

We will begin the first lecture on Church Order. /Please refer to the syllabus for “Church Order” under the books section on the school cyber homepage.

/The textbook for Church Order first includes “Confession of Faith,” /second, “The Shorter Catechism,” /third, “Form of Government,” /and fourth, “Church Rules.” /Fifth, “Rules of Discipline,” /and sixth, “Directory for Worship.”

/First, the Confession of Faith. /The Confession of Faith is based on the Presbyterian Westminster Confession of Faith. /Please take the time to carefully read through the Westminster Confession of Faith. /Please also read through the original Shorter Catechism.

/This lecture will specifically cover **I. Form of Government** of Church Order. /Let’s begin with the introduction of form of government. First, we will begin with the **government system**.

/Martin Luther initiated the Reformation in 1517. /As a result, there was a division between the Roman Catholic Church and the Protestant Church.

/The church government system **first includes the papal**. /Of the papal government, the pope rules over the entire church. This is a form of autocracy. /There are ranks within the clergy.

/This form of government says that the pope is without error. They say the pope is inerrant. /Roman Catholicism falls under this denomination. /The Greek Orthodox Church also falls under this denomination.

/Second, the **prelatical**. /Of the prelatical government, bishops oversee the church. /There are ranks within the clergy. /Some prelatical denominations include the Methodist Church, the Lutheran Church, the Anglican Church, /and the Church of the Nazarene. /These churches have prelatical governments.

/Third, the **independent**. /This is a government system in which each local church has freedom of administration. /The churches are not governed by the jurisdiction of the courts. /The rights are entirely given to believers. /Churches of this government are the Congregational Church /and the Quakers. /These churches abide by the independent government.

/Fourth, the **congregational**. /This is similar to the independent. /However, the representatives of each local church form a community. /No church is superior to another nor does it command or govern over another. /Each church freely governs itself. /The Baptist Church belongs to this form of government.

/Fifth, the **presbyterian**. /The form of government that we have chosen is the presbyterian. /Members of local churches select elders to form the church session. /The church session then governs over believers in this form of government. /Sovereignty is in

the hands of the believers. /The presbyterian government has both democratic and republican characteristics.

/This ultimately falls under theocracy.

/This is because churches receive God's guidance and rule. /The session is also made up of the pastor and elders. /Higher than the session is the presbytery. /Above the presbytery is the general assembly, the highest judicatory. /These are the governing bodies (of which three trials are allowed).

/The lower courts are given opportunities to appeal to higher courts. /They are permitted three court times per incident. /They are given opportunities to make appeals.

/The presbyterian form of government is the government system with the longest biblical history. /For example, there were elders in Moses' time. /Exodus 30:16, /Exodus 18:25, /Numbers 11:16.

/There were elders in the times of the early church and the apostles. /Acts 14:23; /18:4, /Titus 1:5, /1 Peter 5:1, /James 5:14. /The presbyterian government system is most biblical and has been historically acknowledged in the church.

/The presbyterian government is based on the Westminster constituencies of England. /The Westminster Assembly met in England in 1643. The Assembly consisted of a hundred and twenty pastors and thirty elders. /They gathered and formed the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church. /The General Assembly of the Church adopted and promulgated the constitution.

/In 1788 in New York, another constitution was formed based on this constitution. /The Presbyterian Church of North America composed this constitution.

/The early churches of Korea drew up the presbyterian constitution at the General Assembly in 1917. /It was once revised in 1934. /It was then revised once more in 1954.

/Now, we will study preliminary principles. /There are eight preliminary principles.

/Chapter 1, Preliminary Principles.

/Section I, Freedom of Conscience.

/“God alone is Lord of the conscience; /and hath left it free from the doctrine and commandments of men, which are in any way contrary to his word, or ‘beside it in matters of faith or worship’; /therefore they consider the rights of private judgment in all matters that respect religion, as universal and unalienable; /they do not even wish to see any religious constitution aided by the civil power, further than may be necessary for protection and security, and, at the same time, be equal and common to all others.”

/The conscience of the believer is conscience that abides by the Bible. /1 Timothy 1:5, /1 Timothy 1:19. /The believer's conscience has the heart and freedom to obey God alone. /The freedom of conscience is only limited by the Bible.

