

1

Presbyterian Polity

- “The ordinary and perpetual classes of office in the Church are elders and deacons. Within the class of elder are the two orders of teaching elders and ruling elders. The elders jointly have the government and spiritual oversight of the Church, including teaching. Only those elders who are specially gifted, called and trained by God to preach may serve as teaching elders. The office of deacon is not one of rule, but rather of service both to the physical and spiritual needs of the people. In accord with Scripture, these offices are open to men only.” BCO 7.2

2

Presbyterian Polity

- “For the better government and further edification of the church, there ought to be such assemblies as are commonly called synods or councils and it belongeth to the overseers and other rulers of the particular churches, by virtue of their office, and the power which Christ hath given them for edification and not for destruction, to appoint such assemblies; and to convene together in them, as often as they shall judge it expedient for the good of the church.” WCF 31.1

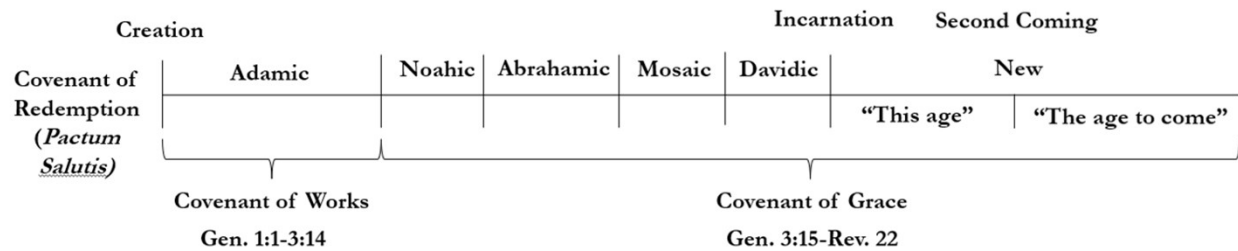
3

Presbyterian Polity

- It belongeth to synods and councils, ministerially, to determine controversies of faith, and cases of conscience; to set down rules and directions for the better ordering of the public worship of God, and government of His church; to receive complaints in cases of maladministration, and authoritatively to determine the same: which decrees and determinations, if consonant to the Word of God, are to be received with reverence and submission, not only for their agreement with the Word, but also for the power whereby they are made, as being an ordinance of God, appointed thereunto in His Word.” WCF 31.2

4

Presbyterian Covenant Theology



5

Presbyterian Covenant Theology

- Paedobaptism
 - An argument from covenantal continuity
 - An argument from the Abrahamic genealogical principle (Gen. 17:1-14)
 - Acts 2:38-39
 - An argument from “holy children” (1 Cor. 7:12-14)
 - An argument from household baptisms in Acts (Acts 10:46-48; 16:15; 16:33; 1 Cor. 1:16)
 - An argument from sign-replacement (Rom. 4:11-12; Col. 2:11-12)
 - An argument from “let the children come to me” (Mk 10:13-16; Lk: 18:15-17)

6

Presbyterian Baptism

- “Baptism is a sacrament of the new testament, ordained by Jesus Christ, (Mat 28:19); not only for the solemn admission of the party baptized into the visible Church, (1Co 12:13); but also, to be unto him a sign and seal of the covenant of grace, (Rom 4:11; Col 2:11-12); of his ingrafting into Christ, (Gal 3:27; Rom 6:5); of regeneration, (Tts 3:5); of remission of sins, (Mar 1:4); and of his giving up unto God, through Jesus Christ, to walk in newness of life, (Rom 6:3-4). Which sacrament is, by Christ’s own appointment, to be continued in His Church until the end of the world, (Mat 28:19-20).” WCF 28.1

7

Presbyterian View of the Supper

- “Worthy receivers, outwardly partaking of the visible elements, in crucified, and all benefits of His death: the body and blood of Christ being then, not corporally or carnally, in, with, or under the bread and wine; yet, as really, but spiritually, present to the faith of believers in that ordinance, as the elements themselves are to their outward senses, (1Co 11:28; 1Co 10:16).” WCF 29.7

8

Evaluation

Strengths

- Conservative Presbyterians have strong doctrines of Scripture, justification, sanctification
- Take church membership seriously
- Committed to a plurality of elders
- Exclusively reformed (unlike Anglicanism)
- High emphasis on doctrine and preaching the word