

The Biblical Data on Church Governance

Governance Model #1: Strict Pyramid

Governance Model #2: Loose Pyramid

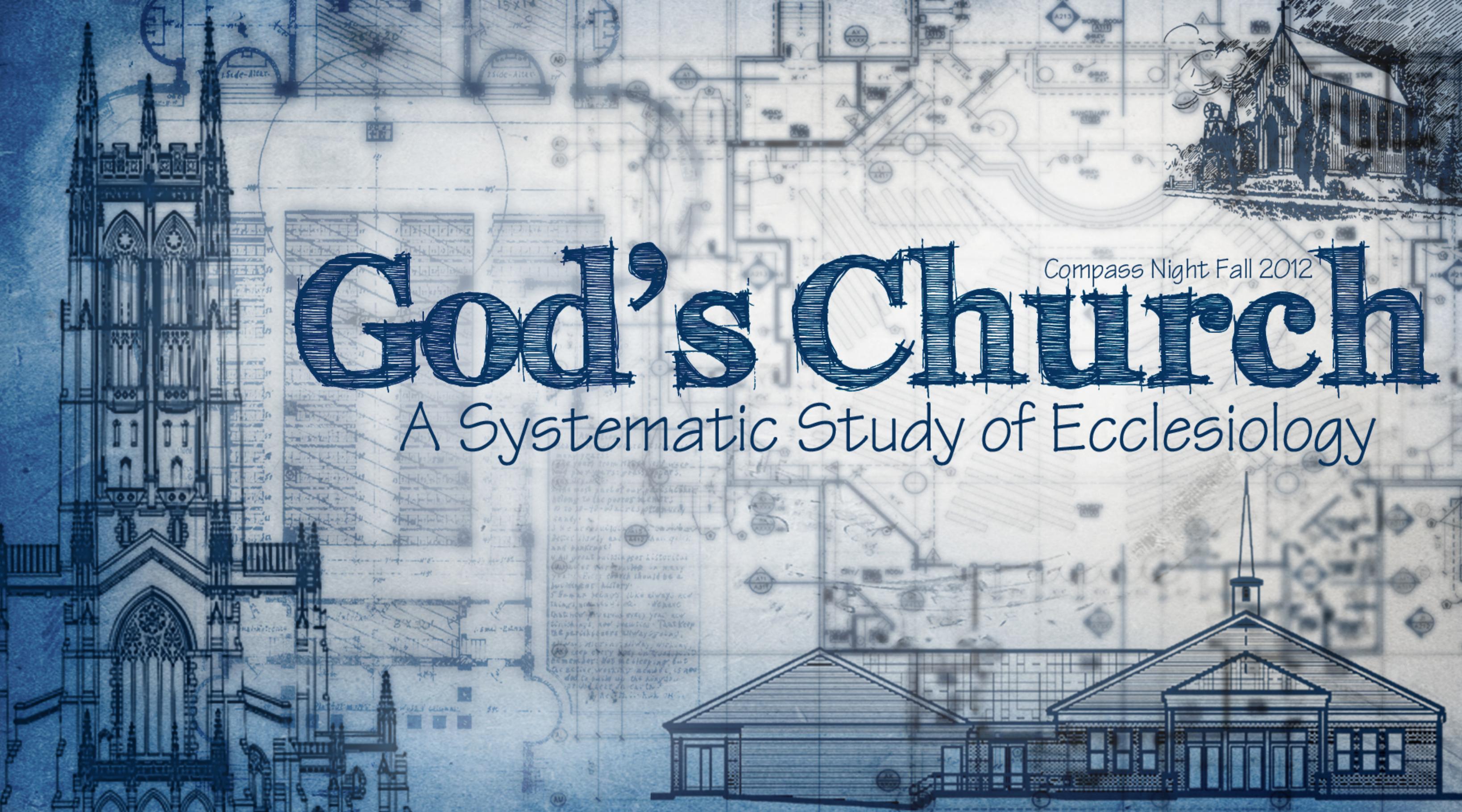
Governance Model #3: Ziggurat

Governance Model #4: Autonomous Democratic

Governance Model #5: Autonomous Lay Led

Governance Model #6: Autonomous Pastoral Team Led

Governance Model #7: Autonomous Moses Model

The background features a complex overlay of architectural drawings. On the left, there is a detailed vertical cross-section of a Gothic cathedral, showing its intricate stonework and pointed arches. The rest of the background is filled with various floor plans and blueprints, some with handwritten notes and labels like 'Side-Altar', 'SANGUARY', and 'A213'. In the top right corner, there is a small, detailed sketch of a traditional wooden church with a steeple. At the bottom right, a larger line drawing shows a modern church building with a prominent gabled roof and a central steeple.

