

Ecclesiology – The Church

Lesson Objectives

Upon completion of this lesson, you should be able to

- recognize the definitions of the church.
- understand the uses of *ekklesia*.
- describe the origin of the church.
- recognize biblical metaphors associated with the church.

The Very Idea of the Church

We are familiar with the term *church*; we are accustomed to the ubiquity of “church buildings”; we are inured to the titles of various denomination (Roman Catholic Church, Anglican Church, United Methodist Church, Presbyterian Church). We are so used to “hearing” and “seeing” the word *church* that we seldom stop to think about this very unique institution, the church of Jesus Christ!

The church is the most unique institution on the face of the earth! It is not exactly like anything else! It is not a business; it is not a school; it is not exactly like a sports team; it is not like a political entity (nation, governmental body like congress); it is not a venue for entertainment.

The church belongs to Jesus Christ: He predicted it (Matt. 16:18); He is building it (Matt. 16:18); He died for it; He preserves it; He is preparing it; and He will return for it! (Eph. 5:25, 29; 1 Thess. 4:13-18). It is called “The body of Christ” and He is its head (Col. 1:18; Eph. 1: 22-23; 1 Cor. 12:13; Eph. 4:12).

The Church Defined

In English

The English term *church*—along with the Scottish word *kirk* and the German *kirche*—is derived from the Greek *kuriakon* (1 Cor. 11:20; Rev. 1:10), which is the neuter adjective of *kurios* (“lord”) and means “belonging to the Lord.”

In English, the term has a variety of uses (Saucy 11):

- A place for meetings
- A local congregation
- The universal body of believers
- A particular denomination

In Hebrew

In Hebrew, the term *qahal* “means simply an assembly, convocation or congregation and can be used for almost any type of gathering of people” (Jer. 31:8; Dan. 9:10; Neh. 5:13; Saucy 13).

The Septuagint translates this term most often with *ekklesia*.

In Greek

The Greek term for “church” in the New Testament is *ekklesia*. It comes from two Greek terms: The preposition *ek*, which means “out,” and *kaleo*, which means “to call or to summon.” Originally, “it did not refer to the people but to

the meeting: in other words, when the people were not assembled formally they were not referred to as an *ekklesia*” (Ryrie 455). The basic meaning of *ekklesia* is “assembly.”

Ecclesiology—The Church

Uses of “*Ekklesia*”

In Secular Greek

Ekklesia was a term used in secular Greek settings for the “assembly of the citizens summoned by the crier” for community business or for a proclamation to be delivered to the whole of the citizenry. “The word came to stand for any assembly, regardless of *its* constituents or manner of convening.” The term *ekklesia* in Acts 19:32, 39, 41 reflects this use. Notice, there is no clear indication that this term was ever used for a “religious assembly.”

In the New Testament

In addition to the “secular use” of *ekklesia* found in Acts 19, the term is used in Acts 7:38 of the “congregation” of Israel and in Hebrews 2:12, which is a citation of Psalm 22:22. None of these uses refers to the New Testament church.

Of the total 114 occurrences of *ekklesia* in the New Testament, only three are found in the Gospels; the term is used 111 times in the Epistles. The term is found in two texts in the Gospels (Matt. 16:18 and Matt. 18:17 (where it occurs twice)).

In Matthew 18:17, the reference is to the congregation of Israel.

In Matthew 16:18, the term *ekklesia* is used in the technical sense for “the church.” This is the passage where Jesus predicts, “I will build My church.”

Several key points arise from this prediction:

- This is the first “technical use” of the term *ekklesia* in the New Testament.
- This clearly indicates something that is yet future.
- This clearly states that the builder of the church is Jesus Christ.

Saucy argues that several “early uses” of the term in Paul’s early letters (1 Thess. 1:1; 2:14; 2 Thess. 1:1) still carry the more general sense of “assembly.” Soon, however, “*ekklesia* developed into its full technical sense and became so completely identified with the specific Christian assembly that the term took on that particular meaning itself and could stand for that assembly without being confused with others. The majority of the New Testament uses have this technical meaning” (Saucy 16).

Two Broad Uses of *Ekklesia* in the New Testament

The Universal Church

The term *ekklesia* is sometimes used to refer to what is called “the universal church.” For instance, in Ephesians 1:22-23: “Here the assembly is the church, which is Christ’s body. The character of this group is 100 percent regenerated and the reason for its existence is the baptizing ministry of the Holy Spirit, which places those who believe into the body of Christ (1 Cor. 12:13). This is the church universal, including every believer in every place on earth and those who are {in Christ} in heaven” (Heb. 12:23; Ryrie 456).

