

**WEEK 6: CHURCH ORGANIZATION**  
**DAY 1: CHURCH GOVERNMENT**

1. Some church organization is necessary for the church to function well. Three forms of church government are found in the history of the Church.

- 1. Episcopalian
- 2. Presbyterian
- 3. Congregational

Write the name of the first form of church government.

1. \_\_\_\_\_

---

---

2. The first form of church government is the Episcopalian form of church government. In this form of church government authority is centralized. Churches must function within the policies established by the hierarchy, a certain elite group of men. The Catholic and Anglican churches are the best known examples of Episcopalian form of church government.

When authority over the churches is from a central hierarchy, what is that form of church government called

\_\_\_\_\_

---

---

3. When authority over the churches is from a central hierarchy it is called Episcopalian form of church government.

In the very earliest Christian churches the apostles evidently did have primary authority. However, this seems to have passed with the first generation of Christians. The authority was not given by the apostles to anyone else. There were no longer apostles. Apostles were those who had been with Jesus. In Acts 1:22 we find the qualifications for the man who was to be chosen as an apostle to replace Judas, the one who betrayed Jesus. After the first generation of Christians there was no one who had been with Jesus on earth and witnessed His resurrection.

Why don't we still have apostles having authority over churches?

---

---

4. After the first generation of Christians there was no one qualified to be an apostle. An apostle is one who was with Jesus on earth and witnessed His resurrection. In Revelation 2 and 3 we read about churches. They were not subject to any central human authority. They were only under the authority of Jesus. After studying about churches in the New Testament we can understand why Baptists do not use the Episcopalian form of church government.

Why don't Baptists use the Episcopalian form of church government? \_\_\_\_\_

---

---

5. By studying the development of New Testament churches we can understand that the authority of the church is Jesus. No human is given authority over the churches. Therefore, Baptists do not follow a form of church government that gives humans authority over the churches.

Write the second form of church government.

1. Episcopalian

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. Congregational

---

---

6. The second form of church government is the Presbyterian form of church government.

The Presbyterian form of church government is known as a representative form. Local churches choose representatives who are organized into a large body that has authority over all the churches.

Who has authority over all the churches in a Presbyterian form of church government?

---

---

---

---

7. An organized group of representatives have authority over all the churches in a Presbyterian form of church government.

In Acts 15 some representatives seem to be making a decision for all the churches. However, read Acts 15:22. The final decision was with "the whole church".

Write the first two forms of church government.

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. Congregational

---

---

---

8. The first two forms of church government are:

1. Episcopalian

2. Presbyterian

Baptists do not use these two forms of church government.

**WEEK 6: CHURCH ORGANIZATION**  
**DAY 2: CHURCH GOVERNMENT**

1. Write the 3 forms of church government.

- 1. \_\_\_\_\_
  - 2. \_\_\_\_\_
  - 3. \_\_\_\_\_
- 
- 

2. The 3 forms of church government are:

- 1. Episcopalian
- 2. Presbyterian
- 3. Congregational

Baptists have chosen to use the congregational form of church government because it is most like that of New Testament churches.

Why do Baptists use the congregational form of church government? \_\_\_\_\_

---

---

3. Baptists use the congregational form of church government because it is the most like that of New Testament churches.

The congregational form of church government is where the authority is within the local congregation. Important matters are decided by the local congregation.

Who has the authority when a congregational form of church government is used?

---

---

4. The authority is within the local congregation when a congregational form of church government is used. Local Baptist churches unite with others in associations and unions or conventions for fellowship and for strength of numbers. This helps to provide theological training and strength for certain projects. But, these groups do not have control over a local church. These groups might suggest plans, programmes or actions, but they cannot tell the local church what to do. Baptists are known for their working together, but other churches, associations and unions/conventions do not have authority over the action of local churches.

Does any other church group have authority over a local Baptist church?

---

---

5. No. A local Baptist church has no other church group with authority over it

One New Testament example of a local church making a decision without consulting with outside human authority is in Acts 6. The church in Jerusalem selected 7 men to serve as deacons.

