



GOVERN THE CHURCH



Skill

Govern the Church is intentional leadership of churches by local elder teams to make authoritative decisions regarding disputes, immorality, and heresy.

Design

Govern the Church (balance scale/judge gavel) > The balance scale illustrates the role of local church elders to maintain the unity and holiness of faith communities. The judge gavel illustrates the authority of elder teams to make decisions affecting each church's convictions and culture. The **sketch** is a balance scale illustrating the challenging nature of church correction.

Story

First Church Heresy (Acts 15:1-22)

This story demonstrates Govern the Church as a kingdom skill because we clearly see a team of elders and apostles discuss and discern the gospel truth surrounding a very destructive and heretical teaching. This leadership team was committed both to unity and truth. They gathered diversely-gifted leaders together and wrestled through the dispute until the Holy Spirit made the truth of the gospel clear to everyone. Then, they made a plan to walk in the truth.

Scriptures

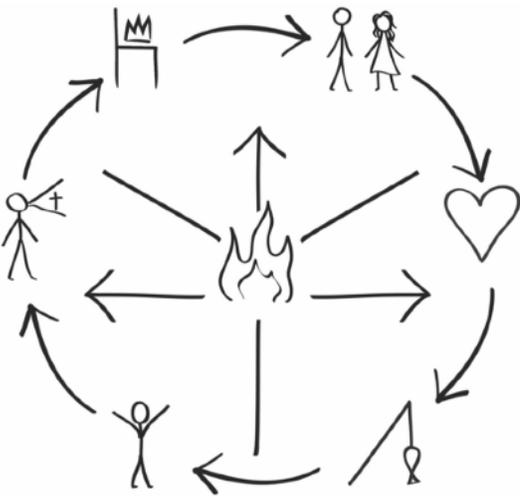
Romans 16:17-18 > I urge you to watch out for those who cause dissensions and obstacles contrary to the doctrine you have learned. Avoid them, for such people do not serve our Lord Christ but their own appetites.

1 Peter 5:1-3 > I exhort the elders among you: Shepherd God's flock among you, not overseeing out of compulsion but freely, according to God's will; not for the money but eagerly; not lording it over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock.

Lesson Summary

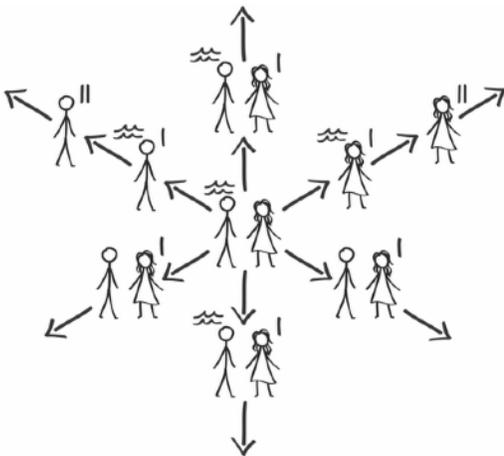
Govern the Church involves a covenant with God and other faithful, shepherding leaders to pursue holiness and lead a church with integrity and accountability. Yahweh chooses to publicly demonstrate His holiness and the gospel of His kingdom in sight of all nations through His redeemed relationship with His children (Ezekiel 36:22-36). Our Lord Jesus invites every disciple to share in His suffering and rely on His power together, because He has made us holy and appointed us heralds of His grace (2 Timothy 1:8-12). The faithful church leader is devoted to practicing holiness (Romans 12:1-2).

Gathering Guide



- Holy Spirit (fire): Let the Spirit guide your meeting.
- **Step One** (back arrow): Last week questions.
- Abide (worshipper): How did you abide last week?
- Harvest (witness): Whom did you share with?
- **Step Two** (up arrow): Discover this week's skill in Scripture as you discuss the Bible story.
- God (throne/crown): What do we learn about God?
- People (man/woman): What do we learn about people?
- Practice: Practice telling this week's story in groups.
- **Step Three** (forward arrow): Next week questions.
- Abide (heart): How will you abide?
- Harvest (fishing): Whom will you share with?

Generations Map



- People of Peace (people/arrows): Draw your disciples and their disciples. Share recent stories of how you and your team are engaging lost people.
- Baptism (waves): Update your map with those who have been baptized. What is the next step for each disciple who still needs to be baptized or become a baptizer by experience?
- Generations (number lines): Update your map with generations. How can we pray for this movement?