Here the emphasis is not on physical proximity but “spiritual unity.” The *ekklesia* is “all those spiritually united to Christ, the Head of the church (Saucy 16).

The universal church is sometimes called the “invisible” church. However, the New Testament never speaks of the invisible church. Furthermore there are “visible” parts of the universal church—living (genuine) believers!

So, the universal church consists of:

- All the saved in the church age: Peter and Paul, Priscilla and Aquila, Augustine, Luther, Calvin, Wesley, Edwards, Moody, Billy Graham, and you.
- All who have been baptized by the Holy Spirit
- All who are members of the body of Christ

“A particular emphasis of the universal church is its unity, whether Jews or Gentiles, all together compose one body, in unity produced by the Holy Spirit (Gal. 3:28; Eph. 4:4; Enns 348).

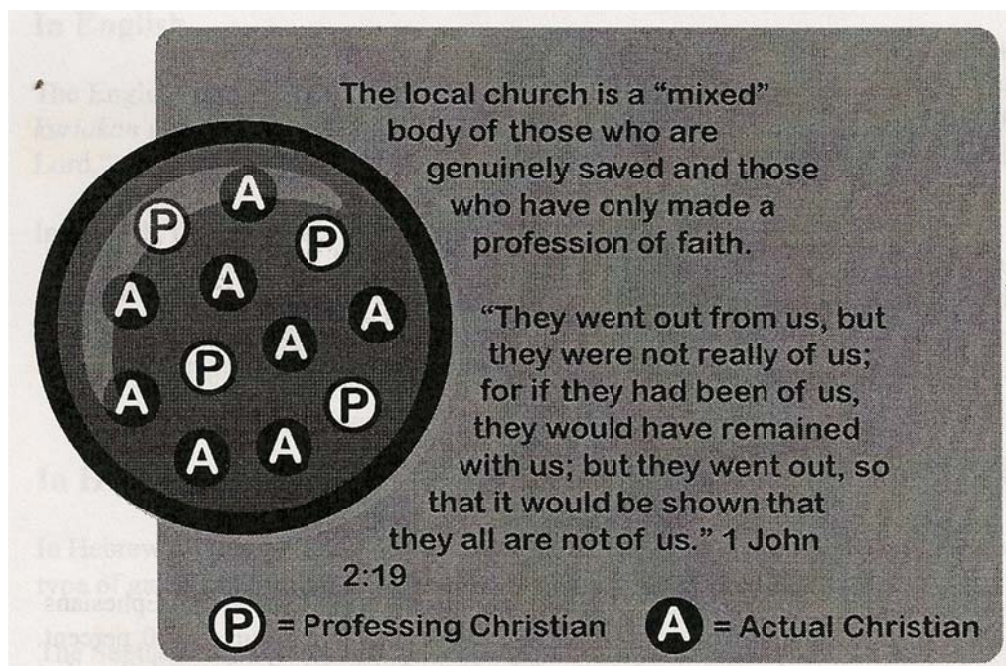
The Local Church

The term *ekklesia* is sometimes used to refer to what is called the “local church.” For instance, look at Romans 16:5; 1 Corinthians 16:19; Colossians 4:15; and Philemon 2: “Here are groups of people very much localized.”

- Churches met in houses (Rom. 15:5; Philem. 2).
- Churches were identified by geography (Acts 8:1; 1 Cor. 1:2; Gal. 1:2).

“The nature of the people, at least in New Testament times, would have been those who professed to have accepted Christ as their Savior. In some instances those who only professed but who did not possess salvation would have been associated with local churches (1 John 2:19; Rev. 3:20), but to be Christian churches, the people would have had to make a Christian profession” (Ryrie 457).

The Local Church



So, the local church is a “mixed body” of those who are genuinely saved and those who have only made a profession of salvation.

The Origin of the Church

“Much disagreement exists over when the church began.”

Some who interpret the church as essentially God’s covenant people of all ages go back to the call of Abraham and the covenant made with him for the beginning of the church. Others go back even earlier to include all those who exercised faith in the promise of God, beginning with Adam.

Even among those who understand the church as a distinct New Testament work of God there is considerable variation. Some suggest Jesus Himself began the church while here on earth. Others, while recognizing the fact that

the disciples of Jesus did constitute the nucleus of the church, believe that the church did not become a reality until the coming of the Spirit at Pentecost.

