
The Communion of the Saints

Part 9:

The Government of the Church



The Scottish Covenanters



King Henry VIII

- 1534—Act of Supremacy
- Divine Right of Kings
- Said the King could command churches how to worship

The Scottish Covenanters

- 1638—the Scottish Presbyterians sign “the National Covenant”
- States the King has no right to tell churches how to worship



The Scottish Covenanters

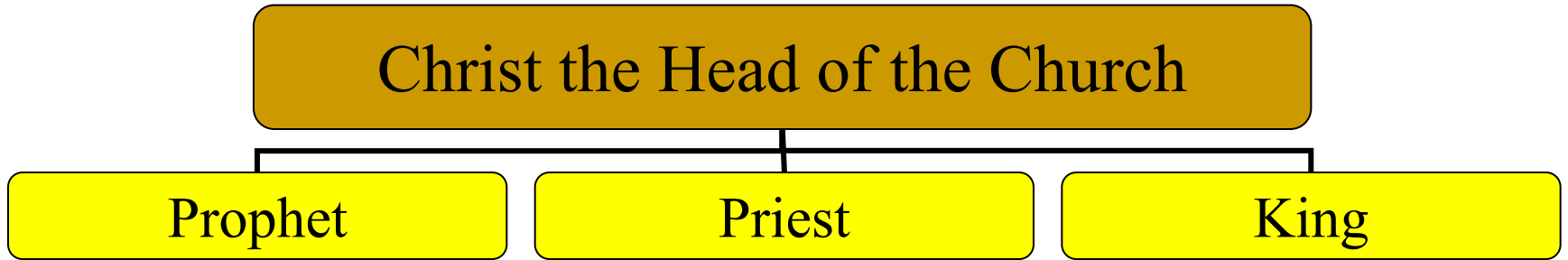
- The slogan of the Scottish Covenanters: “King Jesus”
- 1660: King Charles I persecuted the Covenanters



The Scottish Covenanters

- Christ is the Head of the Church
 - **Ephesians 1:22:** “And He put all things in subjection under His feet, and gave Him as head over all things to the church.”
 - **Colossians 1:18:** “He is also head of the body, the church.”
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The Sovereign Head of the Church



The Sovereign Head of the Church

- Messiah means **Anointed One**
 - Three Offices in the Old Testament were anointed
 - Prophet
 - Priest
 - King
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True King

- The Church is the **Temple** of God
 - **Ephesians 2:21-22:** “the whole building, being fitted together, is growing into a holy temple in the Lord, **22** in whom you also are being built together into a dwelling of God in the Spirit.”
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True King

- Herod beautified the Second Temple of Jerusalem



True King

- Job Description of the King:
 - The King of Israel will **build the Temple**:
 - **2 Samuel 7:12-13**: “I will raise up your descendant after you, who will come forth from you, and I will establish his kingdom. 13 He shall build a house for My name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever.”
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True King

- **Matthew 16:18:** “I will build My church; and the gates of Hades will not overpower it.”
 - Church: Ekklesia: the assembly of called out ones
 - Jesus built His temple = His church
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True Prophet

- Job Description of Old Testament Prophets
 - **Expositors** of the Law
 - **Prosecutors** of the Law:
 - Pronounce blessings and curses according to the Law
 - Jesus
 - Exposed the Law, Matthew 5:27: “you have heard it said, but I say to you.”
 - Matthew 23: pronounced woes
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True Prophet

- Jesus

- Pronounced blessings:
 - **Matthew 5:3-5:** “Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. “Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted. “Blessed are the gentle, for they shall inherit the earth.”
 - **Hebrews 12:25:** “See to it that you do not refuse Him who is speaking.”
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True Priest

- Job Description of priest: **Mediate** between God and man
 - To bring God before the people
 - To bring the people before God
 - **1 Timothy 2:5**: “For there is one God, *and* one mediator also between God and men, *the* man Christ Jesus”
 - Gospel of Mark:
 - Bookended by the word “torn”
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True Priest

- Jesus brings God before the people
 - **Mark 1:10:** “Immediately coming up out of the water, He saw the heavens opening (“torn”) and the Spirit like a dove descending upon Him.”
 - **Isaiah 64:1:** “O that you would tear open the heavens and come down, so that the mountains would quake at your presence.”
 - The heavenly veil is torn
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True Priest

- Jesus brings the people before God
 - **Mark 15:38:** “And the veil of the temple was torn (same word) in two from top to bottom.”
 - The veil of the temple is torn in two, allowing access to God
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The Sovereign Head of the Church

- **Revelation 1:13-16:** “in the middle of the lampstands / *saw* one like a son of man, clothed in a robe reaching to the feet, and girded across His chest with a golden sash. 14 His head and His hair were white like white wool, like snow; and His eyes were like a flame of fire. 15 His feet *were* like burnished bronze, when it has been made to glow in a furnace, and His voice *was* like the sound of many waters. 16 In His right hand He held seven stars, and out of His mouth came a sharp two-edged sword; and His face was like the sun shining in its strength.”
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The Sovereign Head of the Church

