

Lecture 22-The Church (III)**Prayer**

Grant, all mighty God, since You prove our faith and constancy by many trials as it is our duty in this respect as in all others to submit to Your will. Grant that we may not give way to the many attacks by which we are tossed about. For we are assailed on all sides by Satan and all the apious. And while their fury is ever burning and raging cruelly against us, may we never yield to it. May we proceed in our warfare in reliance on the unconquered might of the Spirit, even though evil doers prevail for a season. May we look forward to the event of Your only begotten Son, not only when He shall appear at the last day, but also whenever it shall please You for Him to assist the church and raise it out of its miserable afflictions. And even if we must endure our distresses may our courage never fail us until at length we are gathered into that happy rest which has been obtained for us through the blood of the same, Your only begotten Son, our Lord, Jesus Christ. Amen.

The Church (III)*I. Introduction**II. Nature of the Church**III. Church Order**IV. Church Offices**A. Head of the church is Christ (4, 3, 1)**B. Christ works through the ministry of men (4, 3, 1; Commentary on Malachi 4:6)**C. Categories**1. Temporary/extraordinary: apostles, evangelists, prophets (4, 3, 4)**a. Apostles (and evangelists): "Go, preach the Gospel to every creature" (cf. David B. Calhoun, "John Calvin: Missionary Hero or Missionary Failure?" *Presbyterion* 5 [Spring 1979]: 16-33)**b. Prophets: "those who excelled in a particular revelation" (4, 3, 4) (cf. *Commentary on Ephesians 4:11; 1 Corinthians 12:10; 1 Corinthians 12:28*)**2. Permanent/ordinary ("clergy" 4, 4, 9)**a. Pastors**1) Correspond to apostles/evangelists**2) Ministry: preaching, sacraments, discipline**b. Teachers**1) Correspond to prophets**2) Ministry: Scriptural interpretation and teaching**c. Elders**1) Ministry: spiritual welfare of the people; and discipline**2) Consistory**d. Deacons**1) Ministry: benevolence of the church (and spiritual counsel and comfort)**2) Two classes**a) Administrative officers (The French Fund)**b) Welfare workers**e. Bishops**1) Parity of ministers (4, 2, 6; *Commentary on 1 Corinthians 5:4*)**2) Exceptions (*Commentary on Titus 1:5; Institutes 4, 4, 4; Letter of King Sigismund*)**f. Women*

- 1) Only office of deacon open to women (4, 3, 9; *Commentary* on Romans 16:1)
- 2) John Calvin saw “women’s exclusion from real leadership roles in the church as a matter of decency and order” (Elsie A. McKee, “The Love Office,” *The Reformed Journal* 39 [November 1989]: 8)
 - a) Note *Commentary* on Mark 16:1; John 20:1; Paul’s teaching concerning head coverings and women’s silence in the church (4, 10, 31)
 - b) But Calvin’s view of women in church office (except for the diaconate) not dependent on social customs (4, 15, 21 & 22; *Commentary* on 1 Timothy 2:11-15 and 3:1, 2)

For Further Study

Walker, G. S. M. “Calvin and the Church.” *Scottish Journal of Theology* 16 (1963): 371-89.