

The Church and Its Administration

"While church administration may degenerate into fleshly dependence upon worldly ways and means, this is in no way a necessary consequence. Indeed, one of the most worldly and unchristian ways of dishonoring God is by the careless, sloppy, confused and confusing manner in which some try to carry on His work. Anything pursued in an unbiblical manner, anything not Spirit-controlled, will become fleshly--whether tightly organized and managed well, or whether loosely thrown together. The Spirit is neither bound by organization ... nor unable to work in free contexts... It is of utmost necessity, therefore, to recognize at the outset that good leadership, planning and management in the Church of Christ are not merely tolerated or permitted (as one might suppose from listening to many ministers) but required and encouraged by the Holy Spirit. To put it tersely: biblical administration is spiritual." --Adams, *Shepherding God's Flock* III, p. 318.

I. Church Discipline

A. Defined

"To these officers [of the Church] the keys of the kingdom of heaven are committed, by virtue whereof they have power respectively to retain and remit sins, to shut that kingdom against the impenitent, both by the word and censures, and to open it unto penitent sinners, by the ministry of the gospel, and by absolution of censures, as occasion shall require."
--Westminster Confession of Faith XXX:2

B. Nature = spiritual

1. Declarative

--Warnings and admonishments & Promises and encouragements

Christ --Official discipline simply passes the sentence of

2. Ministerial (moral and spiritual)

--withdrawal of privilege

cf. Ps. 107:17 "Fools, because of their transgression, and because of their iniquities, were afflicted."

Jer. 5:25 (8:13) Your iniquities have turned these things away, And your sins have withheld good from you.

==calculated rewards and chastenings

3. Limits on discipline before God

a. Precepts and examples of Scripture

b. Ultimately, God alone is Lord of the conscience

I Peter 5:3 “Shepherd the flock of God which is among you, serving as overseers, not by compulsion but willingly, not for dishonest gain but eagerly; ³nor as being lords over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock”

Acts 5:29 = only honest escape clause: “obey God rather than men”

C. Mandate of discipline

1. Natural right of "voluntary" associations (Calvin's *Institutes*, IV 12:1)

a. Initial prevention

Be familiar with system of receiving new members: 1) profession of faith, 2) reaffirmation of faith, and 3) transfer of membership

b. Regular maintenance

2. Divine appointment; II Timothy 3:16 ("reproof" and "correction" imply discipline)

a. Admission to the church guarded

Mt. 16:18f. “And I also say to you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it. ¹⁹“And I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.”

John 20:21-23

b. Life in the church guided

Mt. 18:15-18: confronting wayward brothers/sisters

D. Scope

1. Doctrine - heresies

2. Ordinances = sacraments, preaching, internal government
3. Conduct - immoralities, omissions

E. Types of discipline

1. Administrative

a. Realm: offices and duties within the church;
"general review" of a court

-example of John Mark

b. Purpose: to see that all duties are faithfully
discharged to ensure good order in government

2. Judicial = judgment of one's life

a. Realm

1) Subjects: communicants, officers, courts

2) Nature of offenses: gross immoralities, heresies

b. Purpose

"Church censures are necessary for the reclaiming and gaining of offending brethren; for detering of others from like offenses; for purging out of that leaven which might infect the whole lump; for vindicating the honor of Christ, and the holy profession of the gospel; and for preventing the wrath of God, which might justly fall upon the Church, if they should suffer his covenant, and the seals thereof, to be profaned by notorious and obstinate offenders." --WCoF XXX:3

1) Vindicate the honor of Christ

I Tim. 1:20; Hymenaeus and Alexander, whom I delivered to Satan that they may learn not to blaspheme.

5:20, 21; ²⁰Those who are sinning rebuke in the presence of all, that the rest also may fear. ²¹I charge you before God and the Lord Jesus Christ and the elect angels that you observe these things without prejudice, doing nothing with partiality.

Jude 4 For certain men have crept in unnoticed, who long ago were marked out for this condemnation, ungodly men, who turn the grace of our God into lewdness and deny the only Lord God and our Lord Jesus Christ.

2) Promote the purity of the church

I Cor. 5:6,7; ⁶Your glorying *is* not good. Do you not know that a little leaven leavens the whole lump? ⁷Therefore purge out the old leaven, that you may be a new lump, since you truly are unleavened. For indeed Christ, our Passover, was sacrificed for us.

11:27; ²⁷Therefore whoever eats this bread or drinks this cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord.

II Thess. 3:6-15 ²Now those who are such we command and exhort through our Lord Jesus Christ that they work in quietness and eat their own bread

a) Halt putrefying influence, I Cor. 5:7

b) Public Deterrent, I Tim. 5:20

3) Reclaim the offender

(implications of I Cor. 14:23-25)

--II Cor. 2:5-10 = return of excommunicated member (I Cor. 5:5)

Lev. 19:17; ¹⁷You shall not hate your brother in your heart. You shall surely rebuke your neighbor, and not bear sin because of him.

