

# BAPTISM INFORMATION

NEW BEGINNINGS  
CHURCH OF GOD

## **BAPTISM WHY DO WE PRACTICE IT?**

Baptism is a ceremony that points to the cleansing work of Christ Jesus on our behalf with regard to the washing away of our sins. In addition, it reminds us of our necessity to both identify and proclaim our allegiance to Him by making this physical observation public.

In the New Testament, Baptism was both instituted and practiced by Christ Himself, which means He taught by example that Baptism was an extremely important part of the Christian experience. In fact as Jesus prepared to leave final instructions to His disciples, He said, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples (followers) of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.” (Matthew 28:18b-20)

In this statement He gave them: 1) their purpose – “go and make disciples” 2) their authority – “baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit” 3) their method – “teaching them to obey everything” 4) their assurance – “surely I am with you always” 5) the duration of their responsibility – “to the very end of the age.”

Baptism offers a wonderful picture of several spiritual truths as identified by scripture.

1) Romans 6:3, “...don’t you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death.” Christ’s death for our sins covers and cleanses us like the water that swallows us. The water does not wash away our sins – His work of dying on our behalf does!

2) Romans 6:4 “We were therefore buried with Him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life.” Baptism is both a visual reminder of dying to the old life and living by Christ’s life and power in a new life and a landmark that sets a new course toward a Christ-centered life. Our baptism ceremony says, I believe that Christ wants to give me the opportunity to live as a new person and I will become more and more like Him.

3) Mark 16:15 & 16 Baptism is reserved for those who are capable of hearing, believing and by implication understanding the Bible. So only those who have actually accepted Christ as Savior and responded thoughtfully to that understanding are to enter into this ceremony. That's why we believe babies and very young children should not be baptized until they come to that point. We do, however, practice the dedication of babies. This is a covenant between the parents and God to raise and train their little one in the ways of the Lord, so that early in life they can make a decision to be saved and follow the Lord in baptism themselves.

4) Matthew 3:16, "As soon as Jesus was baptized, he went up out of the water..."

Mark 1:10, "As Jesus was coming up out of the water..."

Acts 8:38 & 39, "(they) went down in to the water...they came up out of the water" The biblical model prescribes "immersion" as the proper mode of practice, as well as, the best picture of Christ's death, burial and resurrection.

You may be asking, what if I've been baptized at some point in my past, but now feel I was either too young to fully understand or I've strayed from a close walk with the Lord and am now wanting to express a deeper commitment both to the Lord and His way? The answer is not that you should, but rather you may, if you feel it would be right in your heart and it would reflect a real commitment to be renewed in your faith.

### **HOW CAN YOU BEST PREPARE FOR THIS SPECIAL EVENT?**

Obviously, you should examine your heart to see if you've truly accepted Christ as Savior. Romans 10:9-10 states, "if you confess with your mouth 'Jesus is Lord,' and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved"

Pray and meditate on the truths presented in this pamphlet. Let their truths "sink into" your soul and spirit. In the quietness of your heart, thank the Lord for offering you the free gift of salvation and giving you the opportunity to follow Him in baptism.

Invite your family and friends to witness this most precious moment in your faith journey. Don't forget this is a wonderful opportunity to expose the lost or non-believer to the One you adore, Jesus the Christ!

## WHAT'S GOING TO HAPPEN?

- When you come to church, bring a change of clothes, a towel, and a bag for your wet items. Wear the clothes you will be baptized in (modesty counts here).
- Please leave your change of clothes in the music room before service begins - just west of the riser, next to the Welcome Center (There will be a sign that says "Baptismal Candidates.") and then join us in the Worship Center for service.
- At the end of the regular service the pastor will dismiss you to exit the Worship Center and go to the music room - just west of the riser, where you left your clothes.
- Pastor will meet you there and lead you behind the riser and to the east riser entrance.
- Pastor will enter the water and signal for the first person to come into the water. Please be careful. We will assist you.
- Once the person in front of you is exiting the baptistry, make your way onto the riser.
- Stand in front of the Pastor with one hand grasping your wrist and the other hand holding your nose. (Remember - you're going under)
- Pastor will talk briefly then lower you backwards into the water. Simply bend your knees and relax. He will bring you right back up.
- An assistant will be in the water with him to lift you back out.
- After being baptized, please face the congregation for a moment so they may rejoice with you, and then exit back through the music room to pick up your dry clothes and go to the appropriate area to change.
- Someone will be there to direct you.
- Remember...Relax and Rejoice. It is a day you will always remember.
- You will receive your Baptism Certificate in the mail in a few days as well as a C.D. Rom with a copy of the service.
- **Thank you for allowing us to serve you in your baptism experience.**