Ultradispensationalism, however, delays the inauguration of the church that exists today until the time of the apostle Paul” (Saucy 57).

The Evidence

The evidence of Scripture strongly indicates that the church is not found in the Old Testament and that it began on the Day of Pentecost (Acts 2).

The Church Was Promised

The church was promised by Christ first in Matthew 16:18; this indicates it was not yet in existence; “I *will* build my church.”

The Church Is Formed

The church is formed by “the baptism of the Spirit,” which began on the Day Pentecost (Acts 2:1; 1 Cor. 12:13) follow this line of reasoning:

- The church is the “body of Christ” (Col. 1:18, 24).
- The “body of Christ” is formed by Spirit baptism (1 Cor. 12:13).
- John the Baptist said specifically that he was not baptizing people with/in the Spirit (Luke 3:16).
- Jesus told the disciples that this baptizing work was (future and) “not many days from now” (Acts 1:5; Jesus ascended and ten days later was the Day of Pentecost).

“Since Spirit baptism is necessary for the formation of the church, and since Spirit baptism did not begin historically until the Day of Pentecost, the church did not begin historically until the Day of Pentecost” (Showers 172-173).

Peter’s Statement

Peter’s statement in Acts 11:15-16 refers to “the beginning.” Since this beginning is related to the baptizing work of the Spirit in Acts 2, it is to be understood that the beginning of the church happened in Acts 2.

Paul's Teaching

Paul's teaching concerning the "mystery" (Rom. 16: 25-26; 1 Cor. 2:7-10; Eph. 4:4-5, 9; Col. 1:26-27) indicates the church did not begin before the Day of Pentecost.

According to this line of reasoning:

- A "mystery" in the New Testament indicates something previously hidden which has now been revealed (Rom. 16:25-26).
- The "mystery" of Ephesians 3:1-7 was "that there would be a period of time in which believing Gentiles would be equal heirs of God's blessings, equal members of the same body and equal partakers of the promise in Christ with believing Jews (v. 6)" (Showers 174).
- This "mystery" was part of God's "eternal purpose" (v. 11) and thus, known to Him, but not made known to men in previous generations until it was revealed "to the holy apostles and (New Testament) prophets" (vv. 3-5). See Ephesians 2:20, which says that the church is founded upon "the apostles and prophets" (speaking of New Testament prophets); so, there could be no church until there were "apostles."
- The "body" (v. 6), which is the concern of this "mystery" is the church (Col. 1:18, 24-27).
- The union established by this "mystery" could not happen before the death and resurrection and ascension of Christ because: it is "the blood of Christ" by which the Gentiles are brought near (Eph. 2:16); it is the broken body of Christ that "abolishes the enmity" between Jew and Gentile and makes them "into one new man establishing peace" (v. 15); it is the ascension that makes possible Christ's position as "head of the body" (Eph. 1:20-23).

In other words, the church **could not** have existed without the foundation of the cross work of Christ (1 Cor. 3:11; Eph. 2:20) and *would not* exist without the present ministries of Christ as Head of the body (Eph. 1:22-23; Col. 1:18):

How much of a "mystery" was the church in the Old Testament? In other words, how much did the Old Testament believers know about it? The answer differs within dispensational thought. In short:

- **Classical Dispensationalism** teaches that the Old Testament taught nothing about the body of Christ, hence, nothing about the church. This was reserved for the revelation given through the apostles and New Testament prophets.
- **Progressive Dispensationalism** teaches that the mystery aspect means that Old Testament believers had a shadowy knowledge that the people of God would someday inhabit a kingdom ruled by church would look like. And it is certainly less knowledge than the Covenant Theologian allows, i.e., a rather full understanding of a suffering, substitutionary redemptive death of the Messiah (Ryrie 132-133).

The Nature of the Church: Biblical Metaphors

What is a metaphor? Remember that we must not use metaphors too literally, as if the church is *actually* a bride (ex: when a nun spiritually "marries" Jesus). Nor can we press the details too closely, as if when we call Jesus a shepherd we go on to say that He "shears" us of sin, or guides us by the "crook" of His Spirit, etc. Rather, we can make meaningful statements about reality, but we must realize it is only an analogy. Ex: Christ is our light in the sense that He guides and illumines us.

The Church as the Branches, Christ the Vine (John 15:1-8)

Old Testament Background—Israel was a vine that God planted but which failed to bear the fruit He desired (Ezek. 15:1-5; 19:10-14; Isa. 5:1-7). Against this failed vine is Christ, the True Vine (John 15:1-8).

