

GBC 101

An Introduction to *the* **Glade** Church Gladeville Baptist

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We're glad you have chosen to find out more about GBC and the Christian life. This course is a basic introduction to our church. Since we have members from many different church and religious backgrounds, it is designed to clearly explain who and what our church is.

Basic assumptions behind the course:

- The church is a **fellowship**.
- The church is a **family**.
- God provided the **church** to give us a fellowship (place for friendship, sharing) and a family (instruction, affection, care).
- A Christian without a church is like a **stranger** (without fellowship) and an **orphan** (without a family).

Who, what is GBC?

A. As people...

- We are Christians from different backgrounds who have determined to be part of this fellowship and a member of this church family.
- The average age is **37**.
- Variety of incomes, employment, and education.

B. What kind of church?

1. We are **Baptist**
2. We are affiliated with...
 - The **Southern Baptist Convention**, the largest association of Christian churches in America (SBC.net).

1 out of every 10 churches in America is affiliated with the SBC (40,000 plus churches with 15 million members) SBC churches baptize over 1,000 new Christians a day in the U.S. and start approximately five new churches a day.

- The **Tennessee Baptist Convention**, a group of 2,900 Baptist Churches in Tennessee (www.tnbaptist.org).

Through the TBC, we support three colleges (Belmont University in Nashville, Union University in Jackson, and Carson Newman in Jefferson City, three children's homes, and a number of adult homes and facilities for mentally challenged adults)

- The **Wilson County Baptist Association**, a cooperating group of Southern Baptist churches in the county (wcbamissions.com).

3. Why not just be an "**Independent**" church?

We are! Independent/Autonomous

Every SBC church is independent or "autonomous." There is no denominational control over our church and no hierarchy, as there are in most other denominations. Each church is self-governed and makes its own decisions relative to what it does and how.

- We choose our own **pastor & staff**.
- We **own** our buildings and assets.
- We **determine** our programs, ministries and methods.

4. Advantages of being affiliated with SBC

It allows us to **identify** with other Christians around the world who are known for their commitment to the Bible.

It allows our church to **participate** with the largest missionary organization in the world. Through the "Cooperative Program" we support 7,500 missionaries in 104 countries around the world. Additionally, we are able to conduct educational and charitable ministries which one church could not do working alone.

5. So, what's unique about GBC?

We are a **growing** church.

We are **contemporary** in worship and ministry approach.

We are **passionate**

We are **intentional** in our work – we know what we're doing and why!

We are **experienced**; with long tenured ministers and ministry staff

We are always **learning**.

We are **positive**, defined by what we're **for** rather than what we're **against**.

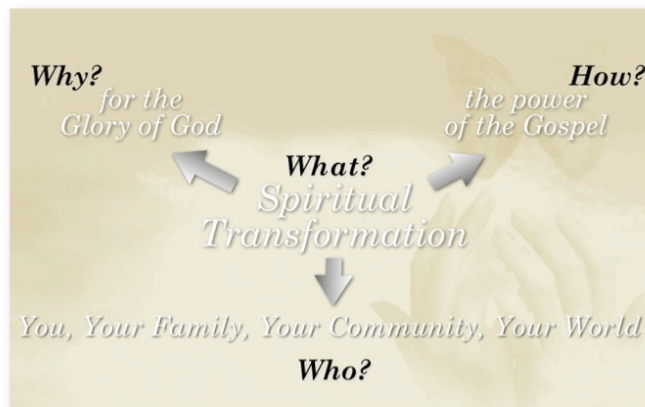
We are **change-** oriented; if there's a better way, let's find it, and do it!

Our Vision & Purpose

Our vision is "To be a **people** with a **passion** for **God** (Mt. 22:37-38) and a **place** with a **passion** for **people** (Mt. 22:39) for the **glory** of **God** (Eph. 3:21)."



Our purpose is to glorify God through the spiritual transformation of individuals, families, our communities, and the world through the power of the gospel of Jesus Christ.



This happens when we...



Come/Worship:
come into a relationship with God and worship Him individually and corporately.



