

LESSON 5

LEADING THE CHURCH IN TRANSACTING BUSINESS

Introduction

Aim

To gain a deeper understanding of the importance of democracy and to learn how a pastor can preside more effectively over a business meeting of the church he leads.

Thought questions

1. Who should make the decisions concerning business matters and programmes of the church?
2. How does church democracy differ from political democracy?
3. Why should a church adopt parliamentary law for guiding its business sessions?¹
4. What is the role of the presiding officer in a church business meeting?
5. Who can preside over a church business meeting?

The Church as a Spiritual Democracy

New Testament teachings

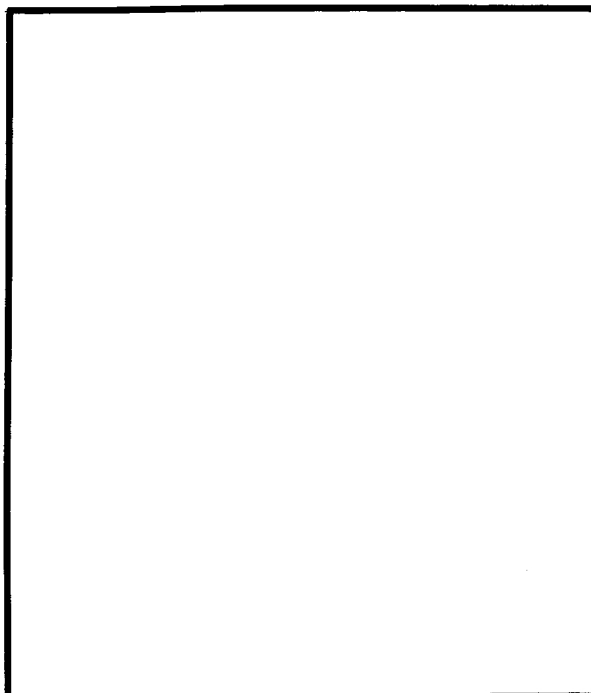
Jesus opposed the traditional concept of leadership—rulers using their positions for their own advantages. He refused to allow His disciples to assume the role of dictators:

Ye know that the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, and they that are great exercise authority upon them. But it shall not be so among you: but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister; and whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant: Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many. (Matt. 20:25b–28)

The word minister means servant, and church leaders are to be servants rather than bosses. Those who have become bosses have assumed a role that is contradictory to New Testament teachings.

The apostles, who were given unique responsibilities in the early Church, had no successors (with the exception of Judas) and made no effort to dictate to the churches.

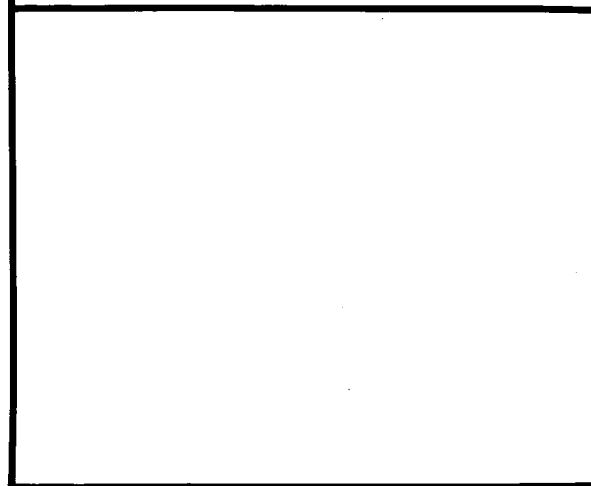
¹ Parliamentary law or procedure refers to rules adopted by a deliberative body to regulate the discussion. The rules are designed to give each person an opportunity to be heard and to prevent an individual or a group from maneuvering decisions or dominating the meeting.



Jesus' view of leadership differed from the traditional:

1. He did not allow His disciples to be d_____.
2. He taught that the great are to s_____.

(1. dictators, 2. serve)



Their authority resided in communicating the teachings of Jesus and witnessing of the resurrection. After Judas committed suicide, Matthias was selected as his successor (see Acts 1:21-26). This exceptional action was based on the interpretation of Psalm 109:8 to mean that God would commission another man to take the office of the traitor.

