

Submit to the teaching and leadership of the church

9

March 2014

Luke 7:1-10; Hebrews 13:17

Do you promise to submit in the Lord to the teaching and government of this church as being based upon the Scriptures and described in substance in the Constitution of the Reformed Presbyterian Church of North America? (from the Covenant of Communicant Membership, question 4)

I. Five biblical truths about leaders

- A. Submit? Says who! (submission to parents Luke 2:51; Exodus 20:12; Ephesians 6:1-3; to government Romans 13:1-5; Titus 3:1; 1 Peter 2:13ff.; wives to their husbands 1 Corinthians 14:34; Ephesians 5:24; Colossians 3:18; Titus 2:5; 1 Peter 3:1-5; to God himself Hebrews 12:9; James 4:7; Christ to God the Father 1 Corinthians 15:28; all things to Christ 1 Corinthians 15:27-28; Ephesians 1:22; 5:24; Philippians 3:21; Hebrews 2:5-8; to leaders among God's people Numbers 15; Philippians 2:14-16; 1 Corinthians 16:15; 1 Peter 5:5)
- B. Leaders really are appointed by God (Numbers 15)
- C. Leaders should be given a willing and careful hearing (Hebrews 13:17; Acts 17:11; see also Psalm 37:7; 62:1; Haggai 2:18)
- D. Leaders should simply be obeyed when doing so would not be rebellion against God (Hebrews 13:17)
- E. Leaders are in authority because they are *under* authority (Luke 7:1-10)
- F. Leaders are in a vulnerable position as those who give account to their Lord (Luke 12:41-48; Hebrews 13:17; James 3:1; Ezekiel 34:10)

II. What is the *Constitution* of the Church?

- A. "Confessions": statements that spell out the beliefs and practices of the church
- B. Everyone has a theology!

III. Submitting "in the Lord"

IV. The final authority

- A. The resurrection, authority, and submission
- B. Church: a God-given mess