- **Prophet**
 - **Revelation 1:13-16:** “in the middle of the lampstands / *saw* one like a son of man, clothed in a robe reaching to the feet, and girded across His chest with a golden sash. 14 His head and His hair were white like white wool, like snow; and His eyes were like a flame of fire. 15 His feet *were* like burnished bronze, when it has been made to glow in a furnace, and His voice *was* like the sound of many waters. 16 In His right hand He held seven stars, and **out of His mouth came a sharp two-edged sword**; and His face was like the sun shining in its strength.”
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The Sovereign Head of the Church

- **Priest**
 - **Revelation 1:13-16: “in the middle of the lampstands / saw one like a son of man, clothed in a robe reaching to the feet, and girded across His chest with a golden sash. 14 His head and His hair were white like white wool, like snow; and His eyes were like a flame of fire. 15 His feet were like burnished bronze, when it has been made to glow in a furnace, and His voice was like the sound of many waters. 16 In His right hand He held seven stars, and out of His mouth came a sharp two-edged sword; and His face was like the sun shining in its strength.”**
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The Sovereign Head of the Church

- **King**
 - **Revelation 1:13-16:** “in the middle of the lampstands / saw one like a son of man... 16 In His right hand He held seven stars
 - **Daniel 7:14:** “everlasting dominion which will not pass away; And His kingdom is one which will not be destroyed.”
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The Steward Officers of the Church

- Church Leaders are merely stewards of the King
 - Two Offices
 - Elder: a **governing** office
 - Deacon: a **servicing** office
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The Steward Officers of the Church

- Terms for the office of elder:
 - Elder (Greek: presbuteros)
 - Overseer (Greek: episkopos, English: Bishop)
 - Pastor (aka shepherd)
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The Steward Officers of the Church

- Elder = Overseer = Pastor
 - **1 Peter 5:1-2:** “Therefore, I exhort the elders [presbuteros] among you, as your fellow elder and witness of the sufferings of Christ, and a partaker also of the glory that is to be revealed, shepherd [pastor] the flock of God among you, exercising oversight [episkopos] not under compulsion, but voluntarily.”
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The Steward Officers of the Church

- Elder (presbuteros)
 - Speaks of the **dignity** of the office
 - Refers not literally to age, but wisdom and maturity
 - 1 Timothy 3, Titus 1: Character qualifications
 - Personal Character
 - Personal Relationships
 - Public Reputation
 - Ability: Able to teach
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The Steward Officers of the Church

- Overseer (Episkopos or Bishop)
 - Speaks to the **authority** of the office
 - **Titus 1:7** “The overseer must be above reproach as God’s steward.”
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The Steward Officers of the Church

- Pastor (or Shepherd)
 - Speaks to the **work** of the office
 - Lead
 - Protect
 - Feed
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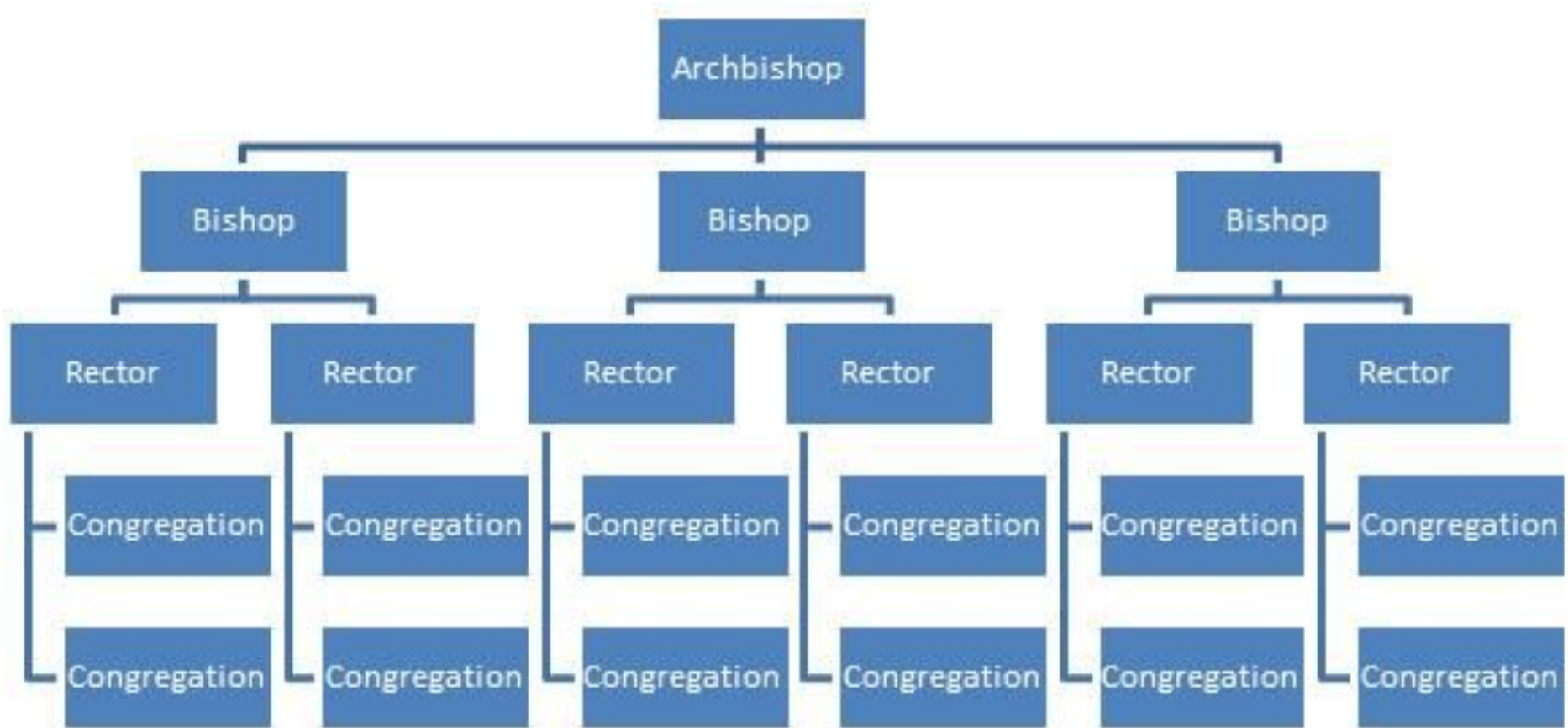
The Structural Forms of the Church