The vital, organic nature of the connection:

- The life of the branch is in the vine.
- The life of a believer is “in Christ.”

The productive nature of the connection:

- The branch that “abides” in the vine bears fruit.
- The believer who holds fast to Christ lives a productive spiritual life.

Thus, the major ideas of the metaphor: “The branches receive their life-giving nourishment in their attachment to the vine; as they remain in the vine, they are able to grow and bear fruit” (Enns 351). The church receives its “life-giving nourishment” from Christ and as Christians abide (*Greek—meno* = “to remain,” “stay,” “live”) in Him they “bear fruit.”

The Church as the Flock, Sheep, Christ the Shepherd (John 10)

Old Testament Background—Israel was called a flock (Ps. 80:1; Jer. 13:17), and the LORD was called the “shepherd” (Ps. 23).

The overall picture: sheep are dependent, vulnerable, and prone to wandering; the shepherd feeds, protects, and leads his sheep.

Christ is the “Good Shepherd” who

- owns the Sheep (John 10:27; 21:16; “my sheep”).
- gives His life for the sheep (John 10: 11, 15b).
- knows His sheep (John 10:14, 27).
- leads His sheep (John 10:27).
- preserves His sheep (John 10:27-29).
- cares for his sheep (John 10:12-14).
- rules over His sheep (1 Peter 2:25).
- delegates shepherding to under-shepherds (John 21:16; 1 Peter 5:2).

The sheep have one major responsibility as sheep: submit to the leading and protection of the Shepherd! (Saucy 53).

The Church as “Priesthood” (1 Peter 2:5, 9)

Old Testament Background—Israel was called a “kingdom of priests” in Exodus 19:5-6, but only the Levites could serve as priests. A priest stood primarily to represent the people before God, which was a mediatorial role.

A priest offered sacrifices; Christians are to offer the sacrifices of

- their bodies, that is, themselves wholly (Rom. 12:1).
- their service (Phil. 2:17).
- their praise (Heb. 13:15).

A priest offered prayers and intercession; Christians are to pray

- for all men (1 Tim 2:1-2).
- for leaders.

- for one another (James 5:14-18).
- for special needs.

The Church as a Building, Temple (Eph. 2:20, 21; 1 Peter 2:5)

Old Testament Background—obviously the background of this metaphor is the tabernacle and temple of the Old Testament. Several aspects of the tabernacle and temple lend themselves to illustrate features of the church, such as:

- The tabernacle/temple was the place where God dwelt among His people (cf. Ex. 29:42-45; 40:34-38; 1 Kings 8:12-13). The church is where the Holy Spirit dwells corporately (Eph. 2:21-22) and individually (1 Cor. 3:16-17; 6:19).
- The tabernacle/temple was the place where the service to God was performed by the priests (cf. Leviticus chapters 1-9; 16); in 1 Peter 2:5, the church is the venue for the activities of “a holy priesthood to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God.”

The metaphor of the church as a building yields “several other facets to our understanding of the church” (Saucy 33).

The composition of the building:

- The foundation: Christ (1 Cor. 3:10-11) and the apostles (Eph. 2:20).
- The cornerstone: Christ (1 Peter 2:6-7; cf. Isa. 28:16).
- The living stones: believers (1 Peter 2:5)

The Construction of the building (Eph. 2:20-23):

- Joining the foundation—each stone is built on (epi) the foundation.
- Joining the stones together—each stone is fit together.
- Increasing the structure—believers are “being built up” (1 Peter 2:5).

The point of this metaphor: The church is established on the doctrine about, the truth of, the work of, the person of Christ; and this mutual “foundation” yields a unity of the believers with Him and with one another.

The Church as the Bride of Christ (Eph. 5:21-30; 1 Thess. 4:16-17)

Old Testament Background—Israel was called a bride and spouse of the LORD (Isa. 54:5-6; 62:5; Hos. 2:7).

The Oriental Wedding:

- Betrothal
- Period of preparation
- Retrieval of the bride by the bridegroom
- Wedding
- Marriage feast

Christ and the church:

- Betrothal: In 2 Corinthians 11:2, Christ “ransomed” [“gave Himself for”] His bride (Eph. 5:25; cf. Hos. 2:19; 3:2)
- Period of preparation (Eph. 5:26; Rev. 19:7)
- Retrieval of the bride by the Bridegroom (1 Thess. 4:16-17)

- Wedding (Eph. 5:27)
- Marriage feast (Rev. 19:7-9)

The point of this metaphor: Christ loves His church and cares for her (Eph. 5:25-27). The church is to respond with faithfulness and expectancy until He comes to retrieve her.