Connect/Grow:
connect with other believers in small groups where we can grow in our faith.



Serve/Go:
serve God though ministry and missions teams.

An Overview of our Essential Beliefs

[See “What’s Gladeville” booklet]

Salvation: What does it mean to be a Christian?

“So you are all children of God through faith in Christ Jesus. And all who have been united with Christ in baptism have been made like him. There is no longer Jew or Gentile, slave or free, male or female. For you are all Christians—you are one in Christ Jesus.” Galatians 3:26-28 (NLB)

What does it really mean to be a Christian?

Most people live their lives without knowing why they are alive and the most basic question: “What is the meaning of life?”

Everyone wants to be happy. People try in many ways.

- ... some look for happiness by acquiring **possessions**
- ... some look for happiness by experiencing **pleasure**
- ... some look for happiness by gaining **prestige** and **power**

But real happiness comes from understanding my **PURPOSE**

I. Why am I here?

1. God made me to LOVE me!

God says, “I have loved you with an everlasting love!” Jer 31:3

“Even before the world was made, God had already chosen us to be his through our union with Christ...because of His love, God had already decided that through Jesus Christ he would make us his children - this was God’s pleasure and purpose.” Ephesians 1:4-5(GN)

2. God made me to ENJOY life, find MEANING and FULFILMENT through a personal relationship with Him, and to MANAGE all of the rest of His creation.

“So God created human beings, making them in His image. He blessed them and said, live all over the earth and bring it under control. I am putting you in charge.” Genesis 1:27-28

“God richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment.” 1 Tim 6:17

*Jesus said, "I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full."
John 10:10*

3. When we know and love God, and live in harmony with His purpose, we experience tremendous BENEFITS in our lives.

Clear <u>CONSCIENCE</u>	Romans 8:1
Life and <u>PEACE</u>	Romans 8:6
Help with <u>WEAKNESS</u>	Romans 8:39
<u>PURPOSE</u>	Romans 8:28
<u>CONFIDENCE</u>	Romans 8:31
<u>SECURITY</u>	Romans 8:39
<u>STRENGTH</u> for living	Philippians 4:13
<u>FULLILLMENT</u>	Philippians 4:19
<u>FREEDOM</u>	John 8:32,36

This is the kind of lifestyle God intends for us to live. Why then aren't most people really happy?

II. What's the problem?

People have a natural desire to be **BOSS** and to ignore God's principles for living.

"Look out for #1. Do your own thing"

"It feels good, do it."

"It's my life and I'll do what I please!"

The Bible calls this attitude: **SIN**.

"All of us, like sheep have gone astray, and each of us has turned to his own way." Isaiah 53:6

*"If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us."
1 John 1:8*

Sin breaks our close relationship with God. It causes us to fear God and try to live our lives outside of His will.

*"The trouble is that your sins have cut you off from God." Isaiah 59:2 (LB)
"All have sinned and fall short of God's glorious ideal" Romans 3:23*

When our relationship with God is not right, it causes **PROBLEMS** in every area of our lives - marriage, career, relationships, finances, etc.

When people have problems, they often try many different ways of coping before turning to God.

*"There are ways that SEEM right to man, but they only end in death."
Proverbs 16:25*

Even when we know that our deepest need is God, we often try wrong ways of getting to know Him:

"My mother was a Christian so . . . "

"It doesn't matter what you believe, just be sincere."

"I'll give up all my bad habits."

"I'll work real hard and earn it."

"I'll be religious and go to church."

III. What's the solution?

Jesus Christ said, "I AM THE WAY, the Truth, and the Life. No one comes to the Father, except THROUGH ME!" John 14:6

God Himself came to the earth as a human being to bring us back to Himself. If any other way could have worked, Jesus Christ would not have had to come.

The way is a Person!

JESUS HAS ALREADY TAKEN CARE OF YOUR SIN PROBLEM!

For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord. Romans 6:23

God did this for us because He loves us and wants us to know Him.