- Possible Forms of Church Government:
 - Episcopalian
 - Presbyterian
 - Congregational
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The Structural Forms of the Church

| Structure | Episcopalian | Presbyterian | Congregational |
|--|---|----------------------------|---|
| Rule by | Bishops | Elders | Congregation |
| Elder/Overseer/ Pastor Synonymous? | No | Yes | Yes |
| Examples | -Anglican -Episcopalian -Methodist -Eastern -Orthodox -Roman Catholic | -Presbyterian -Reformed | -Congregational -Southern Baptist |

Episcopalian



Episcopalian Government has a **Top Down** Structure
Rector = Pastor

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The Structural Forms of the Church

- **Presbyterianism**

- Elders rule: **1 Timothy 5:17**: “Let the elders who rule well.”
 - Elders can **appoint other elders**: **Titus 1:5**: “appoint elders in every city as I directed you.”
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The Structural Forms of the Church

- **Congregationalism**

- The Congregation has a voice
 - Congregations enact **church discipline: Matthew 18:17**: “If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church; and if he refuses to listen even to the church, let him be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector.”
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The Structural Forms of the Church

- Congregations decide **church leadership**
 - Chose Judas' Replacement
 - **Acts 1:23:** “So they (the church) put forward two men, Joseph called Barsabbas and Matthias.”
 - Chose the first deacons
 - **Acts 6:5:** “The statement found approval with the whole congregation; and they chose”
 - Chose delegates/missionaries
 - **Acts 15:22:** “Then it seemed good to the apostles and the elders, with the whole church, to choose men from among them to send to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas”

The Structural Forms of the Church



- Which is the correct form of church government?
 - ❑ a. Episcopalianism
 - ❑ b. Presbyterianism
 - ❑ c. Congregationalism
 - ❑ d. All of the above
 - ❑ e. Both b. and c.
 - ❑ f. none of the above
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 - e. Both b and c.
 - ~~✗~~ f. None of the above

Practical Application

- Esteem your elders
 - **Ephesians 4:11:** “And He gave some *as* apostles, and some *as* prophets, and some *as* evangelists, and some *as* pastors and teachers.”



Practical Application

- Pray for your elders
 - **James Bannerman says**, “The Church has no store of life apart from Christ being in it. Within the province of the Church, the Lord Jesus is the only Teacher, Lawgiver, and Judge. If doctrine is taught, it is taught because He has revealed it; if ordinances are administered, they are administered in His name, and because they are His; if government is established and exercised, it is through His appointment and authority; if saving grace is dispensed, it is dispensed through the virtue and power of His Spirit; if a blessing is communicated, it is because He blesses.”
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Practical Application

- Remember your elders are sinners saved by grace



Samuel Rutherford



1600-1661

Samuel Rutherford

- “Tell them I have got a summons already before a superior judge, and I must answer my first summons, and before your day arrives, I will be where few kings and great folks come.”
 - Died March 29, 1661
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Samuel Rutherford

- “My witness is in heaven that I could wish many pound weights were added to my cross, to know that by my sufferings Christ were set forward in His kingly office in this land.”
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