The Church as the Body of Christ (Eph. 1:22-23; Col. 1:18; 1 Cor. 12)

This is the most important and descriptive metaphor of the church in the New Testament. In some ways, it goes beyond mere metaphor to describe the actual nature of the church. There are no Old Testament parallels to this metaphor; the body of Christ was unknown in the Old Testament.

Christ the Head (Eph. 1:22-23; 4:15-16; Col. 1:18)

In this capacity Christ is:

- The Sovereign Leader (Eph. 1:22-23; 4:15-16)
- The Source of Life (Col. 1:18; 3:4; Rom. 6:4-5)
- The Sustainer of Life (Col. 2:19)

The Members of the Body (1 Cor. 12; Eph. 4:16-17)

In this capacity believers are

- to seek unity (Eph. 4:16-17; 4:1-6)
- to appreciate diversity (1 Cor. 12:4-6, 12-14; Rom. 12:5)
- to maintain “connection with one another” (1 Cor. 12:7-11 [this is fellowship] 1 John 1:3; 1 Cor. 1:9)
- to “care for” one another” (1 Cor. 12:26 [this is fellowship] Acts 4:32-35)

The members of the body are to love one another (1 Peter 1:22)

- pray for one another (James 5:16)
- edify one another (Rom. 14:19)
- forgive one another (Col. 3:13)
- bear one another’s burdens (Gal. 6:2)
- encourage one another (Rom. 14:19; Col. 3:16)
- comfort one another (1 Thess. 4:18; 5:11)

“In true fellowship Christians don’t judge one another, they don’t bite and devour each other, they don’t provoke, envy, lie to one another, speak evil, or grumble about one another. Since true fellowship builds up, Christians receive one another, are kind and tenderhearted to one another, serve one another, practice hospitality ungrudgingly to one another, admonish, instruct, submit to one another, comfort one another. That is true fellowship of the body. It is life touching life to bring blessing and spiritual growth” (MacArthur 134-135).

Self-Check

In order to gain a firm grasp on the important terms and Scripture references in this course, we suggest that you make flashcards with the following information by writing the term or Scripture reference on one side of a note card and the definition on the other. These activities will assist you in remembering essential course information.

Scripture Memorization Activity

Reference:	Verse:
1 Corinthians 12:13	“For we were all baptized by one Spirit into one body—whether Jews or Greeks, slave or free—and we were all given the one Spirit to drink.”
Romans 16:25-26	“Now to him who is able to establish you by my gospel and the proclamation of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery hidden for long ages past, but now revealed and made known through the prophetic writings by the command of the eternal God, so that all nations might believe and obey him.”
Acts 11:15-16	“As I began to speak, the Holy Spirit came on them as he had come on us at the beginning. Then I remembered what the Lord had said: ‘John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.’”
Matthew 16:18	“And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it.”
Galatians 3:27-28	“...for all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.”

Ecclesiology – Church Government and Ordinances

Objectives

Upon completion of this lesson, you should be able to:

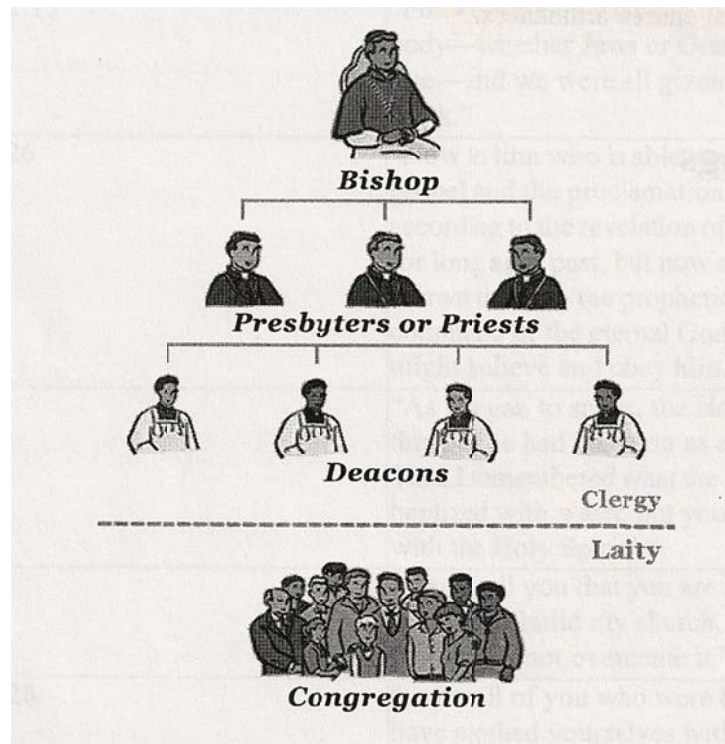
- define the different types of church government.
- express understanding of the roles of church leaders.
- identify various views of church ordinances.

