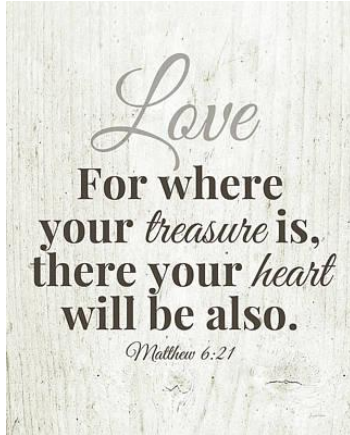


# PLEASANT VIEW PROCLAIMER

March 3, 2024

## Welcome!



*"I will praise You, O Lord, among the peoples; I will sing to You among the nations. For Your mercy reaches unto the heavens, and Your truth unto the clouds"*

Join us at 6:00pm for the final lesson from our "Unsolved Mysteries" series

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**Minister:** Timothy Agee  
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## Prayer List

**Hunter Crouch** was hospitalized with kidney issues

**Johnny Walker** is managing back pain

**Rebecca Brown** is dealing with an ankle injury

**Burt Wilkerson**, Martha Gregory's brother-in-law, is in the nursing home with dementia

**Mamie Hamilton** is doing physical therapy for her leg pain

**Belinda Mayo** is recovering from a second back surgery

**Darinda Paul** has gotten good reports from her cancer treatment

**Elizabeth Demonbreun** is doing well at home

Continue to pray for: the **Nathan Horton** family, **Donnie Garrett**, the **Stroud** family, the **Wilkerson** family, **Keith Walker** and family, **Kim Walker**, **Rebecca Brown**, **Forshia Pennington**, **Carol Saling**, **Camille Brosky**, those in **Ukraine**; **John Hayes**, **Nick Phifer**, and **Bill Gillock**

*We invite everyone to join us Wednesday night at 7pm as we study the Life of Abraham*

## Serving Today

**Song Leader:**  
Jeff Baker

SUNDAY SCHOOL (9:30 am)

**Scripture Reading:**  
Sam Baker

**Prayer:**  
Johnny Walker

WORSHIP (10:30 am)

**Scripture Reading:**  
Mike Reed  
*II Cor 11:1-2; Eph 5:25-27*

**Wait On Table:**  
Dwight Pennington

**Serve:**  
Josh Demonbreun  
Eddie Walker

**Prayer:**  
Jared Roaden

## Service Times

Sunday Bible Study	9:30 am
Sunday AM Worship	10:30 am
Sunday PM Worship	6:00 pm
Wednesday Bible Study	7:00 pm

## Follow Us



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Throughout this series, we will be looking at the **Necessity, Meaning, Form,** and **Timing** of Baptism as presented in scripture. When attempting to discern the **Meaning** of anything we are instructed to do by God and His disciples, it can be helpful to try and relate this to something from regular life. Jesus clearly did this in the parables (**Matt 13:10-12**). When doing this, we must remember that all human attempts to bring clarity to spiritual matters suffer from a lack of precision and fail to convey the full significance of these matters. However, if we understand this limitation, a good metaphor or analogy can be beneficial in beginning our journey toward understanding the full **Meaning** of the spiritual concept.

**A W** \_\_\_\_\_ - The metaphor we will be using in this series to gain a greater understanding of the **Meaning** of baptism is of a wedding ceremony. I first came across this idea in the book ***Baptism: The Believer's Wedding Ceremony*** by F. LaGard Smith. Brother Smith points out that while this picture of a wedding ceremony is not directly used in scripture, it is strongly suggested from a metaphor used for the church. He argues that "seeing baptism as a wedding ceremony allows us to reflect perhaps more deeply than ever before on this loving act of covenant with God".

**A B** \_\_\_\_\_ - The church, *ekklēsia*, are those "called out" by God. This description applies to us both individually and collectively. In **2 Cor 11:2**, Paul says we are "betrothed...to one husband". Would this description not also apply to us both individually and collectively. We are individually betrothed to the "one husband" (Christ) and ultimately joined together with others who have been betrothed, forming the collective church. If both individually and collectively we are betrothed to Christ, when did this relationship begin?

**A U** \_\_\_\_\_ - Before answering that question, consider the marriage relationship in view of what God intended for it to be. In marriage, the husband and wife are bound to form a perfect complement. United in body, spirit, and purpose for the remainder of their lives (**Gen 2:23-24; Matt 19:3-6**). In a similar way, Christ takes the church (both individually and collectively) as his own bride. This union is so complete that the church becomes His body (**1 Cor 12:12-13**). We shouldn't think of the church as a human institution or organization, but as the collective body of individual Christians that have been joined together.

**A P** \_\_\_\_\_ - So again, when does this union with Christ take place? Let's consider Paul's instructions in **Eph 5:22-33**. Paul not only draws a direct parallel between the relationship of husband and wife and that of Christ and His church, but also extends it to the wedding ceremony itself. He alludes to the Jewish custom of purifying the bride in a ritual cleansing (**Ezek 23:40**). Consider that in modern times, a bride traditionally wears white to symbolize the purity she brings to the bridegroom. Before we are joined to Christ, we are not pure and clean brides. None of us are without sin (**1 John 1:5-10**). Christ cleanses us and makes us pure as He brings us into a loving relationship with Himself:

***Ephesians 5:26–27 (ESV)*** - ...that he might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, so that he might present the church to himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish.

As Christians, we must be washed in the waters of Baptism to be a pure bride for Christ. Paul recalled that Baptism was the time in which his sins were washed away when recounting his conversion in **Acts 22:12-16**. With the waters of Baptism, the bridegroom washes away our sins, bathes us in His own blood, and presents us to Himself as a righteous bride. Would we ever be able to present ourselves as pure before the Lord through our own effort? Certainly not! When we act on our faith in God's Word, and submit to being baptized with water, our cleansing is solely a matter of God's grace and mercy (**Titus 3:1-7**).