

Lesson # 5 – Courts of the Church

WCF 25.2. *The visible Church, which is also catholic or universal under the Gospel (not confined to one nation as before under the law), consists of all those throughout the world that profess the true religion; and of their children: and is the kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ, the house and family of God, out of which there is no ordinary possibility of salvation.*

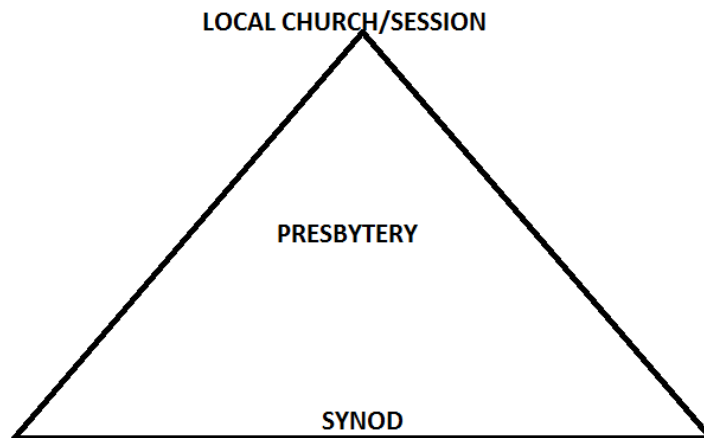
RP Testimony 25.3. *The Church is one among all nations, yet for the purpose of corporate worship and orderly procedures, distinct congregations and judicatories are warranted.*

Acts 15:22 Then it pleased the apostles and elders, with the whole church, to send chosen men of their own company to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas elders are sent to Antioch...

Acts 16:4-5 And as they went through the cities, they delivered to them the decrees to keep, which were determined by the apostles and elders at Jerusalem. 5 So the churches were strengthened in the faith, and increased in number daily.

Berkhof: *"...there are certain passages of Scripture which seem to indicate rather clearly that, not only the invisible Church, but also the visible Church is a unity. The word ekklesia is used in the singular as an indication of the visible church in a wider sense than that of the purely local church, Acts 9:31, I Cor. 12:28, and probably also I Cor. 10:32. In the descriptions of the Church in I Cor. 12:12-50 and Eph. 4:4-16 the apostle also has its visible unity in mind."*

Acts 9:31 Then the churches throughout all Judea, Galilee, and Samaria had peace and were edified. And walking in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Spirit, they were multiplied.



I. The Session

- Consists of at least two resident elders elected by the congregation.
 - Ordinarily, a TE is the moderator of the session.
 - The moderator shall see that the session is properly constituted and adjourned in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, the King and Head of the Church.
 - The session shall elect one of its members as clerk. He shall see that announcement is made of the meetings, keep accurate record of the proceedings, handle correspondence and fulfill other responsibilities as ordered by the court.
 - The session shall hold meetings at stated intervals. Ordinarily, meetings and minutes of the session are open to members of the congregation except when “executive session” is called.
 - The session is subordinate to the higher courts and shall be governed by their decisions.
 - A session may present a paper to presbytery on any subject to which, in its judgment, the attention of the presbytery should be called. It may refer to the presbytery any doctrinal or disciplinary difficulty with which it does not feel competent to deal. Such reference shall be accompanied by a full statement of the problem.
- 1 Cor 14:40 Let all things be done decently and in order.

II. The Presbytery

- Groups of congregations are organized into presbyteries within certain geographical boundaries.
- The session of each congregation within the presbytery shall send delegates to each meeting of presbytery; these would normally include a teaching elder and a ruling elder.
- A presbytery shall hold regular meetings at least once a year.
- Each presbytery shall elect from its members a moderator, a clerk and, if needed, an assistant clerk.
- It shall be the duty of the moderator to see that each session of the court is opened with a devotional service and constituted and adjourned with prayer in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, King and Head of the Church. The moderator shall perform the duties commonly belonging to the presiding officer in a church court; he shall state the subject to be discussed, keep members to the questions before the court, maintain order, decide disputed points of order not matters of law and, if requested, sum up the arguments before putting the vote;
- It is the duty of the presbytery to maintain a faithful supervision over all the congregations within its bounds and to provide for presbyterial visitation, to guard against any teaching contrary to sound doctrine and any corruption of the worship of God, and to institute presbyterial discipline when necessary.
- The presbytery shall have oversight of the men preparing for the gospel ministry and shall have power to license candidates for the teaching eldership.
- The presbytery may facilitate its work by referring to committees various items of business for consideration and for report with recommendations.

III. The Synod

- There are currently 96 RPCNA congregations and missions.
- The Synod of the Reformed Presbyterian Church of North America is the highest court of the church, and is the bond of organic union, cooperation, and mutual helpfulness, between the presbyteries.
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IV. Other Presbyterian/Reformed Denominations (outside the RPCNA)

WCF 25.4. *This catholic Church hath been sometimes more, sometimes less visible. And particular churches, which are members thereof, are more or less pure, according as the doctrine of the Gospel is taught and embraced, ordinances administered, and public worship performed more or less purely in them.*

RP Testimony 25.14. *Divisions that separate believers into denominations mar the unity of the Church and are due to error and sin. It is the duty of all denominations which are true churches of Christ to seek reconciliation and union. Such organizational unity, however, should be sought only on the basis of truth and of scriptural order. It is the duty of every believer to unite with the branch of the visible church which adheres most closely to the Scriptures.*

A. North American Presbyterian and Reformed Council (NAPARC)

- [The Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church](#) (ARP)
- [The Canadian Reformed Churches](#) (CanRC)
- [The Reformed Church of Quebec](#) (ERQ)
- [The Free Reformed Churches of North America](#) (FRCNA)
- [The Heritage Reformed Congregations](#) (HRC)
- [The Korean American Presbyterian Church](#) (KAPC)
- The Korean Presbyterian Church in America (Kosin) (KPCA)
- [The Orthodox Presbyterian Church](#) (OPC)
- [The Presbyterian Church in America](#) (PCA)
- [The Presbyterian Reformed Church](#) (PresRC)
- [The Reformed Church in the United States](#) (RCUS)
- [The Reformed Presbyterian Church of North America](#) (RPCNA)
- [The United Reformed Churches in North America](#) (URCNA)

Congregation name	City, State
Casper Reformed Presbyterian Church	Casper, WY
Christ Covenant RP Church	Lawrence, KS
Clarinda RP Church	Clarinda, IA
Dallas Reformed Presbyterian Church	Flower Mound, TX
Denison RP Church	Denison, KS
Enid Reformed Church	Enid, OK
Hebron RP Church	Clay Center, KS
Laramie RP Church	Laramie, WY
Living Way RP Church	Bryan, TX
Manhattan RP Church	Manhattan, KS
Minneola RP Church	Minneola, KS
Quinter RP Church	Quinter, KS
Salt and Light RP Church	Longmont, CO
Sharon RP Church	Morning Sun, IA
Shawnee RP Church	Shawnee, KS
Springs Reformed Church	Colorado Springs, CO
Sterling RP Church	Sterling, KS
Stillwater RP Church	Stillwater, OK
Teller County Reformed Church	Woodland Park, CO
Topeka RP Church	Topeka, KS
Tri-Lakes Reformed Church	Monument, CO
Trinity Reformed Church	Wichita, KS
Washington RP Church	Washington, IA
Westminster RP Church	Westminster, CO
Winchester RP Church	Winchester, KS