Although Peter was the leader of the Church, he had no special authority in the appointment of a successor to Judas. He did explain the qualifications of an apostle, but "they put forward two" (Acts 1:23a, RSV). Since Peter was addressing the 120 disciples, "they" seems to refer to the disciples rather than the apostles. The casting of lots was a method used to determine God's choice.

The twelve apostles requested the disciples to select seven persons who would be responsible servants in the daily distribution of food and in the sharing of the Word of God (see Acts 6:1-6). "What they said pleased the whole multitude, and they chose Stephen . . ." (Acts 6:5, RSV). Apparently the entire church participated in the selection and the laying on of hands in the ordination ritual of the newly selected servants.

Democratic government in the early Church is implied in the following: (1) the report of Paul and Barnabas to the church at Antioch after their first missionary journey (Acts 14:27); (2) the selection of representatives for the Jerusalem Conference (Acts 15:1-29); (3) the participation of the whole church in the decision agreed upon during the Conference; and (4) Scriptures which infer the independence of each church. Observe in the following Scriptures that individual churches made their own decisions even though they were advised by Paul: 1 Cor. 5:4-13; 2 Cor. 2:5-8; Gal. 6:1; 2 Thess. 3:6, 14, 15.

Implications of the priesthood of believers

The principle of the priesthood of believers has been discussed previously. The democratic form of church government is based on this principle. Since each member has experienced new birth, he is prepared spiritually to receive guidance from the Holy Spirit. Paul pointed out that the Holy Spirit knows the deep things of God (1 Cor. 2:10). Man cannot know the mind of God unless the Spirit of God reveals it to him. The brethren of the Corinthian church had the "mind of Christ"; therefore, they could know the mind and will of God. Spiritual illumination is not limited to the leaders of a church. Since all believers are given the Spirit of God to guide them in ministry, all have access to the mind and will of God concerning church business matters.

In Catholic churches, the direction of authority is from God through the leaders to the people. The people have no voice in the authoritative matters of their churches. The priests consider that their call and ordination endow them with spiritual authority which separates

The apostles' sole authority lay in _____ the teachings of Jesus and _____ of the resurrection.

(communicating, witnessing)

Are these statements true or false?

1. Peter as leader of the Church chose Judas' successor. _____
2. The larger group of disciples chose Judas' successor. _____

(Compare your answers with the text.)

Another example of the disciples' deciding rather than the apostles' is in the choice of the _____.

(seven)

Find the scripture references in your Bible and read about some examples of democratic government in the early Church.

The democratic form of church government is based on the priesthood of b _____.

All who have experienced new birth have the Holy Spirit to g _____ them.

They also have access to the mind and will of God concerning c _____ b _____.

(believers, guide, church business)

them from the laity. Free churches, which hold to the priesthood of all believers, emphasize that each believer has priestly responsibilities or ministries to perform; therefore, each is endowed with and guided by the Holy Spirit. God is the ultimate spiritual authority and can make known to any member His will for the church.

The unity of a church in determining business matters is based on the one Spirit's guiding each member to express the will of God. Since God is one, His will as expressed through each member of the church is one and is not the source of conflict. Church democracy is actually theocracy (the rule of God) expressed through the priesthood of believers. It may be described more accurately as a theocratic democracy.

The role of leaders

Leadership is necessary; however, church leaders are not to be bosses over but servants of the people. They are accountable to the people who expressed God's choice in selecting them, and they are responsible to teach God's truth to the people who chose them. The only authority a pastor has is the Word of God. He interprets God's will for the people by interpreting the Scriptures. The people respond by judging his preaching to determine if he is interpreting correctly the will of God. Pastors are human and may misinterpret God's Word because of personal interests. The ability of the people to interpret the will of God serves as a check against a leader who may be guilty of error. Both pastor and people are subject to the authority of God's will. When both are following His will, harmony in decisions and in ideas results.

Necessary qualities for a spiritual democracy

Christian love must be exercised in a spiritual democracy. The desire of the majority is not always the will of God. Christian love is the attitude of expressing concern for the other person even though his views are different. When another's desires conflict with one's own desires, Christian love compels self-denial and preference for others: "in honour preferring one another" (Rom. 12:10b). If selfishness is allowed to dominate the attitude of the majority, the rights and needs of the minority may be overruled. When this happens, a church ceases to be a fellowship and becomes a divided and contentious group. Apparently the church at Corinth had lost its spirit of fellowship (see 1 Cor. 1:11).