God's Church

Compass Night Fall 2012

A Systematic Study of Ecclesiology

The Biblical Data on Church Governance

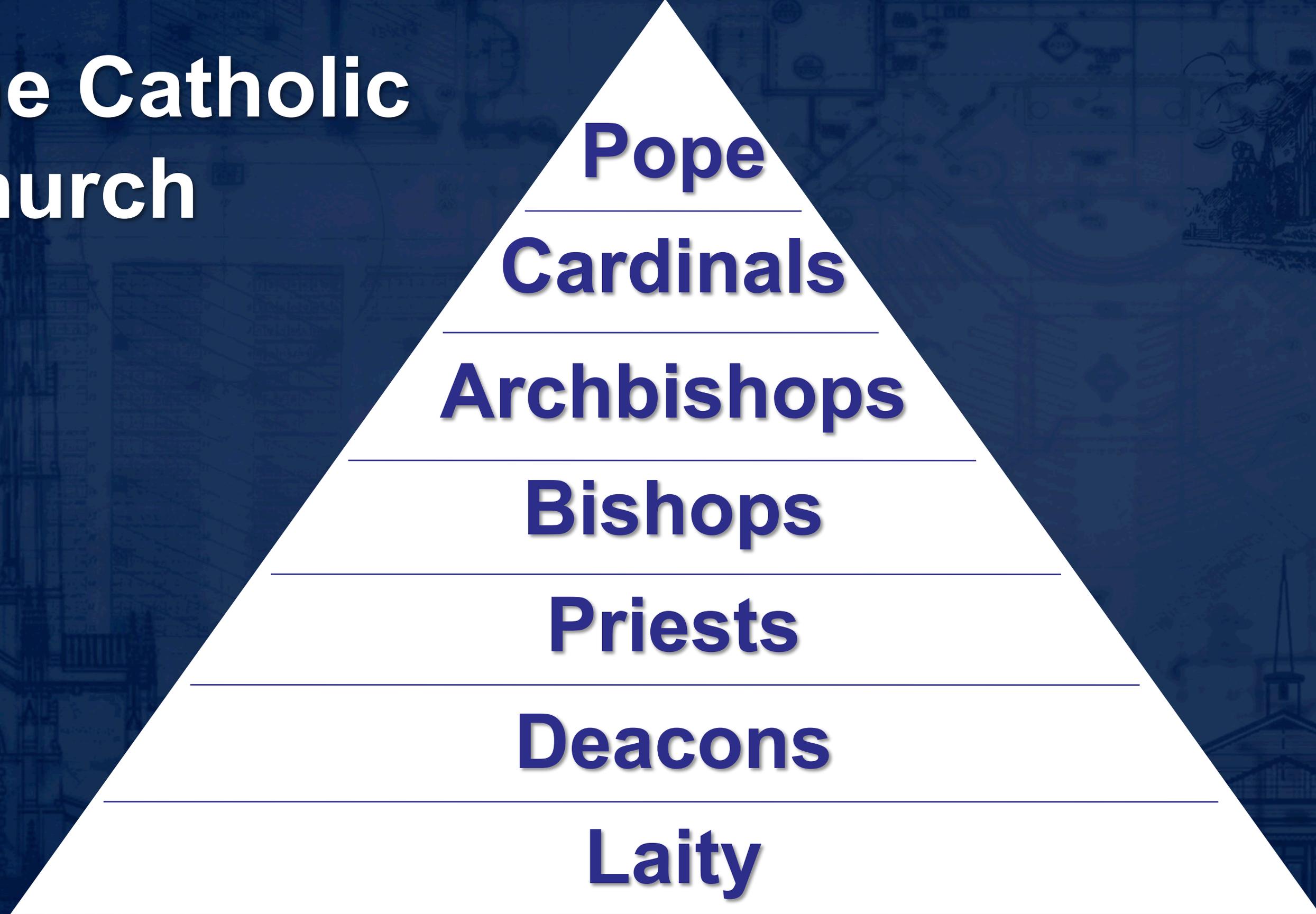
- Clear on Two Distinct Offices**
- Clear on the Duties of Leaders**
- Clear on the Qualifications of Leaders**
- Not Specific on Structure & Organization of Leadership**
- Some Description (Acts) Few Prescriptions**
- The Transitional “Apostolic” Office Makes Patterns in Acts Difficult to Apply**

