# FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH ORILE IGANMU

*Praising the Father, Raising His Children, Reaching the World*

# Basis of Church Membership

**Preacher:** Rev. Olubayo Afolabi Akanmu

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**Scripture:** Acts 2:37-39

**Description:** This sermon explains what makes any individual member of the body of Christ. Anyone who does not have these qualifications cannot be called a Christian. It encourages every sinner to repent, get baptized and receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

*"All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness" - 2 Timothy 3:16*

## Sermon Transcript

Introduction

Every organization, society or institution has requirements for its membership which prospective members must meet up before they can be admitted into such institution. For instance, admission into studentship in any institution has its requirement and process which culminates in the issuance of matriculation number to the admitted students. Upon the receipt of the matriculation number the individual becomes a Bonafide student of the institution. Without the matric number there is no studentship, no matter how long an individual stays in the school campus. The church is not different. It has its requirements for membership. Apostle Peter stated the basis of church membership in Acts 2:38. Let’s engage the text and discover how significant each of them is.

Qualifications for Church Membership (Acts 2:38)

The church of Christ is one irrespective of location or doctrine. The submission of Apostle Peter in this text is applicable to the church of Christ universal. However, each of the denominations of the Christian church has its peculiar requirements for membership. Even within the same denomination, there are areas of uniqueness to individual local churches as to how new members are being integrated into their church membership. Now, we start from the general and thereafter look into some peculiarities.

General Requirements into Church Membership

1. Repentance: Jesus came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance. (Luke 5:32). Isaiah says, “Let the wicked forsake their ways and the unrighteous their thoughts. Let them turn to the Lord, and he will have mercy on them. (55:7) Ezekiel 18:30 calls on sinners to “Repent! Turn from all your offenses, so sin will not be your downfall.” Jesus in Mark 1:15 says, “The time has come… The kingdom of God has come near. Repent and believe the good news.” Peter echoes this in Acts 3:19. “Repent, then, and turn to God, so that your sins may be wiped out, that times of refreshing may come from the Lord.” Christians are not sinners. They are repented sinners. You are not a Christian if you are still living sinful life. You must repent.

2. Baptism: Repentance leads to baptism. Every believer must be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ (Acts 2:38). Jesus commanded his disciples in Matthew 28:19-20 to “…make disciples of all nations and baptize them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.” In the same vein, Jesus in Mark 16:16 says, “Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned.” New members put on Christ when they are baptized (Galatians 3:27). No one can disqualify a repentant sinner from being baptized (Acts 10:47-48). Some argue that baptism does not save. Yes. Because there are people who were baptized without salvation experience.

3. Gift of the Holy Spirit: The Holy Spirit can be likened to a student’s matric number. With the matric number the student can be easily identified for both benefits and punishment due to him/her. No one can be a true Christian without the indwelling and infilling of the Holy Spirit. This is the confirmation of God’s presence in the life of every believer. Acts 1:8; 1 Corinthians 2:12.

Conclusion

School management, not prospective students determine admission requirements. Jesus determines the requirements for church membership. No one can change it. Nothing can replace these requirements. If you are not qualified you are not qualified. Your membership in a local assembly is nothing if you do not belong to the church of Christ universal. Are you a member of Christ’s Church? If not, repent now and be baptized and receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. God bless you.