A spiritual democracy must recognize the presence and leadership of the Holy Spirit. When disagreement arises in church business meetings, less mature members are likely to close their minds to the leadership of the Spirit and "stand up for their own rights." A group will be unable to come to a united decision concerning the will of God when this attitude prevails. When all of the members

Is this statement true or false?

The Holy Spirit will not lead a church in two directions at the same time. _____

(Compare your answer with the text.)

The only authority of a pastor is the _____ of _____, which he must interpret to the people.

(Word, God)

The people must judge if the pastor is interpreting correctly the will of _____.

(God)

Both pastor and people are subject to the authority of _____.

(God's will)

In a spiritual democracy, Christian _____ must be exercised.

(Love)

Another quality of a spiritual democracy is to recognize the presence and leadership of the _____.

(Compare your answer with the text.)

are spiritually minded, a united decision is reached because the Spirit leads all of the members in the same direction.

Freedom of thought must be respected. A spiritual democracy allows members to express their views and to maintain a spirit of respect even though the views may differ. Those with differing opinions must be open to hearing what the others have to say. The Spirit uses diverse views sometimes to bring about additional insight and more mature decisions than would result if either extreme view prevailed. Pride causes one to have a closed mind towards the views of others.

A spirit of humility must prevail in a spiritual fellowship. Each person must recognize that he could be wrong and that his position could be a reflection of his own self-interests and prejudices. If he senses that a Christian brother is being controlled by selfish interests, he should respond by praying for him, realizing that he too is in danger of being overcome by Satan. A spirit of humility enables the minority to accept the decision of the majority and the majority to continue to have respect for the position of the minority.

Organizing for Business Meetings

Preparing reports

The first step in getting ready for a church business meeting is the preparation of reports on each area of work. People will have a greater interest in the activities and business of the church if they know what is going on. There is value in having all of the reports duplicated and distributed to the people.

All churches should present a periodic financial report. Since the people have a part in the finances of the church through their giving, they deserve the right to have a detailed account of the handling of the funds. Often a pastor makes the mistake of failing to inform his members concerning the finances. Some appear to be fearful that they will not give as readily if they know how much the pastor is receiving. The solution to this problem is for the members to determine how much the pastor should receive and then become responsible for making it available.

Preparing spiritually

In planning for business, the pastor should prepare the church spiritually. This may be done by reminding the people of the nature of a spiritual democracy and by giving reports on the spiritual victories of the past month's activities. The atmosphere of the business meeting can be a spirit of thanksgiving for God's blessings upon the congregation.

Freedom of thought must be respected in a
s _____ d _____.

(spiritual democracy)

A fourth quality of a spiritual democracy is
a prevailing spirit of h _____.

(humility)

Reports are important because people have a
greater interest in the activities and busi-
ness if they know what _____.

(is going on)

It is important for the pastor to prepare the
church s _____ for the business
meeting.

(spiritually)

Selecting a time and keeping records

A regular time should be agreed upon for the business meeting, and the members should be reminded in advance of the forthcoming meeting. A clerk or secretary should be present to keep a record of the business items that are transacted. The members should be given opportunity to correct or add to the minutes since they are frequently quoted in them. The minutes are read usually at the next business meeting, at which time the moderator may declare the minutes approved as read and/or corrected after they meet everyone's approval.

Following an agenda

The meeting usually opens with the calling of the group to order and prayer. The minutes of the previous meeting are read and approved, and prepared reports are made and accepted. After the giving of reports, the moderator calls for any unfinished business which may have been revealed in the reading of the minutes. Next he gives opportunity for new business to be introduced.

Using committees

Church leaders have discovered there is value in having new projects studied and evaluated by a representative committee before the congregation makes a decision. This practice prevents the making of decisions without adequate information. Committees function for the purpose of gathering, evaluating, and presenting back to the membership relevant information on new projects. Committees usually are not given the authority to make decisions for the church, but they can provide valuable service.

Parliamentary Procedure

Purpose of parliamentary procedure

A church should agree on a book of parliamentary procedure and follow it as a tool with which to reach a consensus.² The rules of order are not intended to restrict but to assist by allowing the group to fulfil its purpose. Parliamentary procedure is concerned with the rights of persons as they function in groups. If no specific system is adopted, the moderator runs the risk of being accused of discriminating against some during disagreements.