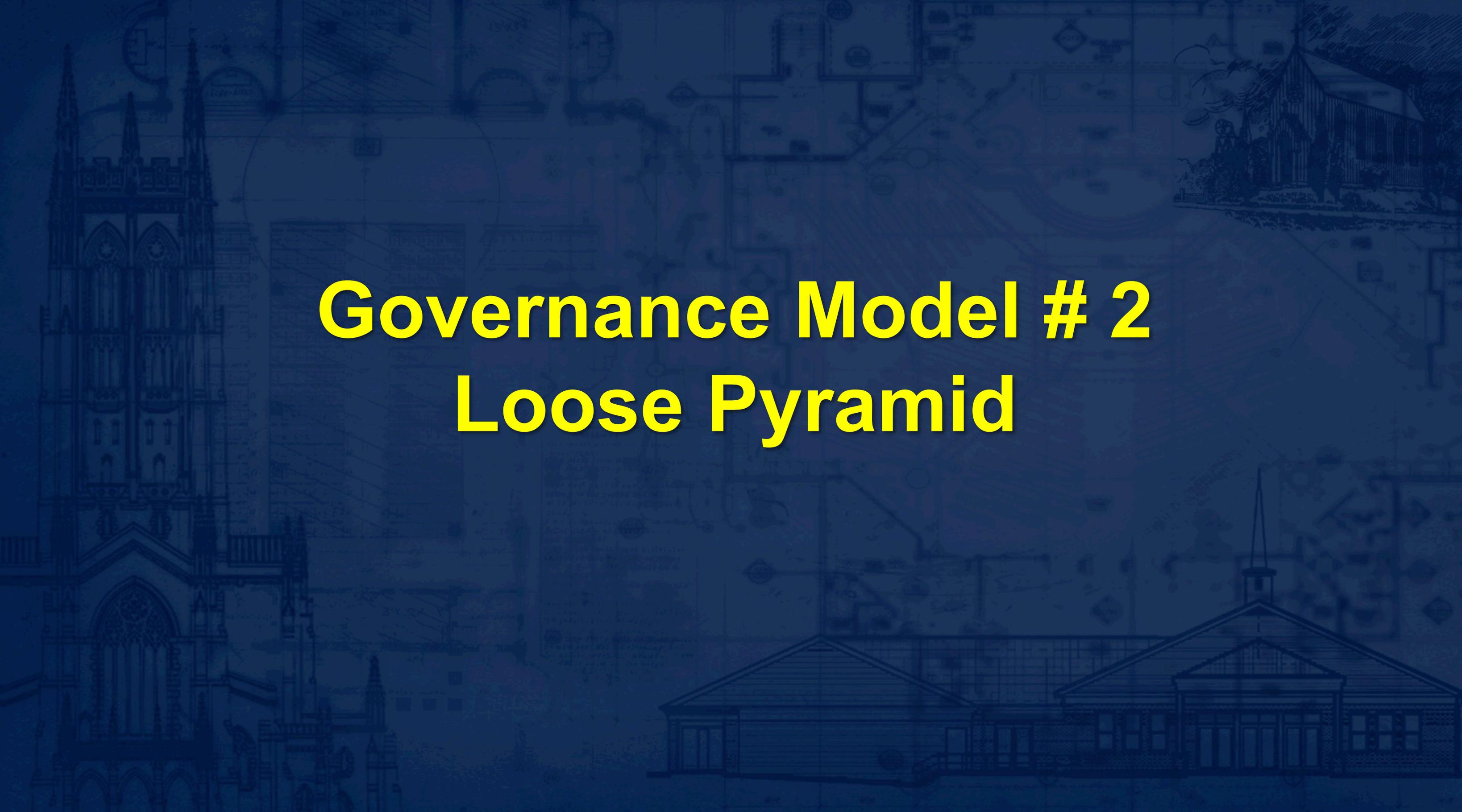


Governance Model # 1

Strict Pyramid

The Catholic Church





Governance Model # 2

Loose Pyramid

The Orthodox Church

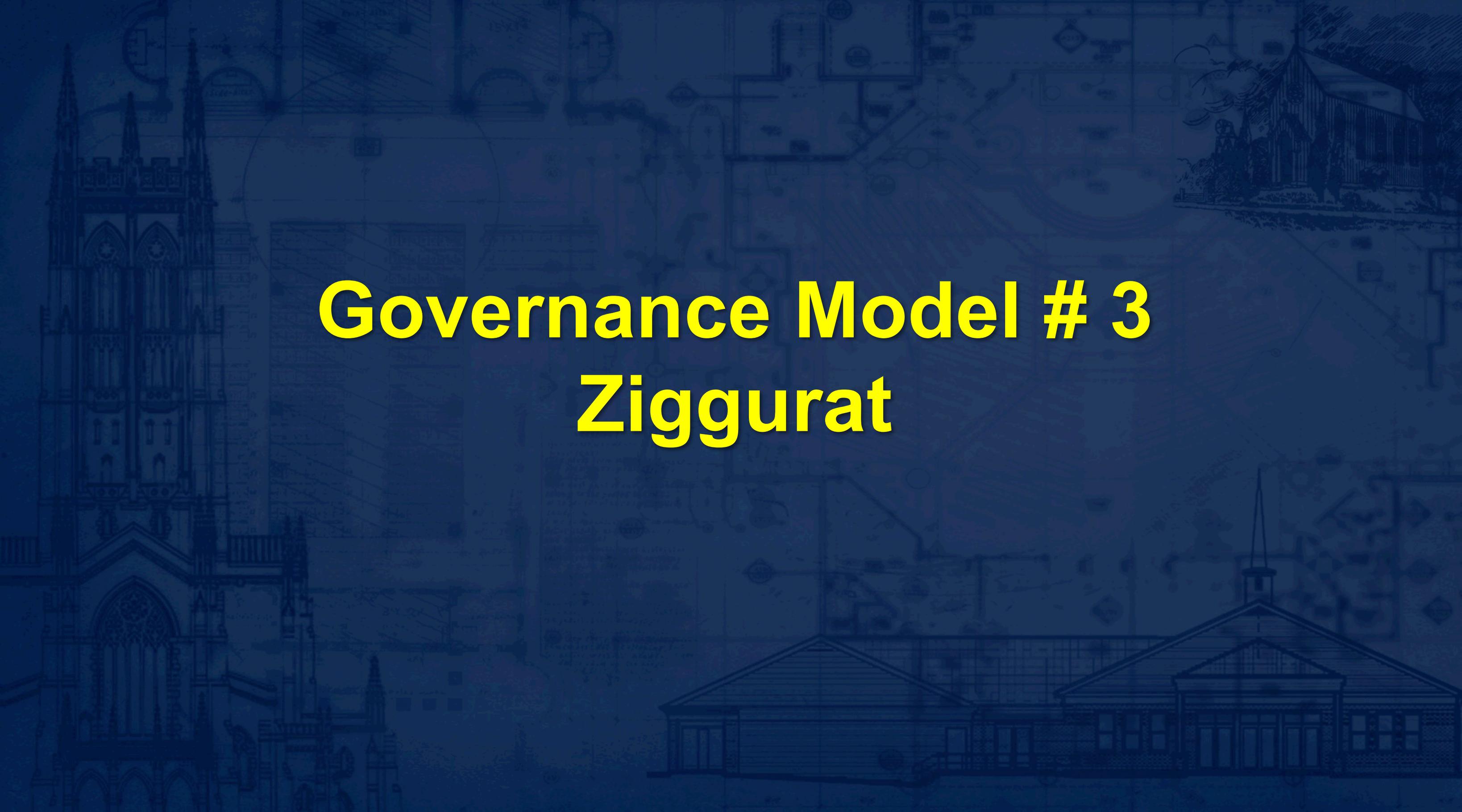
1. Bishops

1. Priests

3. Deacons

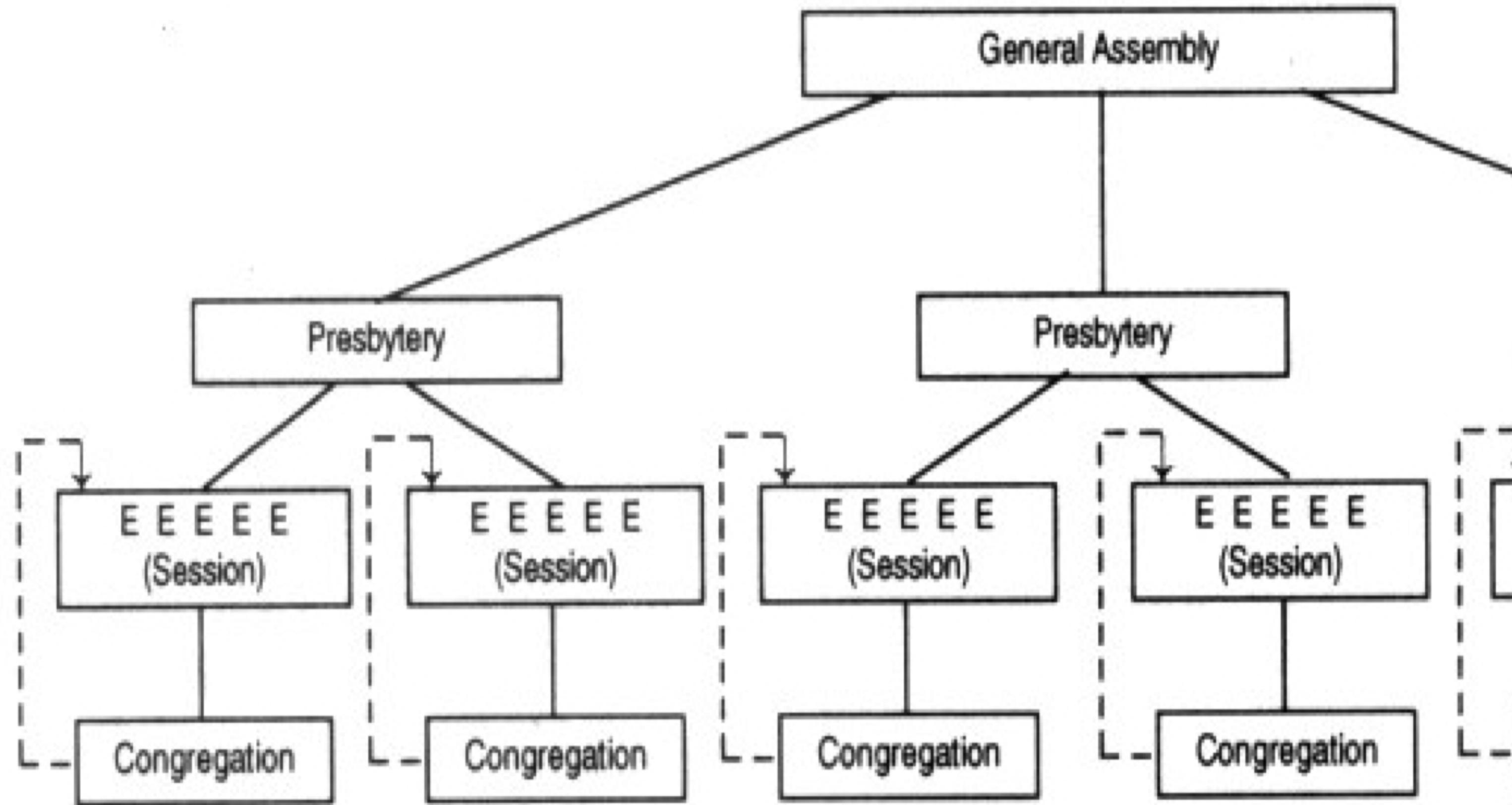
Bartholomew I





Governance Model # 3

Ziggurat



Origin

- It was a response of the Reformers who rejected the governance of the RCC/Episcopalian
- “Presbyterianism is...the form of church government favored by Calvin and brought to Scotland by John Knox.” Olson, *The Story of Christian Theology*, 412

Proponents

- “Beyond the governance of local churches by elders it is important to note also that New Testament churches were connected or bound together by a common government. The principle of mutual accountability, dependency, and submission among the churches is taught at several places in Scripture...” Reymond, *ST*, 900

Biblical Support

- Acts 15
