the way of Baalam, who loved the wages of unrighteousness. Paul says (Acts 20:30-31) that people of our own would arise and teach things perverse, to draw away desciples after them, or cause people to follow after them. Read the book of Jude and let us be careful to know them that labor among us.(1 Thes. 5:12) And esteem them very highly in love for their works sake and be very careful who it is that we have teach us. Paul said: (Phil.3:18) "(For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ: whose end is destruction, whose God is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame, who mind earthly things. (2 Cor, 6:17) Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye seperate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing, and I will recieve you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty."

So you see, we cannot disobey God, or teach anything contrary to the Word of God, and still expect to go to heaven. "Little children, let no man decieve you: he that doeth righteousness is righteous, even he is righteous." When we are decieved, we too commit sin. "He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. FOR THIS PURPOSE THE SON OF GOD WAS MANIFESTED (made known) THAT HE MIGHT DESTROY THE WORKS OF THE DEVIL. Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is BORN of God." 1 John 3: 7-9.

I will close for now in love of the truth, and with love toward all the brethren.

Yours in Christ
Lloyd Treat

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Selah, Washington

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ:

Throughout the New Testament Chirst oftentimes used parables to help his followers to understand what He was attempting to teach. I would like to share with you a modern-day parable.

As you are traveling you find yourself in a small logging town and in need of a doctor. Upon inquireing, you find that there is a clinic in the town. You go there and are told to go into the next room where you'll find him. When you open the door you see two men, each

beckoning for you to come to him. The first is a man dressed in a flanel shirt, blue jeans, and logging boots. His clothes are clean, but he is unshaven. The second man is dressed in nice white medical coat with a tie and shiny black shoes. He is very neat and clean.

Which man are you apt to go to?

While the first man could be a well qualified doctor, his appearance tells us something different. Therefore most people will go to the second. Why? Because in most of our minds this is what we picture a doctor should look like.

Today the world is in desperate need of spiritual doctors. But if the spiritual doctors look no different from the people of the world, how will they know who to turn to?

1 Peter 2:9 says: "But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light."as Those of Christ's Body are to be a peculiar people, and to shew forth the praises of Him who hath called us out of the darkness into His marvellous light.

In Matthew 5:16 we're told. "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father which is in heaven.

Letting our light shine is showing that we are children of God. But who is this to be shown to? God and Christ assuredly, but Matt. 5:16 tells us it is to be the world, those people around us. Why? So they can glorify God through us.

Do we qualify as spiritual doctors? Can the people of the world see that we are different from them and glorify God because fo this difference? If not, why not?

In Christian Love.
Robert Farley
Selah, Wa.

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Yakima, Wa.

A FORGOTTEN OR NEGLECTED COMMANDMENT

Jesus tells us in John 14:15; "If ye love me keep my commandments (all of them). 1 Cor.14:15: "If any man think himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him acknowledge tht the things that I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord."

11 Thess. 3:6: "Now we command you bretheren in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother (or sister) that walketh disorderly." It has been asked; "disorderly in

who's eyes?" We can not judge by man's eyes, but by the Lord's.

1 John 2:15: "Love not the world neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world the love of the Father is not in him. If we love the world and follow after the things of the flesh we are walking disorderly in God's sight. Rom. 1:29-32: "Being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness, full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity, whisperings backbiters, haters of God, (won't submit to Him) despiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, without understanding, covenent breakers without natural affections, implacable, unmerciful, who knowing the Judgement of God (not man's) that they which commit such things are worthy of death not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them.°

Not only do they not withdraw from them, they take pleasure in being in their company. Paul, in 1 Cor. 5:11, adds extortioners, railers and drunkards to the list and tells us not to keep company, not even to eat with such. (or to withdraw from them that they might be ashamed)

Gal. 5:20 adds adultry, incleaness, witchcraft, hatred, strife seditions, revelings and such like. These certainly include dancing and gambling and these he says shall not inherit the Kingdom of God. Rev. 21:8 adds whoremongers and liars shall have their part in the lake of fire.

Eph. 5:11; "Have no fellowship (association) with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them. After we have reproved them if they do not change, do we withdraw from them or do we break this commandment? If we continue in their company, have pleasure and eat with them, do we love Christ and keep his commandments, or do we overlook this one or hide it in a corner and therefore become pratakers of their evil deed? Do we give them the right hand of fellow-ship?

Bretheren, we are to shun those who refuse to change.

Written in love of the truth;
Howard McCay
Rt. 3 #657 A-19
Yakima, Wa.