But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us. Romans 5:8

For there is one God and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus. 1 Timothy 2:5

God has already done His part to restore our relationship to Him. He took the initiative. Now He waits for each of us to individually accept what He has done for us.

IV. What does God want me to do?

1. ADMIT that God has not been first place in your life and ask Him to forgive your sins.

If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness. 1 John 1:9 NIV

2. BELIEVE that Jesus died to pay for your sins and that He rose again on easter, and is alive today.

That 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. Romans 10:9 NIV

Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved." Acts 4:12 NIV

3. **ACCEPT God's free gift of salvation. Don't try to earn it.**

*For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith--and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God--not by works, so that no one can boast.
Ephesians 2:8-9*

Our relationship to God is not restored by anything we do, but on the basis of what Jesus already did for us!

4. **INVITE Jesus Christ to come into yourS life and be the director ("Lord") of your life.**

Yet to all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God-- children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband's will, but born of God. John 1:12-13

This prayer may indicate the desire of your heart as you say "yes" to Christ...

"Dear Jesus, thank you for making me and loving me, even when I've ignored you and gone my own way. I realize I need you in my life and I am sorry for my sins. I ask you to forgive me. Thank you for dying on the cross for me. Please help me to understand it more. As much as I know how, I want to follow you from now on. Please come into my life and make me a new person inside. I accept your gift of salvation. Please help me to grow now as a Christian."

V. God's Promise

A. He has **HEARD** and **ANSWERED** your prayer

"Whoever calls on the name of the Lord will be saved." Romans 10:13

B. Nothing can take you out of His **HAND!**

"...I give them eternal life...and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father, who gave them to me, is greater than all, and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand." John 10:28-29

The Importance of Being Baptized

I. Why should I be baptized?

1. To follow the example set by JESUS

At that time Jesus came from Nazareth in Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. Mark 1:9

2. Because Christ COMMANDS it.

Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples 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 28:18-20

3. It demonstrates that I really am a BELIEVER.

*...many of the people who heard him believed and were baptized. Acts 18:8
We know that we have come to know him if we obey his commands. 1 John 2:3*

II. What is the meaning of baptism?

1. It illustrates Christ's DEATH and resurrection.

*Christ died for our sins...he was buried,...he rose again 1 Corinthians 15:3-4
Having been buried with him in baptism and raised with him through your faith in the power of God, who raised him from the dead. Colossians 2:12*

2. It illustrates My NEW LIFE as a Christian.

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come! 2 Corinthians 5:17

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. Romans 6:4

Baptism doesn't make you a believer - it shows that you already believe. Baptism does not "save" you, only your faith in Christ does that. Baptism is like a wedding ring - it's the outward symbol of the commitment you make in your heart.

For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith--and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God – not by works, so that no one can boast.
Ephesians 2:9

III. Why be baptized by immersion?

Because Jesus was baptized that way.

As soon as Jesus was baptized, he went up out of the water. Matt 3:16

Every baptism in the **BIBLE** was by immersion.

(Example) *“Then both Philip and the eunuch went down into the water and Philip baptized him. When they came up out of the water . . .”* Acts 8:38-39

The word “Baptize” means “to DIP UNDER water”

The Greek word Baptize means “to immerse or dip under the water.”

It best symbolizes a burial and resurrection!

The founders of denominations agree:

Martin Luther: “I would have those who are baptized to be entirely immersed, as the work imports and the mystery signifies.”

John Calvin: “The word ‘baptize’ signifies to immerse. It is certain that immersion was the practice of the ancient church.”

John Wesley: “Buried with Him, alludes to baptized by immersion according to the custom of the early church.”

IV. Who should be baptized

Every person who has BELIEVED in Christ.

Those who accepted his message were baptized, and about three thousand were added to their number that day. Acts 2:41

Simon himself believed and was baptized. And he followed Philip everywhere, astonished by the great signs and miracles he saw. Acts 8:13

But when they believed Philip as he preached the good news of the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women. Acts 8:12

What about Children? Age is not the issue, belief in Christ is.

