

**The Government of the Church**  
The Belgic Confession, Article 30-32

**1. The Scripture: 1 Peter 2:1-10**

But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light. <sup>10</sup> Once you were not a people, but now you are God's people; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.

- a. By summarizing salvation in this way - "now you are God's people" - Peter roots the churchly character of salvation deeply in the story of Israel: Deut. 10:15, Exod. 19:6, Isa. 61:6, Deut. 7:6, Isa. 43:21.
- b. This language for the people of God emphasizes what the Reformation called the office of believer or the priesthood of all believers.
- c. The office of believer is consistent with (and even expressed through) the particular offices of pastor, elder, and deacon.

**2. The Doctrine**

- a. Article 32: The authority of the church is limited to that which is instituted by Christ.
- b. Article 30: There are three offices, each with its own distinct purpose: pastor (Rom. 10:14), elder (Titus 1:5), and deacon (Acts 6:1-4).

**3. The Use**

Article 31: Officebearers are called by the church and are to be esteemed "very highly for their work's sake"

1 Thessalonians 5:12-13 "We ask you, brothers, to respect those who labor among you and are over you in the Lord and admonish you, <sup>13</sup> and to esteem them very highly in love because of their work. Be at peace among yourselves."