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"AS COLD WATERS TO A THIRSTY SOUL, SO IS GOOD NEWS FROM A FAR COUNTRY"

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Yakima, Washington

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ:

I will be preaching at Port Orchard, Wa. on the twenty third of October. It always gives me great pleasure to be able to preach the True Gospel of Christ, and we hope I will be able for a long time. And I will as long as I am alive, Lord willing. Now it is about time

to say this and at the same time ask this question. What does God's Word say about judging your Brothers? Well, lets go to God's Word and find out. This is what the 14th chapter and the 10th verse of the book of Romans says; "But why dost thou judge thy brother? or why dost thou set at nought thy brother? for we shall all stand before the judgement seat of Christ." (verse 12) "So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God." Ecclesiastes 12:14; "For God shall bring every work into judgement, with every secret thing, whether it be good or whether it be evil."

Wherefore, judge nothing before the time. Until the Lord come. So if there is any judgement to be done, let it be by God and not by any member of the Church of Christ. I have been with the Yakima congregation of the Church of Christ and every member is true to the Word of God and its worship is according to the Word of God. So judge not lest ye be judged. (Read Matt 7:1-2)

Bobby and Terry Lamb was blessed with a baby boy. Mother and son are doing fine. Congradulation to Bobby and Terry.

He who loves God, loves his brother also. 1 John 4:20-21.

Your brother and sister in Christ.
Lets all love one another.

Wilbur and Lola Reading.
In Christian Love.

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Port Orchard, Washington

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ:

We have been having unusual weather this year. So far we have had very little rain this fall, giving us a chance to get caught up with outside work.

Some of the members here have had the flu, but otherwise all are well. We are still planning on taking in the Yuma Meeting, and hop to meet with other congregations during our trip. Sister Maggie Forsman is planning on making the trip with us.

Lord willing, Brother Sammy Boen will be holding a meeting for us next fall. Our meeting will be July 28th to August 4.

Visitors last month were bro. & sis. Taylor from Selah; bro & sis. Reading & son Carlos from Yakima. Bro. Reading had two lessons for us. We want to thank both families for their help, and hope they can be with us a again soon. Keep praying for us, as we do all our bro. & sis. in Christ.

With love, yours in Christ from the church at Glenwood.

Robert E. McCay

Stilwell, Oklahoma

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ:

At the time of this writing everyone at Pleasantview Church of Christ are doing fine. No serious sickness. Just a few colds.

Bro. Robert Eldridge and family are now living back in Oklahoma again. They moved back a couple months ago and are living with Sis. Lectie Ross. The;y are in the process of building a new home.

Bro. Lloyd Treat visited at Pleasantview since I wrote last. We always enjoy having him and all other visitors and invite them back. We meet here each Sunday morning at 10:30 A.M., and each Sunday night at 6:00 P.M.

Brother Gerald L. Buckner
Pleasantview Church of Christ
Stilwell, Oklahoma.

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Waterford, California

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ:

Just a few words concerning Waterford Church news. The Church here is injoying good interest, and some growth. We had one addition yesterday, (10-14-84). Sister Connie Williams' husband, Kenny Williams, was baptized. We welcome all who come this way to stop and worship with us, and if possible to visit with us. Our doors are always open to one and all.

Phone (209) 537-9720 for Brother Lawrence Arnett, and (209) 883-4195 for Brother Dean Guyer.

Lawrence Arnett
Waterford Church of Christ

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Sacramento, California

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ:

It has been quite some time since our small congregation has had a input to our newspaper, "The Christian Courier". We are still a small group, praise the Lord that wherever two or more are gathered in his name there will he be also.

Our congregation has been increased by one, Sister Debbie Usrey and I had a son, Joseph Franklin Usrey, on July 2nd of this year. Baby and Mother are doing fine and daddy even survived the delivery.

We are still here in Sacramento at 840 Bell Ave. and visitors are always welcome.

Yours in Christian love:
Lloyd, Debbie & Joseph Usrey
and the congregation in Sacramento.

Gospel Meetings

Yuma, Arizona	November 18-25	Camp
Bellflower, Ca.	June 30-July 7, 1985	Cliff Brockman
Port Orchard, Wa.	July 28-August 4, 1985	Sammy Boen

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BAPTISMS

Kenny Williams: Waterford, Ca. 10/14/84

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BIRTHS

Joseph Franklin Lee Usrey - July 2, 1984
Parents: Bro. & Sis. Lloyd & Debbie Usrey
Sacramento, California Congregation

Brady Andrew Lee Lamb
Parents: Bro. & Sis. Bobby and Teri Lamb Yakima, Wa. Congregregation.

CONGRADULATIONS TO THE NEW PARENTS

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"...He that soweth the good seed is the Son of man; The field is the world; the good seed are the children of the kingdom; but the tares are the children of the wicked one; The enemy that sowed them is the devil; the harvest is the end of the world; and the reapers are the angels. As therefore the tares are gathered and burned in the fire, so shall it be in the end of the world." Matt 13: 37-40. "Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a merchant man, seeking goodly pearls Who when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had, and bought it". Are we good seed? This field, the world in which we live; is it worth the price of a great pearl? Or, this world, and its allurements, should we sell it and go buy the PEARL OF GREAT PRICE? .....OUR SALVATION?

Selected