

# Cornerstone Church

## WATER BAPTISM CLASS

*Revised January 2012*

### **Welcome**

We are rejoicing in your decision and desire to be baptized in water. We believe that the scriptures are very clear as to the command to be baptized in water.

We ask that you participate in this class to ensure you understand the importance of this step in your Christian walk. We also want to teach you why we baptize and we want to encourage you to grow in your walk with the Lord. Lastly we want to go over what you should expect on the day of your baptism.

Please relax and enjoy this awesome time. God's love and peace will be upon you on this special day. This will be a memorable day for you in your Christian walk. May God's blessings be with you on this day and every day.

**DATE/TIME OF WATER BAPTISM:** \_\_\_\_\_

### **Obedience through Water Baptism**

In the New Testament you will find a number of commands that are given in regards to water baptism. First there was the commandment given to the disciples to be baptized. Second, the commandment was given to those who would become disciples of the Lord.

### **Commandments Given To the New Believer**

To provide an example for us, Christ himself was baptized in the Jordan River. All of those then, who want to follow Him, should realize that water baptism is not merely a choice but a command, affirmed to us by His example.

There is a threefold purpose for water baptism:

- 1) **IDENTIFICATION**
- 2) **ILLUSTRATION**
- 3) **PUBLIC DECLARATION**

### **IDENTIFICATION**

As far **IDENTIFICATION** is concerned, you indeed through **WATER BAPTISM OUTWARLY IDENTIFY** yourself with Christ. This **IDENTIFICATION** takes place in this manner; by means of **IDENTIFICATION** you show your union with Christ in **DEATH TO SIN**, in **BURIAL** of your **OLD NATURE** and in **RESURRECTION** to newness of life. The practical demonstration of this **IDENTIFICATION** is by means of water baptism, while your actual **IDENTIFICATION** is by faith.

**ILLUSTRATION**

What a beautiful **ILLUSTRATION** water baptism provides for the world and the church. The **WATER** illustrates a watery grave of your **DEATH TO SIN**. The **BURIAL** of the old life of sin is illustrated through the **IMMERSION** in the water. Then a wonderful picture of **RESURRECTION** to a new life of **RIGHTEOUSNESS** is illustrated through your coming forth out of the water.

**PUBLIC DECLARATION**

Water baptism then becomes a wonderful means for your family and friends to witness the work of grace that has taken place in your life. Be **ABSOLUTELY** sure that you invite them to be a part of this very special step of your Christian life. Wouldn't it be great if your baptism did something in their hearts to cause them to want to make a commitment to Jesus Christ? **YOU ARE A CHILD OF GOD** and your baptism is a powerful **PUBLIC DECLARATION** that you have had a spiritual birth and now you intend to follow on with Christ.

**What must take place before I can be baptized?**

As we look at the scriptures we find that only two conditions must be met before you can be baptized.

**READ EACH OF THE FOLLOWING REFERENCES AND RECORD THE CONDITION:**

**ACTS 2:38**

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**ACTS 8:36-38**

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When Peter talked about repenting he was calling for an individual to have a complete change of mind and heart. This change would involve an **ADMISSION OF GUILT**, A **DENIAL OF SELF** and a **TRANSFER OF TRUST**.

A precedent for the church in regard to water baptism is clearly given to us by the example of the early church.

**How long should I wait between salvation and water baptism?**

**ACTS 2:38; 8:12; 9:18; 16:32-33**

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## **Leaders Are Commanded To Baptize**

### **MATTHEW 28:19**

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The leaders of the church are committing an error if they do not **TEACH, MAKE DISCIPLES** and then **BAPTIZE** those who believe. Leadership in the church is under order from Christ!

#### **Why do we practice “Total Immersion”?**

Nowhere in the scriptures do you find anything other than an individual being totally immersed in water when being baptized. In fact the literal meaning of the word “**BAPTIZE**” in the scriptures means, “**TO MAKE FULLY WET.**” Any baptism in the disciples’ day was always performed with the individual immersed in water. Remember also, that Jesus and the Ethiopian were baptized by total immersion. **MATTHEW 3:16; ACTS 8:38.** Also keep in mind the threefold purpose previously discussed **IDENTIFICATION, ILLUSTRATION** and **PUBLIC DECLARATION.**

We trust that your baptism will be a special event in your life. Our prayers are that God will richly bless you as you continue to grow and walk with Him.

#### **Next Step**

The Christian life involves us taking steps in our new relationship with Christ and finding God’s purpose for our life! Our **NEXT STEO CLASSES** will help you to understand and learn God’s five purposes:

- **CONNECTING...**with God through a relationship with Jesus Christ and with fellow believers.
- **GROWING...**in your relationship with God, so that you are becoming like Christ in your character.
- **SERVING...**discovering your unique **S.H.A.P.E.** and serving in a ministry to other believers.
- **GOING...**learning how God has made you for a mission, to share your lifestyle with others and support others who are taking the gospel around the world.
- **WORSHIPING...**experience God’s presence through worship and learn how living your whole life for God is an act of worship.

So we encourage to you begin attending these classes. Watch the Sunday bulletin for announcements regarding dates and times.

### **Growth Groups**

If you are a new believer you will also benefit by becoming a part of one of our small group ministry called Growth Groups. These small groups are made up of new believers and long time Christian people who are grounded and rooted in Bible basics. It is important that you develop a firm foundation to stand on as you grow in the Lord. It will be helpful to align yourself with fellow Christians too. We have many small groups that you can join and we encourage you to do just that. There is a list of groups on the church bulletin board in the lobby. You can also find a listing of the groups on-line at [www.cornerstoneag.net](http://www.cornerstoneag.net)

Once again, may God richly bless you as you are obedient to his commands and teachings!