/Obedience to the teachings of the Bible is freedom of conscience, whether we agree with the teachings or not. /However, each individual has the freedom of judgment concerning issues not addressed in the Bible, each according to the judgment of his own conscience. /Therefore, the freedom of conscience must not reject the government that is based on Scripture.

/The believer must submit to the just rule and order of the government. /The courts must not make rules that will restrict the conscience of believers.

/Section II, Freedom of the Church.

/"Every Christian church, or union or association of particular churches, is entitled to declare the terms of admission to its communion." /This is freedom to make systems and unions of the Church. /The Church must not rely on the power of the state.

/Our Jesus said to give to Caesar what belongs to Caesar, and to God what belongs to God. /The state must not interfere in spiritual matters of the Church. /The Church also must not depend on powers of the state.

/Still, the believer must fulfill his duties and responsibilities to his nation as a citizen. /The Church and state must respect each other's rights as given to them by God. /The Church must also be governed by the Presbytery and the General Assembly.

/Section III, Duties of Church Officers.

/"That our blessed Saviour, for the edification of the visible Church, which is his body, hath appointed officers, /not only to preach the Gospel and administer the sacraments; but also to exercise discipline, for the preservation both of truth and duty."

/"It is incumbent upon these officers, and upon the whole church, in whose name they act, to censure, or cast out, the erroneous and scandalous; /observing in all cases, the rules contained in the word of God."

/For example, there are three main officers in the Church. /Elders, pastors, and deacons. /These officers do not have ranks. /These three officers are given to us according to our gifts.

/We must serve the Church with our God-given gifts. /Thus, all offices in the Church exist to serve the Church. /Ephesians 4:11. /Officers of the Church must submit to the word of the Lord.

/Section IV, Connection Between Truth and Practice.

/Truth is the only source of goodness. /There is always a connection between truth and practice. /The Church is a group of true believers. /True believers bear fruit of faith.

/Jesus said, "By their fruit you will recognize them." /Matthew 7:16. /Truth and falsehood

cannot exist at the same level. /Faith and practice cannot be separated.

/Section V, Qualifications of Officers.

/"That, while under the conviction of the above principle, they think it necessary to make effectual provision, /that all who are admitted as Teachers be sound in the faith." /We must not choose anyone as officers of the Church. /Officers must be sound in the faith.

/We must observe to see how sound an individual is in his faith. /We must discern whether he is sound in faith in times of training and trials.

/Only those who practice the truth and are sound in faith should become officers of the Church. /1 Timothy 3:6. /Yet, minute differences in opinion should be tolerated.

/Section VI, Election of Officers.

/"The election of the persons to the exercise of this authority, in any particular society, is in that society." /The Church itself cannot choose officers. /Acts 1:22 /Acts 6:5 /Exodus 18:20. /The congregation also cannot elect officers as they please, but must elect officers with the Bible as the standard. /1 Timothy 3:1.

/Section VII, Jurisdiction.

/"That all church-power, whether exercised by the body in general, or, in the way of representation, by delegated authority, is only ministerial and declarative. /That all their decisions should be founded upon the revealed will of God." /Matthew 16:19. /Church power must not be exercised by individuals. /The nature of the governing power is to deliver God's word. /When we govern, we must do so with gentle and humble hearts. /Galatians 6:1. /We must keep in mind that the Bible is the standard of rule.

/Section VIII, Discipline.

/"That, if the preceding scriptural and rational principles be steadfastly adhered to, the vigour and strictness of its discipline will contribute to the glory and happiness of any church. /Since ecclesiastical discipline must be purely moral or spiritual in its object, /and not attended with any civil effects." /Those governing in the Church must not use government powers or force.

/Discipline must be spiritually exercised by the laws of God. /It must appeal to God's word. /Deuteronomy 1:17. /Judgment belongs to God. /Hence, fairness is important in discipline. /It must also be acknowledged by all.

/It must be derived from the countenance and blessing of Jesus the Head of the Church universal. /Those governing and those being governed must both be acknowledged. /All judgments must be fair.

/Discipline is not punishment in its nature, but it a correction, nurture, and training. /The purpose of discipline is not to destroy the sinner /but to help him live. /The purpose is to bring to repentance and make upright.