Church Government

While it should never be forgotten that the church is primarily an “organism” (body of Christ), it requires “organization” to function.

Types of Church Government

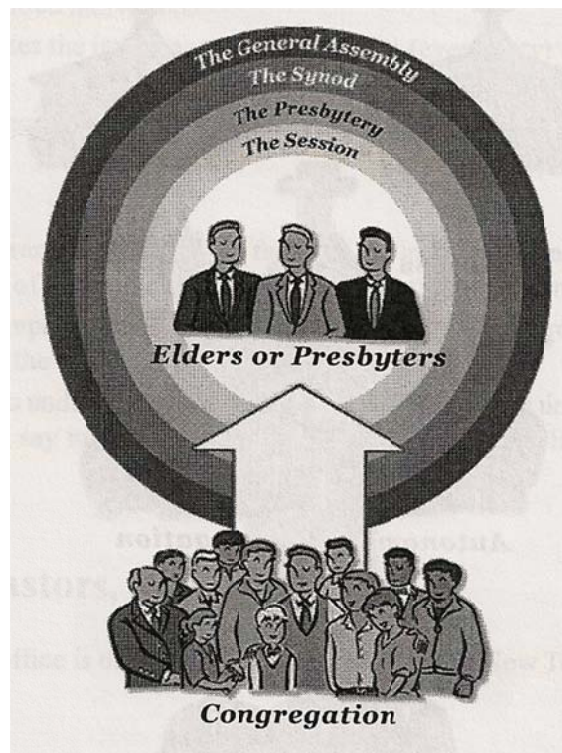
Episcopal Church Government



<i>Origin</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Greek word <i>episkopos</i>, meaning “overseer” (“bishop” in the KJV)• Began in the second century
<i>Various Forms</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Methodist, Anglican (Episcopalian), Lutheran, Roman Catholic, and Eastern Orthodox

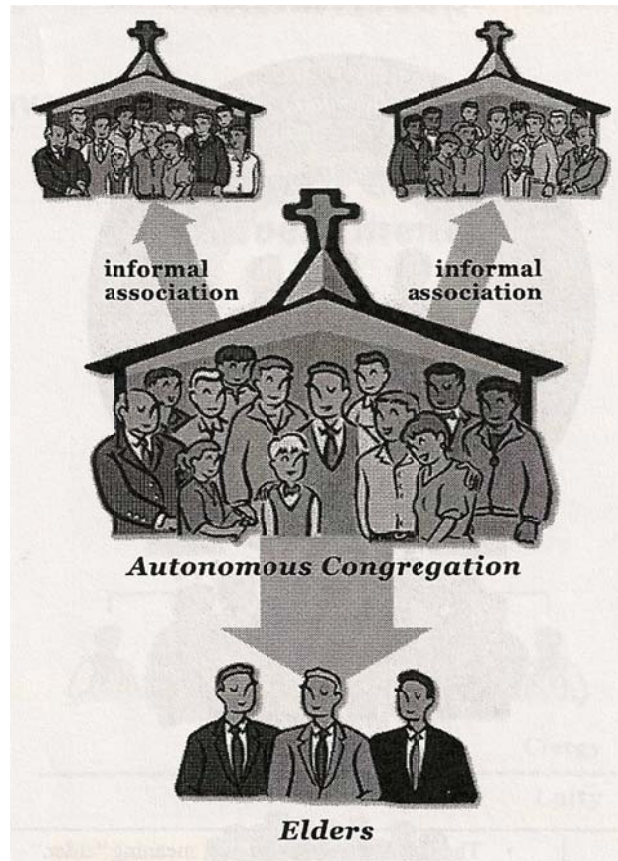
Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A “hierarchical system” with three offices: “bishops, presbyters (priests), and deacons” “The essential concept of this government is that the right to consecrate other bishops and ordain priests and deacons belongs only to the bishops” (Saucy 106). • In Roman Catholicism this authority is derived by “apostolic succession” from the apostle Peter who was (it is claimed) the first Bishop of Rome.
Biblical Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The use of the term <i>episkopos</i> in the New Testament • The prominent position of leaders who really stood out above all the rest, such as Peter in Acts (Gal. 2:11) and of James (Acts 15:13; Gal. 1:19; 2:9)

