

Church History Senior S6

the eyes of our court was considered as belonging to that body. Of course, that's definitely the matter in the case of the Methodists. It all belongs to the church. In the Presbyterian church it has been very uncertain that that claim could be properly carried through, because in the Presbyterian church there have been many splits and many reunions in the course of the last hundred and fifty years and in these various movements as a rule groups of churches have gone out together or groups have come in together and the church has, according to Presbyterian law, been considered as having a large measure of economy in the control of its own affairs. The Presbytery's control has been considered as applying principally to the insurance of sound doctrine in the church and to the insurance that any man called to the church shall be a man who is sound in the faith. That has been historically the attitude of the Presbyterian church, but in recent years as the leaders of the church have more and more lost their interest in sound doctrine and have more and more been interested in the building up of ^a strong and powerful denomination that can express itself in world affairs in the lines in which they are interested in having it do so, the emphasis has been upon denominational activities and denominational control, to so great an extent that the attempt was made by an action was passed by the General Assembly, if I remember correctly, about twenty-five years ago, recommending that every church have its charter of ownership of its buildings state that it is held by the church in trust for the Presbyterian Church, U. S. A. Now that was not done. Most churches are not thus held. Legally, they have their own ~~own~~ ^a ~~of~~ ^a ~~board~~ ^a, which is a body in the eyes of the law, and holds the churches. Nevertheless, while this was passed by the General Assembly, it could have no binding force whatever unless passed by the Presbyteries and made a part of the Constitution. Nevertheless the theory which they tried to advance here has been upheld by the church in most of our cases and even though nine hundred and ninety-five out of a thousand people wish that the church was separate from the denomination, the courts have held that the church belongs to the denomination, and a group of five or six people have