

THE DYNAMICS OF THEOCRATIC AND HIERARCHICAL GOVERNMENT

The Assembly Committee for Biblical Doctrine and Polity has been requested by the General Presbyters to make a clarifying statement concerning our position on church government. We recognize the delicate balance between our theological/ecclesiastical make-up of the church and the business structure that must be maintained for legal purposes.

From the inception of this Church body at the beginning of the twentieth century, our pioneering fathers realized the powerful dynamics of recognizing that in all ministerial and spiritual operations that we were to pattern ourselves after the theocratic principles of the Bible. At the same time, the wisdom of early church Assemblies also realized the critical need to develop a system of hierarchical government in all matters of business pertaining to property, monetary operations, and legal matters. This dynamic requires us as ministers and members to confess that this important balance would be needed to function in a secularized society that did not often reflect a belief in a “direct rule of God through Spirit-filled leaders.”

We hereby declare this Church to be a body striving to operate under theocratic principles in all spiritual, ministerial and inspirational areas, but to recognize that we also function as a hierarchical government to maintain proper order and discipline in all areas pertaining to business and management of our organization. While this statement is being given to clarify our present type of government, this position has been reflected by past Assembly decisions and court rulings throughout our history.