Presbyterian Church Government



Origin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Greek word <i>presbuteros</i>, meaning “elder.”
Various Forms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presbyterian Church and Reformed Church
Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Authority is placed in the elders (local pastors), who are appointed or elected by the people. Together they form the “session,” the principle officers being the teaching elder. Over the session(s) is the presbytery, “which includes all the ordained ministers or teaching elders and one ruling elder from each local congregation in a given district” (Saucy 112). • Above the presbytery is the synod (a district), and over the synod is the general assembly.
Biblical Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The use of the term <i>presbuteros</i> in the New Testament (Acts 11:30; 14:23; 20:17; 1 Peter 5:1,2) • The meeting in Acts 15 particularly (a presbytery?)

Congregational Church Government



Various Forms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Congregational, Evangelical Free, various Baptists, IFCA, Independent churches, and Non-denominational Bible churches.
Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Government by the local congregation as a democracy (appeal is made to Acts 6) • Authority rests in the hands of the congregation. • Each local congregation is "autonomous" with no other body or board above it except for Christ, the Head of the church. • Local churches may voluntarily fellowship and cooperate with other local churches.
Biblical Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The priesthood of all believers (1 Peter 2:5, 9) • The whole church is involved in the ministry of the church (Mafl. 28:19-20; 1 Cor. 11:2, 20). • The whole church is the final authority in a matter of discipline (Matt. 18:17; 1 Cor. 5:4-5; 2 Cor. 2:6-7).

Evaluation of Types

Each of these forms of church government reflect some important features and potential problems of church government.

Important Features

- *Episcopalianism* emphasizes the importance of carefully choosing the leaders of the local church; the pastors and deacons must be qualified individuals.
- *Presbyterianism* emphasizes the importance of cooperation (even unity) between local churches on matters of doctrine and practice.
- *Congregationalism* emphasizes the role of the individual members and the autonomy of the local church.

Potential Problems

- *Episcopalianism* tends to remove authority so far from the individual members that the ministry becomes concentrated in the hands of a few and the church is “distant” from the individual believer.
- *Presbyterianism* tends to emphasize structures over ministry, and local churches tend to focus on the bureaucracy and political structures of the church.
- *Congregationalism* tends to underappreciate the role of leadership and, at times, allows immature and unspiritual believers to have an equal say in the running of the church with those who are charged with oversight.

Church Leaders

Elders, Overseers, Pastors, and Teacher

The biblical picture of this one office is drawn from a “constellation” of New Testament terms and passages.

Elders

An elder (*presbuteros*) is one who is simply “older”; the term came to indicate one who, by virtue of their maturity and wisdom, exercised leadership in the congregation.

Elders were to:

- pass judgment on matters of doctrine Acts 15:2, 4, 6, 22; 16:2
- Receive reports (Acts 20:17; 21:18)
- Visit the sick (James 5:14-15)
- Care for the flock (1 Peter 5:1-3)
- Some elders were to teach doctrine (1 Tim. 5:17)
- All elders are to be respected (Heb. 13:7, 17)

Overseers

An overseer (*episkopos*) is one who “watches over.” The duties of an overseer were those of a “shepherd” or “pastor” (*poimen*), namely, to feed and lead the sheep.

Overseers were to:

- Care
- Teach

- Lead
- Protect

Terms and concepts overlap:

- 1 Peter 5:1-3 (“elder” in verse 1 and “shepherd” in verse 2)
- Acts 20:17 (elders) and Acts 20:28 (overseers who shepherd)
- Titus 1:5 (elders), and Titus 1:7 (overseer)

Qualifications

- 1 Timothy 3:1-7; Titus 1:5-9

Function/Duties

- Caring, Teaching (1 Tim. 3:2; 4:6, 11)
- Leading, Protecting (Titus 1:9)

Deacons/Deaconesses

Origin

- Greek word *diakonos*, which means “servant,” “minister”
- Many see Acts 6 as the origin of this office.
- “Deaconesses” (Rom. 16:1; 1 Tim. 3:11)

Qualifications

- 1 Timothy 3:8-13

Function/Duties

- Caring for the “mundane” to free up the elders to service
- Spiritual needs (Acts 6:2-4)

“An {ordinance is an} outward rite prescribed by Christ to be performed in His church” (Ryrie 149).