 - “...the primary text in demonstrating the connective nature of the churches of the early church is Acts 15, where we are informed of the appeal made by the Antioch church to the apostles and elders in Jerusalem, who met with them in a deliberative council and then *together* rendered a decision in the form of a “letter,” called in Acts 16:4 τὰ δόγματα...” Reymond, 901

Objections

- Misunderstanding of Pastoral/Elder Leadership –
 - Elders were appointed in Cities (Titus 1:6)
 - People are called to obey and submit to them (Heb 13:17) and imitate their faith (13:7).

Objections

- Misunderstanding of Biblical Interpretation
 - “Scripture does not contain an explicit command to the effect that the local churches of a district must form an organic union. In fact, it represents the local churches as individual entities without any external bond of union.” Berkhof, *ST*, 590

Objections

- Misunderstanding of the Role of Apostles
 - “...Council was composed of apostles and elders, and therefore did not constitute a proper example and pattern of a...synod in the modern sense of the word.” Berkhof, *ST*, 591
 - See Eph 2:20

The background features a dark blue color with faint, light-colored architectural sketches. On the left, there is a detailed drawing of a Gothic-style building with multiple spires and pointed arches. In the center and right, there are various sketches of buildings, including a large classical-style structure with a pediment and a smaller building with a steeple. A faint map of the United States is also visible in the upper right quadrant.

Governance Model # 4

Autonomous Democratic

Congregationalism

The background features a dark blue color with faint, white architectural line drawings. On the left, there is a detailed sketch of a Gothic-style church facade with two tall, pointed spires. In the center and right, there are various floor plans and architectural sections of buildings, including a large, simple rectangular structure and a more complex building with a gabled roof and a small steeple. The overall aesthetic is technical and historical.

