

INTRODUCTION

1. Evangelicalism's deficient emphasis on churchmanship.
2. Mt 18:20 *gathered* [sunago] *in My name* - Jms 2:2 *assembly*
3. Mt 28:18-20 Jesus' definition of *gathered in my name* [Mt 18:20]. Jesus' agenda - *I will build My church* [Mt 16:18].
4. Metaphors: NCov Israel; Temple; Family; Body
5. 3 marks: 1] preach; 2] ordinances [bapt/LT]; 3] discipline. Polity: delineates a group [organizes & operates]. Polity; policy; politics - polis.

1st: Our Polity Defines Who We Are as a Church

1. GCBC's Polity = Constitution
2. Art III: Our purpose defines us; we do what are.

2nd: Our Polity Delineates Our Membership

1. Article V Sect 1 - identity of members
2. Mt 16:13-20 confess Jesus as divine Messiah; delegated w/ heavenly authority
Baptism & Lord's Table are crucial.
 - i. Jesus' name is at stake [IIIrd] - Ps 115:1-2
 - ii. Johnathan Leeman: bapt = birth certificate & LT = citizenship [Phil 3:20]
 - iii. *Keys* - admission & exclusion: live under rule of King Jesus.

3rd: Our Polity Defends Us From False Doctrines Who We Are as a Church

1. Polity protects from false teachers & errant doct. A20:29-20; 2Pt2:1; Jd 1:3
 - i. Analogy of Scripture [of Faith] - Scripture interprets Scripture - LBC 1:9
 - ii. *Handed down* = tradition. 1C11:2 delivered ; 2Th3:6 received; 2Th2:15
Oral tradition incorporated into Scripture = same content as preached
2. All churches have a tradition/liturgy. Carl Trueman - *Creedal Imperative* p13. We are grateful for gifted preachers - esp'ly confessional: LBC - 1T 3:15.

4th: Our Polity Demands That We Submit to Jesus' Authority

1. Polity directs congregation to recognize & receive Christ's gifts of leaders. Men: issue is authority not intelligence - Isa 3:12 [juvenile/feminine].
2. 1Thes 5:11-14 dynamic: leaders lead & people receive qualified leaders.
 - i. Leaders must be submitted to Christ's authority revealed in Scripture.
 - ii. Members submit to Biblical authority: be teachable: Hb 13:17; 1Ptr 5:1-5
 - iii. Diotrephes in 3Jn; 2C 11:20 congregation tolerated abusive false leaders.

5th: Our Polity Demands That We Mature as Christians

1. Churchmanship stimulates ind & corporate growth - A2:42
2. Hb 10:23-25 *assembling* - truth & love are found together.
 - i. Exercise of gifts - see 1C12:7
 - ii. How to discern your gift? Love - see need & meet need.
 - iii. Hb 5:12 we shld not be content to plateau, even with legitimate limitations - v13-14
3. Polity encourages us to mature. Eph 4:11-16 discipleship, sanctification, service. To be a biblical Christian is to be a churchman.
 - i. Leeman *Bapt Fndtns* p16: "Want to act like a Christian? Fulfill your church responsibilities... a church member's job is to know the gospel, to only support teachers who teach the gospel, to live by the gospel in word & deed, to help other church membs to do the same & to call non-Christian neighbors to the obedience of repentance & faith in Christ the Savior-King."
 - ii. Church-membership is not a matter of personal preference. It is our expression of faith & love for Jesus the Christ.
4. Longstanding members
5. Christian non-members