Church Leaders

Baptism

Biblical Theme

“Baptism is associated with forgiveness (Acts 2:38; 22:1), union with Christ (Rom. 6:1-10), making disciples (Matt. 28:19), and repentance (Acts 2:38)” (Ryrie 488).

- Washing of sins/forgiveness (Acts 22:16)

- Union with Christ (Rom. 6:3-4)
- Making disciples (Matt. 28:9)
- Repentance (Acts 2:38)

Various Views

Some of the material in this section is taken from Enns 363-64.

<i>Roman Catholic</i>	Baptism is necessary for salvation and is the means of saving grace. "By Baptism, <i>all</i> sins are forgiven, original sin and all personal sins, as well as punishment for sin." Baptism is required for infants <i>Catechism of the Catholic Church</i> .
<i>Reformed/Calvinistic</i>	Baptism is the sign and seal of the covenant of grace. As such, it corresponds to circumcision and brings the blessings associated with membership in God's covenant family.
<i>Symbolic</i>	Baptism is a public testimony to prior saving faith in Christ. Therefore, it is normally administered to only adults. It is an outward sign of inward faith.

The Lord's Supper

Some of the material in this section is taken from Enns 360-362.

Various Views

<i>Transubstantiation</i>	The bread and wine literally change into the body and blood of Christ (although their outward appearance stays the same). The recipient partakes of Christ, whose one sacrifice, formerly offered on the cross, is now offered in an unbloody manner in the Eucharist
<i>Consubstantiation</i>	The bread and wine contain the body and blood of Christ but do not literally change. Christ is actually present "in, with, and under" the elements; recipient receives forgiveness of sins and confirmation of one's faith.
<i>Reformed View</i>	Christ is not literally present in the elements but there is a spiritual presence of Christ; recipient receives grace through partaking.
<i>Symbolic View</i>	Christ is not present physically or in a special sense spiritually; recipient commemorates the death of Christ on the cross.

Self-Check

In order to gain a firm grasp on the important terms and Scripture references in this course, we suggest that you make flashcards with the following information by writing the term or Scripture reference on one side of a note card and the definition on the other. These activities will assist you in remembering essential course information.

Recognition Activity

Term:	Definition:
Transubstantiation	In this view of the Lord's Supper bread and wine literally change into the body and blood of Christ. The recipient partakes of Christ, whose one sacrifice, formerly offered on the cross, is now offered in an unbloody manner in the Eucharist.
Symbolic View	In this view of the Lord's Supper, Christ is not present physically or in a special sense spiritually; recipient commemorates the death of Christ on the cross.
Presbyterian	This form of church government emphasizes the importance of cooperation between local churches on matters of doctrine and practice.
Consubstantiation	In this view of the Lord's Supper the bread and wine contain the body and blood of Christ but do not literally change. Christ is actually present "in, with, and under" the elements; recipient receives forgiveness of sins and confirmation of one's faith.
Reformed View	In this view of the Lord's Supper, Christ is not literally present in the elements, but there is a spiritual presence of Christ; the recipient receives grace through partaking.
Episcopalianism	This form of church government emphasizes the importance of carefully choosing the leaders of the local church; the pastors and deacons must be qualified individuals.
Congregationalism	This form of church government emphasizes the role of the individual members of the autonomy of the local church

Reflection Assignment: The Church: Here, There and Everywhere!?

Idea: We are familiar with the term *church*, we are accustomed to the ubiquity of "church buildings"; we are inured to the titles of various denominations (Roman Catholic Church, Anglican Church, United Methodist Church, Presbyterian Church). We are so used to "hearing" and "seeing" the word *church* that we seldom stop to think about this very unique institution, the church of Jesus Christ!

Discussion: In a society where we often see a church on every other street corner, why is it important for us to really understand the definition, function, and history of the church? Discuss with a fellow Christian what he or she usually thinks or feels when he/she passes by a church on the street corner: reverence, indifference, antagonism? What is the first thing the person recognizes: the architecture, the denomination, nothing at all? What does the individual really know concerning the nature of the church?

Reflect: Reflect upon your conversation; do you think that people in our culture are aware of the unique institution of the church? How would you respond to the questions you discussed above? Do you think that Americans have been desensitized to the mystery and magnificence of the church of Jesus Christ?

Paper: Write a one- to two-page paper that meets the grading criteria found in the syllabus.

Works Cited

Liftin, Dr. Bryan. The Church and Its Doctrines. Chicago: The Moody Bible Institute, 2003.