

A Statement on the Voting Age of Members

A request was made of the elders to clarify the voting age of members.

Having reviewed this issue, we note the following.

Background Information:

1. Membership at GFC is based on an examined profession of faith and repentance, as well as public, believers' baptism.
2. All persons applying for membership are examined by the elders (a separate examination from the one prior to baptism) at which time the membership requirements are explained to the prospective new member.
3. The elders only recommend to the membership those persons who, in our evaluation, meet the membership criteria.
4. The current membership has the right to not vote into the membership any prospective members, even once they have been recommended by the elders.
5. GFC is not in the habit of baptizing anyone of a younger age. We do not set a minimum age for baptism, but we do encourage children and young teens to allow sufficient time for family and church to distinguish between genuine faith and things like spiritual awakening, moralism or others forms of false belief.
6. All things considered, it is very unlikely that anyone who is very young will be baptized by the elders of GFC, making it impossible for them to join as members.

Position:

7. Therefore, we do not feel it is necessary or helpful to set a minimum age for voting for members. If someone has given sufficient evidence to be baptized and to join the membership, then they will have been converted, given the gift of the Holy Spirit and thus have all they need to be a member.
8. Obviously, a younger member may not be as schooled in some of the more technical, theological or financial dealings of a church – but *age* does not necessarily result in wisdom (think of Job's first 3 counsellors), *youth* does not necessarily result in inability (think of Job's last counsellor) and *contribution* is not a qualification for membership anyway. We believe there is a place in the membership for individuals who are spiritually immature, mentally-challenged (by injury, genetics, age, disease, etc) and physically-impaired. We do not bring men and women into membership because of what they are able to do, but because of what Christ has done in them.