

# Church Government

## Principles and Applications

### *Required Texts:*

- Waters, Guy Prentiss, *How Jesus Runs the Church*, P & R Publishing Company, Phillipsburg, NJ, 2011
- Witherow, Thomas, *The Apostolic Church, Which is it?*, Free Presbyterian Publications, Glasgow, Scotland, 1856
- *The Book of Church Order*, The Orthodox Presbyterian Church, Willow Grove, PA, 2011

### *Other Readings:*

- *The Westminster Confession of Faith*, Chapters 25, 30 and 31, The Orthodox Presbyterian Church, Willow Grove, PA, 2005
- Bannerman, James, *The Church of Christ* (two volumes), Banner of Truth, Carlisle, PA
- Kuiper, R B, *The Glorious Body of Christ*, Banner of Truth, Carlisle, PA, 1967
- Murray, Iain H, *The Reformation of the Church*, Banner of Truth, Carlisle, PA, 1965
- Reed, Kevin, *Biblical Church Government*, Presbyterian Heritage Publications, 1983

### *Introductory Matters:*

Structure of the class

Some thoughts on what we have in the Bible:

We have principles, not details

Why

Examples

Relate this to ecclesiology

Relate this to polity

How important is the issue of church government?

Salvation is not dependent upon it

Scripture is a perfect whole. Take something away as being unimportant and you no longer have a perfect whole. See 2 Timothy 3:16.

Does a church have a government? Can a government exist that does not have a form?

What does the word "church" mean?

Do not use etymology

Primary, civil sense: Acts 19:32

An assembly of the people of God, a society of Christians.

Colossians 4:15

Acts 11:22

Acts 7:38

Hebrews 2:12 (compare Psalm 22:22)

1 Corinthians 12:28; Ephesians 1:22f; Matthew 16:18

Ephesians 5:25

Acts 9:31

The plural versus the singular: 1 Corinthians 1:2; Galatians 1:2. The implications of Acts 9:31

## Government of the church

The church is a kingdom. Who is the head (king) of the church?

What are the implications of John 18:36? There are three parts to a kingdom: the king, the subjects, the laws

Who makes the laws? What is the church the task of church rulers? Are there church rulers (Hebrews 13:17)?

What do we see in WCF 20:2? Why are the ruling bodies in Presbyterian churches called, "courts"?

The church in the apostles' days had what form of government? We don't have a detailed description.

The course plan: See the last three paragraphs of chapter one in Witherow.

What offices does Witherow list at the beginning of chapter two?