Some churches practice a “baptism of confirmation” for children. This ceremony is intended to be a covenant between the parents and God on the behalf of the child. The parents promise to raise their child in the faith until the child is old enough to make his own personal confession of Christ. This custom began about 300 years after the bible was completed and is not a practice taught in the Bible.

This is not what Baptism found in the Bible is about. "Confirmation" is not actually Baptism at all. The Baptism found in the bible is a public expression of our commitment to Jesus – which outwardly demonstrates (draws a picture of) his burial and resurrection. At Gladeville Baptist Church, it is a membership requirement that every member must have been baptized the way Jesus demonstrated, even though many of us were "confirmed" as children.

V. When should I be baptized?

As soon as you have believed!

*Those who accepted his message were baptized . . . that day. Acts 2:41
Then Philip began with that very passage of Scripture and told him the good news about Jesus. As they traveled along the road, they came to some water and the eunuch said, "Look, here is water. Why shouldn't I be baptized?" And he gave orders to stop the chariot. Then both Philip and the eunuch went down into the water and Philip baptized him. Acts 8:35-38*

There is no reason to delay. As soon as you have decided to receive Christ into your life, you can and should be baptized. If you wait until you are "perfect," you will never feel "good enough."

Can my family be baptized together?

Yes! If each family member understands fully the meaning of baptism, and each one has personally placed his/her trust in Christ for salvation, we encourage families to be baptized at the same time. It is a wonderful expression of commitment. Young children who wish to be baptized are asked to meet with our Pastor for a pre-baptism conversation. We also offer a class called "Now That I'm a Christian" designed for children.

However, it is important to remember that baptism is a personal statement of faith, not a family tradition. It is usually not wise to delay your baptism while waiting on other family members to accept Christ, particularly children. This puts undue pressure on them, and delays your obedience.

What should I wear when I am baptized? GBC provides the apparel for your baptism.

Will I have to memorize anything? No

Just before you are baptized the pastor will ask you a question such as, "Have you professed Jesus Christ as Your Lord and Savior?" You will simply say, "Yes, I have," or simply, "Yes."

The Meaning of the Lord's Supper

Jesus never asked His disciples to remember His birth. But He did instruct them to remember His death and resurrection. He gave the church two visible symbols (called "ordinances") as reminders of His death. These two ordinances are: Baptism and the Lord's Supper. The Lord's Supper is an object lesson that represents a great spiritual truth for believers.

I. What Is the Lord's Supper?

1 Corinthians 11:23-26

1. It Is a **SIMPLE ACT**

The Lord Jesus, on the night he was betrayed, took bread . . . (V. 23)

2. It Is a **REMINDER**

. . . and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, "This is my body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of me." (V. 24)

3. It Is a **SYMBOL**

In the same way, after supper he took the cup, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood; do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me." (V.)25

4. It Is a **STATEMENT OF FAITH**

For whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes. 1 Corinthians 11:26

II. Who Should Take the Lord's Supper?

Only those who already **BELIEVE** (Mark 14:22-26)

For anyone who eats and drinks without recognizing the body of the Lord eats and drinks judgment on himself. 2 Corinthians 11:29

III. How Do I Prepare Myself for the Lord's Supper?

Therefore, whoever eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of sinning against the body and blood of the Lord. A man ought to examine himself before he eats of the bread and drinks of the cup. 1 Corinthians 11:27-28

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| 1. Self- Examination | 1 Corinthians 11:27 |
| 2. Confessing my sins | 1 John 1:9 |
| 3. Recommitment | Romans 12:1 |
| 4. Restoring Relationships | Matthew 5:23-24 |

IV. When and how often should we observe the Lord's Supper?

Jesus never said when or how often believers should observe the Lord's Supper. He instituted it on a Thursday night. Since it is a supper, it may seem more appropriate to observe it at an evening service.