Matthew 16:18-19 & Matthew 18:15-20 – The authority is given to all Christians

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Galatians 1 – Discerning false teaching

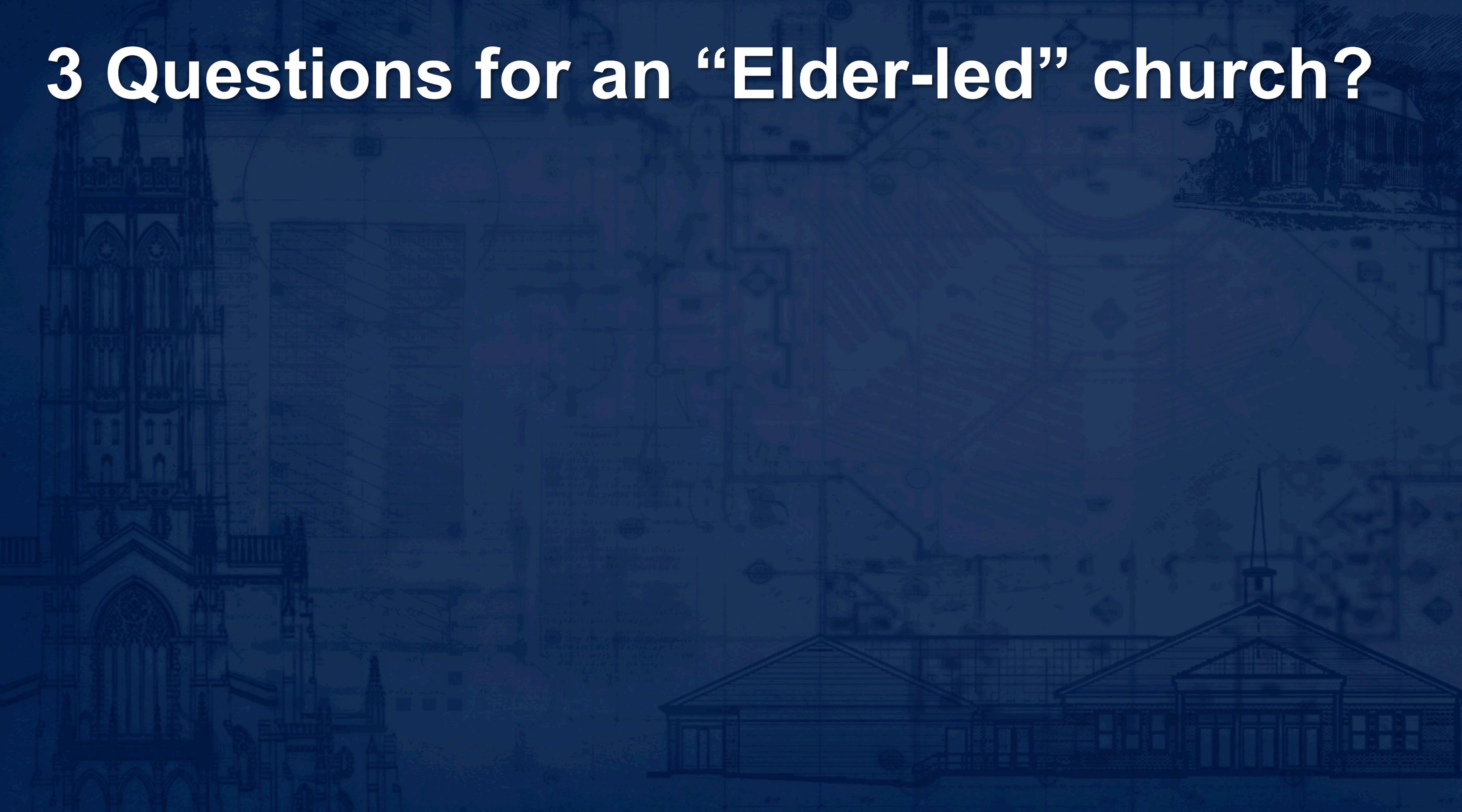
“The portrayal of congregationalism in the New Testament is quite an incomplete picture. We get it in snatches, asides and assumptions.”



Governance Model # 5

Autonomous Lay Led

3 Questions for an “Elder-led” church?



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**1) Is there an unbiblical distinction
between pastors & elders?
(1 Peter 5:1-2)**

Biblical terms for pastors/elders

Episkopos – overseer/bishop

Poimen – shepherd/pastor

Presbuteros - elder

1 Peter 5:1-2

So I exhort the elders (*presbuteros*) among you, as a fellow elder (*presbuteros*)... shepherd (*poimano*) the flock of God that is among you, exercising oversight (*episkopos*)...

