

The Government of a New Testament Church

I. SCRIPTURAL GOVERNMENT:

A. By definition: A New Testament Church = an " _____ assembly of baptized believers."

B. _____ is required for a Church to properly function:

1. I Corinthians 14:40 — "Let ALL things be done decently and in _____."
2. Contrast: I Corinthians 14:26-34.
3. Titus 1:5 — "set in _____."

C. Must be the _____ order — Ephesians 2:20-22.

D. THE THREE ELEMENTS OF BAPTIST CHURCH GOVERNMENT:

1. The _____ of CHRIST:

- Ephesians 1:22,23; 5:23,24; Colossians 1:18.
- A head is essential to the _____ of the body.
- Christ's authority is _____ authority.
- A church must do the _____ of Christ — John 20:21b; I Corinthians 15:58.
- Church members are ultimately _____ to Christ — I Corinthians 3:8-17.

2. The _____ of the _____:

- Hebrews 13:17,24; I Timothy 3:4,5; 5:17; I Peter 5:2,3.
- Pastoral authority is _____ authority — not absolute.
- Qualified by his " _____ " and " _____ " — Hebrews 13:7.

3. The _____ of the _____:

- Every church MEMBER is integral and vital — I Corinthians 12:12-27.
- The CHURCH makes decisions — I Corinthians 5:4,5; II Corinthians 2:6; Acts 15:22,25,28.
- The decision of a Church is the _____ authority — Matthew 18:17.
- The decisions of a Church are ratified in _____ — Matthew 18:18.

E. BIBLE EXAMPLES OF NEW TESTAMENT CHURCH GOVERNMENT:

1. The _____ of a Successor to Judas Iscariot — Acts 1:15-26.
2. The Election of Deacons — Acts 6:1-6.

F. DEFINITION:

"Scriptural Church government is the _____ of the laws of _____ by _____ consent under _____ leadership."

II. ECCLESIASTICAL FORMS OF GOVERNMENT:

A. The History of Departure:

1. Judaism → the Old Testament model — sacralism [One _____, One _____].
2. Nicolaitanism (III John 9,10; Revelation 2:6) → rise of dominant _____ class.
3. Stage ONE — elevation of a clergy class ("clergy" & "laity") ... _____ century.
4. Stage TWO — ranking of clergy into hierarchy ... _____ century.
5. Stage THREE — development of papacy and Catholic hierarchy.

6. Protestant Reformation of Rome — kept various elements of Roman hierarchy.

B. Forms of Ecclesiastical Government:

Usually related to a denomination's history:

AUTOCRATIC <i>The rule of ONE.</i>		Roman Catholic
OLIGARCHICAL <i>The rule of a FEW.</i>	Aristocratic	Eastern Orthodox
	Episcopal	Anglican, Episcopalian
	Consistorial	Lutheran
	Presbyterian	Presbyterian
	Eclectic	Methodist
CONGREGATIONAL <i>The rule of MANY.</i>	Historic	Congregational
	New Testament	Bible-believing Baptist

III. THE INDEPENDENCY & INTER-DEPENDENCY OF NEW TESTAMENT CHURCHES:

A. CONNECTIVITY — “churches beget churches.”

B. INDEPENDENCY:

1. Words used when discussing Independency:

- Autonomous = “self rule.”
- Sovereignty = “no higher rule” — **Matthew 18:17.**
- Independent = “no other rule.”

2. Limits to Independency:

- The _____ of God — absolute authority.
- The Great _____ — stated mission.
- The _____ of the _____ — **I Peter 4:15; Acts 5:29.**

3. Interaction between the churches of Jerusalem & Antioch — **Act 15.**

- Issue was not _____ — that was settled (**Acts 15:11-18**), but _____
- The church at Jerusalem could only _____ — **Acts 15:19-22.**
- A _____ was made to show _____ to Jewish believers.

4. Christ addressed each of the seven churches of Asia _____ — Revelation 2,3.

5. Negatively: There is _____ example of _____ church exercising any command & control over another church.

C. INTERDEPENDENCY:

1. The churches COMMUNICATED — **Acts 18:27; Colossians 4:16.**

2. The churches were GROUPED regionally — **I Corinthians 16:1** (all “on the same page”).

3. Churches supported EVANGELISTS from other churches — **II Corinthians 11:8; Philippians 4:15-18.**

4. Churches cooperated FINANCIALLY — **Romans 5:25,26; I Corinthians 16:1-3.**

- Note — each church sent one of their men. **II Corinthians 8:16-23.**