² A standard book on rules of parliamentary procedure is *Robert's Rules of Order*. Since the book is a compilation of legislative procedures, some church groups find it too complex and involved. Dale Merrell has written a book specifically for church business meetings: *The Church Business Meeting* (Valley Forge, Penn.: Judson Press, 1968). A simplified and inexpensive book which is very helpful for the beginner is *A Guide to Conducting Meetings* (Nashville: Abingon Press, 1965). A guide for preparing constitutions may be found in the workbook by Wayne Hoogestraat and Donald Sikkink, *Modern Parliamentary Practice* (Minneapolis, Minn.: Burgess Publishing Company, 1966).

List the proper order of an agenda.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

(Compare your answers with the text.)

The purpose or function of committees is:
to g _____, e _____, and
p _____ to the membership relevant
information on new projects.

(gather, evaluate, present)

What danger does a moderator face if he does not follow parliamentary procedure? _____

(Compare your answer to the text.)

Following established rules or procedures in making decisions is biblical. In Acts 1:23-26, it was recognized that the Lord knew the heart of each man and was able to make His will known to each Christian concerning Judas' successor. The group prayed and cast lots or voted to determine which man God had chosen. Parliamentary procedure can be an organized method by which Christians express what God has revealed to them. It prevents a few from controlling the business which involves the whole group.

Four basic purposes of parliamentary procedure are: (1) to encourage courtesy and justice for all; (2) to limit consideration to one item at a time; (3) to avoid discrimination by seeing that the views of the minority are heard; (4) to require the group to abide by the majority decision.

Participation of members

Members who participate in the discussions in church business meetings must recognize that they often express opinions rather than facts. For example, one member might state, "It's too hot in here." Another member might differ because the temperature for him might be just right. But if the first person had said, "It *seems* to hot to me," no argument can be forthcoming. No one can argue about how a matter seems to another person.

Reasonable people can agree if they have enough facts. This statement implies that disagreement comes as a result of one of two reasons: either the people are unreasonable, or they do not have enough facts. A definition of reasonable should include Christian attitude. It is possible for reasonable people to disagree sometimes because of their differing views and interpretations of the facts. Most controversial decisions require value judgements.

The pastor as leader and presiding officer can take advantage of the situation and impose his own thinking. To do so is to defeat his pastoral purpose to develop laymen. They grow by assuming responsibility and by functioning in the church. For the pastor to dominate a business meeting limits this development. As leader, however, he must avoid the other extreme of not giving any guidance to church business. His training and relation to every phase of the church programme give him a vision which the majority of members do not have.

Suggestions for the presiding officer

1. The presiding officer should request the one who is making a report, or a motion, to stand. The person making the report should remain before the congregation to answer questions which arise.
2. While presiding, he must not enter the debate or discussion. He must avoid taking sides in a discussion

List four purposes of parliamentary procedure.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

(Compare your answers with the text.)

People disagree in decision-making because they--

1. lack enough *f* _____,
2. are *u* _____,
3. have differing *v* _____.

(1. facts, 2. unreasonable, 3. views)

After reading each suggestion for the presiding officer, write it briefly in your own words.

1. _____

while presiding. If he feels he must express his views on the question, he should call on another to preside.

3. He should be fair to each side which is debating a question. He should not make comments after any speaker which will show favouritism to a position.
4. The presiding officer should not impose his own views. Out of respect for the pastor, many members will vote simply to please him. If their votes do not express their opinions, they will experience an inner conflict which might eventually become significant.
5. The presiding officer should stand while receiving and stating a motion, but he should sit during the discussion of the motion. He rises as one speaker concludes in order to recognize the next speaker. This procedure encourages the speaker to address the congregation instead of the moderator.
6. The presiding officer is responsible for conducting the meeting as fairly and impartially as possible. He must protect the rights of the minority.
7. The presiding officer should maintain a spiritual atmosphere during debates by reminding each side that the purpose of the meeting is to find the will of God rather than to impose one's own views.

