

Example: any organization characterized by a hierarchical structure, a chain of command, in which one person has the right to direct another person's work, or in which one person is responsible to closely supervise another person's activity, in order to accomplish a task or reach a goal.

B. The Nature of the Government of the Church

1. A definition of church Government

Church government is that authority committed by Christ to His Church which defines, establishes, and regulates its organization and the exercise of its functions.

Chapter 26 of the *Philadelphia Confession of Faith* (A.D. 1689) states:

The Lord Jesus Christ is the head of the church, in whom, by the appointment of the Father . . . all power for the calling, institution, order, or government of the church, is invested in a supreme and sovereign manner; . . .

In the execution of this power wherewith he is so entrusted, the Lord Jesus calleth out of the world unto himself, through the ministry of his word, by his Spirit, those that are . . . given unto him by his Father, that they may walk before him in all the ways of obedience, which he prescribeth to them in his word. Those thus called, he commandeth to walk together in particular societies, or . . . churches, for their mutual edification, and the due performance of that public worship, which he requireth of them in the world.

To each of these churches thus gathered, according to his mind declared in his word, he hath given all that . . . power and authority, which is any way needful for their carrying on that order in worship and discipline, which he hath instituted for them to observe, with commands and rules for the due and right executing of that power.

A particular church, gathered and completely organized, according to the mind of Christ, consists of officers and members: and the officers appointed by Christ to be chosen and set apart by the church (so called and gathered) for the peculiar administration of ordinances, and execution of power or duty, which he entrusts them with or calls them to, to be continued to the end of the world, are . . . bishops or elders, and deacons.

Chapter 1 of the *Form of Government* of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. (A.D. 1788) states:

That our blessed Savior, 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; and that it is incumbent upon these officers, and upon the whole Church, in whose name they act, to censure or cast out the