3 Questions for an “Elder-led” church?

**1) Is there an unbiblical distinction
between pastors & elders?**

(1 Peter 5:1-2)

2) Are the elders qualified? (1 Tim. 3:1-7)

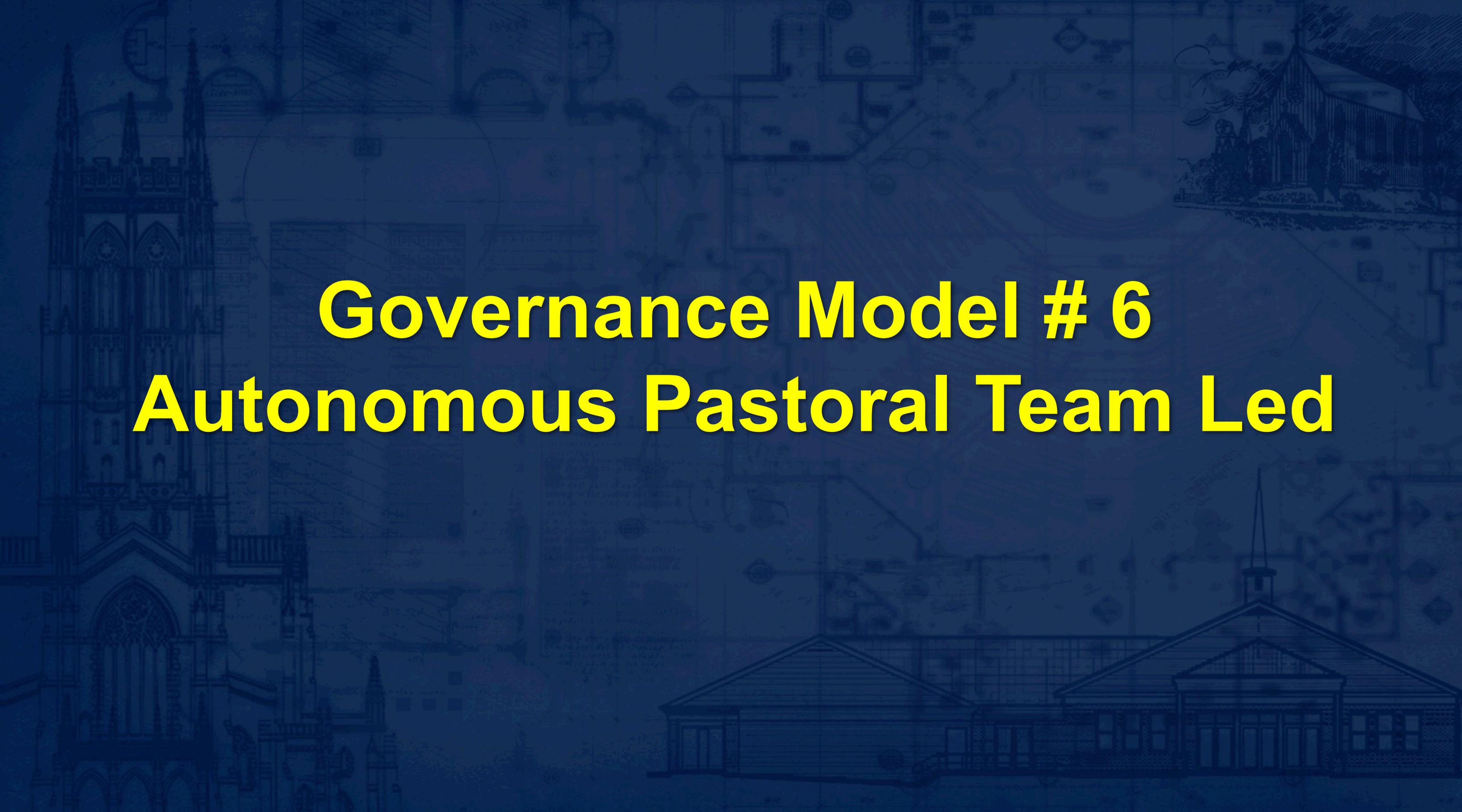
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(1 Peter 5:1-2)

2) Are the elders qualified? (1 Tim. 3:1-7)

3) Are the elders doing their God-given job?