Gal. 6:1,2; Brethren, if a man is overtaken in any trespass, you who are spiritual restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness, considering yourself lest you also be tempted. ²Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.

James 5:19,20; ¹⁹Brethren, if anyone among you wanders from the truth, and someone turns him back, ²⁰let him know that he who turns a sinner from the error of his way will save a soul from death and cover a multitude of sins.

Tit. 1:13; "Cretans are always liars, evil beasts, lazy gluttons." ¹³This testimony is true. Therefore rebuke them sharply, that they may be sound in the faith,

Rev. 3:19 ¹⁹"As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten. Therefore be zealous and repent.

c. Approach in discipline cases (having made sure that Mt. 18 has been followed)

1) Initially handle at the lowest possible level

2) Formal, specific charges

3) Recognize a statute of limitations

4) Private offenses handled differently from public

ones

F. Degrees of Censure

--necessitated by impenitence/contumacy, or in some cases, self-accusation (BP BoD 6:1)

--always treating the offender as family until excommunication

Gal. 6:1

II Thess. 3:15 ⁵Yet do not count him as an enemy, but admonish him as a brother.

--two warnings first, Titus 3:10

¹⁰Reject a divisive man after the first and second admonition,

1. Admonition

I Thess. 5:14; ¹⁴Now we exhort you, brethren, warn those who are unruly, comfort the fainthearted, uphold the weak, be patient with all.

Tit. 1:9 ⁹holding fast the faithful word as he has been taught, that he may be able, by sound doctrine, both to exhort and convict those who contradict.

Rom. 15:14: "competent to counsel"

2. Rebuke (may have to go public)

I Tim. 5:20;

Tit. 1:13; 2:15; Therefore rebuke them sharply, that they may be sound in the faith, *** ¹⁵Speak these things, exhort, and rebuke with all authority. Let no one despise you.

II Tim. 4:2; Preach the word! Be ready in season *and* out of season. Convince, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching.

Eph. 5:11 And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather expose them.

3. Suspension

II Thess. 3:10, 14 ¹⁰For even when we were with you, we commanded you this: If anyone will not work, neither shall he eat. ¹⁴And if anyone does not obey our word in this epistle, note that person and do not keep company with him, that he may be ashamed.

4. (Deposition -- only for officers or ones in critical positions)

--e.g., John Mark on IMJ

5. Excommunication: expelled back into the *kosmos*

Mt. 18:17; “And if he refuses to hear them, tell *it* to the church. But if he refuses even to hear the church, let him be to you like a heathen and a tax collector

I Cor. 5:11-13; But now I have written to you not to keep company with anyone named a brother, who is sexually immoral, or covetous, or an idolater, or a reviler, or a drunkard, or an extortioner—not even to eat with such a person. ¹²For what have I to do with judging those also who are outside? Do you not judge those who are inside? ¹³But those who are outside God judges. Therefore “put away from yourselves the evil person.”

II Thess. 3:14; And if anyone does not obey our word in this epistle, note that person and do not keep company with him, that he may be ashamed

I Tim. 1:20 Hymenaeus and Alexander delivered to Satan

II. Business Meetings

A. Suggestions

1. Regular and scheduled

2. Accurate records (cf. records of Ezra)

3. Preparation and homework

--written reports made available ahead of time

4. Delegate responsibility

a. Moses, Num 11:16ff.; Exo 18:18ff

b. Apostles delegate in Acts 6

c. 2 Tim 2:2

²And the things that you have heard from me among many witnesses, commit these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also.

B. Rules of order

1. Necessity - I Cor. 14:40 "Let all things be done decently and in order."

2. Motions to remember

a. Main motions

1) New questions of business

2) Reconsider a passed motion

- calls for reopening debate and a new vote on old question
- must be made same or next day as the original voted
- must be moved by one who voted with the original prevailing side

3) Rescind

- annuls a previous action
- amendable
- used when too late to reconsider - original negative votes may be rescinded - 2/3 vote required; if notice of intent to rescind sent before the meeting, only majority vote is required
- often attended by "motion to expunge," where simple majority is required

b. "Subsidiary motions" - listed in order of least priority

1) Postpone indefinitely

- kills main motion
- debatable

2) Amendments

- only one amendment to main motion at a time
- motion to amend amendment has priority (2nd degree over 1st degree amendment)

3) Commit

- sends a pending main motion or delegated business to a committee for research or execution
- debatable