What it means to be a member at GBC

I. Introduction

Membership DEFINES who you are

Difference between “attenders” and “members” can be described in one word: COMMITMENT

- commitment to Christ – a believer
- commitment to the body of Christ – a BAPTIZED believer

II. Four Reasons for a Formal Commitment to Membership

A. A BIBLICAL reason: Christ was committed to the church

“... Christ loved the church, and gave His life for it.” Ephesians 5:25

B. A CULTURAL reason: antidote to our society

We live in an age where few want to be committed to anything ... a generation of “church shoppers and church hoppers”

Commitment...

- Shows an “unselfish,” “non-me-ism” attitude
- Builds character and a sense of responsibility
- shows maturity

C. A PRACTICAL reason: it defines who can be counted on

- sports teams have rosters
- schools have enrollment
- businesses have payrolls
- armies have an enlistment
- countries have a census, and require voter registrations

D. A PERSONAL reason: it produces spiritual growth

The Bible places a major emphasis on Christians being accountable to each other for spiritual growth. You cannot be accountable when you are not committed to a specific church family.

III. What is expected of me as a member?

- We never ask our members to do more than the Bible teaches.
- We only expect members to do what the Bible expects of every Christian.

Our Membership Covenant: "Having received Christ as my Lord and Savior and been baptized, I now feel led by the Holy Spirit to unite with the GBC church family, I commit myself to God and the other members of the church to:

A. Protect the UNITY of my church

...by acting in LOVE toward other members

"So let us concentrate on the things which make for harmony, and on the growth of our fellowship together." Romans 15:19

"Live in complete harmony with each other – even with the attitude of Christ toward each other." 1 Peter 1:22

...by refusing to GOSSIP, or speak hurtfully

"Do not let unwholesome talk come out of our mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs." Ephesians 4:29

...by FOLLOWING the leaders

"Obey your leaders and submit to their authority. They keep watch over you as men who must give an account. Obey them so that their work will be a joy, not a burden, for that would be an advantage to you."
Hebrews 13:17

B. Share the RESPONSIBILITY for my church

...by praying for its GROWTH and well-being

"To the church...we always thank God for you and pray for you constantly." 1 Thessalonians 1:2

...by inviting the UNCHURCHED to attend

"Go out...and urge anyone you can find to come in, so that My House will be full." Luke 14:23

...by warmly WELCOMING those who come

So warmly welcome each other into the church, just as Christ has warmly welcomed you; then God will be glorified. Romans 15:7 (TLB)

C. Serve Christ through the MINISTRY of my church

...by **DISCOVERING** my gifts and talents

"Serve one another with the particular gifts God has given each of you..."
1 Peter 4:10

...by being **EQUIPPED** for service by my pastors

"God gave...some to be pastor and teachers to prepare God's people for works of ministry, so that the body of Christ may be built up..."
Ephesians 4:11-12

...by developing a **SERVANT** heart

"Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others. Your attitude should be the same as that of Jesus Christ...who took on the very nature of a servant." Phil. 2:3-4, 7

D. Support the TESTIMONY (message and image) of my Church

...by **ATTENDING** faithfully

"Let us not give up the habit of meeting together ...but let us encourage one another." Hebrews 10:25

...by living a **GODLY** life

"But whatever happens, make sure that your everyday life is worthy of the gospel of Christ." Phil 1:27

...by **GIVING** regularly

"Each of you, on the first day of the week, should set aside a specific some of money in proportion to what you have earned and use it for an offering." 1 Cor. 16:2

"A tenth of the produce of the land, whether grain or fruit, belongs to the LORD and must be set apart to him as holy. Lev 27:30 (NLT)

If you desire to become a “member” of the Glade Church, we receive members in the following manner:

- By receiving believer's baptism (i.e. immersion) by which you are saying that you have received Christ.
- By “statement” that you have already received Christ and have received believers baptism.
- By simple transfer of membership from another Baptist fellowship.
- Note: If you are a believer and you are coming from a church that does not practice baptism by immersion, you may join our church by simply being baptized here.

Some of this material was written by Rick Warren at Saddleback Church and has been adapted by Craig Webb and the Gladeville Staff for use at Gladeville Baptist Church. Permission to reproduce this material does not extend beyond this publication.