/Therefore, we must discipline with God's word and in the name of Christ.
/The purpose of discipline is to protect the true doctrine of the Church. /It is also to encourage believers to live godly lives and do good. /Its purpose is also to correct the lawbreakers.

/Chapter 2, The Church.

/Section I, Establishment of the Church.

/God chose professing Christians from among all nations, and he displays his everlasting and infinite grace and wisdom. /We are the Church of the living God, the body of Jesus, and the temple of the Holy Spirit. /This is called the Holy Church. /The Church is a group of chosen believers.

/Each local church throughout the world is a part of the universal Church. /All churches and believers are organically connected with each other and can be seen as an alliance.

/The Church of Jesus Christ was established after the crucifixion and resurrection of Christ and the gift of the Holy Ghost. /John 20:21. /Acts 1:8.

/Section II, Distinction of the Church.

/The Church is separated into /the visible church and the invisible church. /There is a church that is seen with the eyes and a church that is not seen with the eyes. /What is the visible church? /The visible church is the Church that is spread throughout the world, /its members are called Christians, /and it is a Church that reveres the Triune God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. /It is a gathering of believers who have professed their faith.

/What is the invisible church? /This is a church that only God knows of. /It is a spiritual gathering of God's children who have been chosen by God. /It is a gathering of God's chosen people. /These people will all go to heaven. /This is called the invisible church

/Section III, Gathering of the Church.

/Churches scattered throughout the world cannot gather in one place. /Thus, local churches are established as places of gathering. /This is practical. /This agrees with natural law. /This is because churches that are geographically distant from one another cannot gather in one place.

/The Bible speaks of names of churches in different locations. /Galatians 1:2. /Revelation 1:4. /Revelation 1:20. /There were seven churches in Asia. /There were several churches in broad locations.

/Section IV, Local Churches.

/A local church consists of a number of professing believers of Jesus. /They assemble at a designated place and together worship God. /They live godly lives, unite under the teachings of Scripture for the advancement of Jesus' kingdom, /submit to a certain form of government in the Church, /and gather at a specific time for mutual worship.

/A church is a true church only when it agrees with the Bible. /Matthew 18:19. /This

brings us to the definition of a local church. /A local church consists of a number of believers of Jesus and their offspring who voluntarily gather together for worship. /Galatians 1:22.

/There are five requirements in establishing a local church. /First, believers, /second, a particular location, /third, divine worship and godly living, /fourth, advancement of the kingdom of Jesus, /and fifth, joint worship based on the teachings of the Bible.

/Why is it called the local church? /The local church refers to “a local church of a presbytery.” /The “presbytery” is the center of rule of the presbyterian form of government. /The presbytery establishes churches and organizes sessions.

/The technical term for local church is “particular church” and “mission church.” /A “particular church” is organized by the session. /The “mission church” is not organized by the session. /If a church is established by the session, it implies that there are ruling elders.

/The “absence of ruling elders” implies that “there is no session.” /The existence of sessions depends on the presence of ruling elders. /A church that has been established by the session is called a “particular church,” /and a church that has not been established by the session is called a “mission church.”

/Take a look here. /There are four types of churches: A, B, C, and D. /The church in the middle with elders, the circled church, is called a “particular church.” /This means that this church has a session. /C and D do not have elders, which means that they do not have sessions and are mission churches.

/B does not have a pastor but only elders, and this church is called a “vacant church.” /Churches like B can bring a temporary moderator of the session from the presbytery. /Churches like B also refer to churches that are run by male or female preachers.

/In the case that a church does not have a pastor like D, another pastor from within the presbytery is invited to hold a session as a moderator of the session. /The office of an elder in Korea differs from that of an elder in China.

/Everyone, please keep in mind that the office of an elder in China differs from that of an elder in Korea. /In Korea, ministries are centered around pastors. /Elders in Korea do not have rights to benediction or rights to officiate sacraments.

/The right to preach in Korea belongs to pastors. /According to the church laws of Korea, pastors have the rights to preach, to benediction and to officiate sacraments. /The duties of elders in China and Korea differ.

/We have studied the **organization of the Church**. /A church can be formed when it has more than fifteen adult members. /A pastor can form a local church if the church has at least fifteen adult members. /In order to elect elders in a local church, there must be at

least twenty-five baptized members.

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/Here we will conclude the first lecture on Church Order. /Thank you.