

Today we will finish up our review of the proposed revision to our Doctrinal Statement. We have two categories to complete.

1. Separation
2. Last Things

In our most recent discussion, we have been working on the Doctrine of Man. We want to be sure that we are satisfied with each section before we put the whole document up for a vote. Consequently, we will do more work on our last revisions in a couple of weeks.

What I want to do now is to remind you of the status of our Constitution and Bylaws and how we go about amending them.

I. Our relationship to government according to the Scriptures (1 Pt 2.13-17)

From our revised statement:

We believe that civil government is of divine appointment, for the interests and good order of human society; that magistrates are to be prayed for, conscientiously honoured, and obeyed, except only in things opposed to the will of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who is the only Lord of the conscience, and the coming Prince of the kings of the earth.

Thus, we believe in the authority of secular government regarding external matters (such as building codes, property laws, civic behaviour, and such like) but hold the church separate from the state regarding internal matters (such as doctrine, teaching, electing officers, and other ministries of the church).

Acts 4.19-20, 5.29, Romans 13.1-7, 1 Peter 2.13-17

II. Survey of government requirements (Societies Act)

A. New provincial Societies Act came into effect Nov 28, 2016

1. Changes in the act required changes in non-compliant governing documents (Constitution and Bylaws)
 - a. Constitutions
 - 1) may only include Society's name and purpose

- 2) our Constitution included a Dissolution clause, our Statement of Faith, and a clause with respect to amending the Statement of Faith

b. Bylaws

- 1) Any portions moved out of the previous constitution must be included word for word in the new Bylaws
 - 2) Any clauses from the previous constitution marked as unalterable must be marked as “previously unalterable”
2. These changes (if only word for word from original) DID NOT require a society to hold a general meeting and vote on the changes
 3. Following these instructions, we made the changes required by law without having a meeting or holding a vote

B. Guidelines for making any alterations from the original other than the word for word changes outlined above

1. Such changes before Nov 28, 2016, would require a 3/4 vote (previous Act)
2. Any changes after Nov 28, 2016, would only require a 2/3 vote (new Act)
3. Any changes we make to the wording of our Statement of Faith as discussed would require a general meeting and a 2/3 vote for approval — according to Gov’t requirements

- 1) Before we change our Statement of Faith, we want to change the requirement to unanimity
- 2) Reason: since members are required to agree in writing with the Statement of Faith when they join, it would be unethical to change the statement after they have joined without their approval

III. Plan for further action going forward

- A. We will continue to work on the statement so we can be in agreement when we move forward

- B. We should make the following amendments to the bylaws regardless
1. Revise the bylaws to require unanimity to change the Statement of Faith
 2. Revise the bylaws to clean up the process of dealing with inactive member
 - a. Briefly, we have a process by which people move out of membership for non-attendance (after 3 months, Inactive [non-voting], after additional 3 months, Removed from membership)
 - b. We would like to add to the bylaws wording that will require a letter from the Pastor and Deacons when each step is taken, including wording explaining how membership can be reinstated
 - c. Purpose: to just have a clear paper trail that confirms the status of any membership changes
 3. Revise the bylaws to allow for the Annual Business Meeting date to be scheduled sometime during the first quarter of the year

Current requirement:

The church shall be governed by the Annual General Meeting of the Congregation. The fiscal year shall follow the calendar year. The Annual General Meeting shall be held no later than January 31 of every year and must be announced from the pulpit on three Sundays immediately preceding the meeting so as to give 14 full days notice of the meeting.

Proposed amendment:

The church shall be governed by the Annual General Meeting of the Congregation. The fiscal year shall follow the calendar year. The Annual General Meeting shall be held no later than March 31 of every year and must be announced from the pulpit on three Sundays immediately preceding the meeting so as to give 14 full days notice of the meeting.