Governance Model # 6

Autonomous Pastoral Team Led

NT Patterns for Plurality of Pastors

- Paul

- Appointed elders - Acts 14:23
- Instruct Titus to appoint elders - Titus 1:5
- Writes to saints, elders & deacons - Phil 1:1

- James

- Elders to pray over the sick – Jms 1:1; 5:14

- Peter

- Elders to care for the flock – 1Pt. 1:1; 5:1-2

NT Pastors

- Vocational Position
 - Right to be paid - 1 Corinthians 9:9-12
 - Share in material blessing - Galatians 6:6
 - Elders deserves his wages - 1 Timothy 5:17

NT Pastors

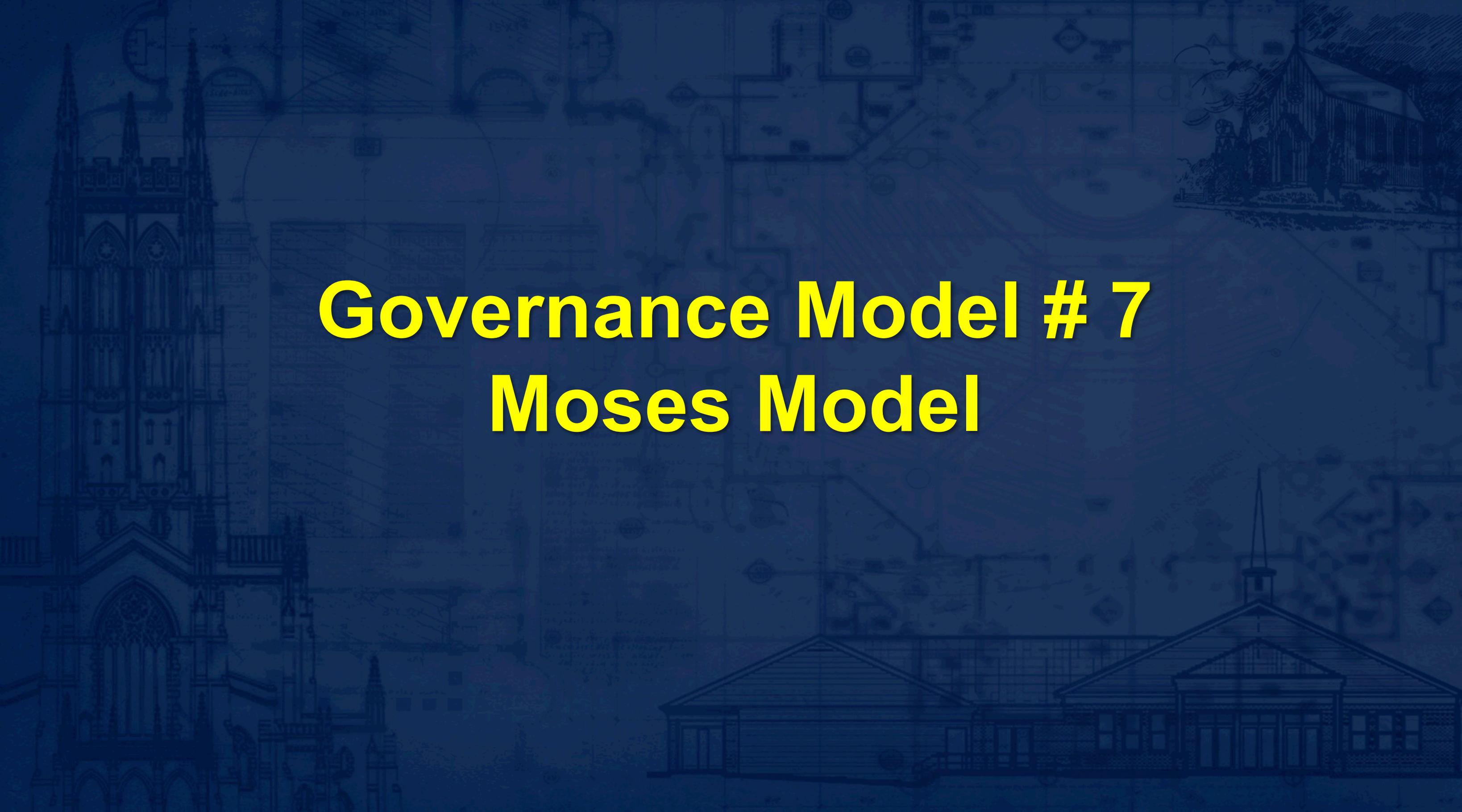
- Functions

- Manage & care - 1 Timothy 3:4-5

- Shepherd & exercise oversight

- 1 Pt 5:2, Eph 4:11

- Teach & preach - Eph 4:11 & 1 Tim 5:17



Governance Model # 7

Moses Model

Governance of Calvary Chapels (et al.)

- **Over 1,000 Calvary Chapels (Most in CA)**
- **Governance based on Theocracy of Israel**
- **Pastor = the Prophet Moses**
- **Pastor = Singular Leader getting direction from God**
- **Elders = Assistants to Moses**
- **Elders = Support Pastor in Seeking God's Direction**



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