

Qualifications for Baptism or Church Membership



Elder Council Position Paper

Qualifications for Baptism or Church Membership

We believe that the Bible teaches only believers and all believers should be baptized subsequent to salvation. While the Scripture does affirm church membership, it does not provide a list of specific qualifications for church membership, with the exceptions of salvation and a godly life.

Baptism

1. Scripture teaches that only saved people should be baptized (*Matthew 28:19; Acts 2:41*).
2. Scripture teaches that every saved person should be baptized (*Matthew 28:19; Acts 2:41; 8:26–36*).
3. There are biblical indications that children can be baptized (*Acts 11:14; 16:15, 31–33; 18:8*).
4. There does seem to be some age at which a person becomes accountable for his/her sins (*2 Samuel 12:23; Romans 7:9*) and needs to receive Christ, and thus baptism.
5. The church must be careful to baptize only those people who are truly saved (*Matthew 28: 18–19; Acts 2:41; 8:12, 36–39; 10:47–48*).
6. The church must avoid establishing rules regarding baptism, which the Bible itself does not make (*Acts 15:10; Galatians 5:1*).
7. Since the Bible does not establish a specific minimum or maximum age when a person can be saved, the church must not establish a specific minimum or maximum age for a person to be baptized.
8. Since the Bible does not give any other qualification for baptism, other than it happen subsequently to salvation, no other qualification should be added by the church.

Church Membership

1. The Bible supports the concept of church membership (*Romans 12:4–5; 1 Corinthians 12:12–27*).
2. Since the Bible does not mention anyone who was saved and refused to be baptized, but does give many examples of people who were saved and then baptized, we can assume that saved and baptized individuals were members of the church (*Acts 2:41; 8:12; 36–39; 10:47–48; 16:14–15; 31–33; 18:8*).
3. There are no specific qualifications mentioned in Scripture for church membership other than salvation.
4. The church must be careful to accept only saved people into membership.
5. The church must avoid establishing specific minimum or maximum ages at which a person can become a member.
6. Scripture does teach that church membership should be restricted from those persons who practice lifestyle sin, sow seeds of disunity, or commit certain sexual sins (*Matthew 18; 15–18; Romans 16:17; 1 Corinthians 5:1–2, 11*).



Elder Council Position Paper
Henderson Hills Baptist Church