If the presiding officer fails to follow these rules, the business meeting ceases to operate on democratic principles. A business meeting ending in decisions influenced by the pastor has not been a truly democratic meeting. His influence as a leader should be exerted before the business meeting: he should teach the people the principles of the Scriptures and provide them with facts necessary for the church to operate. The people must be permitted to formulate their decisions based on previously taught principles and shared facts.

A wise moderator will not allow the business meeting to become ultra-formal, but he will adhere to rules. He may use humour to release tension which tends to mount with regard to debatable issues, but he should be careful to avoid humour that might reflect on the character of any of the participants. He is responsible for keeping the discussion focused on the question before the body and for not allowing the discussion to go in several directions. He must not permit the business meeting to drag on. He should be fair in giving every person an opportunity to express his opinion, but he might need to develop tactful ways of restraining those who tend to dominate the discussion. If he calls for a vote and the outcome is a tie, he should declare the motion lost because it is seldom wise for a church to make a decision on an issue over which it is so completely divided. The motion can be reconsidered when there is evidence of a greater consensus of opinion regarding the decision.

Continue reading and listing suggestions for a presiding officer.

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

6. _____

7. _____

List some additional suggestions for a moderator.

Kinds of motions

The primary question

Only one motion may be brought before the house at any given time. The attempt to make another is out of order until the motion before the house has been disposed of, unless the new motion is classified as privileged. (See the following section on privileged motions.)

Subsidiary motions

These motions grow out of and relate to the main question.

Amendments.—A main motion before the assembly may be amended for the purpose of clarifying or improving the statement of the motion. The amendment may eliminate an objectionable part of the main motion. A person who favours the main motion in general may have an excellent suggestion for improving it. He should move an amendment to the motion, remain standing until it has been seconded, then state clearly and courteously why he feels the amendment should carry. The motion to amend requires a second and is debatable. It requires a majority vote to carry. It is voted on before the main motion. If it carries, the main motion is placed before the assembly as amended. The main motion can have only two amendments pending at one time: (1) the amendment to the main motion, (2) an amendment to the amendment.

Substitute motion.—This motion may be moved when a main motion is before the assembly. It is for the purpose of deleting the entire wording of the main motion and substituting entirely new wording. The substitute motion takes precedence over amendments to the main motion. If the substitute motion carries, the main motion is no longer considered. The substitute motion may be discussed and can receive amendments. Before it is voted upon as the main motion, opportunity should be given for other substitute motions to be made and acted upon.

Motion to delay action on the main motion.—(1) A motion may be made to table a motion. This means that it will be discussed further at a later date. This motion does not have to include a specific time when the main motion will again be discussed. It may not be amended and must be acted upon before discussion continues on the main motion. The motion to table is such a high ranking motion that it is neither debatable nor amendable and, therefore, must be voted upon immediately. The person making such a motion should make it only when other urgent business prevents time for further discussion on the motion. (2) A similar motion is to postpone action indefinitely. This motion differs from the other by being open for discussion and amendment. If the motion to postpone carries, the original motion cannot be brought up for discussion until the next business meeting.

How many primary (main) questions can be brought before the house at a time? _____

(Compare your answer with the text.)

Motions growing out of or relating to the main question are called

_____.

(subsidiary motions)

As you read about each kind of subsidiary motion, list it.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

A motion to move the previous question.—This motion, if it carries by a two-thirds vote, stops debate on the question. It is undebatable and unamendable. If it carries, the main motion must then be voted upon without further discussion. Many permit the erroneous procedure of calling for the question from the floor to replace the proper procedure of moving the previous question. One person's saying "Question!" cannot halt the discussion and force the vote to be taken.

The motion to withdraw a motion.—The maker of a motion can withdraw a motion only before the chair has stated the motion to the group. After some discussion, the mover may decide that the motion should never have been made; therefore, he requests the chair to withdraw it. The chair then expresses the wishes of the maker of the motion to the group. If there are no objections, he is permitted to withdraw his motion. If there is one objection, a formal motion to withdraw the motion must be made and acted upon.

Modifying the motion.—The chairman may use general and unanimous consent in allowing the maker of a motion to modify the motion after some discussion of it. The chairman may use general consent or unanimous consent by stating what is to be done, asking whether there are any objections, and stating, "Hearing no objections, the chair declares that it will be so ordered."

