

# **CHURCH GOVERNMENT** **AND BEING BAPTIST** **Matthew 18:18**

**Baptists believe that each local church should be completely and solely governed by it's own local congregation.**

## **I. INTRODUCTORY ELEMENTS**

### **A. DEFINITION OF CONGREGATIONAL GOVERNMENT**

- Baptists believe that each local church submitted to Christ, has the authority, competence and responsibility to govern itself independent of any outside control.

### **B. CLARIFICATION REGARDING CONGREGATIONAL GOVERNMENT**

- Baptists don't believe or promote congregational government simply because they are biased Americans.

### **C. CONSEQUENCES OF CONGREGATIONAL GOVERNMENT**

- Baptists believe other systems of church government are not Scripturally supported.

### **D. REALITY OF CONGREGATIONAL GOVERNMENT**

- Baptists realize the possibility of misuse and abuse within their governing system.
- Exp: The Corinthian church

## **II. LOCAL CHURCH INDEPENDENCE**

- Biblical support for local congregational government

### **A. LOCAL CHURCHES CHOOSE THEIR OWN SERVANTS**

1. Assistants - Acts 6:1-6
2. Missionaries - Acts 13:1-3 and 15:40
3. Money-Handlers - I Cor. 16:3
4. Elders? - Acts 14:23 and Titus 1:5
  - The terminology does not exclude congregational involvement

### **B. LOCAL CHURCHES CONTROL THEIR MEMBERSHIP**

1. Disciplining Members
  - a. Disassociating from the unrepentant - Matt. 18:15-17
  - b. Removing the immoral - I Cor. 5:1-5, 12-13
  - c. Rejecting the factious - Titus 3:10-11
2. Forgiving the punished - II Cor. 2:6-8

### C. LOCAL CHURCHES HOLD THEIR PEOPLE ACCOUNTABLE

1. Their Leaders
  - a. Peter - Acts 11:1-4, 18
  - b. Paul and Barnabus - Acts 14:27
  - c. Paul and Silas - Acts 18:22-23
2. Their Laity
  - a. Disputing brothers - I Cor. 6:1-6
  - b. Fallen members - Gal. 6:1-2
  - c. Fussing sisters - Phil. 4:2-3

### D. LOCAL CHURCHES DETERMINE THEIR FINANCIAL COMMITMENTS

1. Care for the needy - Acts 4:32-35
2. Relief for the hurting - II Cor. 9:1-5
3. Support for missionaries - Phil. 2:25-30 and 4:14
4. Care for the widows - I Tim. 5:9-10, 16
5. Pay for their pastors - I Tim. 5:17-18 and see Gal. 6:6 and I Cor. 9:13-14

## III. LOCAL CHURCH COOPERATION

- Biblical support for local churches in association with each other
- Not everything is done in isolation

A. RELIEF EFFORTS - Acts 11:27-30 and II Cor. 9:1-5

B. DISCIPLESHIP MINISTRIES - Acts 11:19-26

C. DOCTRINAL CLARIFICATION - Acts 15:1-4, 22-31

D. HOSPITALITY

1. Encouraged by Paul - Rom. 16:1-2, I Cor. 16:10-11, Titus 3:13
2. Commended by John - III John 5-8

## CONCLUSION:

**Who's in charge here? ....**

**YOU are ...**

**WE ARE!**