Another example is when the church in Antioch sent out Paul and Barnabas as missionaries. Read about this in Acts 13. Prayer and finding God's will in the matter was how the local church made the decision.

Name 2 churches in the New Testament that give us examples of a local church making a decision.

1. \_\_\_\_\_ 2. \_\_\_\_\_

---

---

6. The church of Jerusalem and the church of Antioch made decisions without consulting outside human authority. The church members prayed together and found God's will in the matter.

What form of church government do Baptist churches use? \_\_\_\_\_

---

---

7. Baptist churches use the congregational form of church government. They have chosen this because it is most like that of New Testament churches.

**WEEK 6: CHURCH ORGANIZATION**  
**DAY 3: CHURCH GOVERNMENT**

1. What form of church government is used by Baptists? \_\_\_\_\_

---

---

2. The congregational form of church government is used by Baptists.

The congregational form of church government requires church business meetings. At the business meetings church members decide how their church will be organized and how it will use the resources God has made available.

Why does a Baptist church have business meetings? \_\_\_\_\_

---

---

3. Business meetings are required so that the church can make decisions about organization and use of resources.

Each church member has the responsibility to attend business meetings. Each member should pray and ask God for guidance. Then each member shares what he or she senses God is saying to the church.

What should each church member do at a church business meeting? \_\_\_\_\_

---

---

4. Each church member should pray and ask God's guidance. Then he/she should share what God is saying.

Often the church leader believes he knows what God wants the church to do. The church leader can present that to the church. He must not ask the church to follow him without question. The leader encourages the body (the church) to pray and get confirmation from the Head of the church (Christ). Then, when the whole body agrees that a decision is right, the whole body can participate in carrying out that decision.

How does the church leader lead a church to make a decision? \_\_\_\_\_

---

---

---

5. The church leader presents an idea to the church. Then he encourages the church to pray and get God's guidance until they all agree on a decision. We will talk more about this in class.

**Example 1:** A pastor told the church to buy land based on some promises made by the former owner. The former owner did not keep the promises and the church ran into financial problems and became very discouraged. Finally two members of the church spoke up and told the pastor they had only agreed to the purchase of the land because they didn't want to appear to be disagreeing with the pastor. They had not felt it was the right time or place for the church to buy land. If the church members had prayed and then shared what they believed to be God's will before action was taken, many problems could have been avoided.

**Example 2:** Many church members had been praying about how the church could reach the youth of their community. At a church business meeting they shared about how they felt God wanted the church to minister to the youth by providing a sports programme. Several gave ideas and opinions about how it could be done and how it would reach the youth. After a prayer asking for God's guidance, a vote was taken. All the church members present voted to have a sports programme. When it was time to put this decision into action, there were plenty of workers because they had taken part in deciding this was God's will. God blessed the programme and many youth of the community heard the Gospel and began to attend church services.

Which example shows a church using good congregational government to make a decision?

---

---

---

6. Example 2 shows the best decision making by a congregation. Congregational, or democratic, church government gives every church member a responsibility. Participation In all the life of a church by every church member is the only way a church can function well.

**WEEK 6: CHURCH ORGANIZATION**  
**DAY 4: CHURCH COMMITTEES**

1. What form of church government do Baptists use? \_\_\_\_\_  
=====

2. Baptists use a congregational form of church government.

Who has authority in making decisions in a Baptist church? \_\_\_\_\_  
=====

3. All the members of the local church together have the authority to make decisions.

In order to make decisions with all the information available, church committees are often formed. The committees work out all the details. After the committee has done all the detailed planning, it presents the plans to the whole church for a decision. The committee does work. The committee recommends plans. The committee does not make the final decision. The committee does not carry out plans until the whole church has decided they are approved plans.

After a committee works out detailed plans, what does the committee do?

=====

4. The committee presents plans to the whole church, in a business meeting, so that the whole church makes a decision or approval.

Even a small church can best do its work by having elected officers and committees doing certain jobs. The number of church members elected to serve on a committee depends on the job, but usually 5 to 7 people is a good number. Small churches can have committees of 3 people.