Privileged motions

These motions, along with subsidiary motions, have a definite order of rank. A motion of higher rank can always be made while a motion of lower rank is pending. A motion of lower rank cannot be entertained while a motion of higher rank is under consideration. Privileged motions in order of rank are: (1) to fix a time at which to adjourn, (2) to adjourn, (3) to recess, (4) to raise a question of privilege, and (5) to call for the order of the day. If one of these motions is made while a main motion is on the floor, it becomes a privileged motion and must be handled before the main motion.

If someone makes the privileged motion to adjourn during a long and heated discussion on the main motion, the body has to vote on the question of whether to adjourn before it can continue discussion on the main motion. If there is danger that the motion to adjourn will carry and thus interrupt important business, another member may make the motion to fix a time at which to adjourn, thus saving any important business for a later hour or day and yet complying with the feelings of the exhausted group. The later motion is of a higher rank than the motion to adjourn and must be voted upon first.

If a motion is being discussed, privileged motions cannot be debated or amended but must be acted upon immediately. If no other motion is before the group, the

Continue listing the kinds of subsidiary motions as you read about them.

4. _____

5. _____

6. _____

Privileged motions take precedence over _____ motions.

(main)

List the privileged motions in order of their rank.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

(Compare your answers with the text.)

motion to adjourn can be amended and debated as any other motion. The chairman can declare the meeting adjourned if he senses that no other business is to come before the group. He should use the procedure of general consensus.

The motion to recess is not debatable but is amendable as to the length of time to recess. The raising of a question of privilege is directed to the chairman, and the speaker is requested to state the question. It usually relates to the comfort or concern of the total assembly. The motion to call for the order of the day may be used when the group has digressed from an adopted agenda.

Incidental motions

Three of the most commonly used incidental motions are: (1) to appeal the decision of the chair; (2) to withdraw one's motion; and (3) to choose a certain method of voting. The withdrawing of one's motion has been discussed already. If a member feels that the chairman's ruling on a point of order is incorrect, he may move to appeal the decision of the chair. He should be prepared to sustain his questioning of the decision of the chair from a parliamentary rule. The question is, "Shall a decision of the chair be sustained?" The motion is debatable unless the group has just voted to stop debate on the previous question or if the immediately pending motion is not debatable. On this motion, the chairman can speak twice in defending his position. Other members can speak only once. The motion to choose a certain method of voting is used when the vote cast on an issue is very close and indecisive. If the previous vote was by voice, a member may wish to request the use of a standing vote or a ballot. Such a motion requires a second, is not debatable, and is subject to amendment as to method of voting.

Restoratory motions

A motion to reconsider.—The purpose of this motion is to bring back before the group for more thought and consideration a motion that has been hastily passed or defeated. The one who moves this motion must have voted on the prevailing side. It is debatable but not amendable and must carry by a majority vote. If this motion passes, the main motion to which it refers is before the group again for discussion, consideration, and amendment and must be voted on again.

The motion to rescind or repeal.—If a previous motion has been passed prematurely, a member can make the motion to rescind or repeal regardless how he voted on the original motion. It requires a second, is debatable and amendable, and must have a two-thirds vote to carry. If notice is given that such a motion will be made at the next business meeting, the motion to rescind will require only a majority vote at that meeting.

If someone thinks the chairman's ruling on a point of order is incorrect, he may move to appeal the _____ of the _____.

(decision, chair)

The one who makes the motion to reconsider must have voted on the p _____ side.

(prevailing)

One may make the motion to rescind or repeal regardless how he v _____ on the original m _____.

(voted, motion)

The motion to ratify.—If a motion was voted on without the authority of the organization and was not contrary to the organization's constitution and by-laws, it can be legalized by a motion to ratify. This motion requires a second, is debatable and amendable, and carries by a majority vote. Usually this motion is used only with regard to legal matters in a church. The pastor or one of the trustees may make a financial commitment on behalf of the church before the church approves it. To make the commitment legal, the membership must ratify it.

The motion to take from the table.—This motion can bring back before the group for discussion a matter which has been tabled at the same meeting. It requires a second, is not debatable or amendable, and is carried by a majority vote.

Nominations and elections

Some churches elect their officers by nomination from the floor. This procedure often reflects the attitude of merely finding someone who will accept the office instead of seeking someone who can give the best leadership to the responsibility. Most churches find it advantageous to have a nominating committee, which recommends the names of the people to be elected. This procedure does not prevent nominations being made from the floor, but it does give opportunity for more serious consideration of the necessary qualities of the person who is recommended for a position.

