Presbyterianism 101

The Form of Presbyterian Government: Part One

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I. Intro: Orienting Ourselves to The Book of Church Order

A. Preface:

i. The first thing the BCO talks about is the _____ and _____ of the church—Jesus.

1. The first paragraph of our BCO dates back to _____, written by GA in Scotland.

ii. Next, our BCO lays out 8 Preliminary Principles that are foundational to the whole book.

1. These principles were originally written in 1788, by _____.

iii. BCO defines the constitution of the PCA: the _____ & _____

B. Chapter 1 of our BCO gives us the outline for our lessons this week and next.

i. "The scriptural form of church government, which is representative or presbyterian, is comprehended under five heads: a. The Church; b. Its members; c. Its officers; d. Its courts; e. Its orders."

II. The Church

A. Visible and invisible

i. The invisible church consists of God's _____ from every place and time.

ii. The visible church consists of all who _____in Jesus, and their children.

B. Particular and mission

i. A particular church is a local branch of the visible church, with its own _____

ii. A mission church is a _____, a church without its own governing body.

C. The nature and extent of church power

i. Today, some deny that the church has power at all; others claim it has infallible power.

ii. We affirm that Christ has given his church _____ & _____ power.

III. Church members

A. Communing and non-communing

i. _____ are non-communing members (they don't take Communion).

ii. A communing member has _____ in Christ & been admitted to Lord's Supper.

iii. Why distinguish between communing & non-communing members?

1. Because we distinguish between _____ & the _____.

2. This is a broader principle: a child born as a citizen doesn't automatically vote.

B. The rights of membership

i. Pastoral oversight, the instruction & government of the church, communion, & a vote.

ii. And notice it says the government of the church—members are entitled to _____.

1. And this includes the whole system of govn't, including the right to _____.

IV. Practical application: Church is essential to Christian life, and church govn't is essential to church.