

Catechetical Sermon, January 7<sup>th</sup>, 2023

**Belgic Confession, Article 30, "The Government of The Church"**

Scripture Lesson: Exodus 4:18-31

<b>Lesson Aim</b>	To understand three things: First, the need for order in the church, second, what the Scriptures teach about order in the church and third, the results of order in the church.
<b>Steps to Learning</b>	Read <a href="#">Belgic Confession, Article 30</a> and <a href="#">Isaiah 9:6-7; Ephesians 1:20-23, 4:10-16, 5:22-32</a> . Discuss the sermon and the particulars of the lesson below. It may be best to work through the material over several days or sessions.
<b>Discuss</b>	<p><b>Many people today hate authority as it is worked out in the family, state and the church. What is the root cause of such hatred?</b> It is a hatred of God's authority. As sinners, we want to do our own thing and not be restrained by anyone, including God.</p> <p><b>Why is there a need for order in the church?</b> There is need for order in the church because the people of the church are sinful. Sin defies the order of God's Law, which calls us to obedience.</p> <p><b>What passages did we discuss in the sermon that speak to the need for order in the church?</b> <a href="#">Isaiah chapter 9</a> speaks to the disordered state of Israel and Judah. <a href="#">Ephesians chapters 1, 4 and 5</a>, speak to the threat of evil powers, which disorders the church if obeyed.</p> <p><b>Who is King and Head of the church?</b> Jesus Christ, who rules the church from heaven above.</p> <p><b>How does Christ presently give order to the church?</b> He rules the church by his Word and Spirit. More particularly, Christ has given the church, according to <a href="#">Ephesians 4:11ff</a>, officers who rule the church.</p> <p><b>Who are the officers of the church?</b> Ministers, Elders and Deacons.</p> <p><b>What are the results when the church is rightly ordered?</b> There is peace and purity in the church (cf. <a href="#">1 Cor. 14:40</a>). Also, according to the Belgic Confession, true religion is preserved, true doctrine (teaching) is everywhere propagated, transgressors are punished and restrained by spiritual means and the poor and distressed are relieved and comforted.</p>
<b>Bible Reading</b>	<a href="#">2 Kings chapters 18-21</a> [King Hezekiah through King Amon] (covering the great Bible stories)