Nominations made by a committee do not need any kind of motion. The committee's report automatically places in nomination the names which the committee suggests. The presiding officer may state, "These names are in nomination for these respective offices. Are there any other nominations from the floor?" A premature motion to close the nominations should be tactfully refused until every person has had opportunity to express his desire. When the moderator senses that there are no further nominations, he calls for a motion that the nominations be closed. This motion requires a two-thirds vote since it takes away the rights of the group. Another procedure is for the chairman to use the general consensus ruling after adequate time has been given for nominations from the floor. He may declare the nominations closed if there are no further nominations or objections. The entire slate of officers may be elected with one motion if there are no additional nominations. The chairman may proceed without a formal motion by stating, "All in favour of electing these nominees will say 'Aye.'" After the voting, the chairman must declare the officers elected.

Recording business

The chairman is responsible for seeing that a clerk or secretary is present to record the matters transacted at

Usually the motion to ratify is used in a church only for _____ matters.

(legal)

What is the advantage of having a nominating committee recommend officers rather than electing them from the floor? _____

(gives opportunity for more serious consideration of the qualifications of each person recommended)

Are the following statements true or false?

- 1. Nominations made by a committee do not need a motion. _____*
- 2. The nominating committee's report automatically places the names suggested in nomination. _____*
- 3. The nominating committee's report should be accepted without any nominations from the floor. _____*

(1. true, 2. true, 3. false)

each official business meeting. The secretary should read the minutes of the previous business meeting in order that they may be approved or corrected. The chairman may approve the minutes by using the general consensus procedure. He states, "You have heard the reading of the minutes of the previous business meeting. Are there any corrections, additions, or omissions? If there are no objections to the minutes as read, I declare them approved by this body." If corrections or changes have been made, the chairman then declares them approved as corrected.

List the two responsibilities of a church clerk or secretary.

1. _____

2. _____

(1. record transactions at each official business meeting; 2. read minutes of previous business meetings)

Home Study Exercise

Basic assignment (Levels 1, 2, and 3). After reading the content in the study guide, answer the following questions.

1. How did Jesus' view of leadership differ from the traditional view? _____

2. What authority was given to the apostles? _____

3. Give three New Testament examples of church decisions being made by the members rather than the leaders.

4. How is the doctrine of the priesthood of believers related to church democracy? _____

5. What authority does the pastor have over the church? _____

6. What authority do the members have over the pastor? _____

7. List four necessary qualities of a spiritual democracy. _____

8. Why are reports important in church business? _____

9. List the proper order of items on an agenda. _____

10. What is the purpose of committees? _____

11. Name three purposes of parliamentary law. _____

12. Give three reasons people may disagree concerning a decision. _____

13. What are three requirements of the presiding officer in keeping a meeting democratic? _____

14. Distinguish between a primary question and subsidiary motions. _____

15. What are privileged motions? _____

16. What may a member do if he feels that the chairman's ruling on a point of order is incorrect? _____

17. Who may make a motion to reconsider? _____
18. Why do some churches have committees to nominate officers? _____

Supplementary assignment (Levels 2 and 3). Read pages 190-197 in *The Churchbook* by Dobbins, and answer the following questions.

1. What are five dangers of democracy if Christian idealism and motivating love are lacking?
2. Name six important essentials of a Christian democracy.
3. What is the greatest advantage of the democratic process to the individual member?
4. Prepare an order of business to follow in a church business meeting.
5. Name the different classifications of motions.

Advanced assignment (Level 3).

1. Explain what is meant by "the order of precedence."
2. According to your personal opinion, what are some reasons members fail to participate in business meetings?
3. List the committees that you think would be practical for your church to have. What should be their responsibilities?

Seminar Discussion

1. What do you consider to be the weaknesses of the democratic process in churches? Make a list of practical suggestions which would help overcome these weaknesses.
2. Does adopting a democratic procedure guarantee fairness for each member of a church? Explain.
3. How does church democracy differ from political democracy? Which should be more effective and why?
4. Be prepared to participate in a meeting in which a student presides over a group of classmates who have organized to improve theological education.