

## **Baptismal Policy & Procedure**

### **SIGNIFICANCE OF BAPTISM**

Grace Bible Fellowship maintains that baptism is the public expression of a personal reality. Through Baptism a person publically declares their faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and His work on their behalf. Baptism is commanded, by Christ, of every Believer (Matt 28:19-20; Mark 16:16) and serves a symbol of their union with Christ (Rom 6:1-5; Col 2:11-14) and His Church (Acts 2:38-41).

### **CANDIDATES FOR BAPTISM**

Grace Bible Fellowship practices “Believer’s baptism.” Because baptism is a public expression of a personal reality, only those who have expressed faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and His work on their behalf will be baptized (Acts 8:37; 16:30-33). Any Believer, regardless of age, may be baptized by the church.

### **MODE OF BAPTISM**

While Grace Bible Fellowship will recognize those who having been baptized, as Believers, by sprinkling or pouring, the congregation will only practice baptism by immersion (Mark 1:9, 10; Acts 8:38-39).

### **PROCESS OF BAPTISM**

1. Individuals desiring baptism shall inform an Elder of the church.
2. Baptismal candidates shall attend either a baptismal class or an interview, led by an Elder of GBF.
3. During this time the Elder shall provide an overview of the biblical teaching concerning baptism and evaluate whether the candidate is a genuine Believer or not.
4. Once the Elder who conducted the class is confident of the candidate’s conversion, he shall recommend to the rest of the Eldership that the candidate be approved for baptism. At this same time, the Elder will present a written copy of the candidate’s testimony. In cases where the Elder is unsure of the candidate’s conversion an additional meeting will be required.
5. Once approved, the Elders shall announce to the Congregation the time of the baptismal service.
6. The baptismal service shall normally include the following aspects: (a) an appropriate introduction to the meaning and/or significance of baptism, (b) a public testimony by each

candidate, (c) a public declaration of their faith in Jesus Christ and His finished work on their behalf; (d) the baptism of the candidate, and (e) the presentation of the Certificate of Baptism.

#### **PARTICIPANTS IN THE BAPTISM SERVICE**

Normally, the Elder who conducted the baptismal class will preside over the baptismal service and shall baptize the individual. In cases where an adolescent is being baptized, the child's father may be invited to participate in the service. Recognizing their role as the spiritual head of their household, they will be asked if they want to baptize their child.

#### **PLACE AND TIME OF THE BAPTISMAL SERVICE**

Scripture does not specifically stipulate when or where a baptismal service must be performed. As such, Grace Bible Fellowship takes no definitive stand on the issue except to say that the baptism must be open and accessible to the members of the church. By its very nature, baptism is to be a public (not private) affair.

#### **BAPTISM AND MEMBERSHIP**

Having identified themselves with the Lord Jesus Christ and His Church, those who have been baptised will be offered membership with Grace Bible Fellowship. For those who wish to become members of the church, the membership ceremony will accompany the baptismal service.

Only Believers who have undergone "Believer's baptism" will be accepted into the official membership of Grace Bible Fellowship.