**CHURCH OF PRAYER CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP**

**DOCTRINAL STUDIES- FOUNDATIONAL TEACHING**

**LESSON 12: THE GOVERNMENT OF THE CHURCH**

**CLASS NOTES**

**Summary:**

“For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder; and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.” **(Isaiah 9:6 ASV)**

Jesus is our foundation. Read **1 Corinthians 3:10 and Ephesians 2:20**.

God has exalted Jesus and given Him the name which is above every name.

The government of the Lord will be established. Read **Philippians 2:7,9.**

The name of Jesus establishes His people and the church. Every kingdom has a government, officials, and/or institutions. Jesus is the King to the government in which we exist; He reigns and rules in this government. Jesus established this government through His Word and covenant relationship with His people. Jesus has directions to move anything that does not belong to or in His kingdom. He alone is the Ruler of all nations.

Government may be defined in two general ways: The officials or the institutions.

* In reference to officials, government refers to sovereign authority over a body of people.
* In reference to institutions, government refers to the customs, morals, laws, and institutions of a people.

The Government of the Kingdom of God: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. Read **Isaiah 40:10,11; 28-31; Judges 1**, and **Acts 10:42-43**.

Our focus is the Kingdom of God and the Church. When Jesus came, the Kingdom of God was at hand (**Matthew 3:2**); the Kingdom of God meant new order, new government, new covenant, and a new King.

Ultimate authority resides in God and God alone. Read **Judges 8:22-23, 1 Samuel 8:7-9,** and **Romans 13:1-4.** During this time in the Old Testament, the Hebrews had no centralized government. The major unit was the extended family or on a larger basis, the tribe. The government was family based. The first unit of authority or government was the household of the father’s house.

Moses was succeeded by Joshua, who was succeeded by the judges. The appointed judge was not primarily a judicial official, but rather a charismatic military leader. The judge would rally the forces of Israel and defeat an oppressing power. The book of **1 Samuel** brings a change in the emphasis of the judge. The judge became a priestly official, as in the cases of Eli and Samuel.

**SCRIPTURES: Titus 1:5**

The Government of the Church is based on the Fivefold Ministry:

1. Apostles **(1 Corinthians 12:28)**
2. Prophets **(1 Samuel 3:20 and Matthew 2:5)**
3. Evangelist **(Acts 21:8)**
4. Pastors **(John 10:2)**
5. Teachers **(Isaiah 48:17)**

**Apostle-** A special messenger, delegate, one commissioned for a particular task or role; one who is sent forth with a message. Read **Acts 14:14.**

The diverse duties of an apostle:

* **Planting Churches**- (**Acts 13:4-14:26)**
  + Apostles plant local churches because these churches are the building blocks of the Kingdom. As they plant, they are responsible for imparting the faith and laying a proper foundation for dynamic growth. Read **Ephesians 2:20**.
* **Overseeing and Strengthening the Church- (2 Corinthians 11:28)**
  + Apostles carry a deep love and concern for the church **(2 Corinthians 11:28)**; they know that once a church has been planted, it must be nurtured and protected to ensure its survival.
* **Developing Leaders**
  + A great portion of the apostle’s time is spent in establishing new leaders **(2 Timothy 2:22).** Apostles must serve as fathers and teachers, producing spiritual children as Paul did with Timothy and Titus. These spiritual offspring can assist the apostle in apostolic work.
* **Ordaining Ministries- (Acts 6:1-6; Titus 1:5)**
  + Once apostles have poured themselves into the lives of faithful servants, they will set these servants into church offices. Apostles will regularly ordain elders and deacons to rule and serve in the house of God. During these times, apostles may assemble a prophetic presbytery to lay hands on those who are being ordained. Together this team of ministers will impart spiritual gifts to the candidates **(Romans 1:11)**.
* **Supervising and Coordinating Ministries- (Philippians 2:19-20)**
  + A large part of the apostles’ responsibilities includes filling the roles of a ministry. Apostles must be able to act as administrators, utilizing people to get things done.
* **Managing Crisis**
  + Apostolic work is filled with obstacles and challenges; thus, apostles can be understood largely as problem-solvers. Read **Acts 5:1-11, 1 Corinthians 5:11,** and **2 Corinthians 2:5-11**.
* **Networking with Other Ministries**
  + When the apostles came together in the Jerusalem Council that left for us an example of the importance of coming together as a group to share with one another. We need one another.

**Prophet**- One who proclaims or tells a message he has received; a spokesman, herald, announcer. A prophet is someone who announces a message at the direction of another (from the Lord).

**Evangelist-** One who brings the good news of the gospel. The word evangelist appears in **Acts 21:8**, where Philip is identified as an evangelist; in **Ephesians 4:11**, which views evangelists as gifted individuals given to the church; and in **2 Timothy 4:5**, where Timothy is told to do the work of an evangelist.

**Pastor-** also known as a Shepherd; one who tends, leads, guides, cherishes, feeds, and protects a flock. **Read John 10:2.**

**Teacher-** One with the knowledge to be able to train, teach or educate others. To instruct others; teaching and learning involves hearing the divine Word of God. Jesus was often addressed as teacher. Those who are skillful teachers are charged with the task of maintaining the pattern of divine doctrine delivered to them by apostles. **Read 2 Timothy 1:13, 2 Timothy 2:2, 2 Timothy 3:16,** and **Titus 2:1.**

**Elder-** *Zaqen* is the word for elder; someone advanced in age who deserves respect and would be valued as a counselor. Elders had governing roles in the judicial history of Israel. The critical ministry of an elder is mentioned in **1 Timothy 5:17**.

**Deacon-** A servant; a minister. The Greek word for deacon is *diakonos,* which means “one who serves.” The ministry of a deacon include serving tables and meeting physical needs, read **Acts 6:2**; teaching the word of God, read **acts 6:4**; and giving money to meet others’ needs.

Additional Scriptures to read include **1 Timothy 6:3, 1 Timothy 3:1-15, 2 Timothy 2:14-15,** and **1 Corinthians 12:28-30.**