- a minority report is received with the committee recommendation only by majority consent of the assembly.
- 4) Postpone definitely
 - delays action until assembly is ready to handle it
 - debatable
 - amendable as to time
 - 5) Previous question
 - ends debate and further amendments, and requires immediate vote on the previous question
 - not debatable
 - 2/3 vote required
 - unrecognized shouts for the "question" carry no privilege
 - 6) Table/Take off the table
 - delays debate on main question until called up at the assembly's discretion - not debatable
 - unamendable
 - question must be taken off table before close of next session
- c. "Incidental motions" - equal among themselves but take priority over all other motions except to Table and "privileged motions"
- 1) Withdraw a motion
 - removes original motion from debate and from the minutes (motion to withdraw is not recorded, either), even if main motion has been amended
 - not debatable
 - simple majority required
 - original motion may be reintroduced later as a main motion
 - 2) Reading of papers
 - correspondence or documentation in debate - not debatable
 - moved when a member or the chair objects- majority vote
 - 3) Suspend the rules
 - 2/3 vote for By-laws, which must state the allowance of their suspension
 - standing rules (e.g., debate time limits, admission, etc.) = majority vote
 - 4) Objection to consideration
 - avoids irrelevant or controversial motions introduced by obstructionists
 - not debatable
 - 2/3 vote required
 - differs from "withdrawal of motion" in that main motion cannot be reintroduced
 - 5) Appeal of the chair's ruling
 - debatable, but debaters speak only once - majority vote
- d. "Privileged motions" - take priority over all others
- 1) Question of privilege

- challenges conduct or voting privileges, or presence of others
 - may interrupt one who holds floor - majority rule
- 2) Adjourn or recess
 - holds over all of the above
 - not debatable
 - majority vote
 - 3) Fix the time to which to adjourn
 - holds priority over all above
 - may be reconsidered
 - not debatable
- e. Nominations require no second

III. By-Laws

A. Decency and order

B. Content

1. Membership

a. Should Christians be church members?

- 1) Mt. 16:18 - Christians are the building blocks that Christ uses to build his church.
- 2) The great commission demands that disciples be baptized (and catechized), the rite of initiation into Christ's body. This makes the church more than an optional, voluntary society that we can or don't have to join. In the OT church, uncircumcised Hebrews were to be put out of the community (Gen. 17:14).
- 3) The NT assumes membership rather than permanent adherents; "conversion included being added to the church," Acts 2:42,47
- 4) Practicalities require that a local congregation be defined by its committed members

- 5) Coming to Christ and coming into the body of Christ are not two steps, but one
(Rom. 14:7; 15:7 “accept one another, just as Christ accepted us”;
I Cor 12:27 “Now you are Christ’s body, and individually members of it.”)
- 6) Christianity requires submission to the brethren and to church leaders. How can a Christian promise to submit (I Thess. 5:12; Heb. 13:17) if they are still independent and not committed to the covenant community?
- 7) How can you have church officers (Acts 14:23; Phil. 1:1; Eph. 4:11) without members to nominate and elect them??
- 8) Practically speaking, without membership it would be impossible to decide who would vote in calling leaders, etc.

b. Qualifications

c. Responsibilities

--could be reviewed in New Member Classes

--inform of member's responsibilities, church's responsibilities, church distinctives and history; talent survey

d. Terms of dismissal

2. Officers

a. Qualifications

b. Terms

3. Terms of Dissolution

IV. Scheduling

A. Necessity

1. Set your daily schedule, or else somebody else will do it for you

2. "More than half of one's time can thus be saved."
--Archibald Alexander

3. Carry a pocket secretary or PDA!

B. Suggested pastor's routine (subject to change and interruption)

	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat
8:30-9:30	Correspondence	Bible Study	Biography	Bible Study	History	History
9:30-10:30	& follow-up on	Philos. & Science	Prayer Meeting	Philos & Science	Missions	Great Lit
10:30-11:30	Sunday activities	Theology	Sermon Prep.	Greek	Sermon Prep	Sermon Prep
11:30-12:30		Periodicals	Profess'l Study	Hebrew	Sermon Prep	Sermon Prep
12:30-1:00	LUNCH					
1:00-2:00	Correspondence and phone calls					Recreation or Sermon Prep.
3:00-5:00		Visitation and Counseling	Visitation and/or Sermon Prep.	Writing and reading	Visitation and Counseling	
5:00-7:00						
7:00-9:00		Misc. Meetings	Family Activities?	Family Activities?	Family Activities?	

