



# WHAT IS A BIBLE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH?

**BIBLE PRESBYTERIANS** are a small but vigorous group of people who seek to maintain a strong connection to our Reformed roots with a warm-hearted vitality in our ministries. long to know and love our Creator with increasing fervency and joy; to faithfully edify the Body of Christ; to progress in grace and holiness; and to proclaim the glorious sufficiency, power, and authority of Christ both at home and abroad. Love of missions, evangelism, and sound Bible instruction stir the hearts of our people.

**WE BELIEVE** reformed doctrine is historic Christianity in its emphasis upon the sovereignty of God and trustworthiness of the Bible. It was the compromise of the truths of Scripture in the early decades of the twentieth century that led to the formation of the Bible Presbyterian Church. As theological liberalism moved into Presbyterian seminaries and out into the church, it became fashionable to question or reject fundamental tenets of Christianity such as the inspiration of the Bible, the virgin birth of and deity of Christ, His supernatural works, the atonement on the cross, and even His resurrection from the dead.

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**WE BELIEVE** that God has raised up this denomination to take a faithful stand for the historic Christian faith and to be a light in the darkening days of compromise and apostasy. The Bible Presbyterian Church adopted the Westminster Standards in its organizing synod held September 6-8, 1938. Year after year the BPC has reaffirmed its belief in the biblical doctrines of historic Christianity that are outlined in the Westminster Confession of Faith and Catechisms. The denomination approves two mission boards, one seminary, and a publishing arm as independent agencies of the Church.

## PRESBYTERIAN GOVERNMENT

**THE BIBLE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH** operates under a Presbyterian form of government because the Apostles established a representative form of government where the elected spiritual leaders, called elders or presbyters, make up the session of the local church to oversee affairs of the church. The denomination consists of one synod, four active presbyteries, and twenty local churches. Each of these courts has its own distinct function in the worship of God, the promulgation of the faith, and the discipline of the church. The denomination adopts the Westminster Standards (Confession of Faith, Larger and Shorter Catechisms) along with the Book of Discipline and Form of Government as its Constitution.

**Local churches** are governed by a session, composed of the minister(s) and ruling elder(s), which administers the affairs and discipline of the church. Congregations approve or disapprove sessional recommendations such as extending calls to ministers

**THE BIBLE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH** strives to walk under the old Presbyterian principle that “God is the Lord of the conscience,” so our local congregations all have a flavor of their own in worship and ministry activities. The Scriptures provide our only “regulations” when it comes to worship. BP worship is marked by a vibrancy that comes from each communicant bringing his or her own offerings before the Lord with a full heart, within the bounds of the Word of God.

and church budgets. Each congregation owns its own property and approves by-laws that help apply the Constitution to the local situation.

**Presbyteries** consist of ministers and elder delegates representing each congregation in a certain geographic region. The Presbytery's duties include:

- Receiving and ruling on all appeals and complaints brought before it from sessions;
- Overseeing the spiritual welfare of the local churches in the region;
- Providing accountability for ministers and local churches;
- Examining, ordaining, installing, and judging ministers and missionaries;
- Ministering together in mutual projects across the region, such as church planting efforts, camps, seminars, evangelistic efforts and so on.

The BPC has a strong commitment to a Scriptural purity in association. Such purity has been important to the character, activity, and development of the denomination from its inception. This commitment has guided our fellowship with other major Protestant denominations that hold to the essential doctrines of Christianity and recognize the Bible as their only infallible rule of faith and practice. We oppose ecumenicity that seeks to bring together all churches without regard for their doctrine or faithfulness. At the same time, we extend the hand of fellowship and cooperation to other churches and ministries that endeavor to remain faithful to the Word of God.

**The General Synod** of the Bible Presbyterian Church consists of every minister and elder delegates from each church. The Synod is the ultimate governing body of the denomination. The Synod's duties include:

- Receiving and ruling on all appeals and complaints brought before it from presbyteries or sessions;
- Laboring toward the bond of union, peace, correspondence, and mutual confidence among all our churches;
- Representing the denomination to, and corresponding with other branches of the Christian faith;
- Serving as the primary outlet for the official views and positions of the BPC regarding the application of Scripture truth to the visible church and society at large.

The BPC has no denominational headquarters, and no tenured leadership. Presbytery and Synod moderators are elected annually from among the brethren, and are subject to constitutional limitations on consecutive years in which those offices may be held. There are few standing committees, and those that exist act only as directed by the Synod as a whole in between the annual meetings. All ministers and delegate elders in the denomination are expected to attend barring impediment. There is no national hierarchy.

### ***Independent Agencies***

There is no mandatory subscription to the various ad hoc ministries of the General Synod. Individual congregations at their own discretion may, or may not, financially support mission boards, schools, and other ministries that the Synod recommends to the whole Body. Independent agencies are not controlled by Synod committees, but have their own independently constituted governing bodies. This arrangement allows agencies the freedom to pursue priorities as they will apart from the national Body, but affords the national Body the opportunity to express its approval or disapproval of those ministries through action at the annual Synod meeting or through the withholding/withdrawing of financial support at any time.

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