How many church members should be on a committee? \_\_\_\_\_  
=====

5. The number of church members on a committee depends on the job and the size of the church. Small churches have 3 people, larger churches have 5 to 7 on a committee. What committees a church has depends on the needs of the church. A small church might decide it does not need any committees. There is no set number of committees a church should have. There are no set names for committees. We will look at some typical church committees.

**(A) Church Council (or Executive Committee):** Many Baptist churches, especially larger ones, have a church council. This is made up of the leaders or directors of all the church programmes. The pastor is usually the chairman of the Council. The Council's responsibility is to plan and coordinate the entire programme of the church. They can suggest goals and work out a calendar of activities. All the plans and decisions of the Council must be presented to the church for approval.

**(B) Nominating Committee:** This committee is responsible for locating and recommending qualified persons to fill the church offices.

**(C) Building and Grounds Committee:** Overseeing the care of the church property and making recommendations about it is the responsibility of this committee.

**(D) Finance or Budget Committee:** This committee oversees the use of church finances and works on plans for the use of money. They present a proposed budget plan to the church for approval.

**(E) Counting Committee:** This committee is responsible for counting the offering money after each service. They give it to the church treasurer to record and deposit in a safe place. They serve as a protector for the treasurer and for the church.

**(F) Ushers Committee:** Ushers greet people when they arrive for a church service. Responsibilities of this committee include assisting persons attending services with seating, books, or any other way needed. They also usually receive the offering. Sometimes the deacons are used for this.

**(G) Flower Committee:** Making the worship centre a beautiful place by supplying flowers or plants is the responsibility of this committee. They might bring recommendations to the church for how church members can take turns bringing the flowers.

**(H) Hostess Committee:** When the church wants to have a meal together this committee is responsible for making the plans. They may do the preparing or may have others help, according to what the church approves.

What committees does your church have?

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

Plan to discuss this in class.

**WEEK 6: CHURCH ORGANIZATION**  
**DAY 5: CHURCH OFFICERS**

1. Under the leadership of the Holy Spirit, Baptist churches select leaders and officers to minister and equip church members for their work. Next week we will learn about special church leaders named in the Bible. Today, let us consider other officers a church might have. A local Baptist church can decide on how many officers and positions are needed to do its work well.

How many officers does a local Baptist church have? \_\_\_\_\_

---

---

---

2. A local Baptist church can decide how many officers are needed.

All of the church officers must be church members. They should be elected to serve in a specific position within the church. They should be elected for a specific length of time. They report to the church and carry out instructions from the church.

Does a church officer need to be a member of the local church? \_\_\_\_\_

---

---

---

3. Yes. Church officers must be members of the local church they are serving.

A Sunday School/Bible Study Director and Teachers are needed. The number of teachers depends on the size of the church. Qualified church members should be carefully chosen for teaching adults, youth and children. These teachers have a very important position. They will be held accountable to God for their work of teaching. Read James 3:1. Teachers of God's Word must study God's Word.

What do you think qualifies a church member to be a Sunday School teacher?

---

---

---

4. We asked what you think and will discuss it in class. Did you think of one who has a spiritual gift of teaching? How about one who prays and studies God's Word daily?

Each church needs a Recording Secretary, or Church Clerk. This person has the responsibility for keeping accurate records of all church business decisions. This person also must keep careful records of church membership.

Who is the Recording Secretary, or Church Clerk, for your church? \_\_\_\_\_

---

---

5. If you do not know the answer to that question, talk about it in class.

Every church needs a Treasurer. This person is responsible for proper receiving, recording, banking, disbursing and reporting on church funds. Honesty and faithfulness are qualities a church looks for when choosing a Treasurer.

Who is the Treasurer for your church? \_\_\_\_\_

---

---

6. Again, if you do not know the answer, talk about it in class.

Some churches have moderators to lead the business meetings. Some elect music or choir directors. Many elect programme leaders or directors for different organizations and activities such as women, youth, choir, recreation and fellowship, and outreach. Assistants, or in-training assistants, are often elected for every position. The local church decides what officers are needed to do its work well. Because Baptists follow the congregational form of church government, no outside human authority tells the local church what to do, or what officers to have.

Learn about what officers and committees your church has.