

Catechetical Sermon, January 14th, 2023

Belgic Confession, Article 31, “The Calling of Officers of the Church”

Scripture Lesson: Acts 6:1-6

Lesson Aim	To understand three things: First, who the officers of the church are and what they are called to do, second how the officers of the church are called and third, how the congregation should follow the officers of the church.
Steps to Learning	Read Belgic Confession, Article 31 and Acts 6:1-6 . Discuss the sermon and the particulars of the lesson below. It may be best to work through the material over several days or sessions.
Discuss	<p>Why is the topic of church officers important? It is important because officers wield power that can be abused and, as a result, the people of the church suffer. The officers of the church must humbly serve the people of the church as the Scriptures teach.</p> <p>Who are the officers of the church? Ministers, elders, and deacons.</p> <p>Where in the Bible do we understand the warrant for the office of elder today? From the Old Testament in passages like Exodus 4:29, 1 Samuel 8:45, and Numbers 11. The New Testament mentions the office of elder explicitly in Romans 12:8 and 1 Corinthians 12:28.</p> <p>What Old Testament office is the office of minister related to? The priest. As priests were given to the Word and Sacraments so are minister today.</p> <p>Where in the New Testament is the warrant for minister found? The warrant for ministers is found most of the time when the word “elder” is found since ministers are also elders. The direct passages are found in 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1.</p> <p>How are officers of the church rightfully and lawfully called? The Belgic Confession says that ministers, elders and deacons “ought to be chosen to their respective offices by a lawful election by the Church, with calling upon the name of the Lord, and in that order which the Word of God teaches.”</p> <p>Specifically, what is the process of choosing officers of the church? Three things must be in place: A man must believe he is called to the office; a man must be called by on objective body of leaders and the man must be called by the congregation.</p> <p>How shall the congregation think of the officers of the church? They must be esteemed.</p>
Bible Reading	2 Kings chapters 22-25 [Last kings of Judah, the fall and exile of Judah] (covering the great Bible stories)