V. New pastorates - see Wiersbe and Sugden's excellent ch. 3!

VI. Managing Staff

A. Preliminaries

1. The right personnel

2. Written job descriptions

3. Annual reviews

B. Delegate!

1. Biblical precedent - Moses and 70 elders, Apostles in Acts 6

II Tim. 2:2, 24 ²And the things that you have heard from me among many witnesses, commit these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also

2. Greater effectiveness (see Adams, p. 341)

C. Paid staff

D. Volunteer Staff

1. Recruiting

2. Regular review

3. Cabinet meetings?

Leading officers of church meet with Pastor to make recommendations to session, not to govern

E. Committees

1. Preliminaries

- a. Pastor is *ex officio* member of all
- b. Don't assign to committees what individuals can do
- c. An elder or deacon should be involved with each committee

2. Suggested areas

- a. See Adam's illustrative scheme, ch. IV., p. 356
 - b. Audio-visual, baptismal, Christian council, flower, grounds, library, Lord's Supper, missions, music, new member sponsors, nursery, property, p.a. system, public relations, prospective members, recreation, young peoples, ushers
- (in which of these areas can the youth participate?)

VII. Business and Finance

A. Miscellaneous

B. Computers?

Sermon Prep	DeskTop Publishing	Databases	Finances	Scheduling	Communications
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C. Personal Finance and Stewardship

1. Taxes (see the handbook by B.J. Worth who annually updates her tax guide for clergy and religious workers)

--Possible Soc.Sec. exemption by IRS form #4361

Note that recently ordained ministers may opt out of Social Security coverage and its attendant taxes in your first two years after ordination. Otherwise you will pay the full 15.3% tax.

Anyone who opts out (on grounds religious conviction) really should follow their conviction preparing for their own future systematic investment and management of their own pension!

2. Payroll suggestions

a. Housing Allowance as part of the salary package

- 1) Not declared at all as income on year-end W-2 form
- 2) Covers such items as
 - mortgage/rent
 - all utilities
 - all furnishings and appliances
 - all maintenance of the domicile; includes lawnmower & gas--does NOT include car/travel expenses
- 3) Housing allowance rate must be pre-arranged in an official business (session) meeting before the next tax year begins

b. "Professional expenses" budget for subscriptions and conferences

3. Investment

- try to buy a home, even if a parsonage is supplied
 - some churches will give an "equity allowance" of 1-3% per annum to pastors living in the parsonage
 - only clergy may double dip by getting a tax free housing allowance while deducting mortgage interest
- if you can buy a home or build some other estate, consider purchasing decreasing term life insurance

4. Disability Insurance?

VIII. Communication channels

A. Need

B. Intra-publicity and promotion

1. Bulletins

2. Monthly newspaper

3. Bulletin boards

4. Tape ministry

5. Prayer chains

C. Community publicity

IX. The challenge of church leadership

A. Leadership or management?

"The leader usually is a good manager, but a good manager is not necessarily a good leader because he may be weak in terms of motivating action in others." Ted Engstrom, *The Making of a Christian Leader*, p. 20.

Engstrom's contrasts

Leadership	Management
vision	realistic goals
concepts	functions
faith	fact
effectiveness	efficiency
potential resources tapped	available resources requisitioned
direction	control

B. Administration tips by Engstrom (pp. 21,22)

1. Set goals in writing, but never talk at this stage about paying the inevitable bills

2. Suggest activities to achieve goals

3. Organize programs or operations to implement necessary activities

4. Set a time table

5. Establish check points for review

6. Communicate, Communicate, Communicate...
 - a. Clarify responsibilities and accountability
 - b. Develop cooperation

- c. Report progress to subordinates, etc.
- d. Don't be afraid to use visual aids, charts

7. Resolve problems

- a. Isolate the problem
- b. Pick the best of several solutions
- c. Implement your plan
- d. Check for results

8. Recognize efforts

C. Managing Conflict

1. Common causes of conflict

- a. Lack of communication from the top
- b. Lack of goal ownership; followers are not vested
- c. Lack of common priorities. Leaders may need to sacrifice short-term priorities for long-term good of the group
- d. Personal immaturity

2. Responses to conflict

- a. Avoidance
- b. Counter-attack
- c. Solution-oriented problem solving

3. Problem solving in the church

a. Maintain a mature and biblical focus to honor God

- 1) Tackle problems, not people
- 2) Work from facts, not feelings
- 3) Be quick to forgive petty offenses; offer admonishment where patterns of offense have developed
- 4) Keep an eye on the goal - be flexible on the process
- 5) Focus on tomorrow rather than yesterday
- 6) Speak in terms of confusion rather than anger
- 7) Communicate to clear up misunderstanding before it turns into mistrust

b. Strategies for constructive conflict resolution
(suggested by Philip Van Auken of the Baylor Univ. Center for Church Management, *Clergy Journal*, March '92, p. 45)

- 1) Bring everyone to the table in a supportive environment for resolution after allowing time for cooler tempers
- 2) Involve larger groups where possible
- 3) Distinguish reality from perception
- 4) Occasionally focus on bridges of commonality
- 5) Break down the conflict into smaller pieces
- 6) Emphasize listening over talking
- 7) Avoid premature solutions.
- 8) Invite a neutral third party to listen and counsel
- 9) Pray through the meetings