

Qualifications For Baptism

- I. Sometimes the question arises as to why a minister of Jesus Christ does not automatically baptize a petitioner. This study addresses that issue.
- II. To be qualified for baptism according to Scripture, there are some absolute requirements to be met.
 - A. One must be a penitent believer who confesses sin and confesses Christ.
MAT 3:6-11; MAR 16:15-16; ACT 2:38-41; 8:12, 36-37; 16:14-15, 31-34; 18:8; 19:1-5.
 1. This demands a voluntary, volitional act based upon knowledge.
 2. This excludes any who do not or cannot consciously believe the gospel.
 3. This excludes any who are not ashamed of sin and repent of sin: humility.
JER 31:18-19; JOB 42:6; ROM 6:21 c/w JAM 4:6-10.
 - B. One must have a proper belief: that Jesus Christ is the Son of God as revealed in the Scriptures. **ACT 8:36-38; MAR 16:15-16 c/w 1CO 15:1-4; ROM 1:4.**
 1. A petitioner's faith may be lacking in many areas but it cannot be lacking in this.
 2. There is obviously teaching/catechizing which precedes a response of faith.
MAT 28:19-20 c/w ROM 10:16-17.
 3. The best candidate for biblical baptism is an informed, convicted and persuaded believer. **ct/w ACT 26:27-28.**
 - C. The above are the "bare bones" foundational principles of Christianity. **HEB 6:1-2.**
- III. Scripture teaches us that some get into the church for the wrong reasons.
 - A. Some profess faith and are baptized for personal advantage or power. **ACT 8:9-24.**
 - B. Some pretend to have a genuine interest in God's house. **EZR 4:1-5.**
 - C. Some deliberately infiltrate churches to undermine them, exploit them or advance their own agenda. **2PE 2:1-3; JUDE 1:4; GAL 2:4.**
 - D. Some get into the church under false assumptions about their "righteousness."
MAT 22:11-12 c/w REV 19:7-8; PHIL 3:8-9.
 - E. Others profess faith and are baptized for various flawed reasons: it's trendy, mate-shopping, family connection, looking for handouts, politics, business connections, etc.
 - F. It is therefore prudent for the minister of Christ to vet petitioners and take into consideration both the weakness and the wickedness of men. **MAT 10:16-17.**
- IV. The minister of Christ functions as God's porter for His house. **MAR 13:34.**
 - A. porter: One who has charge of a door or gate, esp. at the entrance of a fortified town or of a castle or other large building, a public institution, etc.; a gate-keeper, door-keeper, janitor.
 1. In the O.T., there were "...doorkeepers for the ark" (**1CH 15:23-24**).
 2. The porter/doorkeeper did not cleanse men but determined who was clean or unclean and so allowed or barred entrance. **2CH 23:19.**
 - B. The minister/porter is a watchman on guard against potential incoming trouble and would be nothing but a hireling if he abandons his responsibilities.
MAR 13:35-37; JOH 10:12-13.
 - C. This is a solemn responsibility of Christ's minister and he would be a fool to adopt a loose proving policy which would invite sin and trouble into the church unnecessarily.
 - D. The church is to be a communion of true saints not in fellowship with false religion or the works of darkness. **2CO 6:14-18; 1CO 10:20-21; EPH 5:3-11.**
 1. A minister must therefore be on guard against any petitioner who might have a continued infection of soul that would infect others and/or bring reproach upon the name of Jesus Christ. **2TI 2:15-18.**

2. Occasionally, an insincere person may be baptized but when exposed, he must be marked and excluded. **ACT 8:18-23; ROM 16:17-18.**
 3. The Lord's Table is for those redeemed from iniquities and who have power over iniquities, not under their power. **TIT 2:14 c/w 1CO 5:9-11.**
 4. Concerning the Lord's Table, the minister of Christ acts as both porter and *steward* (An official who controls the domestic affairs of a household, supervising the service of his master's table...). **TIT 1:7.**
- V. It is appropriate for a minister to discourage a petitioner who professes to become a disciple of Jesus Christ.
- A. Christ even discouraged His apostles. **JOH 6:66-69.**
 - B. Christ discouraged professors to sift out the chaff.
LUK 9:57-62; 14:26-35; MAR 10:17-22.
 - C. Petitioners for baptism should be made aware of the cost and scope of their professed commitment: faithful until death. **REV 2:10; 12:11.**
 - D. This approach is not only for the sake of church purity, but also for the sake of the petitioner who, if not completely and consciously committed to follow Christ, could fall away and invite greater judgment. **2PE 2:20-22; HEB 10:26-27; 38-39.**