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Section: Doctrine of the Church (Ecclesiology)

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**HANDOUT NOTES**

**Q108. What is the *local church*?**

The local church is a group of professing believers who have covenanted to unify together to worship and glorify God by fulfilling the commands and mission God has given to the body of Christ.

**Q109. What are the primary duties of the local church?**

The local church is to submit to the authority of and diligently teach the Bible, follow the leadership of qualified elders, regularly gather together, serve one another, make disciples, practice higher levels of accountability, and live missional lives together.

**1689 Confession of Faith**

1. The catholic—that is, universal—church may be called invisible with respect to the internal work of the Spirit and truth of grace. It consists of the full number of the elect who have been, are, or will be gathered into one under Christ her head. The church is the spouse, the body, the fullness of him who fills all in all.
2. All people throughout the world who profess the faith of the gospel and obedience to God through Christ in keeping with the gospel are and may be called visible saints, as long as they do not destroy their own profession by any foundational errors or unholy living. All local congregations ought to be made up of these.
3. The purest churches under heaven are subject to mixture and error. Some have degenerated so much that they have ceased to be churches of Christ and have become synagogues of Satan. Nevertheless, Christ always has had and will have in this world to the very end a kingdom of those who believe in him and profess his name.

**Matthew 7:21-23** "Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. On that day many will say to me, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and cast out demons in your name, and do many mighty works in your name? ' And then will I declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from me, you workers of lawlessness.’

**1 John 2:19** (NKJV) They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would have continued with us; but they went out that they might be made manifest, that none of them were of us.

* **Covenanted to Unify Together**
* **Unity in Diversity**

**1 Corinthians 1:10** I appeal to you, brothers, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you agree, and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be united in the same mind and the same judgment.

**1 Corinthians 8:4-13**

* **Unity in Devotion**

**Acts 2:42** And they devoted themselves to the apostles ' teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers.

**1 Timothy 4:13** Until I come, devote yourself to the public reading of Scripture, to exhortation, to teaching.

**Hebrews 10:24-25** And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.

**1 Corinthians 12:21-26**

* **Unity in Love**

**Ephesians 4:2** with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love,

**John 13:35** By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.

**Ephesians 4:1-3** I therefore, a prisoner for the Lord, urge you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

**1 Samuel 15:22-23a** "Has the Lord as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to listen than the fat of rams. For rebellion is as the sin of divination, and presumption is as iniquity and idolatry.

**Q109. What are the primary duties of the local church?**

The local church is to submit to the authority of and diligently teach the Bible, follow the leadership of qualified elders, regularly gather together, serve one another, make disciples, practice higher levels of accountability, and live missional lives together.

* **The Local Church Is to Submit to the Authority of the Bible**

**2 Timothy 3:16-17** All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.

* **Follow the Leadership of Qualified Elders**

**Hebrews 13:17** Obey your leaders and submit to them, for they are keeping watch over your souls, as those who will have to give an account. Let them do this with joy and not with groaning, for that would be of no advantage to you.

**Ephesians 4:11-12** And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers [elders], to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ,

**Titus 1:5** This is why I left you in Crete, so that you might put what remained into order, and appoint elders in every town as I directed you—

* **Regularly Gather Together**

**Hebrews 3:13** But exhort one another every day, as long as it is called “today,” that none of you may be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin.

**Romans 14:19** (NASB) So then we pursue the things which make for peace and the building up of one another.

**1 Thessalonians 5:11** Therefore encourage one another and build one another up, just as you are doing.

**Romans 15:7** ...welcome one another as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God.

**Hebrews 10:24-25** And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.

* **Serve One Another**

**Galatians 5:13** For you were called to freedom, brothers. Only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love *serve one another.*

**Romans 12:3-6** For by the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think with sober judgment, each according to the measure of faith that God has assigned. For as in one body we have many members, and the members do not all have the same function, so we, though many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another. Having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let us use them…

* **Make Disciples**
* **Practice Higher Levels of Accountability**

**Colossians 3:16** Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God.

* **Live Missional Lives Together**

**Ephesians 4:11-12** And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ,