A Response to New Apostolic Reformation Critics Revised and Expanded
3rd Revision, March 26, 2024

by

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Introduction

Dr. Randy Clark

This revised and greatly expanded "Response to NAR Critics" provides answers and insight regarding the confusion related to my first submission on this subject to Academia. This confusion arose in large part because my response, which was 303 pages, was not posted in full. Only 80 pages were posted. The complete document that should have been posted contained responses from seven students and one professor from Global Awakening Theological Seminary (GATS). This first truncated submission was met with several critical comments, some of which stemmed from the fact that my full response was not made available, such as the comments that I did not deal fully with the charges made by the critics. To mitigate further confusion as to the full content of this second response, I have now included a table of contents to go with the critical responses from each of the students so one can see which issues raised by Geivett and Pivec are addressed.

Other criticism pointed out my lack of scholastic rigor in some instances. In response, I have included citations this time around. One critic felt that I must not have read Calvin or Luther due to my statement that I believe the Reformers were apostolic. While I have not read all that Calvin or Luther wrote, I have studied both. In preparation for this resubmission, I studied Calvin's *Institutes*. I came away with evidence that Calvin did, in fact, believe the Reformers were apostolic, and I will provide evidence from his writings to substantiate this claim. I am grateful for the challenge that sent me to Calvin's *Institutes*. The critics have caused me to strengthen this discussion with evidence that indicates that Calvin believed the function of apostles had been restored during the Reformation to establish the Protestant churches and that Luther was a distinguished apostle. Furthermore, that other reformers were apostolic.

While I trust that readers will find this second response a much more thorough examination of the issues, please be aware that it does not address all the issues raised by Dr. Douglas Geivett and Holly Pivec in their book.[1] At the time of my initial response, I was teaching a class on Renewal Theology that focused on Third Wave theology and how it differs from classical Pentecostalism and Evangelical dispensationalism.[2] Part of the class dealt with the New Apostolic Reformation, pointing out that many who hold to Third Wave theology, which embraces the "now and not yet" view of the Kingdom of God are often called NAR by critics of the NAR. Often this is not accurate. I assigned *A New Apostolic Reformation* by Geivett and Pivec as part of the class's recommended reading for the course. Students were asked to write a paper on one or more of the issues raised in the book. The students were divided into groups and assigned different issues they were to respond to, pointing out what they agreed and disagreed with. For some of the students this was their first course in the master's program, for others it was near the end of their master's program. One student, Landen Dorsch, a pastor in the Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada (PAOC) asked for permission to write in more depth on the

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[1] R. Douglas Geivett, and Holly Pivec, *A New Apostolic Reformation: A Biblical Response to a Worldwide Movement*, 2nd ed. (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2018), xxiii.

[2] Third Wave theology is Pentecostal in experience, embraces the continuationist position that all the gifts of the Spirit in the NT are still available today. It is based upon the view popularized by Dr. George Eldon Ladd of Fuller Theological Seminary and especially by John Wimber, founder of the Vineyard movement. The Kingdom began with the Incarnation of Jesus and has been actively growing ever since. But it has not consummated and will not be until the Return of Jesus. The Kingdom of God is both "now and not yet," here but will not be completely here until the Second Coming of Jesus and the final judgment. There are many who identify with the Third Wave who believe the consummate experience of the Holy Spirit occurs at the New Birth when (at that time) we are filled with the Holy Spirit. But there are others who identify with the Third Wave who believe it is possible to have a simultaneous New Birth and filling of the Holy Spirit, but who believe this is not the normative pattern of Scripture or of experience in history or today. Third Wave theology does not embrace the necessity of speaking in tongues as the initial evidence of the Baptism in the Holy Spirit either. Though Third Wave leaders embrace the value of all the gifts of the Spirit, and most would have the gift of speaking in tongues as their prayer language. This is my position, my theological construct for living and teaching the Christian faith. Also, I will use Pentecostal as an adjective to reflect those who embrace Pentecostal experiences whether or not the person is a classical Pentecostal. I will also use charismatic as a synonym for Pentecostal and charismatic as representative of those in other nations where there are charismatic denominations and networks like there are Pentecostal denominations in the Western world.

issue of modern apostles, which I granted. Landen is working on his Master of Divinity with a concentration in Bible. He is a leader in the PAOC.

Geivett and Pivec made a number of accusations regarding what they say leaders in the NAR believe. In response, I have clarified what it is that leaders in the NAR do believe, drawn from responses to a survey I conducted. It is of note that many who were surveyed had major disagreements with the beliefs of NAR leaders as defined by Geivett and Pivec. It is possible that critics of the NAR are arguing from a dispensational theology that is the basis for believing the Church will be lukewarm in the end-times, will be in a weakened state, and that the kingdom of the devil will be progressing faster than the Kingdom of the Lord Jesus.

What follows begins with my personal response, which compromises the first fifty pages. Following my response, I provide a brief overview of what each of the students are covering in their response to one of the issues raised by Geivett and Pivec. Therefore, in addition to my initial address to the issues raised about the NAR, there are five sections that follow.

Section 1: Addressing Issues Raised by New Apostolic Reformation
Randy Clark

Why do I feel I have the right and am qualified to speak to the issue of healing, Third Wave theology, and apostolic ministry, all of which are impacted by Geivett and Pivec's *A New Apostolic Reformation?* First, in January of 1984, when John Wimber and I first met, he heard the audible voice of God tell him that one day I would be sent to the nations and would be used by God to pray for pastors and leaders to see God empower them and activate gifts in their lives. The second time we met, John Wimber heard this same message from God, in the same audible way. At the time John heard these words I was pastoring a small village Baptist church with about 110-120 average attendance. There were no reasons in the natural for John to see anything in me or my accomplishments that would indicate such prophetic words. Ten years later, in 1994 (the year the Toronto Blessing began), John Wimber called me to tell me that the prophetic word he had heard regarding me had begun to be fulfilled in my life. Without prophecy, I wouldn't have known with the same certainty needed to persevere in the planting of a new church in the St. Louis area. Neither would I have had the same certainty to give up said church, sell my home, and move my family to Mechanicsburg, PA. The faith to do these things came from the confirmations from God, especially prophecies and dreams, and divine appointments. The timing of these events made it clear that these things were not mere accidents or coincident.

Second, during my seventeen years in the Vineyard movement, in which I was an Area Coordinator for a few years, I was exposed to the key proponents of Third Wave theology. The Vineyard movement is noted as the denomination that is committed to Third Wave theology that includes the Kingdom "now and not yet" understanding of eschatology. It is within this theological construct that the ministry of healing and deliverance is understood.

Third, in the summer of 1994, while ministering at the Toronto Airport Vineyard, I had a strong impression, which I believe was from the Holy Spirit, that I was to be a "fire-lighter, vision- caster, and bridge-builder." This meant that my life would be involved in seeing God move upon people and churches in revival, as well as seeing people empowered by God as I taught the biblical basis for such an experience (call it what you may—knowing different networks and denominations use different terms for such an experience). Out of this strong impression from God, I knew I was to preach about the possibilities in and through God, and to share the vision for an empowered people of God and the significance and connection between obedience-intimacy-revelation-faith-and power for healing and miracles based upon the emphasis of Jesus in his Upper Room Discourse of John 14-16.[3] This was what it meant to be a vision-caster and a fire-lighter.

Fourth, to be a bridge builder meant I was to work for unity in the body of Christ. I understood this as working with any Christian leader or denomination that desired to bring more glory to God by moving in more of God's power and understanding more of God's authority that has been delegated to His Church in Jesus' name. After this experience I looked at all invitations through this three-fold lens. Does this opportunity or invitation allow me to be a fire-lighter, vision-caster, or bridge-builder?

As a result of God's grace and election, I have had the privilege of preaching and teaching in many different places, including but not limited to the largest Baptist church in South Africa, East London; the oldest and second largest Baptist church in Argentina, Buenos Aries; the largest traditional Baptist church in Brazil with a 26,000 average attendance, São Jose dos

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[3] Randy Clark, *Intimacy with God: Cultivating a Life of Deep Friendship through Obedience* (Nashville, TN: Emanate a trademark of Harper Collins Christian Pub., 2021). Esp. 58-59, Chapter Three "Intimacy and the Healing Ministry" and Chapter Four "Intimacy and Fruitfulness," 25-60.

Campos; the largest Baptist church in Brazil, Lagoinia, with a 50,000 average attendance near Belo Horizonte; and Central Baptist church in Belo Horizonte with a 22,000 average attendance. Much fruit has come from these efforts.

This latter church had about 400 in attendance for 40 years when I met Pastor Paulo Mazoni in Toronto. It was there that he received two prophecies that were almost identical and accurate within 24 hours. Subsequently, when I took a team to his church in Brazil, there was a major outpouring of the Holy Spirit. Soon afterwards, when praying, Mazoni was led by specific revelation from God as a light shone in his office upon a paper on the wall that had the words "Small Groups" written on it. As a result of this encounter, Mazoni was led by God to implement cell groups and to transition his church into a cell-based church. Since then, the growth has been phenomenal. In addition to their average attendance of 22,000, they have trained other churches in Brazil in implementing cell groups. Today there are 350,000 cells with about 3,500,000 people in them on a weekly basis. Pastor Mazoni now has about 25,000 other leaders and pastors that look to him and his team for leadership advise. He also has a huge network of churches not only in Brazil but in other countries in South and Central America, Africa, and Europe.

In addition to the Baptist, God opened the door for me to minister to a gathering in Holland of a Reformed denomination that had been cessationist since the Reformation. The two top leaders of this denomination asked me to come and teach their pastors because they felt that I understood theology well enough to relate to their pastors. They wanted to see their pastors become more open to the continuationist position regarding the gifts of the Holy Spirit. It was an honor to have the opportunity to minister to this large group of several hundred pastors. I have discovered that God continues to bless Reformed and Arminians today even as he did in the great evangelical revival under George Whitefield, who was Reformed in theology, and John Wesley

who was Arminian in theology. This same reality is seen among Protestants and Catholics where both experience God's miracles. This fact reveals the truth that God doesn't do miracles to prove correct doctrine, but to back up the Gospel. The signs and wonders are not authenticating signs alone of the Gospel. They are in fact part of the gospel of the inbreaking of God's kingdom into the kingdom of the god of this world.[4] The Gospel results in bringing people out of the kingdom of darkness into the Kingdom of light.

God has opened doors to other mainline Protestant denominations as well. For example, I have been to a few of the largest Methodist churches in America and Malaysia to preach, teach, and minister, and to a few large Nazarene churches in USA and in Brazil—the largest in the world; two large Presbyterian churches in Brazil, one with 10,000 members and the other with several thousand members. In England I ministered in several of the largest Anglican churches, including Holy Trinity Brompton. In Nigeria I ministered in some of their largest new denominations and new network churches.

I have had the privilege to minister in some of the largest Pentecostal, Assemblies of God, Pentecostal Holiness, Charismatic, and Third Wave churches in the USA. Additionally, God opened the door for me to minister within the Roman Catholic Church in Australia, the United States, and to Catholic priests in Australia, the USA, Poland, Brazil, and other countries. God has allowed me to see priests and Catholic laypersons alike released in gifts and new anointing for healing and moving in the gifts of the Spirit. I have found Jesus' words in John 14-16 to be more important to the continued work of the Holy Spirit than whether one held to Reformed, Arminian, Anglican, or Catholic theology. Loving Him through obedience to him

[4] I am heavily influenced and dependent upon Jon Ruthven for these insights. Esp., Jon Ruthven, *On the Cessation of the Charismata: The Protestant Polemic on Postbiblical Miracles* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1993).

would bring about His visitation to us and habitation in us, which would in turn bring about revelation from Him, through which he would reveal specific things the Father wants to do in and through us. This knowledge produces the kind of faith that moves mountains. This is what is included in God's word to me that I would be "a fire-lighter, vision-caster, and bridge-builder."

Fifth, I have taught courses on healing as an adjunct professor at Regent University and United Theological Seminary, a United Methodist Seminary. Additionally, I continue to teach several seminary courses on Christian Eschatology, Physical Healing, Christian Theologies, and Renewal Theology at Global Awakening Theological Seminary of which I am the president. And, in addition to these master courses, I teach in three of the six intensives for the D.Min. program and three of the eight intensives for the Th.D. program.

Sixth, my mentor for my doctoral work was Dr. Jon Ruthven, whom I believe has written the gold standard to refute the cessationist viewpoint, and who has also addressed why the ministry or function of apostles is still needed today. However, he too makes a distinction between the ministry of the Twelve and Paul, and that of the other apostles mentioned in the New Testament that did not meet the qualifications for Judas' replacement in Acts chapter one. After receiving my D.Min., Dr. Ruthven continued to speak into my life, becoming part of our Randy Clark Scholars program at United Theological Seminary, and helping Global Awakening Theological Seminary by teaching in the masters' programs and being a mentor in the doctoral programs before he was called to glory in the Spring of 2022.

Seventh, God gave me the impression that he was going to send me to the nations and that He would introduce me to some of the greatest pastors, evangelists, and apostolic leaders in the world. This impression was in the Spring of 1994, before I had ever left North America and had not yet been invited to a nation other the USA and Canada. I believe God told me through

subjective impression that he was going to give me his doctoral education in revival and healing, and I was to share it with leaders in North America. Whether one believes this was from God or not, it did come to pass. (At the time I received this invitation I did not have any doctoral degrees and God knew in my heart I wanted to get a doctor's degree.) The impression was that the books hadn't been written yet about what he wanted to teach me, and that I needed to learn from those who were doing the work of revival and renewal, who would either write the books or there would be others who would write the books about what God was doing.

It is my desire for this study to create greater faith in your life to experience the Christian life that looks like what we see in the New Testament. A life that witnesses missionary expansion of the Church, sees the Church continually planted and set on solid foundations where healings, miracles, and the other gifts of 1 Corinthians 12 and Romans 12, as well as Ephesians 4:11 are at work in the church, in the marketplace, and in our relationships with others and with God. It is my hope that more insights will be provided on these issues and there will be clarification of misunderstandings. It is true that Jesus invites us into intimacy with Him like a branch of a vine out of which flows obedience, revelation, faith for the supernatural connected to the revelation, and the result is the release of power by grace through faith to advance His Kingdom.[5]

For more foundational answers to the questions raised by liberalism and cessationism regarding whether or not healing and miracles are for today, see my doctoral thesis that can be read free by doing a google search for Randy Clark's thesis. It can be freely downloaded from Academia.edu for those who are members of Academia.

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[5] John 14-16 the Upper Room Discourse of Jesus. For more on this theme see my book, *Intimacy with God*, esp. chapters 3-6.

Introduction to the first edition with revisions and expansions Analysis of the Foundational Issues of the Critics

Randy Clark

The critics this document refers to are Dr. Douglass Geivett and Holly Pivec. Holly has a master's degree from Biola University, and Doug has his PhD as a professor of philosophy at Biola University in the Talbot School of Theology. Doug has authored fifteen books, including three with Holly Pivec. Holly has been the editor of Biola magazine and is a Christian apologist with a podcast.

Based on the Articles of Faith of Biola University, it is clearly a conservative Christian university. Additionally, their eschatological position is strongly committed to dispensational premillennialism. I believe this dispensational hermeneutic, which undergirds their understanding of the end-times, is related to their concerns about the New Apostolic Reformation (NAR). Though some categorized as NAR are historical post-tribulation premillennialists, others are postmillennialists, and others are amillennialist. One of the most widely interpreted views between victorious amillennialism, postmillennialism, and dispensationalism involves what will be happening in the Church during the last days. Often the dispensationalist will have a discouraging view of the Church in the last days. To this person, Laodicea represents the Church in the last days; therefore, the end-time Church will be lukewarm and not victorious.

Dispensationalists emphasize how the enemy is gaining ground on the Church, and if there are signs and wonders, they are most often identified as "lying signs and wonders," done not by the Church or churches but by the Antichrist, the Beast, and the False Prophet. Critics often accuse other Christians of being used by the Devil, having been deceived by him as working these lying signs and wonders. I prefer to see lying signs and wonders as those worked

by the AntiChrist New Age movement that rejects Jesus as the Son of God and hates Christianity because the Christian faith is a major obstacle to entering the Age of Aquarius.[6]

The victorious amillennial and the postmillennial, as well as the historical premillennial perspectives, have a much more positive view of the Church at the end of time. These views hold that the Kingdom of God will continue to grow on the Earth with the Church gaining ground, especially through revival, prayer, and missionary work. This was the belief of Jonathan Edwards, a famous Reformed leader during the First Great Awakening in America. Edwards was not a victorious amillennialist. He was a postmillennialist who believed the Kingdom of God was being established by prayer, revival, and missions.[7]

Instead of a regressive view of history, it has a progressive one. This is a strong view of the Church as the primary advancer of the Kingdom of God, which, as Jesus taught in Matthew 13, is like a mustard seed that begins as the smallest of seeds but grows into the largest plant, and which is like leaven in a lump of dough that starts small but continues to affect the whole. The revivalists and prominent Church leaders of the 17th- and 18th centuries and the early 19th-century decades were postmillennialists who believed the Kingdom of God would be established through prayer, revival, and missions. Dispensational adherents of the premillennial, pretribulation rapture include some members of Biola University, who do not believe in a great end-time revival or a victorious end-time Church.

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[6] W. J. Hanegraaff, *New Age Religion and Western Culture: Esotericism in the Mirror of Secular Thought* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1988). This work provides an important understanding from a scholarly position on the New Age movement and the role of healing in the New Age movement. This is only one of 26 quotations regarding the strong opposition within New Age religion against Christianity. “As a religious movement, spiritualism was characterized by a pronounced scientistic attitude combined with a vehement opposition to institutionalized Christianity.” (Emphasis mine).

[7] Mark C. Rogers, "A Missional Eschatology: Jonathan Edwards, Future Prophecy, and the Spread of the Gospel," *Fides et Historia* 41:1, no. Winter/Spring (2009): 23-46.

Additionally, many (not all) who hold a dispensational premillennial end-time eschatology also hold to an *a priori* of cessationism, which dramatically limits the understanding of the Holy Spirit's activity in the Church today. This *a priori* assumes both that the functions and offices of the 5-fold ministry of Ephesians 4:11 have ended along with the use of the gifts of miracles and healings that God used mightily to initiate and expand the Gospel to create the New Testament Church. As stated earlier, Jon Mark Ruthven's *On the Cessation of the Charismata* is a seminal work that systematically undermines cessationist dogma.

When it comes to the ministry of the apostle, I do not believe these functions were ever lost to the Church; they were given another name, i.e., bishop instead of apostle.[8] The bishop's job description contains several of the functions of the apostolic gift: for example, the laying on of hands at confirmation for the stirring up of latent gifts received in the baptism of catechumenates. In addition, earlier in the history of the Church, this prayer for the sealing of the Spirit was not just for stirring up gifts that had already been received, but it was the expectation of new charisms (gifts) coming to the person.[9] So also, for those ordained into the ministry, such as a priest or another bishop, the imparted gifts would be commensurate to the vocational calling. And even as today, bishops in earlier times were the defenders of the apostolic faith who worked with priests and deacons to encourage the laity to exercise their gifts of the Holy Spirit in the life

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[8] John Calvin believed much of the work of the Apostles of the first century was carried on by the Evangelists of the next few centuries, and possibly could be brought back into the life of the Church when circumstances necessitated such a restoration. I will develop this and cite it from Calvin below.

[9] This is clear from Tertullian's instructions to those about to be baptized. Regarding water baptism and its relationship to Spirit baptism, Tertullian comments, "I do not mean to say that we obtain the Holy Spirit in the water, but having been cleansed in the water, we are being prepared under the angel for the Holy Spirit."4 Tertullian instructed catechumens preparing for baptism, "Therefore, you blessed ones, for whom the grace of God is waiting, when you come up from the most sacred bath of the new birth, when you spread out your hands for the first time in your mother's house with your brethren, ask your Father, ask your Lord, for the special gift of His inheritance, the distributed charisms.…Ask, He says, and you shall receive." Randy Clark, *Baptized in the Spirit: God's Spirit Resting Upon You with Power* (Shippensburg, PA: Destiny Image Pub., 2017), 71.

of the community. They gave governance to the churches in the diocese and were responsible for seeing that the laity was encouraged to minister. They had the power and authority to move priests and ministers to new parishes or churches.[10] However, they did not have the authority to write new scriptures.

As previously discussed, I believe Geivett and Pivec's dispensationalism is related to their accusations against those they consider NAR. The following quote from Biola's webpage clarifies my point.

Teaching Position on Eschatology

> Biola University holds to the following teaching position on eschatology:
>
> In fulfillment of God's historical purpose for humanity to rule and establish God's kingdom on earth (Gen. 1:28; Ps. 8:4-8; Matt. 6:10; Heb. 2:6-9), the Scriptures teach a millennial reign of Christ with His saints on earth following His literal return. The nation of Israel, having been redeemed, will play a central role in bringing the blessings of salvation to all nations during the millennium in fulfillment of biblical prophecies (e.g., Is. 2:1-4; 11:1-12; Jer. 23:5-6; Ezek. 37; Amos 9:9-15; Zech. 14.
>
> Matt. 19:28; Acts 1:6; 3:19-21; Rev. 20:4-6). Following the millennium, this kingdom will be merged into the eternal kingdom (I Cor. 15:22-28).
>
> Before these millennial events, the believers will be caught up to meet the Lord in the air (I Thess. 4:13-17). The time of this "rapture" is unknown, and thus believers are to live constantly watchful and ready.[11]

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[10] *The Orthodox Study Bible*, ed. St. Athanasius Academy of Orthodox Theology (Yorktown, VA: Thomas Nelson, 2008), xxiii, Kindle. "It should also be mentioned that it was out of the ministry and life of the apostles that the people of God, the laity, were established in the Church. Far from being a herd of observers, the laity are vital in the effectiveness of the Church. They are the recipients and active users of the gifts and grace of the Spirit. Each of the laity has a role in the life and function of the Church. Each is to supply something to the whole (1 Cor. 12:7). And it is the responsibility of the bishops, the priests, and the deacons to be sure that this is a reality for the laity" (xxiv).

[11] Biola University, "Biola University's Theological Positions," 2022, https://www.biola.edu/about/theological-positions. It should be pointed out that the pretribulation rapture premillennial dispensational view was due to a new revelation or vision or hermeneutic that Margaret McDonald shared with John Irving and another view on its origin was it was a new understanding of Scripture that was developed by John Darby. Its origin was around 1830.

Why Am I Responding to the Critics? Because of My Concern for the Apostolic Teaching and Practice of the Church?

I was surprised one day when a pastor friend called and told me I was listed (by Geivett and Pivec) as one of the main leaders of the NAR. I had heard of the NAR. I knew it was a name C. Peter Wagner had given to a group of fast-growing churches that had some beliefs, practices, or values in common. Among these were: strong entrepreneurial leadership (some of the leaders in this category were Evangelical as well as Pentecostal or Charismatic); belief in the governing office of modern-day apostles and prophets; practices of strategic level spiritual warfare; and belief in miracles, signs, and wonders for today. Some leaders connected these miracles, signs, and wonders to an end-time army of equipped lay people trained to partner with God to minister healing, deliverance, and miracles.[12] And the ministry offices of apostles and prophets would practice the laying on of hands for impartation or activation of spiritual gifts or being filled or baptized in the Holy Spirit. Geivett and Pivec have criticized these ideas as well as the concept of teaching people how to heal, prophesy, or move in other gifts of the Holy Spirit. Their explanations and categorizations are not consistent with some who they criticize or include as involved in the NAR, including my views, the great majority of the Vineyard movement, many of the leaders in the Revival Alliance, and some of the networks of those leaders. From the Third Wave perspective, this teaching involves training people how to see and understand what the

[12] In the late 80s and early 90s the language was "a nameless faceless generation." This generation of little ole me[s] would come out of the revivals and would be used to usher in a great end-time revival. Some even talked of a billion-soul harvest. There were to be two waves: the first one to the Church and the latter to the world. The first to renew the Church and prepare it for the second wave of revival the great harvest. Within this subset of churches, certain prophetic people were telling the pastors to get the nurseries ready. This was metaphorical language for small groups to help pastor and disciple the harvest." I heard this language at several conferences and meetings at local churches within the Vineyard movement. In fairness to the Vineyard, after a few years John Wimber distanced himself and the Vineyard from belief in apostles, government of prophets, any form of elitism within the movement. He also rejected the practice of Strategic Level Spiritual Warfare. It was over this issue that he and. C. Peter Wagner had strong disagreement. Both John and Peter told me about this tear in their relationship of this issue.

Holy Spirit is doing, to move in His gifts by cooperating with God, and to understand how gifts often work together. I believe the critics, not only of the NAR but of Third Wave theology, have missed the nuances in this matter.

I should also clarify that the items listed above do not accurately reflect what Wagner taught but is how critics of the NAR characterize its beliefs and practices. Critics often label people members of the NAR if they hold only a few of these commonalities and reject many others. Let me again clarify, there is no official NAR; it does not have a headquarters, a confession of faith, or practices. It is not an organization and does not contain a leadership structure or a membership list. I have even told people who asked if I considered myself to be a member of the NAR or agreed with it, "No, I do not agree with the NAR in some of its teachings." However, since some of the foundational beliefs of classical Pentecostal, Charismatic, and Third Wave are lumped in as NAR, there are beliefs that I do agree with. Still these are not unique to NAR but to the larger Spirit empowered believers in the Church.

Some of the teachings which I do agree with are: the continuation of all the gifts of 1 Corinthians 12, Romans 12 and Ephesians 4:11; in addition to special revelation (the Bible) and general revelation (in nature) there is specific revelation including calls to ministry, calls to specific forms of ministry, places of ministry, what to preach at specific times even when the message prepared is biblical but God has another message he wants to be delivered; revelation that comes to be shared with the body of believers in worship, especially prophecy and words of knowledge; divine appointments are the result of specific revelation; words of knowledge and

prophecies are based upon specific revelation for an individual or group or church.[13] However, these revelations would not be the basis for a new doctrine or truth that contradicted the Bible.

I believe Christians can learn the ways of God, making their ministries more powerful, not because they are relying on their education or human ability but are truly co-laboring with God.[14] As they learn the ways of God, the people of God begin to experience the gifts of God through which the power of God is often experienced.

I also believe in an end-time victorious Church that will not be able to fully establish the Kingdom of God because that requires the Second Coming of Jesus. I do not believe the Church will be in the state of Laodicea—weak and lukewarm—at the Second Coming of Christ. I agree with G.B. Caird, who taught in his commentary on *Revelation*, that the time of the Second Coming will be both a powerful time for the Church and a time of persecution.[15] The result of this will be that people will be changed by conversion, which in turn will bring about a change in

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[13] The difference in how revelation is understood is central to the disagreement and misunderstanding between Pentecostals, Charismatics, Third Wavers and Cessationists. Cessationists prefer to limit the word revelation to Scripture and instead use the word inspiration or illumination where Pentecostals, Charismatics and Third Wavers have three levels of revelation not just one. I believe this is much more biblical, cf. 1 Cor. 14:6,26,30; Eph. 1:17. There are 12 NT uses of this word and three of them pertain not to apostles receiving revelation, but the members of the body of Christ who are to expect to receive revelations to share with the others. 1 Cor. 14:6 refers to Paul but is followed by a parallel which is referring to members of the body who receive the revelations. 1 Cor. 14:26-33 "What then, brothers? When you come together, each one has a hymn, a lesson, a revelation, a tongue, or an interpretation. Let all things be done for building up. [27]If any speak in a tongue, let there be only two or at most three, and each in turn, and let someone interpret. [28]But if there is no one to interpret, let each of them keep silent in church and speak to himself and to God. [29]Let two or three prophets speak, and let the others weigh what is said. [30] If a revelation is made to another sitting there, let the first be silent. [31]For you can all prophesy one by one, so that all may learn and all be encouraged, [32]and the spirits of prophets are subject to prophets. [33]For God is not a God of confusion but of peace" (ESV).

[14] 2 Cor. 6:1, "As God's co-workers we urge you not to receive God's grace in vain" (NIV); "Working together with him, then, we appeal to you not to receive the grace of God in vain" (ESV, RSV); "Working together with him, then, we appeal to you not to receive the grace of God in vain" (NASB). See the last chapter by Anne Watt to have a fuller understanding of what I am saying and how to better hear from God's Spirit.

[15] G.B. Caird, "The Theology of the Book of Revelation," in *The Revelation of St. John the Divine* (New York, NY: Harper and Row, 1966), 289-301.

their morals and worldview that will influence society. Because of the suffering for the Gospel and the signs and wonders that confirm the Gospel, many unbelievers will come to Christ just as it was in the early Church.

I believe founding apostles still exist today who not only begin a church but begin and establish churches. I believe these founding apostles who establish new churches should have greater authority over those churches than pastors who later would pastor such churches. The same principle applies for a movement of churches established by an apostolic leader. A gifted pioneer missionary is a more acceptable term to some than founding apostle but speaks about the same office gift. The person in this office should have greater authority among the churches they established, typically by the missionary working with an apostolic team. The Apostle Paul in his letters relates greater authority with the churches he planted than those he did not. This authority was to be used to build up the believers which is consistent with Ephesians 4:11-16.[16]

I believe dominionism is a poor term to use. It can unfortunately present a picture of Christians as the equivalent of the Islamic Taliban forcing Shira law upon all members where they rule. It does not represent the kind of advancing of the Kingdom that Jesus referred to in his parables of the Kingdom in Matthew 13. Should Christians seek to have impact, influence, and blessing upon their communities? Yes, but not by coercive power. Instead, these things should come about by serving, bringing divine wisdom to human problems that seem unanswerable, by influence instead of power plays. Should culture be impacted by Christ? Yes. But in the ways of Christ, the Suffering Servant.

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[16] 2 Cor. 10:8, "For even if I boast a little too much of our authority, which the Lord gave for building you up and not for destroying you, I will not be ashamed. 2 Cor.13:10. For this reason I write these things while I am away from you, that when I come, I may not have to be severe in my use of the authority that the Lord has given me for building up and not for tearing down."

I believe it is important to Jesus for there to be unity within His Church. Jesus prayed for such unity in John 17. I believe God has been working to bring about a greater unity within His Church in two ways, one through revival and the other through the ecumenical movement for unity. The revivals we see, especially since the 20th century with the outbreak of powerful worldwide revivals, four of which happened in the 20th century and involve a great emphasis upon the New Covenant outpouring of the Pentecostal fire with the gifts of the Spirit. First, there were the Pentecostal revivals that began in the first decade of the 20th century with fires of revival breaking out in Topeka, Kansas 1901; Wales 1904; Mukti, Kedgaon, India 1905;[17] Azusa St., Los Angeles 1906; Pyongyang, Korea 1907; Santiago, Chile 1909.[18] There probably were other places where revival broke out spontaneously during this time that I am not aware of.

Second came the Latter Rain Revival and the Healing Revival of the late 1940s. Third, the Charismatic Revival began in the early 1960s and impacted most of the Church, Protestant, Catholic, and Anglican. Fourth, there was the outpouring of the Spirit that began in the mid-1990's, leading to a world revival with over 4,000,000 conversions and scores of thousands of new churches. These figures represent just one-third of the major three sources of this revival, the revival in Toronto with pastor John Arnott and me as the revivalist. I believe the numbers would be much greater if the other two primary sources were included: the ministry of Rodney Howard-Browne and pastor John Kilpatrick, and revivalist Steve Hill in Pensacola, Florida.

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[17] Frederick G. Henke, "The Gift of Tongues and Related Phenomena at the Present Day," *The American Journal of Theology, Vol. 13, No. 2 (Apr. 1909), 193-206* (1909).

[18] Stanley Frodsham, "Pentecostal Revival in Chile - Stanley Frodsham," 2022, https://www.revival-library.org/revival_histories/pentecostal/south_american/pentecostal_revival_in_chile.shtml.

These revivals led to the salvation of millions and the founding of scores of thousands of new churches around the world.

A revival broke out in China in 1994 without any connection with Toronto that had similar phenomena that resulted in great church growth and the conversions of multitudes.[19] About the same time, a spontaneous revival broke out in the mountains of southern Mexico, impacting the culture with phenomena considered strange to the culture. The culture had no place for public laughter.[20] Also, during this same time frame, a Canadian evangelist shared how the Inuit people of Far East Russia had the same phenomena break out among them while no one had told them about Toronto. He told me when he asked them, "How these phenomena of laughter and spiritual drunkenness had happened?" They replied, "You left us New Testaments in our language. We prayed that God would visit us as he did the disciples on the Day of Pentecost."

No one has thoroughly studied the fruit of the mid-1990s revival, which would make a good dissertation. It would be amazing to see the fruit of each stream individually and then collectively. Perhaps each one could become a doctoral project.

The ecumenical movement is the second work God is doing to answer the John 17 prayer of Jesus. However, I believe the ecumenism of the Spirit is accomplishing more than by the efforts at ecumenism by church leaders, but both are playing an important part. What I mean by ecumenism of the Spirit is the willingness of denominations to work together in mission and

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[19] Dennis Balcomb and the seven Chinese leaders shared with me about this revival and its phenomena in the late 1990s. See Dennis Balcombe, *China's Opening Door: Incredible Stories of the Holy Spirit at Work in One of the Greatest Revivals in Christianity* (Lake Mary, FL: Charisma House, 2014).

[20] Missionary evangelist [another way of referring to the apostolic function or gifting] David Hogan shared this with me during a personal interview in the late 1990s.

worship. Acts portrays the breaking down of barriers for the apostolic Church, taking it beyond Judaism to embrace within its numbers Samaritans, Gentile God-fearers, and pagan Gentiles turning to Christ.[21] I believe the Charismatic movement opened the eyes of many within their denominations to the fact that people in those denominations thought most of the other denominations, or at least the ones most different from their own, were lost and needed saving. It is true that in all the denominations, the wheat and the tares growing together; the truly saved. and those who are not. But this is not because of the denomination. It is due to the fact they have no witness of the Spirit in their lives.

I believe a potential place where greater unity could be obtained would be if those at the level of bishops in the liturgical denominations that have them, the bishops among some Pentecostal denominations and Charismatic networks, and the apostolic leaders within the renewal movements would meet, discuss, pray, worship together, bless each other, and work together. It would be helpful for the Roman Catholic Church to gain an understanding of the similar roles between Protestant apostolic leaders and Pentecostal bishops and the Catholic, Anglican, Orthodox, Moravian, and Norwegian Lutheran denominations that have bishops. It would also be important for the Protestant apostolic leaders and Pentecostal bishops to gain understanding of the roles of the above-mentioned churches' bishops. It would be important for each to discover the similarities and dissimilarities between these bishops and the apostolic leaders. I believe this would help develop a greater understanding and perhaps even unity, or at least a greater honor between the bishops and the apostolic leaders and the respective churches they serve.

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[21] Acts 8, 10, and 19.

I believe in spiritual warfare, that there are demons and principalities and powers. I believe good fruit can come from some aspects of strategic level spiritual warfare (SLSW), but I don't agree with all the varied emphasis of advocates of SLSW. I believe identificational repentance is helpful for breakthroughs of the Spirit of God and resultant revivals. I do not believe SLSW is necessary to experience revival. I believe and have discovered that some people were set apart by God and led by him to do SLSW and to bind the territorial spirits over the city they were to conduct their crusades. Omar Cabrera Sr is one of these leaders and I have met with him and discussed how God used him in this way and gave him the faith required when necessary.

I believe God led him into this practice and authorized him to bind such territorial spirits, although whether they are principalities or powers and authorities, I don't know. But when he was authorized he experienced a strong presence of the Spirit at that moment he did bind them—it was powerful and successful. His crusades would have thousands of conversions instead of hundreds. And the numbers of healings were likewise many more than when he did not receive authorization from God or a revelation from God as to what he was to bind. Yet, Omar said to me that he did not teach any of his biological or spiritual sons in ministry to do SLSW. He also told me that most of the time when he did SLSW, their ministry was smaller, and few other Christians working with him. In the latter years of his ministry, instead of SLSW practices he instead often had 500 intercessors at the meetings, praying for the outpouring of the Spirit, similar to what Carlos Annacondia did.[22]

[22] The statements of this paragraph are based upon multiple interviews I conducted with Omar Cabrera from 1995-1999 when I made several trips from two to three weeks when I ministered in his churches and to his leaders.

I do not teach or practice SLSW, even though I have met several key leaders for whom it had been beneficial in their breakthroughs, because it is easy for the body of Christ to become more focused on the Devil than upon the Savior; to become demon chasers rather than God chasers. Often, North Americans franchise a practice as if it were a business model that could be duplicated without understanding the level of holiness that should be present for anyone involved in SLSW. I do believe that it is very dangerous for lone intercessors to engage in SLSW. If someone is doing SLSW, they should have many other intercessors praying for and with them.[23]

Having gone to 54 countries in the world on every continent except Antarctica and having discussed SLSW with many key leaders, I found that it is not a uniform practice and there are different expectations of holiness in the lives of those who practice it. I believe wisdom would be to not engage in SLSW without a personal Holy Spirit authorization and call to do so. I do believe in spiritual warfare and the reality of demons, powers, authorities, principalities, and the angels that did not fall.[24]

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[23] There was much I agreed with in John Paul Jackson's book, *Needless Causalities of War*. However, I shared with him that I felt a weakness of the book was that it did not deal with any of the positive effects of SLSW, or the issue of those who are called into SLSW by God. In those instances, to be faithful was to be involved. I also believe that in addition to Omar Cabrera, what Father Nash and Clare Abel were doing in their intercessory prayer helped Charles Finney's ministry to have great breakthroughs in the 19th century. I also believe that when Johann Blumhardt cast the demon out of a woman after a two year plus battle, the result was an open heaven and revival in his area with many coming to the Lord and many being healed. The same principle would be noted with Horge Marcus in Montevideo, Uruguay, who after casting a powerful demon out of a man there ensued a powerful breakthrough of the Holy Spirit and revival in his city. (Pastor Marcus told me this story when I visited and ministered to his church of 3,000. No other Protestant church had grown past 500 before his explosive growth.) The same would be true for a leading Baptist leader in Argentina, who, after casting a demon out of a woman saw a breakthrough in his church.

People who lived around his church would come to visit and stop at the door and go back to their cars and leave, others would pull into the parking lot but not get out of the car, turn around and leave. People from outside the area did not have this response. Once the demon was cast out, the people in the area were free to come to the local church pastored by this Baptist leader. (I am referring to Eduardo Lorenzo, and I was told this story by his adult son Victor Lorenzo while I was in Argentina.) These are examples of breakthroughs related to deliverance of people who were demonized by a high-ranking demonic power.

[24] I believe Walter Wink's trilogy are very important to the issue of spiritual warfare. See Walter Wink, *Engaging the Powers: Discernment and Resistance in a World of Domination*, vol. 3 (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1992). Walter Wink, *Unmasking the Powers: The Invisible Forces That Determine Human Existence*, vol. 2

Having focused on some of the things I do agree with, and some with greater reservations, I shall now concentrate on other issues I disagree with that are said to be part of those who are considered within the NAR.

I do not believe in the Manifest Sons of God teaching that a level of power and holiness would occur in the lives of some believers so that they would not be susceptible to death and become immortal. *I do not believe in an end-time army* of Christians who are not touchable by death or disease or the aging process. However, I do believe in the importance of the military language of the Apostle Paul as symbolism for the whole church to recognize that we have an enemy and we have been given offensive and defensive gear to engage in the spiritual war

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(Philadelphia, PA: Fortress Press, 1986). Walter Wink, *Naming the Powers: The Language of Power in the New Testament*, vol. 1 (Philadelphia, PA: Fortress Press, 1984). Wink doesn't argue like most Pentecostals, and grassroot Charismatics, but from a more liberal position. (I believe there would be both Pentecostal and Charismatic scholars who would agree with Wink's insights regarding the powers.) Even though what he writes has great truth in it and has strong biblical support, he doesn't embrace another aspect of spiritual warfare in the New Testament that indicates there are real demons that can demonize a person, and that these persons need the ministry of deliverance. Here the Pentecostals and the Charismatics around the world have a stronger, more biblical position. The Catholic, Orthodox, and Anglican churches have such a belief as well as the Pentecostals, Charismatics, and those in the Third Wave. I am not saying either of these two perspectives are wrong but that each has truth in their emphasis. The former group on how evil impacts our lives through power structures; governmental, ideological, and corporate for examples, and the latter how evil works through demons who have personality and will to bring harm to humans. It is in my opinion the former view represented by Wink that the greatest evil happens within humanity. I also believe that Fascism, Nazis, and Communism were demonic, and Hitler was demonized. In this case both sources of evil power were working in tandem. For reasons to believe Hitler was demonized read about those who influenced him in W. J. Hanegraaff, *New Age Religion and Western Culture: Esotericism in the Mirror of Secular Thought* (Leiden: BRILL, 1988, 1996). This work provides an important understanding from a scholarly position on the New Age movement and the role of healing in the New Age movement, as well as the demonic and esoteric influence upon not only New Age thought but upon the ideologies of powers to influence political government such as Nazism and Hitler. Chapter 15, esp. p. 502 of New Age Religion and Western Culture. I also believe Pol Pot of Cambodia was demonized, which led to the genocide of one-third of the population. Stalin may not have been demonized to the point of Pol Pot and Hitler, but he too was under demonic influence in the purposed killing of millions of people by purposed starvation, death squads, and war upon the people. In addition, other important works dealing with spiritual warfare would be Gregory Boyd's, God at War and its sequel Satan and the Power of Evil. See also Michael Heiser's trilogy: on the unseen realm: Michael S. Heiser, *The Unseen Realm: Recovering the Supernatural Worldview of the Bible* (Bellingham: Lexham Press, 2015). Michael S. Heiser, *Supernatural: What the Bible Teaches About the Unseen World - and Why It Matters* (Bellingham: Lexham Press, 2015). Michael S. Heiser, *Angels: What the Bible Really Says About God's Heavenly Host* (Ashland: Lexham Press, 2018).

between the forces of darkness and those of the light. (Darkness and light are terms that the Apostle John used more than Apostle Paul.)

It is a fact that the number of healings and miracles the church began to experience really increased around the middle of the 19th century,[25] and they have significantly increased in number among many more denominations since then. I believe we will continue to see greater breakthroughs as we recover biblical truths about the Gospel relating to deliverance from sickness, disease, and demons, as well as forgiveness of sins and eternal life through grace by faith.

However, I do believe it will also be true that the number of healings and miracles will be much less among cessationist leaders and the people of their congregations because these miracles are related to grace gifts, of words of knowledge, prophecy, gifts of faith, and a growing understanding of the ways of God so we can better work with God. Where there is little expectation, there will be little faith. Where there is no teaching on how to recognize the ways of God, there will be much fewer miracles and healings—not due of God's unwillingness but because human disbelief or lack of expectation.

I do not believe that a church must have prophet or be submitted to an apostle for it to accomplish its mission. I do believe that the ministry of a prophet can be beneficial to a local church, and that the impartation gift, vision, wisdom, and advice of an apostolic leader can also

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[25] Donald Dayton, "The Rise of the Evangelical Healing Movement in Nineteenth Century America," *Pneuma* 4, no. 1 (01 Jan. 1982 1982). Paul G. Chappel, "The Divine Healing Movement in America" (Drew University, 1983). See *The New International Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements*, Revised and Expanded Edition ed. "I. The First Eighteen Centuries" and "II. The Last Two Centuries" for an overview of the struggle between cessationism and hagiography as well as the relationship between traditional protestant missions and the belief for a return to apostolic methods.

be beneficial to accomplish its mission. *However, I do not believe the prophet should have governmental authority over a local church or its pastors or elders*.

I believe the apostolic level of governmental authority is related to whether he/she founded the local church or churches. Even then, the apostolic leader who founded the church should establish a team of leaders, often using the biblical term elders, to help govern the church and help care for the church. A cell church would ordain those at the Zone Pastor level as equivalent to elders, and those over a cell or up to five cells would be more in the biblical capacity of a deacon. I believe the cell model is much more in line with the New Testament church model than the traditional or Cathedral model. It is only in a model of church that embraces both the necessity and importance of small groups and congregational celebration meetings that many of the admonitions of Scripture apply to our lives and the practice of what we are to do when gathered together. In this way, apostolic authority is limited to a church that looks to a particular apostle for guidance, advice, vision, and impartation, inviting the apostle to come in when there are needs that his/her gifts can help the local church navigate. I believe this model, which I am committed to, would work, with some adjustments, in all three of the systems of church government: episcopal, presbyterian, or congregational.[26]

For those with a Presbyterian system of government, with elders, or a church with a congregational government, what I have said above works well if there is a clear understanding of the limited role of the apostolic for both the apostolic and the presbyters. There would

[26] I found Dr. Barry Wissler's book, *Healthy Leadership Teams*, to be very helpful regarding the relationship between apostolic leaders and elders and the congregation. Though the book was written in regard to leadership that was not limited to the apostolic relationship, there was material that was very helpful regarding such relationship. See Barry Wissler, *Healthy Leadership Teams: Practical Help for Church and Ministry Leaders* (CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform, 2018).

likewise need to be an understanding between the apostolic leader and the congregation in congregational polity. It worked well within the episcopal in the late apostolic and post-apostolic period. It could work today in the episcopal, especially if the bishop believed in and had faith for the more apostolic aspects of his or her sphere of authority in the diocese or a designated apostolate. It seemed to work well with Augustine of Canterbury, the apostle to the Angli people in England, for Patrick in Ireland, for Cyril and for Methodius to the Slavs. In the 20th century, the former Baptist turned Pentecostal, Ivan Voronaev, is called an apostle to the Slavs. Boniface, Archbishop of Mentz, called the apostle of the Germans, was noted for miracles that accompanied his ministry in the 8th century.[27] Let it be noted that the persons mentioned above were all called apostles, and their ministries span the 7th through 20th centuries. They also represented Roman Catholic, Orthodox, and Pentecostal ministers.

Regarding miracles, I believe that to accept the Enlightenment definition of miracles utilized by the Roman Catholic committee at Lourdes, France, is to go beyond the biblical understanding of miracles. These criteria require that the healing is instantaneous, complete, and permanent. It is also required that there is before and after medical evidence of the condition that proves the healing, and that there could not have been any treatment for the condition before the healing that could be attributed to the healing. This definition or criteria goes beyond that of the Bible. Miracles are greater than healings, and those of us in the part of the church that prays for both should be more guarded in the language we use, not using the term miracles when they were healings but true miracles. However, I believe both will be experienced. It has been, and I

[27] Thomas Boys, *The Suppressed Evidence: Or, Proofs of the Miraculous Faith and Experience of the Church of Christ in All Ages, from Authentic Records of the Fathers, Waldenses, Hussites, Reformers, United Brethren, & C* (England: Hamilton, Adams, 1832, 1832). Chapter 2 “The Fathers” about paragraph 57 footnoted as 48 and 49.

believe will continue to be, so for me and the ministry I founded. I know this to be true for the associates. All the associate ministers of our ministry, Global Awakening, and those in the Apostolic Network of Global Awakening, see lots of healings, collectively— thousands a year— but much less miracles. Even if there could be a naturalistic explanation for what we believe to be miraculous, this does not prove it is not a miracle by Bible standards. What makes it miraculous is that the time it occurred is directly related to the time of the intercessory prayers or prayers of commands of God's people.

I believe in a powerful Gospel of the Kingdom that replicates the preaching and teaching of Jesus, the message of the Twelve in their commission, the same for the 70/72 in their commissioning, and the Apostle Paul. This message pertains to the inbreak of God's power in our world (part of the fulfillment of the New Covenant) to heal and to make whole, as well as authority and power to deliver people from demonic problems. Yet this Gospel includes and is expressed with the forgiveness of sins and life eternal by grace through faith.[28]

When I said I did not consider myself to be in the NAR, I was referring to a so-called central belief of the NAR: the restoration of the governing offices of apostles and prophets. This view believes that God began restoring the offices of apostles and prophets, particularly in the 1990s. I do not believe this because I don't believe the function ever ended and that much of the

[28] Luke 9:1-21, When Jesus had called the Twelve together, he gave them power and authority to drive out all demons and to cure diseases, [2] and he sent them out to preach the kingdom of God and to heal the sick. In this passage in Luke's gospel, Jesus sent out the twelve to preach the kingdom of God and to heal the sick. In Matthew 6:10, He taught us to pray, "…your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven." If we truly desire to "invade earth with heaven's realities" in the area of healing-or any other area for that matter, then our understanding of the Kingdom, and a revelation of its nature, is crucial. The Kingdom message is central to the gospel. John the Baptist preached that the kingdom of heaven was at hand. Mt. 3:1-2. Jesus' message was centered on the Kingdom. Mk 1:14-15; Lu. 17:20-21, 18:17; Mt. 24:14. His commissioning of the 12 were likewise focused on the Kingdom Mt. 10 and Lu 9, and the commissioning of the 72 in. Lu. 10. Paul argued for and preached the Kingdom, Acts 19:8, 28:30-31. Philip, the evangelist preached the good news of the Kingdom of God, Acts 8:12.

purpose of the apostolic function is maintained in the work of the bishops of the liturgical churches. There have also been great missionaries who were apostolic. Both in the past and living in the 21st century.

I believe very strongly in the effectiveness of the ministry of impartation. It can happen with or without the laying on of hands, but it is very biblical to practice laying on of hands. I believe it is important to understand that it is a mystery of operation that involves three things: the truth of God's Word from the Bible, the faith of the person who receives the impartation (which is related to biblical examples and precepts), and the sovereignty of God. The person ministering impartation is not the source of what happens. God alone via the Holy Spirit is the source. But God does instruct the church to use means. In the case of impartation, the greatest means is the Word of God, and the lesser means is the testimony of what God has done before—not just in the Bible but in history and recent times. The Anglican Church, the Methodist, and Wesleyan churches have understood the importance of Christians availing themselves of the means of grace provided by the church, baptism, communion, and preaching the Word.[29]

Many other Protestant churches would also include as a means of grace the accountability and the importance of confession of sins to one another in the life of small groups or cell groups as another powerful means of grace since the 1990s. I have a different perspective. I believe the New Testament is true and that the offices or *doma* gifts of Ephesians 4:11 never stopped. The early Church wanted to make a distinction between the Twelve Apostles and Paul from those

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[29] Lawrence W. Woods, *The Meaning of Pentecost in Early Methodism: Rediscovering John Fletcher as John Wesley's Vindicator and Designated Successor*, vol. 15 (Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 2002). "For these early Methodists, the sacrament of the Lord's Supper was a primary means of receiving the converting and sanctifying grace of God," 2. For the importance of the rite of laying on of hands see chapters 15 and 16, The Meaning of Pentecost.

who were apostolic or continued the apostolic role or function, excluding the writing of Scripture. The Roman Catholic Church and the Orthodox Churches, Anglican Church, Old Catholic, and Norwegian Lutheran have bishops who are in apostolic succession from the apostles.

Historical evidence shows that the office of the bishop was in existence while some of the apostles were still alive.[30] I submit the following as examples: Irenaeus writes in 170 A.D. that

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[30] About 95 A.D. St. Clement, bishop of Rome, in his letter to the church in Corinth (First Letter of Clement), expressed the view that bishops succeeded the Apostles. Encyclopedia Britannica. "After the martyrdom of Paul and of Peter, Linus was the first to obtain the episcopate of the church at Rome. Paul mentions him, when writing to Timothy from Rome, in the salutation at the end of the epistle." Eusebius Book 3, chapter 2.1. Linus, whom he mentions in the Second Epistle to Timothy 2 Timothy 4:21 as his companion at Rome, was Peter's successor in the episcopate of the church there, as has already been shown." "Clement also, who was appointed third bishop of the church at Rome, was, as Paul testifies, his co-laborer and fellow-soldier." Eusebius 3.4.10. "After Vespasian had reigned ten years Titus, his son, succeeded him. In the second year of his reign, Linus, who had been bishop of the church of Rome for twelve years, delivered his office to Anencletus." Eusebius 3.13. Eusebius Book III, Chapter 15 writes "In the twelfth year of the same reign [Domitian's reign] Clement succeeded Anencletus after the latter had been bishop of the church of Rome for twelve years. The apostle in his Epistle to the Philippians informs us that this Clement was his fellow-worker. 'With Clement and the rest of my fellow-workers whose names are in the book of life.'" Domitian reigned from 81-96. His twelfth year was year 93 A.D. when Clement became bishop of Rome, but his predecessor Anencletus had been bishop of Rome for 12 years, since 81 A.D. Peter was the first bishop of Rome and he consecrated two other bishops, Linus and Anacletus as priests. Linus became the second bishop of Rome in 67 A.D. while apostles were still alive. The earliest mention of Linus as the second bishop of Rome is from Irenaeus who wrote in A.D. 180, "the blessed apostles, then, having founded and built up the Church, committed into the hands of Linus the office of the episcopate." The Episcopate is a reference to having been consecrated a bishop. It consists of the bishops.

"In the fourth year of Domitian, Annianus, the first bishop of the parish of Alexandria, died after holding office twenty-two years, and was succeeded by Abilius, the second bishop. Eusbius 3:14 (Domitian began his reign in 81 A.D. the fourth year would have been 85 A.D. when Abilius was appointed the second bishop of Alexandria. However, his predecessor, Annianus, had been bishop for 22 years meaning he would have been appointed bishop in 63 A.D. Paul wrote the first letter to the Thessalonians around 50 A.D. the N.T. was not finished until 81-96 A.D.) Peter was martyred in 64 A.D. and Paul in 68 A.D. both in Rome. John is believed to have lived till 100 A.D. This is the historical basis for my belief Bishops were already in existence while some of the Twelve Apostles were still alive. Though Origen stated that all the apostles were dead by 70 A.D. and Gregory of Nyssa states John was martyred.

Antioch, one of the first four major churches or Sees was, according to tradition, founded by Peter. According to the Orthodox Church, Evodius was one of the 70. "Apostle Evodus - Orthodoxwiki," Apostle Evodius (Euodias) of the Seventy (OCA), 2022, https://orthodoxwiki.org/Apostle_Evodus. The Orthodox Church teaches Paul ordained Timothy bishop of Ephesus in 65 A.D., and he was their bishop until 80 A.D. when he was martyred. See "Apostle Timothy - Orthodoxwiki," 2022, https://orthodoxwiki.org/Apostle_Timothy. According to Eusebius James, the brother of Jesus was the first bishop of Jerusalem and was appointed bishop by Peter James the son of Zebedee and John. Simeon of Jerusalem was the second bishop appointed in 70-107 or 117 A.D. Like James he too was martyred. Onesimus was the second bishop of Ephesus following Timothy. "Saint Timothy | Bishop of Ephesus," (2022), https://www.britannica.com/biography/Saint-Timothy.

"So when he came to Smyrna, where Polycarp was, he wrote an epistle to the church of Ephesus, in which he mentions Onesimus, its pastor; and another to the church of Magnesia, situated upon the Mæander, in which he

Polycarp was appointed Bishop of Smyrna in Asia and that the apostles also taught Polycarp.[31] Polycarp was recommended to be consecrated bishop by his bishop Bucolos of Smyrna, who was ordained bishop by John the Apostle. Irenaeus wrote that Peter's successor at Rome was Linus, whom he had ordained as a priest along with Anencletus by Peter.[32] Both became bishops of the church of Rome.

The Apostle Paul, according to the early Church historian Eusebius, made Timothy the bishop of Ephesus, Titus the bishop of Crete, and Crescens in Gaul.[33] Paul also appointed

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makes mention again of a bishop Damas; and finally one to the church of Tralles, whose bishop, he states, was at that time Polybius." Eusebius 3.36.5.

"10. These things he wrote from the above-mentioned city to the churches referred to. And when he had left Smyrna he wrote again from Troas to the Philadelphians and to the church of Smyrna; and particularly to Polycarp, who presided over the latter church. And since he knew him well as an apostolic man, he commended to him, like a true and good shepherd, the flock at Antioch, and besought him to care diligently for it." Eusebius 3:36.10.

[31] Irenaeus, in *Against Heresies*, 3:3.3, writes about several churches which would be in Modern Turkey having bishops, presbyters (priests), and deacons. See *The Apostolic Fathers with Justin Martyr and Irenaeus*, ed. Alexander Roberts, James Donaldson, and A. Cleveland Coxe, vol. 1 (Buffalo, NY: Christian Literature Company, 1885). The letters were written in 107. Note that This date is impossible because his letters are usually dated about 180. Perhaps his 107 was meant to be 170. He draws upon the letters written by bishop Polycarp on his way to Rome to be martyred. Irenaeus writes, "1. It is within the power of all, therefore, in every Church, who may wish to see the truth, to contemplate clearly the tradition of the apostles manifested throughout the whole world; and we are in a position to reckon up those who were by the apostles instituted bishops in the Churches, and [to demonstrate] the succession of these men to our own times; those who neither taught nor knew of anything like what these [heretics] rave about." *Against Heresies Book III*, chapter 3.1, (Italics mine.) "4. But Polycarp also was not only instructed by apostles, and conversed with many who had seen Christ, but was also, by apostles in Asia, appointed bishop of the Church in Smyrna, whom I also saw in my early youth, for he tarried [on earth] a very long time, and, when a very old man, gloriously and most nobly suffering martyrdom, departed this life, having always taught the things which he had learned from the apostles, and which the Church has handed down, and which alone are true. To these things all the Asiatic Churches testify, as do also those men who have succeeded Polycarp down to the present time—a man who was of much greater weight, and a more steadfast witness of truth, than Valentinus, and Marcion, and the rest of the heretics. He it was who, coming to Rome in the time of Anicetus caused many to turn away from the aforesaid heretics to the Church of God, proclaiming that he had received this one and sole truth from the apostles—that, namely, which is handed down by the Church." (Irenaeus, *Against Heresies*, 3:3.4).

[32] Polycarp was ordained bishop at the recommendation of his beloved bishop Bucolos of Smyrna who was ordained bishop by John the Apostle. "Bucolos, Bishop of Smyrna - Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America," 2022, https://www.goarch.org/chapel/saints?contentid=414.

[33] "Timothy, so it is recorded, was the first to receive the episcopate of the parish in Ephesus (Eusebius 3.4.6). Titus of the churches in Crete" (Eusebius 3.4.6.). "As to the rest of his followers, Paul testifies that Crescens was sent to Gaul" Eusebius 3.4.9. See *Ecclesiastical History, Books 1–5 Eusebius of Caesarea*, ed. Roy Joseph Deferrari, vol. 19 (Washington, DC: The Catholic University of America Press, 1953).

Hierotheos as the first bishop of Athens in 52 A.D.[34] But this is questioned, with some believing he was only ordained a priest and Dionysius was actually the first bishop appointed by the Apostle Paul.[35] The Apostle John also appointed bishops while he was alive. Eusebius in 3.23.6 writes that the Apostle John, upon returning from Patmos to Ephesus, "went away upon their invitation to the neighboring territories of the Gentiles, to appoint bishops in some places, in other places to set in order whole churches, elsewhere to choose to the ministry some one of those that were pointed out by the Spirit." Again, Eusebius tells us that after James was martyred in Jerusalem, the apostles came together with still living disciples who had seen the Lord and selected Symeon as the second bishop of Jerusalem.[36]

The church in Alexandria was another of the four greatest and earliest churches in Christianity. The Orthodox Church believes this church was founded by John Mark, who wrote the Gospel Mark. Annianus was consecrated bishop by Mark in 62 A.D. The Roman Catholic Church believes Mark was the founder of the church in Alexandria, but that Annianus was the first bishop. Alexandria, at this time, was the second largest city, next to Rome, in the Empire and had many Jewish people in its large population.[37]

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[34] *The Catholic Encyclopedia and Its Makers*, ed. Charles Herbermann (New York, NY: The Encylopedia [!] Press, Inc., c1917)., s.v. "Christian Athens."

[35] Eusebius, *Ecclesiastical History*, Book 3, chapter 4.11.

[36] After the martyrdom of James and the conquest of Jerusalem which immediately followed, it is said that those of the apostles and disciples of the Lord that were still living came together from all directions with those that were related to the Lord according to the flesh (for the majority of them also were still alive) to take counsel as to who was worthy to succeed James. 2. They all with one consent pronounced Symeon, the son of Clopas, of whom the Gospel also makes mention; to be worthy of the episcopal throne of that parish. He was a cousin, as they say, of the Saviour. For Hegesippus records that Clopas was a brother of Joseph." Eusebius 3.11, 1-2.

[37] Clyde Curry Smith, "Annianus (C. 62-C. 8)," *Dictionary of African Christian Biography* (2004), https://dacb.org/stories/egypt/annianus/. Dr. Smith is Professor Emeritus of Ancient History and Religion, University of Wisconsin, River Falls.

Origen states that Ignatius was the second bishop of Antioch, but Eusebius states that Ignatius was the third bishop of Antioch after succeeding Peter and Euodius, who died around 69 A.D. Ignatius, a disciple of the Apostle John, wrote about him, "Remember your blessed father Evodius, [another way his name is written] who was made your first pastor by the Apostles. Evodius was martyred in 66 A.D. after serving as Bishop of Antioch for 27 years or since 41 A.D."[38] His appointment as a bishop would have been eleven years after the Crucifixion of Jesus.

Bishop Ignatius and Bishop Polycarp both knew John the Apostle. They were both martyred in their old age. Bishops were offices in the church while the apostles lived, and apostles were considered bishops. For example, in Acts 1:20, Peter quotes Psalm 108:8, "Let his bishopric another take."[39]

King Herod martyred James, the son of Zebedee in the spring of 44 A.D. Peter and Paul died as martyrs in the Neronian persecution in 67-68 A.D. The Apostle John is believed to have died about 100 A.D. Though, as noted earlier, others think John died before 70 A.D. Matthew it is believed he wrote his gospel in the 70s or 80s, and although some scholars date it earlier in the 50s, Keener believes it is more likely in the 70s-80s.[40] If the later dates are correct then Matthew had to have lived after bishops had already been appointed in the churches—at least some of the major churches.

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[38] Origen states that Ignatius was the second bishop of Antioch, but Eusebius states that Ignatius was the third bishop of Antioch after succeeding Peter and Euodius who died around 69 A.D. Ignatius who was a disciple of the Apostle John wrote about him, "Remember your blessed father Evodius, [another way his name is written] who was made your first pastor by the Apostles. "Apostle Evodius (Euodias) of the Seventy," Orthodox Church in America, 9/7/2022, https://www.oca.org/saints/lives/2022/09/07/102536-apostle-evodius-euodias-of-the-seventy.

[39] *The Orthodox Study Bible*, xxiii, Kindle.

[40] Craig S. Keener, *Matthew* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1997), 42-44.

This belief became known as apostolic succession when using the title apostle was longer politically correct. Meanwhile, the New Testament refers to apostles not of the Twelve and Paul.[41] I believe the Church dropped the title of apostle but that all the aspects or functions of the office have continued—save one, writing Scripture—and only about twenty-five percent of the Twelve wrote Scripture.[42] It seems to me that as apostles were appointing bishops, the evangelists during the first century began to be seen next to the apostles as far as going, evangelizing, founding churches, and appointing presbyters and deacons, and possibly bishops.[43]

I believe the cessationist teaching that grew out of the Reformation caused a blind spot about some of the spiritual gifts, such as healing, miracles, prophecy, tongues, and interpretation

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[41] "Barnabas (Acts 14:14; 1 Cor. 9:6), James? (1 Cor. 9:6; Gal. 1:19), the brothers of the Lord? (1 Cor. 9:6), Andronicus and Junia (a woman, Rom. 16:7), Silas (1 Thess. 2:6), unnamed 'apostles of churches' (2 Cor. 8:23), Judas and Silas? (Acts 15:22), Apollos? (1 Cor. 4:1, 6, 9)." Jon Mark Ruthven, *On the Cessation of the Charismata: the Protestant Polemic on Post-Biblical Miracles, rev. & expanded ed.* (Tulsa, OK: Word & Spirit Press, 2011), 198-99.

[42] Ruthven, *What's Wrong with Protestant Theology?*, 22-23; Ruthven, *On the Cessation of the Charismata*, 216-17. I went to the Greek text of the NT, stripped out all verse numbers and English titles, etc. and dealt with the raw text. Here are the data. By the most extremely conservative attributions (Matthew, Pastoral Epistles, Revelation; all "apostolic"): "apostles" wrote 81,628 words or 59 percent of the NT, non "apostles" [wrote] 56,392 words or 41 percent of the NT.

If, however, Matthew is in question (Why does he have so very little original material and quote Mark and Q so constantly, unlike John, if he were an eyewitness? [The NT does not mention him as the author]), then the ratio shifts to 54.2 percent to non-apostolic authorship vs. 45.8 percent apostolic.

In any case, out of 89 or so apostles listed in the NT (the 70 were "apostled" in verb form, Luke 10), why did only 4, or 3 apostles write Scripture, if Scripture writing were their main job? Why, for that matter is such a high percentage of the NT entrusted to non-apostles?

[43] Eusebius 3:37.1 "1. Among those that were celebrated at that time was Quadratus, who, report says, was renowned along with the daughters of Philip for his prophetical gifts. And there were many others besides these who were known in those days, and who occupied the first place among the successors of the apostles. And they also, being illustrious disciples of such great men, built up the foundations of the churches which had been laid by the apostles in every place, and preached the Gospel more and more widely and scattered the saving seeds of the kingdom of heaven far and near throughout the whole world." As the bishops authority was localized to the city and possibly the surrounding area the evangelists appear to continue the "being sent" aspect of the meaning or function of apostles. The evangelists, after the apostles, more than any other Ephesians 4:11 doma gifts as persons have the most frequent or greater mention of the gifts of healing and miracles in their ministry. This is not so easily separated for Timothy; the Evangelist was ordained by Paul as the Bishop of Ephesus. It appears for some people they occupied various /offices/functions during their lives. Timothy and Titus being examples.

of tongues. Cessationism refuted the Catholic view that their miracles proved, or were evidence, that their doctrine was correct. The rejection of Catholic doctrine and its supposed evidence caused Protestant leaders to have little faith for gifts of healing or miracles to occur during their time. However, as Jon Ruthven so powerfully argues in his book, *On the Cessation of the Charismata: The Protestant Polemic on Postbiblical Miracles*, miracles did not authenticate or provide evidence that Roman Catholic doctrines were correct. No, instead, they were part of the good news of the in-breaking of God's Kingdom. They were not primarily evidential but demonstrated and confirmed the Gospel instead of the Church's creeds or doctrines.[44]

I believe the Reformers were apostolic. For example, Martin Luther declared accurate prophecies and believed he was the fulfillment of a one-hundred-year-old prophecy by Jon Huss.[45] His prayers were effectual in seeing two other Reformers brought back to life from the edge of death—Philip Melanchthon and Friedrich Myconius.[46] Luther also believed his prayers had spared his life and that of another family member from illness. Ronald K. Rittgers, professor of the history of Christianity at Duke Divinity School, writes, "In the spring of 1542, Martin Luther (1483–1546) remarked to his friends, 'We have prayed three people on the brink of death back to life: me, my Katie, and also Philip, whose eyes had already become lifeless.'"[47]

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[44] Ruthven, *On the Cessation of the Charismata*, 83-95.

[45] Boys. Kindle Chapter 3 "The Waldenses" about p. 28 of the chapter, particularly pertaining to John Huss.

[46] Boys. Kindle Chapter 4 "The Reformers" Part II, about 142 pages into the chapter, 4.2. 3. "From the predictions of Luther, we pass on to his *views of prayer."* [Italics Boys'] 4.2.4 "Such were Luther's sentiments on the subject of prayer for the sick: and he did not experience the benefit of them in his own case only, but was made the instrument of recovery to others by the same means; and so regarded himself, in at least three cases of healing." Myconius's reference is about 147-151 pages into the chapter. Melancthon's healing about 151-155 pages into the chapter.

[47] Ronald K. Rittgers, ""We Have Prayed Three People on the Brink of Death Back to Life" | Christian History Magazine," accessed 9/19/2022, https://christianhistoryinstitute.org/magazine/article/we-have-prayed-three-people-back-to-life.

John Calvin believed if missionaries entered a part of the world without Christianity or a church, one could expect the restoration of the apostle, prophet, and evangelist functions until the church was established. Then, these functions would disappear. Calvin writes, "Those who preside over the government of the Church, according to the institution of Christ, are named by Paul, first, Apostles; secondly, Prophets; thirdly, Evangelists; fourthly, Pastors; and, lastly, Teachers (Eph. 4:11). Of these, only the two last have an ordinary office in the Church. The Lord raised up the other three at the beginning of His Kingdom, and still occasionally raises them up when the necessity of the times requires."[48] Calvin elaborates on the meaning of "the necessity of the times requires." "According to this interpretation, which appears to me consonant both to the words and the meaning of Paul, those three functions were not instituted in the Church to be perpetual, but only to endure so long as churches were to be formed where none previously existed, or at least where churches were to be transferred from Moses to Christ; although I deny not, that afterward God occasionally raised up *Apostles*, or at least Evangelists, in their stead, *as has been done in our time*. For such were needed to bring back the Church from the revolt of Antichrist."[49] Note that this is not a singular verb and indicates he is not limiting those who were apostles raised in his time to bring the Church back from the revolt of the Antichrist.

Calvin, in the same section, gives a primary purpose for the apostle. He writes, "The apostles, therefore, were sent forth to bring back the world from its revolt to the true obedience

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[48] John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion & 2*, ed. John T. McNeill, vol. 1 (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2011), 4.3.4.

[49] Calvin, *Institutes*, 4.3.4. Italics, mine.

of God, and everywhere establish his kingdom by the preaching of the Gospel; or, if you choose, they were like the first architects of the Church, to lay its foundations throughout the world."[50]

Calvin appears to view the Evangelists as next in importance to the Apostles and sees them as having very similar responsibilities. He writes, "By Evangelists, I mean those who, while inferior in rank to the apostles, were next them in office, and even acted as their substitutes. Such were Luke, Timothy, Titus, and the like; perhaps, also, the seventy disciples whom our Saviour appointed in the second place to the Apostles" (Luke 10:1).[51]

In this same section of his *Institutes*, Calvin ties the length of the offices of apostles, prophets, and evangelists, "those three functions were not instituted in the Church to be perpetual, but only to endure so long as churches were to be formed where none previously existed, or at least where churches were to be transferred from Moses to Christ."[52] Calvin's understanding of the functional nature of the apostles tied to there still being places where the Christian Church does not exist would logically and reasonably argue for the perpetual nature of these three offices until this very day, for there are still unreached people groups where churches need to be formed. Calvin's argument breaks down logically once part of the function of the apostles was to establish churches in regions of the world where none existed is recognized.

Furthermore, I believe it is fair and proper to deduct reasonably that Calvin believed Luther was an apostle and that, as such, would most likely include himself and other main

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[50] Calvin, *Institutes*, 4.3.4.

[51] Calvin, *Institutes*, 4.3.4. I am not sure how Calvin supplants the second place of prophets with the third-place evangelists in Eph. 4:11 and in light of the evangelist not mentioned in 1 Cor. 12:28. Though I believe the evangelist is listed in fourth place possibly as implied by the healings and miracles, for they experienced more healings and miracles than anyone else in the New Testament Church.

[52] Calvin, *Institutes*, 4.3.4.

reformers in the 16th century. R. Scott Clark states, "God raised up Luther and others in the beginning [of the Reformation]."[53] He wrote that Luther "carried the torch for us toward re-discovering the way of salvation, who founded our ministry, who instituted our churches."[54] He described Luther as "*a distinguished apostle of Christ*" (emphasis added).[55] "Luther was the pioneer of Protestant theology, piety, and practice."[56] ". . . Calvin always saw himself as Luther's loyal son."[57] "Calvin wrote to Luther in 1545 professing his admiration for Luther, whom he described as "the most excellent pastor of the Christian church." He repeatedly called Luther "my father…."[58]

In the modern apostolic networks, Calvin's langued regarding Luther sounds quite similar to the language in apostolic networks of the 21st century. The leader is often seen as a father, and those in the network sometimes allude to themselves as sons of the apostolic leader. The work of founding ministry and instituting churches is seen as apostolic. Most of those who believe in modern-day apostolic ministry done by little "a" apostles, apostles of the Church, would consider the person who was "the most excellent pastor of the Christian church" to be apostolic. It is also

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[53] R. Scott Clark, "Luther's Loyal Son," *Reformation 21* (October 6, 2017), https://www.reformation21.org/blogs/luthers-loyal-son.php. This and the following quotes are from a column written by R. Scott Clark October 6, 2017, in the above referenced *Reformation 21* website, sponsored by the Alliance of Confessing Evangelicals, which is a strong Calvinist group.

[54] Clark, "Luther's Loyal Son," One of the purposes of apostles was to establish churches.

[55] Clark, "Luther's Loyal Son." Luther is described by Calvin as a "distinguished apostle" in his *Defensio adversus Pighium (Corpus Reformatorum,* VI, p. 250), where the fuller quotation is "a distinguished apostle of Christ by whose ministry the light of the Gospel has shone." See Allan L. Farris, "'Calvin's Letter to Luther,' Canadian Journal of Theology 10.2 (April 1964): 124-131. - 10-2_124.Pdf," 2022, https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/pdf/cjt/10-2_124.pdf.

[56] Clark, "Luther's Loyal Son."

[57] Clark, "Luther's Loyal Son."

[58] Clark, "Luther's Loyal Son."

noteworthy that Luther ministered deliverance to a few people and had a strong perspective on the reality of the devil and his demons. Luther also, through prayer, saw four people who were very ill, even close to death restored through his prayers for healing in faith in the promises of God, as previously noted.

I have belabored these points above due to the first version of this introduction being strongly criticized that I had not read Calvin or Luther, which was partly true. I have not read all the *Institutes* or all the writings of Luther. To be sure, if I identified as a Calvinist or a Lutheran, I would have read them. I have read all the writings of John Wimber and many, if not most, of the books representing Third Wave theology. I could as easily have accused the critics of my response of failure to have read Wimber, Spittler, Kraft, Morphew, and many others who reflect Third Wave Kingdom "now and not yet," but I didn't. It was enough to say I thought they were misunderstanding Third Wave theology. I should also acknowledge that though I was in the Vineyard movement for many years, I was told by a key leader that the movement had more leaders who were Reformed than Arminian. However, it was a tent big enough to include many diverse theological backgrounds for many years. Now, back to the introduction's focus.

Great missionaries were called apostolic; for example, Count Ludwig Von Zinzendorf, Hudson Taylor, William Carey, Adoniram Judson, Luther Rice, Amy Carmichael, and C. T. Studd—some with healing and deliverance. There were many great Roman Catholic apostolic missionaries with healing and deliverance following. The Protestant missionary expansion exploded after Pentecostal revivals at the beginning and middle of the 20th century. These Pentecostal missionaries included the healing evangelists of the 1948 healing revival: Oral Roberts, Jack Coe, Tommy Hicks, Lester Sumrall, T. L. Osborne, and many more. They saw many healings and miracles that helped establish the Christian faith or churches in many lands. A

researcher at the University of Birmingham, England, reported that up to 90% of the people coming to Christ in China note that healing led to their conversion.[59]

I think great revivalists were apostolic, for example, John Wesley, George Whitefield, Charles Haddon Spurgeon, and Billy Graham. Of these examples, all but Graham would not be considered part of the worldwide Pentecostal or Charismatic movements or denominations due to their historical context predating these events, and neither was Graham a Pentecostal. Yet, John Wesley is considered the world's grandfather of the Holiness, Pentecostal, and Charismatic denominations. And, when one considers founders of Pentecostal and Charismatic denominations or evangelists like Oral Roberts and Lester Sumrall, one can see many more who were apostolic in function. These men, however, did not refer to themselves by the title of apostle. Yet they founded not only churches but many churches or impacted their cities.

Wesley founded a whole new denomination and ordained bishops in North America: Thomas Coke and Francis Asbury. He was used to deliver people from demons and had some healings. In our time in the 2020s, new pastors are being raised up who are apostolic, who are leading hundreds to thousands of churches and scores of thousands to hundreds of thousands of people in those churches. Many do not call themselves apostles, choosing to be called pastors, but they realize they are laboring in the function of an apostle. Some have been ordained as a bishop in their denomination or network of churches, realizing this is a less loaded and more accepted title than apostle. Due to the confusion and misunderstanding among leaders who bring

[59] Edmond Tang, a researcher in Asian Christianity at Birmingham University says, "According to some surveys, 90% of new believers cite healing as a reason for their conversion." Justin Brierly, "Around the World in 80 Miracles," *Premier Christianity, The UK's Leading Christian Magazine* (April 10, 2014), https://www.premierchristianity.com/home/around-the-world-in-80-miracles/2590.article.

different definitions to the function of apostle, some love the function and excel in the responsibilities while calling themselves pastor or bishop.

Efforts to Clarify the Confusion and Misunderstanding

What is the basis for the confusion and misunderstanding about NAR, and what aspects of the practices do critics consider dangerous or wrong among those deemed NAR? Many of the disagreements are simply due to misunderstanding what some supposedly NAR leaders mean in their writings. Starting with the issues around which confusion and misunderstanding exist, I will move to an analysis of their causes.

Geivett and Pivec identify seven primary areas that raise problems and require clarification. First, they argue that NAR adherents believe the gifts of apostles and prophets are being restored to the Church, and they are to have strong governmental powers. Second is the role of the prophet in leadership. Third are issues related to SLSW. Fourth are matters dealing with eschatology. Fifth, they dispute signs and wonders, especially healing and miracles. Sixth, they raise concerns about discipleship (teaching or training) and how to obey the commandments of Jesus—especially the ministry of healing and miracles. Seventh, they highlight issues related to the meaning and various applications of the concept of revelation.

To promote clarity about such confused issues, I utilized a survey of apostolic leaders. I will let the evidence, or data, speak for itself.[60] The data reveals that many allegations against those purported to be NAR do not believe in or practice many of the issues noted above. I conducted a survey study of twenty key leaders: twelve apostles of significant apostolic networks, two theologians (teachers), two pastors of megachurches that I consider apostolic

[60] I am working on four other surveys of large apostolic networks in Brazil and have completed one with the traditional Baptists who were powerfully impacted in 2016 when the Holy Spirit came upon their church during a healing school of Global Awakening.

pastors, one evangelist, and three leaders who did not self-identify as apostolic (though I considered every person apostolic except two professors who were invited to take the survey). The questions were designed to test the statements and judgments of the critics. Each question was related to an accusation, a charge of heresy, or a dangerous belief. The results were quite contradictory to the allegations of many of the critics of the NAR. The critics' generalizations and extreme characterizations were mainly proven invalid by the survey.

Survey Results: Examining Major Issues in Geivett and Pivec's Book

I would like to point out that some survey responses below are calculated as 6%, this being one response out of twenty-two. As there is a similar concept running through the questions with a 6% response, I believe this is likely the same person's response.

Apostles and Prophets Governing Churches

First, regarding apostles and prophets governing churches, the survey indicated this was not how the apostles saw their role. They much preferred collegiality and team leadership instead of authoritarian leadership over churches. Moreover, apostolic unity was considered helpful but not necessary for revival. None of those surveyed believed modern-day apostles have the same authority as the Twelve and Paul. No one believed pastors in a city must align with the apostle. The majority also did not think aligning with an apostle was necessary for revival, but all thought it was beneficial. The majority also rejected the belief that it was essential or imperative for the churches of a city to unify to bring about the army of the Lord needed to transform society. However, about half of those surveyed believed they were one of the gatekeepers for their community. (I agree on this due to their churches' significant ministry.) Almost all rejected the teaching that large-scale submission to an apostle, or apostolic group, is the only way to achieve the unity of Ephesians 4:13. Approximately three-fourths of those surveyed believed it was

important for apostles to work with prophets to help hear from God for strategies for the church or an apostolic network. And about half believed proper governance of the local church required apostles to work with prophets or a prophet. (To "work with" implies receiving direction or vision towards future strategies for strengthening the church or evangelizing the community. However, it did not mean the prophet had an official place in the government of the local church or the churches in the network.) About 60% believed apostles should have an unusual or more than ordinary grace and power regarding signs and wonders, miracles, and healing. Approximately 82% felt recognizing apostolic ministry was necessary for the presence of signs and wonders, healing, and miracles to happen in their lives. One hundred percent believed that the community of believers should recognize apostles and not self-appointed, with 94% believing apostles are called and sent by God. We will look a little more deeply into six concerns in the following.

The Prophetic Role in Church Government and Ministry

Second, more than half of the apostolic leaders believed that prophets should be subject to apostles. A little over three-fourths believed prophets should have a special responsibility to hear from God. But, only 19% believed NT prophets and prophets today have the same authority as the OT prophets. Only 25% believed prophets should have extraordinary authority in the church(es), with only 6% believing they should have authority over individuals. One hundred percent believed prophets could hear from God for strategies or creative ideas for ministry or ministries to advance the Kingdom of God. However, only 6% believed prophets should demand obedience to these strategies and creative ideas. Also, only 6% believed new insights should be called "new truths" that lead to new doctrine. Yet, 13% believed these "new truths" could lead to new practices or strategies for ministry. One hundred percent were affirmative that prophets

should be subject to the pastors, as was the belief that prophets are responsible in local churches to equip the members to move in prophetic gifting. Slightly less, 93%, believed prophets have a special responsibility to hear from God and work with apostles in helping with the direction of the church.

Strategic Level Spiritual Warfare

A third primary area of confusion or misunderstanding was the practice of Strategic-Level Spiritual Warfare (SLSW), especially waring against principalities and powers in the heavenly realm. Those surveyed believed apostles had a special authority in binding and loosing, but only 63% of them thought they had a greater authority for this. Almost 80% believed some members of their churches should be trained in SLSW. Only about 50% of the apostle respondents were involved in SLSW, with the same percentage, 53%, having a practice of SLSW in their local church. Only 13% believed the Kingdom of God was to be fully established on earth before the Return of Christ. An impressive 87% believed in the worldview of territorial spirits, powers, and authorities in the heavenlies over geographical areas or cities. An amazing 100% believed that the Kingdom of God is "now and not yet," instead of the "Kingdom Now" view of R. J. Rushdoony, a radical postmillennialist. Twenty-one percent believed territorial spirits must be addressed through spiritual warfare prayer for the Kingdom of God to come more effectively, or for revival to come more powerfully. Yet only 7% believed high-level spiritual powers must be taken down or bound before revival can come to an area or city. Twenty-seven percent thought spiritual mapping was essential to an evangelistic campaign. Sixty-four percent believed Daniel 10:13, 20 provided a biblical basis for SLSW study. A remarkable insight was that 87% believed traditional prayer for revival that does not bind or call down powers, authorities, or principalities was as effective as SLSW to bind the heavenly powers. Only 7%

believed in an end-time army, Joel's army, that would be empowered by God and manifest God so powerfully that they would not be subject to sickness, disease, or death and would live just before the Second Coming of Christ. No one believed in the Manifest Sons of God teaching. (This apparent contradiction in the previous two sentences makes me think the person misunderstood the question.) Eighty-seven percent believe the Kingdom of God would be ever-increasing on earth before the Return of Christ. Identificational repentance, part of SLSW, was viewed as helpful or necessary for advancing the Kingdom of God in a geographical area in the following manner: necessary 6%, helpful 71%, neither 24%.

I recently discovered that the controversy over SLSW treating it as a new novel practice among some Pentecostals, Third Wave adherents, and the NAR was incorrect. This is not a new practice developed in the 1980s-1990s but had been a strategy for missions 100 years earlier. S.M. Burgess and G. B. McGee wrote editors of the New International Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements Revised and Expanded:

> Frank W. Sandford was an even more controversial figure than most of the above. At his Holy Ghost and Us Bible School at Shiloh, ME, he organized The World's Evangelization Crusade on Apostolic Principles. In accentuating the cosmic dimension of "spiritual warfare" in confronting the powers of darkness on mission fields, he later purchased a schooner and barkentine and led his followers on cruises around the world, praying as they passed the coastline of each country that God would release his power for its conversion.
>
> Arthur E. Street, a Presbyterian missionary to Hainan, China, believed that prayerful intercession could bind the "strongman" (the evil spirit ruling over each country, such as the "prince of China") and provided the formula for successful evangelism (Matt. 12:29). Street's popular booklet, Intercessory Foreign Missionaries, published by the Student Volunteer Movement for Foreign Mission and other agencies, underwent many printings. Nearly a century later, some Pentecostals, and especially independent charismatics, third wave, and New Apostolic Reformation enthusiasts advanced a similar approach to spiritual warfare to bring the nations under the dominion of God through binding the "territorial spirits."[61]

[61] *The New International Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements*. Kindle Edition, II. The Last Two Centuries, A. The 19th Century, 5th paragraph. S.M. Burgess and G. B. McGee.

Interestingly, a Presbyterian missionary most popularized this practice. A booklet called *Intercessory Foreign Missionaries*, became popular after it was published by the Student Volunteer Movement for Foreign Missions, which was a well-known Evangelical organization. The fact that other agencies published it is important, and in the context of the missionary focus of this paragraph, I believe the reference to "other agencies" is a reference to other missionary agencies at the height of the American missionary movement of the 19th century. It was not seen to be a heretical concept at that time by the evangelicals, including the Presbyterians. The authors of the article note the practice of SLSW is "a similar approach to spiritual warfare to bring the nations under the dominion of God through binding the 'territorial spirits.'" Why is it seen as so radical and heretical in the 21st century but had such widespread acceptance in the 19th century? Is the answer found due in a significant difference in the practices, or in the perspective of the critics and a prejudice against Pentecostal or Charismatic practices?

I am arguing that the apostolic function of preaching with signs and wonders confirms the Gospel, especially in lands where there are no churches or Christianity is not established, has been a continuing function since the apostolic age. Whether or not a person referred to themselves as an apostle is not the issue. The issue is, did they do apostolic things such as establish churches in non-Christian lands? Did they lay the foundations for those newly established churches in doctrine and discipline? (Calvin would have allowed for establishing evangelical churches in countries without evangelical Protestant churches. I have already alluded to this in an earlier section.) Did they build on the foundations of the apostles, as it was said of Augustine of Canterbury, 7th century apostle to the Angli (English)? Did they experience healings and miracles, deliverances from demons and sinful bondages? Did they raise up and

establish other leaders in the churches they were establishing? Did they go because of a certainty of being called to that place by God, being sent by God? If so, this is apostolic ministry! Let us remember that the Greek word Apostolos apostle in English was translated into a Latin word from which we get the English word missionary—one who is sent. Obviously, not all missionaries are apostles but some definitely are apostolic in function throughout the history of the Church, Protestant, Roman Catholic, and Orthodox. If you are doing the functions of the apostolic, then you are apostolic. If you are the adjective, you are the noun, an apostle. I advise you not to print your business card and refer to yourself as apostle John Smith. Instead, as Bishop Gregory the Great wrote to Augustine of Canterbury about himself, "The servant of the servants of the servants." We are the servants to the Church and its churches.

Burgess and McGee note the issue of miracles has not been only that of Pentecostals but has also been present among Evangelicals.

> Anticipation of miracles continued in the ranks of evangelicals, but with more caution and less fanfare than Pentecostals accorded them. Cessationism, controversy over the "tongues movement" and faith healing, and fears of subjective religious experience produced hesitations that until recently have generally kept them from seeking signs and wonders. Still, healings, exorcisms, and other extraordinary events happened in the ministries of missionaries in the CMA, World Gospel Mission, Church of the Nazarene, Missionary Church Association, Overseas Missionary Fellowship, Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), Southern Baptist Convention, Unevangelized Field Mission, and Worldwide Evangelization Crusade, among other organizations.[62]

It is encouraging to see missionaries and ministers of the above organizations and denominations embracing the power and gifts of the Spirit. It is truly not the domain of the Pentecostals and Charismatics anymore.

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[62] *The New International Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements*. Kindle Edition. II. Last Two Centuries, B. 20th Century, 5th paragraph. Burgess and McGee.

Dominionism

A fourth primary area of confusion or misunderstanding was dominionism, which has implications for eschatology. Twenty-four percent of survey respondents were historical premillennialist post-tribulation rapture adherents; 6% were dispensational premillennialist pretribulation rapture; 18% were amillennialists; 53% were victorious amillennialists, and 0% were postmillennialist. Only 6% believed in dominionism, where the Church would gain control over the seven mountains of society's influencers. No one believed the Church, through government, should establish the laws of God as found in the OT that were to govern society by forcing them through the legislature. When asked whether the Church should desire to influence the seven mountains or gain control of them, 100% said influence through godly wisdom and service, and 0% chose to control through the exercise of power to force compliance. Only 6% believed a central goal of apostles and prophets is to see the Church eventually have dominion over all spheres of influence. Remember, the 6% represents one person who is an outlier for the survey.

Signs and Wonders—Healing and Miracles and Deliverance

A fifth primary area of confusion or misunderstanding was healing, miracles, signs, and wonders. Fifty-three percent believed apostles, prophets, and evangelists should see more signs and wonders in their ministries than pastors, teachers, and deacons. Twenty-five percent believed apostles and prophets would reveal new truths that activate miracle-working power. None believed the followers of the apostles and prophets would grow in the miraculous and become instruments to loose God's judgments while becoming immortal. About 80% rejected the teaching that without submission to the authority of today's apostles, the Church would be unable to fulfill its mission to transform cities and advance the Kingdom of God. Eighty-eight

percent believed God could use an apostle to perceive whom God is touching, and bless what God is doing, resulting in God's Spirit empowering that person and even possibly activating a gift in the person—that it is not the ability of apostles to do as they wish. They are utterly dependent upon recognizing what the Spirit is doing. The Holy Spirit chooses and activates. Fifty-six percent believed apostles have the power to lay hands on someone and transfer power or activate gifts in the person as an innate power of the apostle or prophet. (These last two sentences seem contradictory; however, the problem, I believe is in the wording "innate power." This would not be contradictory if the persons taking the survey interpreted innate power as having delegated authority or the ability to see and hear what the Father or Jesus is doing through the Holy Spirit and then cooperating with God's intention.)

Teaching Christians How to Heal or Prophecy

A sixth primary area of confusion or misunderstanding was the ability to teach someone how to heal, prophesy, or exercise other gifts of the Spirit. The first two survey questions revealed the first question was not understood correctly. Seventy-one percent believe anyone, including an apostle, prophet, evangelist, pastor, or teacher, can teach people a method by which they can heal others. The second question received 100% agreement but contradicted the first question. The second question stated, "Do you believe what is actually being taught in regard to healing and deliverance is parallel to evangelism—only God can do these things; heal, deliver, or save—and that the teaching is really about teaching Christian believers to co-labor with Christ by recognizing the ways of God—how his gifts operate and the connection between one gift and another. i.e., learning to work with the Holy Spirit?"

Driving home a corrective to the first question, the third received a 94% agreement: "Do you believe it is no more unbiblical to teach we can learn the ways of God through the Word of

God to see people born again or saved than it is to teach we can learn the ways of God through the Word of God to see people healed or experience a miracle—that in both cases God is the active agent and we are passive agents through whom God worked by His Spirit?" As I already said, 94% responded "yes." One hundred percent believed God could raise the dead today. Then, to the question, "Do you believe in teaching how to be dependent upon God; not an independent broker of God's power or energy—not learning how to channel the energy of the universe as in the New Age, but how to explain the love of God, the ways of God, and the necessity of trusting God alone for the working of miracles or healings?" All respondents, 100%, replied "yes."

Finally, "In regard to resurrecting the dead, do you believe that people can raise the dead (active agents), or do you believe that God uses them, but God's power raises them (passive agents) where God alone is the active agent?" Their responses where humans are the active agents – 19% and humans are the passive agents – 81%.

The Issue of Revelation and a Closed Canon

A seventh primary area of confusion or misunderstanding was regarding revelation. The survey question asked, "Do you believe the revelation apostles, prophets, and others in the church(es), including the laity experience, is not special revelation—equal to the Bible; and it is not general revelation—God made known to a degree in nature and our conscience, but specific revelation, i.e., information that is not deduced through rational or natural processes but revealed by the Spirit about specific needs and God's desire to meet those needs, resulting in special faith to act on this specific revelation allowing faith to act in love?" Ninety-four percent responded yes to the question.

My Context of Ministry

I oversee an apostolic network, the Apostolic Network of Global Awakening (ANGA), which consists of apostolic leaders, prophetic leaders, evangelists, pastors, teachers, and other itinerate ministers. The five-fold ministry provides oversight to this network, consisting of several hundred ministries and about two hundred churches with multiple thousands of churches under the oversight of some of the apostolic leaders in the network.

The apostolic network I oversee is part of a larger alliance of five other apostolic networks that relate to each other purely on a relational basis called the Revival Alliance. It consists of the following apostolic networks: Global Legacy, led by Bill Johnson; Iris Global Ministries, led by Rolland and Heidi Baker; Catch the Fire Churches, begun by John and Carol Arnott and now being led by Duncan and Kate Smith; Harvest International Ministries led by Ché and Sue Ahn; and Global Celebration led by Georgian and Winnie Banov, and myself and my wife, DeAnne. What binds us together is how we were all powerfully impacted by the move of God that began in Toronto, Canada, in January 1994. A major prophet prophesied that we were to work together as a group, a word that confirmed what several leaders had already been sensing prior to receiving the prophecy. In addition, some of these apostolic leaders had other prophetic words of being connected to each other before forming the Revival Alliance.

There is great diversity among us. Three of us were former leaders in Vineyard Churches. Five of us were influenced by John Wimber's teaching and his ministry practice. One couple has a Pentecostal background, and another are experienced in the Word of Faith movement. Some are heavily influenced by the Calvinism of Jonathan Edwards, while others by the Arminianism of John Wesley. Eschatologically, one is a postmillennialist, another a dispensational pretribulation premillennialist, some are historical post tribulation

premillennialists, and others are victorious amillennialists. All of us have had, or have, ministry training schools in the supernatural ministry of the Holy Spirit. Almost every leader has a doctorate, one with a Ph.D., three with D.Mins., one with a D.Pm., and one with an honorary doctorate, D.D. as well as a D.Min. and a Th.D.

What binds us together is our shared experience of the Holy Spirit's power in the revival at, or through, what some call the Toronto Blessing, but which John Arnott prefers to call The Father's Blessing. We all want to see churches and leaders renewed in the Holy Spirit. We all embrace a high priority for evangelism of any kind—especially power evangelism connected to signs and wonders, healings and miracles, and prophetic evangelism. We all agree that proclamation evangelism must accompany the other forms of evangelism—prophetic, power, and presence—to be complete. We are all committed to seeing new churches started. Ministry to the poor is another common value. Equipping the saints for the work of ministry is high on our priorities. The church being a blessing to the community or city is also a value. As already mentioned, but it deserves its own emphasis, is the ministry of healing and deliverance. And a very high value is worship. Value for these forms of ministry has thus far been more important than our doctrinal differences, whether they be eschatological (end-times), ecclesiological in particular regarding the five-fold ministry, or differences between major theological systems, i.e., Calvinism, Arminianism, and different aspects of classical Pentecostalism, Third Wave, and Word of Faith. Again, the values bind us together, not allowing the theological differences to break us apart. Different network leaders have higher priorities for certain values than others in the alliance. We are all committed to revival. Because of the continuing flames of revival, we have seen scores of thousands of churches planted and thousands more renewed since the Toronto Revival began in 1994.

Interestingly, most of us have been listed by critics as key leaders of the New Apostolic Reformation, though most of us would not agree with the accusations. Nor do we teach the extreme, misleading, or misunderstood beliefs we are accused of. Let me make this clear, not one of these leaders represents the strawman created by NAR critics.

I also speak to critical leaders, particularly in Brazil, who oversee large numbers of churches. I am committed to helping one Baptist leader with his movement as long as my health allows. I first met him at the revival in Toronto and prophesied over him the secrets of his heart, and prayed for him. The prophetic word I gave him was given almost word for word the next day by an elderly lady without title or office. Both times when he was prayed for the Spirit overcame him. The elderly ladies' prayer had a longer impact on his inability to stand or remain conscious. After her prophecy, he fell and was on the floor for about twelve hours before becoming conscious again. His church of a few hundred experienced a mighty move of the Spirit when I visited there with a small team of laypeople to help me minister. Within a year or two, the lead pastor had a vision to start cell groups in the church. Today, due to the power of the Spirit and the structure of the cell groups, their Baptist church in Belo Horizonte grew from a few hundred to 20,000. It is one church in multiple locations in and around the city. There are multiple congregations with one staff member all the congregations of one church. In addition, due to his influence in helping other pastors, a network evolved of 25,000 pastors from around the world who look to him for leadership. Every week in Brazil, the churches he influenced through equipping conferences now see 3,500,000 believers in 350,000 cells throughout Brazil. This does not count the cells in the churches in Europe, Africa, North America, or other countries of South America.

It should be noted that most evangelism happens in and through the cells, that a high percentage of the 3,500,000 are new believers. I also serve as the spiritual father to another apostolic leader, Pastor Carlito Paes, of the Church in the City, formerly the First Baptist Church of São Jose dos Campos. It is still a Baptist church connected to the traditional Baptist denomination. He is also the leader of a network, called Inspire, of more than 700 churches, with the top fifty running from 1,500 to 7,000 in weekly average attendance. Pastor Carlito's self-perception is that God is using him apostolically as he leads his 23,000 congregants in his Baptist church and the other 700 churches, which are primarily of traditional evangelical non-Pentecostal denominations.

I also serve as the president of the Global Awakening Theological Seminary, teaching in the master's and doctoral programs. The seminary focuses on offering a strong commitment to Word and Spirit, orthodoxy and orthopraxy, in theological education, emphasizing Third Wave theology. More traditional theological systems are studied, but we are committed to the ongoing signs and wonders through the Church by the Spirit. We want to be strongly Word and Spirit-oriented while focusing on the fire of revival and passion for God and the lost. I realize that the theological and hermeneutical methods of the critics, Geivett and Pivec, and I will be the source of some disagreements. It is my opinion, based upon the Scriptures, that the cessationist perspective is circular reasoning and is anachronistic, reading back into the text views developed much later than the original recipients of the texts. I believe if you took new believers who knew nothing about theology, who knew nothing about cessationism and continuationism, had them read the New Testament alone, they would come away being continuationist. You have to be taught to read the New Testament through a cessationist lens to become a cessationist. I am not limiting cessationism to the gifts of 1 Corinthians 12-14 but also to the gifts of Ephesians 4:11.

Further Research on NAR and Geivett and Pivec Book

As for the heart of this document, what follows is research by seven of my master's level students at Global Awakening Theological Seminary, as mentioned at the beginning of this introduction. The students have written responses to one or more of the concerns raised by Geivett and Pivec that I discussed above. Each section deals with primarily one concern and includes the student's research in response. I hope these responses will provide clarity for the critics, who have used a strawman argument and put us all into one category, and that they will also bring correction and balance where needed. I also hope these responses catalyze understanding and clarity so that there will be more unity in the Body of Christ between our differing camps. As Scripture says, "How good and pleasant it is for brothers to dwell together in unity" (Ps. 133:1), and we are to be "diligent to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace" (Eph. 4:3).

Eschatological and ecclesiological differences aside, we all know that the One King, Jesus, will return. Let us work towards greater unity until that day. There is the comfort of knowing our salvation is not based upon our ability to pass a theology exam or the right view of continuationism or cessationism, the correct understanding of the end-times - eschatology, the correct understanding of church government the church offices, its sacraments, or ordinances, that we are saved by the work of Jesus on the cross by grace through faith. I want to recognize the good intentions of those with whom I disagree and honor all they do in their obedience to Christ.

A Final Word

After I wrote the first introduction, I had a personal Zoom meeting with Doug Geivett and Holly Pivec. I felt, and I hope they did as well, that we all love Jesus, the Gospel, and the Church. I found them quite kind in our three and a half-hour initial meeting. I hope that where there has been misunderstanding, on their part or mine, we will work to bring light into the fog of confusion and that the Son's light will cause it to lift. I believe unity is essential for the 21st century Church. May we learn to find unity where we can, to work together, giving glory to God and honor to Christians of other movements.

Section 2: The Office of the Apostle

Introduction to Section 2

Dr. Randy Clark

In his writings, "The Apostolic Challenge," Landen Dorsch examines the issue of modern-day apostles and related issues surrounding them. He begins by focusing on the bottom-line issue of whether one is approaching the Scriptures as a cessationist or a continuationist. So many of the arguments behind the other issues are rooted in this larger context. Dorsch points out that the continuationist position is the majority position of Christians in the world, and a very high percentage of Christians in the majority world or the Southern Hemisphere. He also deals with the issues of the post-modern context of Christianity and with identifying the controversies and contentions of the NAR and the straw man arguments that are often used against people accused of being in the NAR. I want to point out that as the professor of the students whose writings appear here, there are some apostolic leaders who gladly identify as NAR, but they would not agree with the all the accusations of Geivett and Pivec. There are others, like me who would not self-identify as part of the NAR but would self-identify as being committed to Third Wave theology.

Dorsch focuses on four key points of contention. First is the issue of the extraordinary authority of apostles, second is the issue of dominionism, third is the issue of apostolic unity, and fourth is the issue of new or prophetic revelation. Regarding the first contention, Dorsch points out the various types of apostles, some being hierarchical and others not; some are foundational, and others are not. He examines the question "is the apostle an office or a function?" with a consideration of the Ephesians 2:19-22 passage dealing with the foundation built upon the

apostles and prophets. He also examines the issue of whether the focus of apostles should be on their extraordinary authority, their grace to govern, or their being called to serve the church. Dorsch suggests that a possible solution is to consider the apostolic through the lens of the ascension.

Regarding dominionism, after presenting similarities and differences in how dominionism could be understood, Dorsch raises legitimate concerns on how best to talk about the concept of dominionism and a better language to use that seems to be more in line with the understanding of leadership in the teaching of Jesus.

Regarding new or prophetic revelation, Dorsch addresses the truth that unlike the critics accusation that Pentecostals, Charismatics, and Third Wavers believe in revelation that could challenge the canon, all of these streams agree that the canon is closed and are very explicit about it. Once again, the problem is that the meaning of the word revelation differs between cessationists and continuationists. Dorsch further examines the meaning among continuationists of the word revelation explaining what it means to talk about contemporary revelation. Further, he addresses three problems with the cessationist revelatory argument: the problem with Scripture, applied practice, and biblical promises. Finally, in addressing the issue of new or prophetic revelation he points to three major blind spots of most Western Christians: ecclesiological evolution, Western centric thought, and persecution versus popularity. Dorsch finishes his section with possible ways forward for the church considering contemporary apostolic ministry, dealing with the major related Scriptures, while suggesting possible solutions to some of the misunderstandings theologically and some of the issues practically relating to apostolic ministry.

Will Hart was the other person I selected due to include in this work because of his personal knowledge of so many key people who the critics consider NAR representatives. Will was able to interview Heidi Baker on her understanding of apostolic ministry.

The second paper on the apostolic, "Modern-Day Apostles: Critiques, Corrections, and a Response," by Will Hart, who is the CEO of Iris Ministries, which was founded and is led by Heidi Baker, PhD, and her Husband Roland Baker, D.Min. During the course, Hart reached out to Geivett and Pivec and arranged for an interview between me and them. Hart is responsible for overseeing over seventy Iris Ministries bases around the world. Since he has the closest relationship to Heidi and Rolland Baker, I thought his unique viewpoint would be most interesting and helpful in understanding the self-understandings of the Bakers who I believe are two of the greatest missionaries of the 20th and 21st centuries. Per statistics from September 2019, Iris had 65 locations in 34 nations, including 371 missionaries, 1,105 national staff, 2,628 international volunteers. For more information on Iris Ministries see https://www.irisglobal.org/about/what-we-do.

While dealing with the issue of apostles, Hart addresses the difference between the Apostles of Christ - the Twelve, and Paul especially, and the apostles of the church, sometimes referred to as big "A" and little "a" apostle, raising the question of what a modern-day apostle is. He also addresses the blatant danger in the apostolic fringe. A wonderful section on "dominion not domination" is also presented, addressing four concepts of dominionism, namely worldwide Christian domination – the seven-mountain strategy and mandate, and the issue of theocracy. Hart then gets to the very crux of the issue of the apostolic for Holly Pivec – that being whether the apostolic has governmental authority over local churches, drawn from his dialogue with Holly Pivec while writing his paper, and afterwards. He does a great job of allowing Heidi Baker

to share her position on the apostolic as well as discussing Francis Chan's journey regarding the apostolic. Will Hart is pursuing his Master of Arts degree in Evangelism at GATS.

Dorsch and Hart's papers follow.

The Apostolic Challenge
by Landen Dorsch

Introduction

"Beware of the New Apostolic Reformation."[63]

"Conservative Christians are Losing Their Kids to the N.A.R. because of 'love bombing.'"[64]

"Is My Church Under the Influence of the New Apostolic Reformation?"[65]

"Six Hallmarks of a NAR Church." [66]

A quick internet search will provide many headlines, websites, articles, and opinions of the perils of what C. Peter Wagner has coined as the "New Apostolic Reformation" (NAR). Statements like those above propose the dangers of NAR churches, NAR leaders, or the reconstructionist dogma of "America's Own Taliban."[67]

Criticisms born primarily out of cessationist dogma contend the NAR "movement" elevates individuals to governing offices that carry levels of unhealthy authority, suggesting influence over more than the Church, but cities and even nations.[68]

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[63] Roberta Morrison, "Beware of the New Apostolic Reformation," recorded May 19, 2019, Living in His Presence Church, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MyDufXATFl4.

[64] Wretched, "Conservative Christians are Losing Their Kids to the N.A.R. because of 'love bombing,'" March 11, 2016, accessed March 1, 2021, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=14azj-_bJik.

[65] Be Watchful, "Is My Church Under the Influence of the New Apostolic Reformation?" February 25, 2017, accessed March 3, 2021, https://bewatchful.org/2018/05/29/is-my-church-under-the-influence-of-the-new-apostolic-reformation/.

[66] Amy Spreeman, "Six Hallmarks of a NAR Church," blog, June 7, 2016, accessed March 3, 2021, http://www.piratechristian.com/berean-examiner/the-six-hallmarks-of-a-nar-church.

[67] Paul Rosenberg, "America's Own Taliban," July 28, 2011, accessed March 3, 2021, https://www.aljazeera.com/opinions/2011/7/28/americas-own-taliban.

[68] "Far at the other end of the spectrum are NAR leaders who affirm the existence of apostles today and hold that these apostles have governing authority equal to the original apostles. On this permissive conception, apostles hold an official church office and wield unexcelled authority extending to workplaces, cities, and nations." R.

Is the *doma*[69] gift of apostles for today? Do they possess and wield the authority to match those of the original twelve?[70] Or is the *doma* gift of Ephesians 4 and 1 Corinthians 12 a charism of function over position? Is the "five-fold" meant to issue in what reconstructionists would call "theonomy"?[71] Are NAR leaders convinced the "revelation" they receive holds equal value to canon?[72] Finally, must the Church unify under apostles to transform society?[73]

Thesis

This paper will examine the cessationist challenge to the continuation of the charismata and the five-fold in its expression post the apostolic age and critique the straw man nature of modern denunciation of charismatic expression and the inconsistencies of the detractors' arguments. It will also address four critical points of contention amongst critics of the NAR: the assumption of extraordinary authority, dominionism, prophetic revelation, and the requirement of apostolic unity. Extra attention will be given to the critics' challenge of prophetic revelation holding the authority of canon, based on the premise of the continuation of the gifts of the Spirit.

Douglas Geivett and Holly Pivec, *A New Apostolic Reformation?: A Biblical Response to a Worldwide Movement* (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2018), 49, Kindle.

[69] The "doma" refer to the "gifts" given by Jesus to the church according to Ephesians 4:8. In this paper the terms, "doma" or gifts, the ascension gifts and the five-fold will be used interchangeably as they are defined in Ephesians 4:8-11. The "doma" gifts are defined as the apostle, prophet, pastor, evangelist and teacher, and their timing is determined as after Christ's ascension. All three terms point to the five gifts given by Jesus to the church.

[70] Geivett and Pivec, *New Apostolic Reformation?,* 68.

[71] Michael J McVicar, "Introduction: Children of Moloch: Christian Reconstruction, the State, and the Conservative Milieu," in Christian Reconstruction: R. J. Rushdoony and American Religious Conservatism, 1-17 (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2015), Accessed February 26, 2021, 5. http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.5149/9781469622750_mcvicar.4.

[72] "He teaches that NAR prophets reveal new truths that are universally authoritative, which is tantamount to claiming that the canon remains open." Geivett and Pivec, *New Apostolic Reformation?,* 173.

[73] "In NAR, the church is an army that God is raising up to advance his kingdom. The army's strength comes, in large part, from its unity, a unity that is achieved through Christians' submission to apostles. This type of unity is referred to as apostolic unity." Geivett and Pivec, *New Apostolic Reformation?,* 208.

In conclusion, areas for "re-traditioning" in the NAR movement will be presented and, where accurate, discussion regarding blind spots of outdated leadership and praxis.

Continuationism versus Cessationism

In broad strokes, continuationists believe that the gifts of the Spirit, or the charismata, will continue until the return of Jesus. In contrast, cessationists believe the charismata ended after the Apostolic age.

At the very start, this difference of belief is a vital lens to be aware of when considering critics' arguments towards the NAR. As Deere wrote, "If you were to lock a brand-new Christian in a room with a Bible and tell him to study what Scripture has to say about healing and miracles, he would never come out of the room a cessationist."[74] Sharing from his journey, he adds, "This is not a system of doctrine that I would have ever come up with on my own. I had to be taught that the gifts of the Spirit had passed away."[75]

Deere goes on to challenge that cessationist writers do not make their case on doctrine alone but lack of experience. While their tradition would support their lack of belief, such belief would have no success were it not for their lack of experience in the miraculous.[76]

Andre Gagne, professor of Theology at Concordia University in Montreal, Quebec, would agree, stipulating that cessationists have to face the real problem that Ephesians 4:13

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[74] Jack S. Deere, *Surprised by the Power of the Spirit: Discovering How God Speaks and Heals Today* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1996), 34, Proquest Ebook Central. https://thedtl.on.worldcat.org/oclc/1078564863.

[75] Deere, Surprised, 35. Italics mine. Identifying this lens is vital in considering the biblical hermeneutic of critics towards the continuation of the charismata. As Deere states above, cessationists view scripture through the a priori of their doctrine; therefore, a lens predetermines their interpretation of scripture.

[76] Deere, 35. Further to Deere's point, Ruthven adds to this that the lion of cessationism, B.B. Warfield wrote Counterfeit Miracles shortly after the death of his invalid wife, saying, "We may only speculate on how this tragic long-term illness affected Warfield's perspective on miracles and divine healing." Jon Mark Ruthven, *On the Cessation of the Charismata: The Protestant Polemic on Post-Biblical Miracles*, Rev. Ed (Tulsa, OK: Word & Spirit Press, 2011), chap. 2, Kindle.

causes as it states the gifts would be in operation until the perfection of the saints. Even Professor Gagne, a secular scholar, sees that passage as referencing the return of Christ.[77]

Not a Minority

According to Pewforum, continuationist doctrine makes up 88% of the worldwide Christian population.[78] Catholicism and Orthodoxy, both continuationist in belief, make up 62% of Christianity, while Protestantism makes up 36% of the world's believers. Out of which, just over 26% are Pentecostal or charismatic in their expression. These statistics reveal cessationist doctrine in the vast minority of thought worldwide. While there would be varying degrees of expression amongst the broad strokes provided by Pewforum, the clear majority of Christians believe, to some measure, that the gifts of the Spirit are for today.[79] According to Gagne, projections are that by 2050, one billion people will identify within the charismatic stream.[80] It is safe to say that the majority of the body of Christ do not think of the book of Acts as the high watermark of the Holy Spirit at work in power.[81]

Are the Gifts for Today?

Written into the very DNA of the Church, the Nicene Creed states, "We believe in one holy, catholic, apostolic church."[82] The inclusion of "apostolic" points to the early fathers'

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[77] Andre Gagne interview with author, 01 March 2021.

[78] "Global Christianity- A Report on the Size and Distribution of the World's Christian Population," December 19, 2011, accessed February 20, 2021, https://www.pewforum.org/2011/12/19/global-christianity-exec/.

[79] Pew Forum does not delineate the number of Charismatic Catholics in their worldwide Catholic calculations.

[80] Andre Gagne, interview.

[81] Alan Scott, *Scattered Saints: Unleashing the Church to Bring Life to the City* (Colorado Springs, CO: David C. Cook, 2018), 138.

[82] John Behr, *The Nicene Faith, Part 1 & 2*, vol. 2 (Crestwood, NY: St Vladimir's Seminary Press, 2004), 3.

awareness of the ascension gifts for the set apart, universal, missional Church. Hirsch and Catchim write, "an authentic missional church should exist and express itself at all four levels (locally, city-wide, regionally, and universally) to be the kind of church that Jesus envisioned."[83]

In his book, *The Cessation of the Charismata*, Jon Ruthven takes considerable time to break down several scriptures affirming the continuationist position stating, "that the charismata will continue until the 'end (to teleion),' a reference to the end of the age."[84] The following is a brief examination of three passages Ruthven interprets.

1. 1 Corinthians 1:4-8[85]

Ruthven points to Paul's encouragement that the Corinthian church will not experience lack in any gift, "by which the Church is enriched and strengthened until the Parousia at the end of the age."[86] He contends this passage, which has no other textual variants, confirms not only what was present in the Corinthian church was of God, but that it would continue until Jesus's return.[87]

2. 1 Corinthians 13:8-13[88]

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[83] Ian Hirsch and Tim Catchim, *The Permanent Revolution: Apostolic Information and Practice for the 21st Century Church* (San Fransisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 2012), Intro., Kindle.

[84] Ruthven, *On the Cessation*, 3.2.1.2.

[85] 4 I give thanks to my God always for you because of the grace of God that was given you in Christ Jesus, 5 that in every way you were enriched in him in all speech and all knowledge— 6 even as the testimony about Christ was confirmed among you— 7 so that you are not lacking in any gift, as you wait for the revealing of our Lord Jesus Christ, 8 who will sustain you to the end, guiltless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ (1 Corinthians 1:4-8 ESV, emphasis mine).

[86] Ruthven, 3.2.1.1.

[87] He writes, "The gifts continue confirming Christ, progressively strengthening the believers morally and spiritually until the eschaton which is described as "the end," that is, the point at which the readers are "blameless," not in this age, but "in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ." Ruthven, 3.2.1.1.

[88] 1 Corinthians 13:8-13 (ESV) 8 Love never ends. As for prophecies, they will pass away; as for tongues, they will cease; as for knowledge, it will pass away. 9 For we know in part and we prophesy in part, 10 but when the perfect comes, the partial will pass away. 11 When I was a child, I spoke like a child, I thought like a child, I

Referring to 1 Corinthians 13:8-13 as the locus classicus of the continuation of the gifts, Ruthven reminds us that this passage was used by the early Church fathers citing verse ten to dispute the heretical view of the ceasing of the gifts by the Montanists.[89] Ruthven's examination also relays that the passage lacks textual variants, relating the context of this passage to 1 Corinthians 1:4-8, as Paul restates his argument of the relation of the spiritual gifts to the eschatological goal of the Christian life.[90]

3. Ephesians 4:7-13[91]

Finally, we come to the contentious gifts of the ascension. Ruthven's scholarly dissertation reveals that this passage serves as a parallel to the 1 Corinthians passages as the gifts continue to be in operation until the "end," or Parousia. However, the Ephesian passage "describes 'the end' in terms of the ultimate spiritual growth of the believer into the absolute 'full measure of perfection found in Christ' (NIV). As 1 Corinthians 13:11, Ephesians 4:13 uses

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reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I gave up childish ways. [12] For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I have been fully known.[13] So now faith, hope, and love abide, these three; but the greatest of these is love (1 Corinthians 13:8-13 ESV).

[89] "It is necessary that the prophetic charisma be in all the Church until the final coming." *Against Alcibiadesin, Eusebuis, Church History*, V, 17, 4 (PNF, 2nd ser., 1:234) quoted in Ruthven, 3.2.1.1, fn. 332.

[90] He adds "To summarize, this passage also argues that, in contrast to Christian love, which is manifest both in the present and in heaven, spiritual gifts are temporary, i.e., characteristic of the present age, ceasing only at its end, when the full revelation of God will occur." Ruthven, 3.2.1.2.

[91] But grace was given to each one of us according to the measure of Christ's gift. 8 Therefore, it says, "When he ascended on high, he led a host of captives, and he gave gifts to men."[9] (In saying, "He ascended," what does it mean but that he had also descended into the lower regions, the earth? [10] He who descended is the one who also ascended far above all the heavens, that he might fill all things.) [11] And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, [12] to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the Body of Christ, [13] until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, (Ephesians 4:7-13 ESV).

the metaphor of the mature man to portray the heavenly state of believers."[92] It is this phrase in Ephesians 4:13 that Gagne finds a problem for cessationists.[93]

In this summary, Ruthven paints a compelling biblical polemic for the continuation of the gifts, disarming the arguments of critics who would claim the gifts of the Spirit have no place in the contemporary believer's life.

Post-Christianity

Ruthven opines that Calvin's cessationism wasn't as strict as later proponents of the doctrine would argue. He shares that Calvin "was less rigid about cessationism than many of his followers in that he held to the tradition that in unevangelized areas, apostles and prophetic gifts could recur to confirm the Gospel."[94]

Many would say that we are living in or on the cusp of post-Christianity.[95] Gene Edward Veith Jr. suggests we are beyond the threshold as constructivism has invaded society's institutions, calling us to "notice what this particular post-Christian revolution means. Rejecting God, human beings are attempting to place themselves in his role as creator lawgiver and savior."[96] Is it possible that our society is as lost as the society the original Church sought to

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[92] Ruthven, 3.2.1.3.

[93] Andre Gagne, interview.

[94] "[Miraculous or revelatory spiritual gifts as a category] either does not exist today or is less commonly seen." *Institutes* IV, 3, 4 (1057), quoted in Ruthven, *On the Cessation*, 1.3.10 fn. 53. Apostles, prophets or evangelists, he says, are not ordinary offices in the church today, but the Lord "now and again revives as the need of the times demands" (1056). Pavel Hejzlar, "John Calvin and the Cessation of Miraculous Healing," *Communio Viatorum* 49:1 (2007), pp. 31–77.

[95] Leonardo De Chirico, "Post Christianity is an Opportunity for Real Christianity," July 13, 2020, accessed February 19, 2021, https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/reviews/post-christianity/.

[96] Gene Edward Veith Jr., *Post-Christian: A Guide to Contemporary Thought and Culture* (Wheaton, IL, Crossway, 2020), chap. 1, Kindle.

evangelize? Is there not a case to be made in line with Calvin's thought that such times require a recurrence of the charismata?

The Controversies and Contentions of the NAR

"Since NAR is not an organization or denomination, there is no official listing of NAR beliefs, leaders, or churches. But the one thing all participants in NAR share, in our view, is the controversial belief in the present-day offices of apostle and prophet."[97] In the book, *A New Apostolic Reformation?*, Douglass Geivett and Holly Pivec present their case as to the danger of what Wagner coined in 1994 in response to what he saw as a "phenomenal move of the Holy Spirit."[98] Wagner states that the NAR is not a movement but rather the name of a spiritual occurrence.[99] However, authors Geivett and Pivec attempt to present the appearance of a loose organization, saying, "those in the NAR have established numerous organizations and developed intentional networks with one another."[100] Nevertheless, Wagner maintains that his "research

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[97] Geivett and Pivec, *New Apostolic Reformation?,* 20.

[98] C. Peter Wagner, "Year in Review: The New Apostolic Reformation Is Not a Cult," Charisma News, 24 August 2011, n.p. Online: https://www.charismanews.com/opinion/31851-the-new-apostolic-reformation-is-not-a-cult. [07 March 2020]. While there is the appearance that Geivett and Pivec agree that the NAR is not an organization, they use identifiers Wagner developed to distinguish churches or ministries that would fit the NAR template, resulting in making it seem as though there is a movement.

[99] "The New Apostolic Reformation is an extraordinary work of God at the close of the twentieth century which is, to a significant extent, changing the shape of Protestant Christianity around the world. For almost 500 years Christian churches have largely functioned within traditional denominational structures of one kind or another. Particularly in the 1990s, but with roots going back for almost a century, new forms and operational procedures are now emerging in areas such as local church government, inter-church relationships, financing, evangelism, missions, prayer, leadership selection and training, the role of supernatural power, worship and other important aspects of church life. Some of these changes are being seen within denominations themselves, but for the most part they are taking the form of loosely structured apostolic networks. In virtually every region of the world, these new apostolic churches constitute the fastest growing segment of Christianity." C. Peter Wagner, *Apostles and Prophets* (Bloomington, MN: Chosen, 2000), 17, Kindle.

[100] Geivett and Pivec, *New Apostolic Reformation?,* 20.

methodology is not philosophical or theological (in the classical sense) nor exegetical or revelational, but rather phenomenological."[101]

Straw Man Arguments

Contrary to the defense presented by Geivett and Pivec around their format for discussion and presentation of leaders or ministries with NAR similarities, their "critique" shows a biased straw man argument and the use of rhetoric.[102] At the beginning of their book, *God's Super Apostles: Encountering the Worldwide Prophets and Apostles Movement*, Geivett and Pivec share three "true" stories.[103] However, they infer that those types of stories are true of a "new religious movement led by apostles and prophets [that] is strewn with confused people, divided churches, and strained families forcing people to make painful choices between those they love and what they believe to be the truth of God's Word."[104] Their choice of examples are clearly used to suggest that such abuse is common.

They continue to ramp up the rhetoric later in their appendices, providing advice to parents, loved ones, or concerned leaders warning that they must, "Understand that NAR leaders move into places where they think opportunity is greatest and resistance will be minimal."[105]

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[101] C. Peter Wagner, *Apostles Today: Biblical Government for Biblical Power* (Minneapolis, MN: Chosen, 2006), 77, Kindle. However, critics have some ground to stand as Wagner helped create a loose organizational configuration around his findings, allowing for disseminating his views and providing a wider audience and acceptance. Such organizations as the International Coalition of Apostles (now the International Coalition of Apostolic Leaders), which he participated in leading and the Wagner Institute.

[102] Holly Pivec and Doug Geivett, "Michael Brown's NAR Strawman: Is the New Apostolic Reformation a Conspiracy Theory or Something More?" May 10, 2018, accessed March 1, 2021, https://www.christianpost.com/voice/michael-browns-nar-straw-man-is-the-new-apostolic-reformation-just-a-conspiracy-theory-or-something-more.html.

[103] Geivett and Pivec, *New Apostolic Reformation?,* 11-12.

[104] Douglas R. Geivett and Holly Pivec, *God's Super-Apostles: Encountering the Worldwide Prophets and Apostles Movement* (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2014), 12, Kindle.

[105] Geivett and Pivec, *Super Apostles*, 113.

Geivett and Pivec are thereby implying predatory behavior is associated with anyone whom they consider to be NAR; an organization they admit does not exist.[106]

Four Key Points of Contention

This paper is not an exhaustive look at the full scope of arguments leveled against the NAR, nor is it a comprehensive defense of its tenets. However, detractors have an obvious a priori in their criticisms towards the NAR and the continuationist doctrine. In response, this paper will address the four critical points of contention critics level against NAR philosophy. The first is the assumed extraordinary authority of apostles, the second, dominionism, the third, apostolic unity as a precursor to revival, and the fourth, the assumption that "new" or "prophetic revelation" takes canonical status.

First Point of Contention – Extraordinary Authority

"Many NAR leaders teach that apostles hold the most important office in the Church. They are the equivalent of generals. All other church leaders in what they call their apostolic network—including pastors—are expected to submit to the apostles' authority."[107]

The abuses of Papal authority resulted in the development of critical principles that reformers embraced. Sola Scriptura, by Scripture alone, Sola Gratia, by Grace alone, *Sola Fida*, by Faith alone, Sola Christi, by Christ alone—not by the Pope or by church tradition.[108]

Ex cathedra, or the Pope's infallibility, resulted in encyclicals written which imposed new doctrine on the Church, so the Reformers simply "quarantined them (papal apostolate) to the

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[106] Geivett and Pivec, *New Apostolic Reformation?,* 20.

[107] Geivett and Pivec, *Super Apostles*, 17.

[108] John Mark Ruthven, *What's Wrong with Protestant Theology? Tradition vs Biblical Emphasis* (Tulsa, OK: Word & Spirit Press, 2013), 13, ProQuest Ebook Central. https://thedtl.on.worldcat.org/oclc/853649340.

Apostolic age."[109] As a result, modern cessationists, Geivett and Pivec, lean into Sola Christi when it comes to the controlling purview of leadership, in their assumption that any apostolic authority is equivalent to that of the original Twelve.[110] While it is appropriate to challenge some critics' methods, sadly, stories of abusive authority that detractors reference do happen within charismatic churches; however, they are not limited to the charismatic movement alone. Terrible reports of the abuse of leadership have occurred in both cessationist and continuiationist churches and ministries.

Types of Apostles

The *doma*, or gift of the apostle, holds tremendous value, albeit steeped in controversy. Benjamin G. McNair Scott, in his thoroughly researched and scholarly book, *Apostles Today*, writes, "However, if we put the question of terminology aside, and describe the type of ministry being advocated by our popular authors, highlighting the main functions that are being brought to the fore (church planting; overseeing; evangelizing), then we have a form of ministry that even cessationists would be hard-pressed to reject."[111]

When Jesus declared, "It shall not be so among you," He was setting the stage for how He expected leaders to imitate His leadership.[112] He made His baseline expectation regarding the posture and attitude of all leaders of His body. The importance of this standard is paramount in

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[109] Ruthven, *What's Wrong*, 19.

[110] Geivett and Pivec, *Super Apostles*, 16.

[111] Benjamin G. McNair Scott, *Apostles Today: Making Sense of Contemporary Charismatic Apostates: A Historical and Theological Appraisal* (Eugene, OR: Pickwick Publications, 2014), 101, ProQuest Ebook Central. https://thedtl.on.worldcat.org/oclc/903319224.

[112] Matthew 20:25-28 (ESV). [25] But Jesus called them to him and said, "You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great one's exercise authority over them. 26 It shall not be so among you. But whoever would be great among you must be your servant, [27] and whoever would be first among you must be your slave, [28] even as the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."

having clarity for the role of modern-day apostles. In the five-fold gifts, there is a danger where the title of the office could have more importance than its function.

Three key passages of scripture instruct us about the five-fold gifts existence, function, and continuation. They are Ephesians 2:20, 4:11-13, and 1 Corinthians 12:28. The passage in Ephesians 4 teaches that the gift's role is to "equip the saints for the work of the ministry, for the building up of the body of Christ, until we all attain the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God to mature manhood" (Ephesians 4:12-13a ESV).

In his book *Apostles Today*, Scott presents a well-written perspective of contemporary apostolic expression, and after performing his research, he identifies three "Types" of apostles. Type 1- Hierarchical Apostles, Type 2- Non-Foundational Apostles, and Type 3-Non-Select Apostles.[113] As a result of Scott's examination of various forms of contemporary apostolates, he presents several thoughts in favor of them, arguing "that each one of these points is a reasonable inference from Scripture and is not unfounded within Christian tradition."[114]

Type 1– Hierarchical Apostles

Scott takes a critical look at several examples of who he would see operating as apostles, challenging the biblical exegesis of their proponents while at the same time finding where there are successes in their structure.[115] He submits that there are scholarly arguments for biblical

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[113] Scott, *Apostles Today*, 50.

[114] They are:
"1. The Church needs apostles. 2. God is still giving apostles post the apostolic era. 3.There was a specified number of apostles. 4. This is scripturally legitimated. 5. Ephesians 4:11-13 is the key text and source of the underlying theology that drives this emphasis. 6. There is enough in Scripture to paint a picture of how an apostle functions. 7.They exercise a spiritual authority based upon an empowering by the Spirit rather than delegated authority via church hierarchy. 8. All modern apostles are "under" scripture and not authors of it. 9. Paul is a model apostle par excellence, and his gift is evidenced through his spiritual fatherhood of initiating and nurturing churches." Scott, 100.

[115] Scott, 12-50.

support of the Type 1 apostles.[116] Scott determines ministries led by Type 1 apostles are united in "that their apostles are viewed as indispensable, their spiritual authority takes precedent over all other ministries in the church, and they provide 'foundational' input without which the Church local and universal will never become all that God desires."[117]

Scott shares Wagner's use of three scriptures, Ephesians 4:11, 2:20, and 1 Corinthians 12:28, in support of Type 1 hierarchical apostles[118] The Type 1 apostle would be the most indicative of the NAR. Citing Ephesians 4:11, Wagner labels the five-fold roles as offices as they are for the equipping of the saints for the work of the ministry, and since the saints are those who are trained, Wagner is comfortable with the term "office" to identify five-fold leaders.[119] Some would dispute the validity of using Ephesians 4 for governmental structure as it would appear to be an interpretation that stretches beyond its original intent in the "equipping of the saints for the work of the ministry."[120] Ruthven, however, connects Ephesians 4 to 2:20, challenging the logic of cessationist critique of contemporary apostolates. He writes, "on that same logic, (should we) insist that the death of a founding mayor of a town require the extinction of the office, title or function of mayor? To the contrary: his 'foundational' role as mayor sets the pattern and implies the continuation of that role after him."[121]

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[116] Scott, 102.

[117] Scott, 104.

[118] Scott, 104.

[119] Wagner, *Apostles Today,* 1.

[120] See Ephesians 4:12 ESV.

[121] Ruthven, *On the Cessation*, Preface.

Types 2 and 3

Non-Foundational and Non-Select

Scott continues to identify two other Types of apostles in his study. Type 2 non-foundational apostles and Type 3 non-select apostles. As they are mostly similar in their expression, they will be discussed together, highlighting their minor variations.

John Wimber was most comfortable in referring to the apostolic from the perspective of big "A" apostles versus little "a" apostles as it separates the contemporary expression from Christ's Apostles or the "twelve" and Paul.[122] Scott identifies Type 2 apostles as also identifying Ephesians 4:11 as the scriptural basis for the manifestation.[123] "As a result the hierarchical nature of apostleship is downplayed, and the pioneering functional aspect is brought more to the fore."[124] They would not espouse Ephesians 2:20 and 1 Corinthians 12:28 as creating hierarchical status to those other than the original apostles.[125]

As it is a more palatable stance on the apostolic, there is a broader acceptance of this mindset amongst various streams in the faith as it holds a more ecumenical nature due to its non-authoritarian posture.[126] Gagne would agree with this thought, sharing that it is the least controversial route has it does not take away the authority of the congregation.[127] Rob

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[122] Scott, 110.

[123] Scott, 110. Amongst Type 2's "'little a' apostles do not have the right or ability to make authoritative decisions in light of their 'apostolic gifting' on behalf of the Church universal, nor are current apostles the 'foundation of the church' alongside prophets."

[124] Scott, 110.

[125] Scott, 110.

[126] Scott, 112.

[127] Gagne, interview.

Lindemann, Academic Dean of Vanguard Bible College in Edmonton, Alberta, agrees, saying that this would be appealing to the middle stream of believers, which will be discussed later in this paper.[128] Viewed more as pioneers or missionaries, this Type is expressed more in function than in the title.[129]

The main difference between Type 2 and Type 3 apostles is that within the ethos of the Type 2 expression, people are singled out and recognized as operating in one of the five gifts. In contrast, Type 3 apostolates consider that all in the body of Christ are "charismatically gifted" as apostle, prophet, evangelist, pastor, and teacher.[130] Scott cites Breen's interpretation of Ephesians 4, suggesting that if verses 8 and 9 were omitted, one would naturally conclude that "to each one of us grace has been given," would include all believers and that the grace gifts in verse 11 would be identified as the grace given.[131]

Offices or Function

A consistent criticism of ministries that would reflect NAR tenets promoting the Type 1 apostle identified by Scott is the title of "office," used to recognize five-fold gifts from Ephesians 4:11. Geivett and Pivec present four reasons why Wagner's distinction of "office" as the title of five-fold gifts is unacceptable.

1. Quick growth is not a sign of God's approval
2. Scripture doesn't indicate apostles hold formal government
3. 1 Corinthians 12:28 appear to be functional, not governmental

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[128] Rob Lindemann, interview with author, 08 March 2020.

[129] Dave Wells, interview by author, 13 February 2020.

[130] Scott, *Apostles Today*, 111.

[131] Scott, 112.

4. Ephesians 2:20 does not prescribe ongoing offices but speak to a temporary function[132]

Critics approach their interpretation from an *a priori* posture engaging their understanding from a predetermined cessationist position and consider their interpretation standard. Considering that cessationism is a worldwide minority viewpoint, the thought that it could be viewed as "the standard" for biblical interpretation lacks integrity. As shown earlier, a secular theologian clearly sees the inconsistency in their argument and scriptural problem because of Ephesians 4:13 pointing to the second coming of Christ, affirming the gift's continuation. Therefore, a more robust challenge of interpretive authority is in order

Foundation – Ephesians 2:19-22 (ESV)

> [19] So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God,[20] built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone,[21] in whom the whole structure, being joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord.[22] In him you also are being built together into a dwelling place for God by the Spirit.

In their book, *Permanent Revolution*, Alan Hirsch and Tim Catchim present a strong argument for contemporary apostolic and prophetic foundational activity as well as a clear line in the sand towards the a priori of cessationist scholars:

> Paul declares in both explicit teaching and implicit modeling (which is the way he operates) that the Church is built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets (Ephesians 2:20). As you will no doubt guess, for similar hermeneutical reasons used in Ephesians 4, we reject the traditionalist, procrustean interpretation that this applies only to the original apostles and prophets.[133]

They go further:

> In fact, much of the Cessationist readings of the twentieth century have been shown to be precisely this type of tendentious exegesis—in this case, their personal and preferential

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[132] Geivett and Pivec, *Apostles Today?*, 102-3.

[133] Hirsch and Catchim, *The Permanent Revolution*, chap. 3.

> distaste for all things charismatic. Any attempt to undermine the fundamentally multidimensional ministry structure of the New Testament church turns out to be a selective, nuanced, and anachronistic reading. Taken at face value and on its own terms, the New Testament itself makes no suggestions of the rescinding of the Church's ministry. Quite frankly, any attempt to make it say something else is manipulative and dishonest.[134]

Note that Hirsch and Catchim do not promote Type 1 apostles but lean more towards Type 2 and 3, where function matters more than office title. However, they see the role of present-day five-fold leaders to operate foundationally in context for the ministry that they lead.[135]

The primary challenge of skeptics towards the Ephesians 2:20 text is the inference toward leaders assuming equality with the original twelve apostles. In a poll created by Dr. Randy Clark, Founder & President of Global Awakening, 81% of apostolic leaders disagreed when asked if they felt that contemporary apostles held the same authority as the original twelve and Paul.[136]

Scott shares that Wagner's use of Ephesians 2:20 as a scriptural basis for office is a position agreed upon by several scholars: others, however, consider it a weak scriptural argument for governmental authority.[137] Scott also asserts it could allow for the usurping of other leaders' authority as they become "overly reliant upon what these figures declare are the God-inspired authoritative messages determining the direction and future of that person/community."[138] He

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[134] Hirsch and Catchim, Appendix, 6.

[135] Hirsch and Catchim, chap. 3.

[136] Randy Clark, "Renewal Theology Survey," electronic survey summary report, accessed March 12, 2021, https://www.getfeedback.com/s/DkZdF6Yj/; Dr. Randy Clark is a world renown healing evangelist, particularly gifted in healing, teaching, and education. For more on Dr. Clark and Global Awakening go to https://globalawakening.com/.

[137] Scott, 105.

[138] Scott, 105.

instead views Frank Viola's perspective as more effective, saying that the natural order of the apostle is planting and building contextually and therefore foundationally.[139] Hirsch clarifies that no foundation stands on its own, but is built entirely on the Founder, Jesus. Any attempt to build outside of the parameters of the Founder is rightly called heresy.[140]

Extraordinary Authority, Grace to Govern, or Called to Serve?

All of the leaders interviewed leaned heavily toward their apostolic responsibility to be servants. Dr. Ché Ahn, President and Founder of Harvest International Ministries, brought to the fore the importance of Paul's general greeting and the greetings of other apostles as "bondservants."[141] A recent survey administered by Global Awakening asked apostolic leaders if they felt that they were like a general in an army commanding allegiance, to which 94% responded they did not. Clark also asked the leaders if they thought they possessed the same authority as the twelve and Paul—81% said they did not.[142]

The Lens of the Ascension

Contextually, consideration should be given to the relationship of the five-fold gifts to the ascension as written in Ephesians 4.[143] The oft-forgotten doctrine of the ascension has been lost

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[139] Scott, 105.

[140] Hirsch and Catchim, chap. 3.

[141] Ché Ahn, interview with author, 3, March 2021; for more on Dr. Ahn please see https://www.harvestim.org/.

[142] Clark, "Renewal Theology Survey." While there is a percentage that responded in the minority, detractors need to be clear of two items, the first that they are a minority, not a broad stroke of the whole. Second, no consideration towards cultural and regional variables was in the poll, and those variables affect outside of Western-centric thought.

[143] 7 But grace was given to each one of us according to the measure of Christ's gift. 8 Therefore, it says, "When he ascended on high, he led a host of captives, and he gave gifts to men." 9 (In saying, "He ascended," what does it mean but that he had also descended into the lower regions, the earth? 10 He who descended is the one who also ascended far above all the heavens, that he might fill all things.) 11 And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, 12 to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the Body of

from the narrative of contemporary charismatic believers, but it held great importance to the early Church.[144] Luke ends his gospel and begins the book of Acts with the ascension.[145] Stephen accesses the grace to face his martyrdom through a revelation of the ascended Jesus.[146]

There is little said of the ascension amongst charismatics, but there is value in studying the theology of the ascension.[147] When read through the lens of the ascension, the book of Hebrews takes on powerful imagery of the High Priestly role of Jesus and how that role has a lasting effect beyond the atoning work of the cross and resurrection.[148] The High Priestly role of Jesus is the ongoing work of the ascension, and understanding His work as our High Priest is vital as it points beyond His sacrifice and resurrection—having completed the atonement by presenting His blood in the Holy of Holies and now is interceding for us (see Hebrews 9:11-15).[149] Bishop Todd Atkinson teaches that the intercession of Jesus has three key components: identification, intercession, and intervention.[150] Perhaps leaders would express the five-fold gifts differently if they were viewed through the lens of the intercessory High Priestly role of Christ.

Christ, [13] until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, (Ephesians 4:7-13 ESV).

[144] David S. Schrock, "A Neglected but Necessary Doctrine- How Christ's Ascension Clarifies Our Theology and Comforts Our Souls," October 27, 2020, accessed March 1, 2021, https://davidschrock.com/2020/10/27/a-neglected-but-necessary-doctrine-how-the-christs-ascension-clarifies-our- theology-and-comforts-our-souls/.

[145] See Luke 24:50-53 ESV; Acts 1:6-11 ESV.

[146] See Acts 7:54-56 ESV.

[147] Todd Atkinson, interview with author, 27, February 2021.

[148] Gerrit Dawson, *Jesus Ascended* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P & R Publishing, 2004), 117, ProQuest Ebook Central. https://thedtl.on.worldcat.org/oclc/747037931.

[149] Todd Atkinson, "Canon 2016 Saturday Night," 2016, accessed March 1, 2021, https://vimeo.com/170218079.

[150] Todd Atkinson, "Canon 2016 Saturday Night." In His High priestly role, Jesus intercedes from a place of fully identifying with what it is like to be human. Hebrews 5:15 points out that we have a High Priest who is sympathetic to our weaknesses. Atkinson shares that this meets a basic human need of being understood.

Second Point of Contention – Dominionism

Dominion Theology is based on God granting "dominion" to humanity (see Genesis 1:28). There are two perspectives to be considered; Theonomy, which is the legislated implementation of God's Mosaic law, also known as Reconstructionism,[151] and theocracy, which is where priests rule by divine guidance.[152]

Dominionists would believe in theonomy and are committed 5-point Calvinists. They believe that certain Old Testament laws, even the minor ones, are not obsolete but continue today and, in some cases, write out entire political agendas on Mosaic Law. Dominionism is a highly political approach affirming strong conservative political activation, originating from R. J. Rushdoony, Greg Bahnsen, and Gary Betts. This doctrine would have advocated capital punishment for a minor crime and would use slavery to allow people to pay off their debts. It embraces the health, wealth, and the prosperity message and "encourages this as a necessary tool to help empower Christians to overturn society."[153] There is, however, confusion amongst critics

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Furthermore, He intercedes as an advocate, but not to protect us from the Father, but as an expression of the Father's love. Jesus's intercession is an act of the Trinity, the Father wills it, the Son offers it, and the Spirit empowers the intercession against darkness, temptation, and the works of the enemy. He is fulfilling the ongoing process of saving "to the uttermost," each of us until we are seated with Him (Hebrews 7:25). This fulfills another basic need, having someone stand up for us.

Finally, His priestly intercession intervenes on our behalf as He is acquainted with temptation; he can "help those who are being tempted" (Hebrews 2:18). In this, the basic need of not being abandoned or left alone is met.

[151] Robin A Brace, "What are Dominion Theology and Kingdom Now Theology?" April 2009, http://www.ukapologetics.net/09/dominionism.htm.

[152] The Editors of *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, "Theocracy," accessed March 3, 2021 https://www.britannica.com/topic/theocracy. "Government by divine guidance or by officials who are regarded as divinely guided. In many theocracies, government leaders are members of the clergy, and the state's legal system is based on religious law."

[153] Brace, "What are Dominion Theology and Kingdom Now Theology?"

between the definitions of dominionism and the charismatic theologies of "Kingdom Now" and "Kingdom Now-Not Yet."

Similarities

Both Kingdom Now and Kingdom Now-Not Yet agree with the restoration of the offices of apostle and prophet. They both believe in the manifestation of the gifts of the Spirit, and both are non-Calvinistic in doctrine.[154]

Differences

They differ on several fronts. Kingdom Now thinkers assert that apostles need to lead society and govern society by kingdom principles to usher in the second coming of Christ. In the legalistic view of "conversion or punishment," charismatic Kingdom Now sympathizers believe that society should be a theocracy.[155] But this is not the view of Kingdom Now-Not Yet. Critics mistakenly fail to differentiate between Kingdom Now and Kingdom Now-Not Yet theologies.[156] This lack of differentiation on their part allows for the inference of the extraordinary authority and control they claim modern apostles require but the two cannot be considered the same!

Kingdom Now-Not Yet theologies express the Kingdom of God as a present reality and a future consummation. The Kingdom of God is a current reality since the crucifixion, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus, which inaugurated the complete overthrow of the kingdom

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[154] Brace, "What are Dominion Theology and Kingdom Now Theology?"

[155] Brace, "What are Dominion Theology and Kingdom Now Theology?"

[156] Geivett and Pivec state, "NAR apostles and prophets claim God has revealed a new strategy for advancing God's kingdom, a strategy they call the Seven Mountain Mandate. According to this revelation, the Church must take control of the seven most influential societal institutions—called mountains—which are identified as government, media, family, business, education, Church, and arts. These institutions are presently dominated by secular humanists and other people who do not share God's values. The Church must take control of them if it is to fulfill its mandate to advance God's kingdom" The seven mountains of influence were identified by Bill Bright and Loren Cunningham as the key points or mountains of influence on society. Geivett and Pivec, *Super Apostles*, 77-78. (See also https://rayedwards.com/the-seven-mountains/.)

of darkness. The Kingdom Not Yet is also a future consummation since the fullness of Jesus's victory will not materialize until His triumphant return.[157]

Ahn identifies that there is a difference between ruling and kingdom influence.[158] He shares how Jesus showed us that Heaven's Kingdom is like leaven affecting the different mountains of influence implementing Kingdom principles that benefit society. Leithart further clarifies, stating that saints do not rule by domination but through servanthood, as "in Christ to lead is to serve."[159] Additionally, to drive this point home, in the survey carried out by Dr. Clark, 100% of respondents felt that godly influence, through wisdom and service, was how the Church should be engaged on the mountains, not through rulership or dominion. All respondents also felt that this was not to happen through legislation or force, but rather by the influence of being salt and light.[160] This is the view of Kingdom influence held by Kingdom Now Not-Yet theology, which is vastly different than Kingdom Now.

Legitimate Concern

The survey found that 6% of respondents felt that the Church would control the mountains of influence, revealing different schools of thought on influence versus rulership.[161] One must concede that some would perhaps hold a more dogmatic view of control even among present charismatics. Gagne reminds the charismatic Church that the initial Reformation was to

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[157] "Book Review – The Gospel Of The Kingdom By George Eldon Ladd," Bob Blincoe, Last modified 2021, https://bobblincoe.wordpress.com/2012/09/26/book-review-the-gospel-of-the-kingdom-by-george-eldon- ladd/.

[158] Ché Ahn, interview.

[159] Peter J. Leithart, *The Kingdom and the Power: Rediscovering the Centrality of the Church* (Phillipsburg, NJ: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Company, 1993), 180-18.

[160] Clark, "Renewal Theology Survey."

[161] Clark, "Renewal Theology Survey."

break away from the authoritative, controlling apostolate of the Romanists. He would suggest the irony of the same ideology in present five-fold thought.[162] Scott would agree, saying the restorationist perspective mimics the very Catholic structures that the Reformation fought to overcome[163] that structure failed to bring about unity or maturity; it often brought worse results.[164]

Third Contention – Apostolic Unity

Critics propose that apostolic thinkers champion that Church unity will not happen until Christians submit to the leadership of apostles.[165] Dr. Phil Nordin, of the Canadian Coalition of Apostolic Leaders, clarifies that apostles lead through serving, not controlling.[166] Ahn agrees, turning attention to the fact that true apostles call themselves bondservants—he reminds us to look to the words of Jesus in declaring that the greatest amongst us would be our servants in His Kingdom (Matt. 23:11).[167]

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[162] Gagne, interview. There are different schools of thought about the influence being about rulership over society or benefit to it. I submit that Kingdom principles work regardless of whether an individual is aligned with the Kingdom of Heaven, or not. In a sense, because the Kingdom principle of honesty works to the benefit of a society, a believer in government could utilize their position of influence to help establish honesty over different areas of leadership, making their society better. The sincere belief to benefit and not rule over society is a vital element that has to be revisited amongst charismatics. As an example, a young believer who is a business owner of a commercial insulating company submitted a plan to his competitors to end post quoting undercutting of one another. The Kingdom principle of honor was introduced to those companies who then signed off on a covenant to not cheat one another out of business, and they all benefited. His was the only company owned by a Christian. In this instance, the Kingdom of heaven is impacting society for its betterment, through a believer to make the world better. Thus, revealing a form of Kingdom Now Not-Yet theology in action.

[163] Scott, *Apostles Today*, 50, 106.

[164] Scott, 107.

[165] Geivett and Pivec, *Super Apostles*, 85. As is often the case, the critic's first posture suggests that the majority of charismatics believe that all forms of potential forward momentum in the kingdom of Heaven will become a reality as soon as apostles are in control over every aspect of the Church and society, which is not the case.

[166] Dr. Phil Nordin, interview with author, 04 March 2021.

[167] See Matthew 20:25-28 ESV.

Is apostolic unity necessary for revival in a region? Nordin and 94% of survey respondents agree on an important point: Unity is not a formula for revival, as we have yet to witness unity as the cause of revival in a region.[168] Simultaneously, while not considered necessary, 100% of survey respondents felt that unity is beneficial but not expected as a requirement in a city where an apostolic leader may be situated.[169]

Fourth Contention – New or Prophetic Revelation

Paul prays for the Ephesians to receive the Spirit of wisdom and revelation so that they would be able to comprehend the "immeasurable greatness" of God's power towards them.[170] Critics, Geivett and Pivec, nod toward Wagner's assurance that new revelation must never be contrary to the Bible.[171] Even so, they give three requirements for revelation. First, new revelation must contain substantial traces to past revelation. Second, what is new should, to some degree, be anticipated in what has already been revealed. Third, it should amplify already existing revelation.[172]

However, in their three forms of measure for revelation, they approach it from the closed world view of cessation and therefore have a predetermined outcome. After presenting their three

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[168] Phil Nordin, interview; Clark, "Renewal Theology Survey." Again, one response to the survey (a 6% contingency) would disagree. However, they remain in the minority and their perspective cannot be used as a representation of the whole.

[169] Clark, "Renewal Theology Survey."

[170] Ephesians 1:17-19 (ESV) [17] that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of him, [18] having the eyes of your hearts enlightened, that you may know what is the hope to which he has called you, what are the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints, [19] and what is the immeasurable greatness of his power toward us who believe, according to the working of his great might.

[171] Geivett and Pivec, *New Apostolic Reformation?,* 116.

[172] Geivett and Pivec, 119.

prerequisites for new revelation, they say, "We believe that the sum of revelation we have available today was completed when the apostle John wrote the book of Revelation."[173] As a result, it would appear that they approach new revelation from the posture that it cannot exist.

Do Charismatics Believe the Canon is Open or Closed?

Wagner writes:

> One of the major roles of an apostle is to communicate to the Church "what the Spirit says to the churches," as we see in the book of Revelation (see Rev. 2:7). The apostle knows what the Spirit is saying by receiving revelation from God. When this happens, authority increases exponentially; the apostle announces the word of the Lord. This is not the logos word contained in the Canon of Scripture, which cannot be added to or subtracted from. Rather, it is the Rhema word through which God gives us specific direction regarding His will for the present and future.[174]

It is incredibly short-sighted of critics to accuse others who are seeking God for wisdom as attempting to add to the canon. As mentioned earlier, the Reformed doctrine against Ex Cathedra was reactionary to Papal abuses.[175] However, Ahn points to 1 Corinthians 2:9-14, which shows us that we have an invitation to ask the Holy Spirit to reveal more about God's nature and ways.[176]

Critics would present that any Rhema word shared by an apostle across a more comprehensive network would be assuming equal footing with Christ's apostles, and therefore

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[173] Geivett and Pivec, 119.

[174] Wagner, *Apostles and Prophets*, 29-30.

[175] Ruthven, *What's Wrong*, 19.

[176] Ché Ahn, interview. [9] But, as it is written, "What no eye has seen, nor ear heard, the heart of man imagined, what God has prepared for those who love him"—[10] these things God has revealed to us through the Spirit. For the Spirit searches everything, even the depths of God. [11] For who knows a person's thoughts except the spirit of that person, which is in him? So also no one comprehends the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God. [12] Now we have received not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might understand the things freely given us by God. [13] And we impart this in words not taught by human wisdom but taught by the Spirit, interpreting spiritual truths to those who are spiritual (1 Corinthians 2:9-14 ESV).

asserting authority over the body of Christ, essentially implying it holds canonical value.[177] Ahn refers to this as nonsense, saying that God will illuminate scripture but never contradict or add to it.[178] Gagne agrees and points out that Wagner always said that no revelation would contradict the Bible and that he (Wagner) simply felt that God could speak to people today. Furthermore, Gagne argues that no one is claiming to add to scripture.[179]

The majority of charismatics do not believe the canon is open. The unfortunate commitment to the cessationist anti-prophetic position points to the agenda Hirsch and Catchim described earlier. In the poll by Clark, when respondents were asked if revelation should be considered equal to canon, 94% of apostolic leaders said no.[180] This again proves that most leaders recognize the supremacy of the canon. However, in line with the concern shared earlier, 6% of respondents did feel that such revelation was on equal footing as canon. This perspective should be scrutinized and individuals holding this view are the exception not the rule. The majority of continuationists would believe that all revelation must be weighed against scripture and interpreted through it. J. Rodman Williams writes, "Such revelation, I must immediately add, does not place the prophetic message on the same level as Scripture. It is revelation that is subordinate to what God has specially revealed to apostles and prophets and has been set forth in Scripture."[181] Ahn agrees writing, "When I talk about revelation, I am not talking about extra-

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[177] Geivett and Pivec, 108.

[178] Ahn, interview.

[179] Gagne, interview.

[180] Clark, "Renewal Theology Survey." As mentioned in "Legitimate Concern," this does point to 6% of the leaders believing that prophetic revelation would be equal to the canon of Scripture. This rightfully raises legitimate concern among cessationists, as well as concern amongst mature Third Wave and continuationist evangelicals.

[181] J. Rodmand Williams, *Renewal Theology: Sytematic Theology from a Charismatic Perspective*, Three Volumes in One (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Academic, 2011), 1573, Kindle.

biblical revelation. God has given us the canon and it is closed. Further, all personal and ministry revelation must be aligned with God's Word and tested and confirmed by others in the Body of Christ. But receiving prophetic revelation is biblical."[182]

Contemporary Revelation

"For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart" (Hebrews 4:12 ESV). The Bible is a living document which is why it can be read contextually and situationally provided that situational reading remains congruent with its overall message. The Bible's highest point of anointing is to its original audience; therefore, the primary view of any passage is its context. Scripture's context precludes God speaking directly to an individual thus creating a protective measure to prevent the abuse of its authority. However, God reserves the right to use His word out of its context to speak into ours while not compromising its overall message allowing us to engage in what Ruthven writes as the Bible's main emphasis, hearing God's voice.[183] He further challenges the prohibition of revelation reminding detractors "The human tendency to take refuge from this fact in seeking to substitute a knowledge of God with the knowledge of scripture ends up being completely circular since the emphasis of scripture itself ironically leads back to the centrality of God's voice!"[184]

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[182] Ché Ahn, *Modern Day Apostles* (Shippensburg, PA: Destiny Image, 2019), 135, Kindle.

[183] Arguing against the cessationist polemic on revelation, Ruthven states, "Today among conservative Protestants, you will hear this enlightenment solution applied to charismatic or prophetic confusion by saying, "I don't rely on experience but on the facts of scripture." Trouble is that this statement has a huge problem: Experience directly hearing the voice of God is probably the biggest fact that Scripture emphasizes." Ruthven, *What's Wrong*, 102.

[184] Ruthven, *What's Wrong*, 104.

Three Problems with Cessationist Revelatory Polemic

There are three problems with the cessationist perspective on prophetic revelation. Jesus challenged the religious order of the day for not seeing of whom the Scriptures speak.[185] Ruthven states:

> Accordingly, some streams of Protestantism are confronted with an enormous irony: using cessationism (a doctrine that insists that God does not reveal himself directly today) in an attempt to protect the canon of scripture from extraneous revelations from claims of so-called "extraordinary" (and extinguished) charismata of prophecy and miracle, traditional Protestantism succeeded in suppressing the central characteristic of the New Covenant from Scripture itself, namely, the ongoing and Biblically normative process of the revelation of God directly and immediately into the hearts of believers.[186]

Aside from the predetermination that any revelation received would be used as some sort of God-given authority to control believers, the cessationist polemic fails to answer three problems—the problem with scripture, the problem with applied practice, and the problem with promises.

The Problem with Scripture

Wayne Grudem identifies four scriptural examples of prophecy not speaking with the authority of scripture. He points to the biblical historical narrative that the words prophet or prophecy were used by ordinary Christians, who did not assume divine authority but simply reported what God had put on their hearts or minds. Scripture supports that such revelation has less authority than that of scripture and even of recognized apostolic teaching.[187]

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[185] 37And the Father who sent me has himself borne witness about me. His voice you have never heard, his form you have never seen, 38 and you do not have his word abiding in you, for you do not believe the one whom he has sent. 39 You search the Scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life; and it is they that bear witness about me, 40 yet you refuse to come to me that you may have life (John 5:37-40 ESV).

[186] Ruthven, *On the Cessation*, Preface.

[187] Wayne Grudem, *Systematic Theology* (Grand Rapids, MI: Harper Collins, 1994), 1051-1054, Kindle.

1. Acts 21:41[188]

Here, a prophet told Paul not to go to Jerusalem. However, he chose to disregard that prophetic word and went anyway. If prophecy were considered to hold the same authority as scripture, he would have never disobeyed.

2. Acts 21:10-111[189]

Agabus prophesied Jews in Jerusalem would bind Paul and give him up to the Gentiles. While the prediction was not far off, the prophecy had inaccuracies within it. Enough inaccuracies, according to Grudem, that it would have called into question the validity of any Old Testament prophet. Grudem points to his previous definition of a believer simply sharing what they felt God was saying and, it had the potential for fallibility and was not considered equal to scripture.

3. 1 Thessalonians 5:19-21[190]

Paul teaches the Thessalonians not to despise but to test prophecy, and in the testing "hold fast to what is good" (1 Thess. 5:21). If the thought were that the prophetic was equal to the scriptures, they would not need coaching against despising, nor coaching to test it. Instead, Grudem shares that Paul teaches to receive and take what is good, implying to reject what is not. One would have never held an Old Testament prophet's word to such scrutiny.

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[188] 4And having sought out the disciples, we stayed there for seven days. And through the Spirit they were telling Paul not to go on to Jerusalem (Acts 21:4 ESV).

[189] 10While we were staying for many days, a prophet named Agabus came down from Judea. 11 And coming to us, he took Paul's belt and bound his own feet and hands and said, "Thus says the Holy Spirit, 'This is how the Jews at Jerusalem will bind the man who owns this belt and deliver him into the hands of the Gentiles'" (Acts 21:10-11 ESV).

[190] 19Do not quench the Spirit. 20 Do not despise prophecies, 21 but test everything; hold fast what is good (1 Thessalonians 5:19-21 ESV).

4. 1 Corinthians 14:29-38[191]

Paul is teaching on order for the prophetic in his absence. He suggests that two or three prophets speak and then others "weigh what is said" (1 Cor. 14:29). Grudem also quotes 14:36-38, showing Paul's challenge that no one spoke God's very words, indicating that none there heard God above others. Furthermore, he shows how Paul reminds them of his apostolic authority in claiming that he was giving a command from the Lord, and it was not to be questioned.

For cessationists to argue the inerrancy and vitality of scripture to guide and direct believers and yet hold fast to the doctrine of cessation, they must ignore the above scriptures. Including many others, such as the closing scriptures of 1 Corinthians 14, to maintain their stance. "So, my brothers, earnestly desire to prophesy, and do not forbid speaking in tongues. But all things should be done decently and in order" (1 Corinthians 14:39-40 ESV).

The Problem with Applied Practice

"And the tempter came and said to him, 'If you are the Son of God, command these stones to become loaves of bread.' But he answered, 'It is written, 'Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God'" (Matthew 4:3-4 ESV). In overcoming temptation, Jesus modeled the applied practice of hearing and responding to the voice of God. Scripture makes it clear that "the apostles and the laity of the Early Church

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[191] 1 Corinthians 14:29-38 ESV) [29] Let two or three prophets speak, and let the others weigh what is said. [30] If a revelation is made to another sitting there, let the first be silent. [31] For you can all prophesy one by one, so that all may learn and all be encouraged, [32] and the spirits of prophets are subject to prophets. [33] For God is not a God of confusion but of peace. As in all the churches of the saints, [34] the women should keep silent in the churches. For they are not permitted to speak, but should be in submission, as the Law also says. [35] If there is anything they desire to learn, let them ask their husbands at home. For it is shameful for a woman to speak in church. [36] Or was it from you that the word of God came? Or are you the only ones it has reached? [37] If anyone thinks that he is a prophet, or spiritual, he should acknowledge that the things I am writing to you are a command of the Lord. [38] If anyone does not recognize this, he is not recognized. (1 Corinthians 14:29-38 ESV).

expected to hear God speak in a variety of ways alongside Scripture."[192] Scripture also "does not exhaust" the many ways God can communicate to us.[193] Paul instructs us to be led by the Spirit; what does that look like other than hearing Him and trusting His guidance according to the His role?[194] Cessationists would have to agree with situational revelation and following the leading of the Spirit, since in their view, revelation by the Spirit is the only way for individuals to come to a saving knowledge of Christ.[195]

The applied practice of prophecy cannot add to Scripture because it is on the one hand, situational; it is the Lord giving revelation internally or through the loving intervention of another from the Body of Christ, as an expression of God's concern for our personal lives. On

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[192] Gary S. Greig and Kevin N. Springer, *The Power of the Cross: The Biblical Place of Healing and Gift-Based Ministry in Proclaiming the Gospel* (Ventura, CA: Regal Books, 1993), 389-390. This is a pre-release version used by permission, the published reference is: *The Kingdom and the Power: Are Healing and the Spiritual Gifts Used by Jesus and the Early Church Meant for the Church Today?,* eds., Gary S. Greig and Kevin Springer (Ventura: CA, Regal Books, 1993).

"How do claims of no continuing revelataion in the Church explain the ongoing work of God through prophetic revelation in the Church according to Rom. 12:6; I Cor. 12:10, 28; 14:1, 4-5, 22, 24, 29-31, 39; Eph. 4:11; I Thess. 5:19-21, etc.? Did Stephen, a layman, not need an additional prophetic vision of Jesus in heaven in Acts 7:55? Did Philip, a layman, not need an additional word from God through the angel of the Lord or from the Holy Spirit in Acts 8:26, 29? Did Ananias, a layman, not need an additional revelation from God about praying for Saul in Acts 9:10-12? Did Peter not need the additional revelation from God through a vision and a direct word from the Spirit in Acts 10:9-19? Did the church at Antioch not need an additional word from the Lord about Paul and Barnabas in Acts 13:1-3? Did the Early Church not need an additional word from God through Agabus about the imminent famine in Acts 11:27-28? Did Paul not need the additional revelation in the vision of the Macedonian man in Acts 16:9-10 or in the vision at Corinth in Acts 18:9? Did the Ephesian disciples not need the additional prophetic words God put in their mouths when Paul prayed for them in Acts 19:5-6? Did the church of Caesarea not need the additional revelation God gave it through Philip's daughters (Acts 21:8-9)? Did the believers in the Early Church not need "the fellowship of the Holy Spirit" (2 Cor. 13:14), which certainly involves the Spirit speaking and communicating with believers, as the following passages show: Matt. 10:19-20; Lk. 2:25-29; 12:11; Jn. 16:13-14; Acts 8:29; 10:13-19; 11:7-12; Rom. 8:16.

One could go on and on--Acts 20:23 (prophetic messages to Paul "in every city"); 21:10-11 (prophecy of Agabus to Paul); 21:17-18 and 23:11 (words from the Lord to Paul); 27:23-24 (angel of the Lord to Paul); Rom. 12:6 and I Cor. 12:10, 28; 14:1, 4-5, 22, 24, 29-31, 39 and Eph. 4:11 and I Thess. 5:19-20 (ongoing prophetic revelation in the church); etc."

[193] Greig and Springer, *The Power of the Cross*, 390.

[194] See Galatians 5:18 (ESV); John 16:8-15 (ESV).

[195] Wayne Grudem, "*Should Christians Expect Miracles Today? Objections and Answers from the Bible*," in Greig and Springer, *The Power of the Cross* 72.

the other hand, it does not add to scripture because it is of lesser authority than scripture and tested by scripture.[196] In His great love and grace, God has provided the complete canon of Scripture as a plumb line to test the congruency of a prophetic revelation to determine its value.

This is a point that needs to be discussed further as there is a question of continuity regarding cessationist perspective on revelation and the appearance of incongruency with the practice of revelation in their own camp. Dispensationalism, which remains a key component in cessationist history, is never challenged as revelation. Even though its genesis is the same as modern revelatory practice amongst continuationists, a practice that is looked down upon by the cessationist camp. Furthermore, accusations around Bible translations or paraphrases as "NAR" Bibles, falls into the realm of hypocrisy considering heavily influenced dispensational notes of the Scofield and MacArthur Bibles. There exists a case to add this as: The Fourth Problem - Inconsistency of Doctrinal Integrity. It would appear that revelation, revelatory biblical notes, and interpretation are only admissible when they fit into accepted cessationist doctrinal parameters.

The Problem of Promise

The third problem that the cessationist argument must overcome against prophetic revelation being active amongst believers today is that God simply promises it upon the outpouring given at Pentecost:

> But this is what was uttered through the prophet Joel:
> "And in the last days it shall be, God declares, that I will pour out my Spirit on all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams; even on my male servants and female servants in those days I will pour out my Spirit, and they shall prophesy" (Acts 2:16-18 ESV).

[196] Grudem, "*Should Christians Expect Miracles Today?*", 69.

Ruthven's assertion is consistent with scripture stating that cessationism "strikes at the very heart of biblical revelation—at the core message of the Bible: that the normative pattern for God and man is the goal of immediate, direct revelation as the essential part of the intimate, divinely-ordained relationship, so that 'I will be their God and they shall be my people' (Jer. 31:33)."[197]

Blind Spots

It is unlikely that critics of the NAR's governmental belief of apostolic structure or five-fold apostolic function will become its champions any time soon. However, the next generation of leaders is less inclined to lean into denominational and doctrinal lanes as the primary motivator for fellowship. As Rev. Heath Adamson shared, believers today will follow a leader before they will follow a belief system, being attracted to a leader's style and, sometimes, social media presence, thus allowing that leader to influence their belief system.[198]

This inclination is both advantageous and disadvantageous to the five-fold. It may be beneficial because doctrine is not necessarily the prohibitor it was in the past. Effective, innovative, Christ-centered, apostolic leaders can attract people into a five-fold environment. The disadvantage is that people are attracted to charismatic, innovative leaders in what is trumpeted as an apostolic ministry. However, it may be an effective leader who is simply operating in the gift of leadership, hence the dangers of merely applying apostolic governing authority to one who has the grace to lead but not oversee.[199] With these thoughts in mind, there are several blind spots within the NAR tenets requiring consideration.

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[197] Ruthven, *On the Cessation*, Preface.

[198] Heath Adamson, interview by author, 20 February 2020.

[199] Todd Atkinson, interview with author, 27 February 2020.

Blind Spot: Ecclesiological Evolution

Classic Pentecostal movements, like the Assemblies of God, or the Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada, recognize the value of the five-fold function and consider that the governmental structure of the Church has evolved since the first century.[200] Although affirming the presence, value, and expression in the gifts, the PAOC would refrain from appointing individuals into the "office" role of the gift, stating that was not the intent of the Ephesians 4 text.[201]

These positions would be echoed by the Assemblies of God in their "End Time Revival Spirit-Led and Spirit-Controlled" statement from 11 August 2000 highlights Ephesians 4:11-12.[202] Considering these positions, perhaps the pattern of governing needs to be re-branded as "leadership grace." Nordin shares how the International Coalition of Apostles changed its name

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[200] "Contemporary attempts to understand a New Testament apostolic role and function are based primarily on historical passages of Scripture that, while describing New Testament practice, do not prescribe a singular ecclesiology for the future Church. The New Testament was not written with the intent of developing the role of apostles and how they relate to the mission of the Church." William Griffin, ed., *Contemporary Apostles and the Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada* (paper presented at the general executive meeting of the Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada, November 2002), 1-2, Online: https://paoc.org/docs/default-source/church-toolbox/position-papers/contemporary-apostles/contemporary-apostles.pdf?sfvrsn=d6f196a_2. [06 March 2020].

[201] In the position paper, R.E. McAlister, one of the founders of the PAOC, who wrote an article written in 1949, "Apostles - True or False," as a response to the Latter Rain movement in North Battleford, is quoted. There was a relative continuity in issue. Much the same perspective was written regarding the prophetic and prophets: "The New Testament speaks of this equipping ministry as a gifted individual whose function is to assist in maturing believers, rather than an 'office,' that is, an assigned position of authority, as was the case with the prophets in the Old Testament."

[202] "Structure set up to avoid a previous structure can soon become dictatorial, presumptuous, and carnal while claiming to be more biblical than the old one outside the new order or organization. Proponents of apostles/prophets leadership stop too soon in their reading of the Ephesians 4 passage, overlooking the high calling of every office and minister of the Church." General Council of the Assemblies of God, *End Time Revival: Spirit- Led and Spirit-Controlled* (paper presented to the General Presbytery of the Assemblies of God, 11 August 2000). Online: https://ag.org/Beliefs/Position-Papers/Revival-Endtime-Revival--Spirit-Led-and-Spirit-Controlled. [07 March 2020].

to the International Coalition of Apostolic Leaders to distancing itself from governmental language.[203]

Blind Spot: Western Centric Thought

Much of the criticism and challenges come from a Western mindset towards authority. What detractors fail to consider in their critique is that other cultures respond to spiritual leadership differently. Adamson shared that in the Western Church, attendees do not often ask "What do I believe?" but rather, "How do I want to believe?" which leads to making choices about style and expression versus doctrine and belief.[204] This attitude of belief begs the question if people are following celebrity leaders or following Christ?

Blind Spot: Persecution versus Popularity

One unique element that is not addressed at present is the danger of a leader's tendency to be deceived by popularity and perceived influence within the body of Christ at large. Church structure is regionally influenced. Cultural and regional anomalies are at play throughout the world, so one model is not necessarily a cut and dry fit. What is effective in North America is not effective in China. God reserves the right to manifest His ways uniquely to the needs of any region.

For example, it appears that regional persecution protects Type 1 apostles to stay on track in their ministries while possessing a great deal of authority.[205] Necessity requires that they remain hidden. That hiddenness is a safer place for a hierarchal apostolate to flourish as the

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[203] Phil Nordin, interview.

[204] Heath Adamson, interview.

[205] An example of this would be the Chinese underground church.

trappings of popularity are removed simply to stay on mission and safe. At the same time, the Type 3 apostolic model spoken of by Hirsch and Catchim is working profoundly in the Middle Eastern Churches, where the five-fold charisms are being developed within the believers to be apostolic, prophetic, pastoral, evangelistic, and teachers.[206]

Re-traditioning

The five-fold ministry's importance is evident simply by its inclusion in scripture and, therefore, cannot be ignored.[207] However, criticism over the five-fold is very strong. Thus, there is a need for (as Rev Heath Adamson calls it) "re-traditioning," and perhaps reformation, within the present Charismatic movement concerning our current understanding and expression of the five-fold.[208] The opponents to the New Apostolic Reformation, and their criticisms affect what Lindemann would refer to as the middle-stream of believers—those who would be Spirit-filled evangelicals, classic Pentecostals, and conservative charismatics, and who would possess a somewhat opened mind toward the five-fold. Still, the abuses of the past cause them to be cautious.[209]

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[206] FAI Studios, "Sheep Amongst Wolves Volume 2" FAI studios, August 23, 2019, accessed March 1, 2021, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9SAPOLKF59U&t=3845s

[207] Rob Lindemann, interview with author, 08 March 2020.

[208] Heath Adamson, "Succession in Ministry in the Assemblies of God USA: What psychographic variables shape the belief system of the AG USA millennial Christian leaders and what is its impact on leadership?" (Doctoral thesis, Goldsmiths University of London, 2019), 335, https://research.gold.ac.uk/26811/1/STaCS_Thesis_AdamsonH_2019.pdf

[209] Rob Lindemann, interview. The value in re-traditioning our Five-Fold expression would open the door for the middle-stream to engage the Five-Fold's power. It could tip the scales for a greater expression of the Five- Fold within the Body of Christ as a whole.

Non-Spirit Stream	Middle Stream	Charismatic Stream
Non Charismatic Cessationist CLOSED World View to the Spirit	Spirit Filled Evangelical, Classic Pentecostal, Conservative charismatic SOMEWHAT OPEN World View to the Spirit	Charismatic, Independent Charismatic OPEN World View to the Spirit

Figure 1. Definitions of non-Spirit, middle-stream, and charismatic streams.

If a sustained move of God is to be experienced the five-fold perspective will need to evolve to include the middle-stream and the next generation of leaders. In his thesis, Heath Adamson writes, "The inclusivity AG USA Millennial leaders seek was present at Azusa and in Acts 2. The religious innovation or re-traditioning of Peter found in Acts 2 and by AG USA pioneers at Azusa is needed in this current intergenerational transition of leadership if AG USA will address the contemporary issues its Millennials value (Molenaar, 2014; Kerr, 1913; Menzies, 1971)."[210]

In following the leading of the Lord, Adamson's assertion is Hezekiah re-traditioned what Israel's spiritual father, Moses, had built in obedience to God. There is a hint about the change's purpose as the "people of Israel made offerings to it."[211] Consider it as outdated honor to a form

[210] Adamson, *Succession in Ministry*, 335.

[211] Heath Adamson, interview. In our interview Adamson, brilliantly defined re-traditioning through the connection between Moses, Hezekiah, and the bronze serpent. In Numbers 21, as instructed by God, Moses fashions a bronze serpent to heal the snake bites amongst the people. [8] "And the Lord said to Moses, 'Make a fiery serpent and set it on a pole, and everyone who is bitten, when he sees it, shall live.' [9] So Moses made a bronze serpent and set it on a pole. And if a serpent bit anyone, he would look at the bronze serpent and live" (Numbers 21:8-9 ESV). Later, Hezekiah, doing what was right in the eyes of the Lord, destroyed the bronze serpent that Moses had built, being told by God to destroy it. [3] "And he did what was right in the eyes of the Lord, according to all that David his father had done. [4] He removed the high places and broke the pillars and cut down the Asherah. And he broke in

of the past needing to be revised and re-traditioned for the sake of following God's pathway in the present. Re-traditioning would not mean that we simply tear down every structure from the past but rather recognize when it is time to examine a structure to ensure we are not serving a structure versus serving the Spirit.

Scripture points to two similar examples of re-traditioning where the prophets Isaiah and Joel speak of similar imagery in opposite fashions:

> Proclaim this among the nations:
> Consecrate for war; stir up the mighty men. Let all the men of war draw near; let them come up. Beat your plowshares into swords and your pruning hooks into spears; let the weak say, "I am a warrior" (Joel 3:9-10 ESV).

Isaiah offers the same image but oppositely:

> He shall judge between the nations, and shall decide disputes for many peoples;
> and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks;
> nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore (Isaiah 2:4 ESV).

Both prophets are pointing to the re-traditioning of items for warfare and harvest. One was pointing to a people of peace transitioning to war, the other from a people of war transitioning to peace. However, in both cases, the tools of the activity are being re-traditioned for a different purpose. While the "closed world view" of the critics is unlikely to change, five-fold proponents have an opportunity to determine what "swords" can be beaten to "plowshares" and refine expression and influence the "Middle Stream" towards a greater "open worldview."

Don Williams shared a message for the Society of Vineyard scholars' opening session in 1986 in Anaheim, CA. He spoke to several challenges that the Third Wave doctrine brought to

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pieces the bronze serpent that Moses had made, for until those days the people of Israel had made offerings to it" (2 Kings 18:3-4 ESV).

the forefront as defining criteria lost in previous moves of the Spirit.[212] His message calls out to the present five-fold culture as a "constitutional" reminder of where the current five-fold expression was birthed. His whole message is a reminder of upholding apostolic continuity. Highlighted below are four vital apostolic reminders that bear witness to today.

The first is that the Third Wave recovered functional biblical authority, meaning there is no canon within the canon. The Bible must always remain the final authority, and philosophy must fit within its narrative, not the other way around.[213] Second, he shares that the Third Wave demands the fruit of biblical theology, his challenge being that we must not try to fit Jesus into our context but rather fit ourselves into His.[214] Third, "the locus of authority is not fundamentally ecclesiological."[215] His meaning was that authority does not lie in the Church's traditions, nor is it in the psychological—it is not resting on the charismatic personality of its leader. It does not rest in the economic or political realm or, said differently, the alliances between power and money. It is entirely Christological. Jesus alone is the locus of authority.[216] Fourth, Williams establishes the link between the release of the laity into ministry and the five-fold function,

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[212] Don Williams and Mike Raburn. "Don Williams: Theological Implications of the Third Wave," 9 July 2015. https://mikeraburn.com/2015/07/09/don-williams-theological-implications-of-the-third-wave/. [20 February

[213] Williams, "Third Wave." Williams beautifully states, "Revelation begins with a critique of philosophy and that the Word of God must be set free from philosophical control. Once this takes place, then God can speak for Himself, and He is no longer dominated by philosophy that determines in advance what we will discover from the Scriptures."

[214] Williams, "Third Wave." "And what does this force us then to? It forces us to a recovery of the marvelous Gospel of the sheer mercy and grace of God given to us in Jesus Christ. And rather than human nature being exalted, Christ is exalted as His work is proclaimed."

[215] Williams, "Third Wave."

[216] Williams, "Third Wave." Williams shares, "Once we submit to His Lordship, we're then under His authority. It's not our authority. We respond to His call, to His ministry, not our ministry. We are anointed by His Spirit, in His name, for His ministry, not our ministry, and by faith we exercise both the authority and the power of His ministry in the life of the church. A recovery, then, of the Christological locus for the authority of ministry."

according to Third Wave nomenclature.[217] He shares this most powerful statement, "The Third Wave is calling the church to do what the Reformation promised and never fulfilled, namely, the priesthood of all believers."[218]

Thoughts come back into frame from interviews with Rob Lindemann and Heath Adamson, in consideration of re-traditioning the five-fold perspective, to consider the open or closed world view in light of what Williams shared those years ago.[219] Alan Hirsch's world view of the five-fold revealed in his book *5Q* moves it toward function over a position.[220] An important and often overlooked understanding of Kingdom principles is that they are held in tension with a "both/and" ideal versus an "either/or" mindset.[221] Consequently, function and authority are connected to bring balance and order to the five-fold.

Hirsch gives an exegetical breakdown of Ephesians 4 with a passionate reminder that the ascension gifts are provided as a gift and as a whole package. Thus, we receive more than the pastor and teacher; we welcome all five; apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers for our benefit.[222] With William's message in mind, Adamson's and Lindemann's reminder of the

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[217] Williams, "Third Wave."

[218] Williams, "Third Wave."

[219] Rob Lindemann, interview; Heath Adamson, interview.

[220] "Ephesians 4 understands ministry as given to the entire Body (v. 7), not just to leaders—leadership is not even mentioned in the text. Sadly, churches miss this point and approach Ephesians 4 as a leadership text, which inevitably seems to engender fractious political disputes, dysfunction, and even church splits. As far as I can tell, just about every time the "power-understanding" of Ephesians 4 predominates, it inevitably leads to an ecclesial bus crash." Alan Hirsch, *5Q: Reactivating the Original Intelligence and Capacity of the Body of Christ* (100 Movements, 2017), Appendix 2, Kindle.

[221] Principles of the kingdom are held in tension to protect from out of balance living. Generosity and prosperity are linked, serving and leading are linked. In other words, one perspective is generally given a counterweight so one can live in balance and blessing can overtake a believer without overruling them.

[222] Hirsch, *5Q*, chap. 1.

difference between an open or closed world view, and re-traditioning as a challenge, Hirsch's functional argument, and the desire to be "both/and" in our thinking, the following are the author's recommendations to re-tradition the present five-fold perspective for the sake of seeing it continue to mature.[223]

Recommendations for Reforming the Apostolic

1. Revisiting Ephesians 2 and 4, and 1 Corinthians 12 text in the context of governance versus governmental position in contrast with Matthew 20:25-28 and 1 Timothy 3.

Suppose William's call to not look at the scripture through the lens of philosophy but rather the philosophy through the lens of the scripture is taken seriously. Then consideration to revisit the texts that point to the gifts, their order, and the posture of their proper expression is necessary.[224] Bishop Atkinson contends that the present charismatic movement has moved away from the Ephesians 4 text, leaning more toward authority and governmental structure, and he would disagree with that posture. However, he holds an extremely high value for the charismatic; he considers himself charismatic and desires the Five-Fold's fullness to be released.[225] Lindemann would add that both Ephesian texts and the 2 Corinthian texts do not speak of government.[226] As shared earlier, the PAOC and AG position papers on the apostolic, the

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[223] It is important to note here that the open or closed world view mindset that Lindemann is talking about is based on whether we are open or closed to discussing our present perspective and structures to determine whether course correction, adaptation, or reformation is necessary as we seek God for what seems right to the Holy Spirit and to us.

[224] If we are to operate in the same integrity that we challenge the cessationist protagonists to operate in, we must remove the *a priori* of governmental structure from our hermeneutic.

[225] Todd Atkinson, Interview. I want to stress that Bishop Atkinson holds the charismatic in very high esteem. This criticism is out of a desire for the depth of what the gifts have to offer the body of Christ to not be lost in simple pursuit of governmental authority.

[226] Rob Lindemann, Interview. I would liken it to when we see someone operating prophetically, we often warn them that operating prophetically does not mean they possess the office of prophet. In the same way, a person showing apostolic gifting in leadership does not equate to government.

governmental perspective of the Five-Fold is being challenged and challenged biblically from Spirit-filled middle-stream denominations. Therefore, a healthy examination is appropriate for creating inclusive language for title, function, and practice so that governance is established and governing is not lost.[227]

Allowing for the examination of the above scriptures through a more open view would provide latitude for Spirit-led direction to potential swords or plowshares that may need to be re-traditioned.[228] Such evaluation of present thought regarding governing offices from the biblical narrative would respond to Wagner's challenge in "*Churchquake*," where he wrote of the "Constant Need for New Wineskins" and "What to Keep and What to Change." This manner of pursuit of biblical accountability would prove the New Apostolic Reformation is not above Wagner's challenge.[229]

2. Establishing a healthy Apostolic Gospel Continuity in line with Galatians 2:1-10.

Bishop Atkinson shares an element of the Apostle Paul's journey in the light of continuity. It starts from considering how Paul managed his call in Galatians 2:1-10.[230] In this

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[227] I want to stress that I firmly believe in the governing call of the Five-Fold gifts, and don't believe it should be lost, just better explained and managed for the sake of the middle stream finding traction in language and practice. The necessity for clear language around title is paramount as many fundamentalists use this as an 'ad hominem' tactic to create a wide range labelling of all those who would hold Apostle as a title as ones assuming "super apostle" status. The attack itself is rubbish, however without clarity this attack is empowered to deceive the middle stream. It must be continually and clearly stated that no one is assuming ascension to the role of the twelve, which would assume rights to add to canon, and to provide accountability to those who think they are ascending to that measure of authority. Which they are not.

[228] These narrative challenges the present consideration of apostolic governmental posturing by seeing the text from a perspective of Jesus being revealed through the gifts not just simply governing by them, thus adding the substance of Christocentric governance in style to the form of government over the body.

[229] C. Peter Wagner, *Churchquake* (Ventura, CA: Regal Books, 1999), 15-19.

[230] Galatians 2:1-2 (ESV) 1 Then after fourteen years I went up again to Jerusalem with Barnabas, taking Titus along with me. [2] I went up because of a revelation and set before them (though privately before those who seemed influential) the gospel that I proclaim among the Gentiles, in order to make sure I was not running or had not run in vain.

scripture, we see the activation of the continuity of the Gospel in Paul's apostolic ministry. Atkinson would refer to this as the "Apostle's teaching" that the new believers were "continually devoting" themselves to Acts 2:42.[231] His point is that unity in the Spirit is not limited to relationships within the Body alone but also to the Body over time.[232] Part of the apostolic call is to maintain a connection to the Gospel's potency in its originality.[233] Lining up with William's points formerly shared, Alain Caron wrote, "He is the Sent One of the Father, the great Apostolos of our faith. He is and must remain the center."[234] Jesus must remain the central character of our ministry.

Paul's example guards the five-fold movement in its integrity with the Gospel. It avoids the promotion of apostolic titles to people in governing roles because they are simply gifted, innovative leaders as the gift of leadership does not necessarily guarantee spiritual authority. Instead, it creates accountability to the authenticity of their gospel message versus just being visionaries.[235] In other words, there is an apostolic urgency to ensure current, creative, innovative leadership and vision is wholly connected to the original message of Jesus. It is not about control of vision or expression; it is about maintaining the message's authenticity. At the same time, the authentic, powerful statement is made current, creative, through innovative leadership.[236]

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[231] Acts 2:24 NASB.

[232] Todd Atkinson, Interview.

[233] Todd Atkinson, Interview.

[234] Alain Caron, *Apostolic Centers* (Gatineau, Quebec: Hodos, 2013), 16.

[235] I do not suggest a return to a "line of Bishops" practice; however, I do see the value in the continuity of the gospel, and I feel that is an apostolic responsibility.

[236] This could feel like a return to old ways but rather I would submit it releases a greater move of the Holy Spirit because of the price paid by present apostolic leaders to preserve the original Gospel message of signs and wonders, healing and power evangelism, and deliverance ministries. All of which point to the original gospel.

3. Scrutinize systems of accountability amongst Apostles and Apostolic Networks.

In his book *Churchquake*, Wagner shared concern about the vigor of the systems of accountability that existed amongst present apostolic networks at the time of its writing. However, he shares in *Apostles Today* that the accountability structures amongst apostles and apostolic networks had grown and evolved in their scope and effectiveness, providing healthy systemic examples of accountability structures in some networks.[237]

Hirsch writes, "By breaking up, or bypassing, or purging the fivefold typology, the Church has damaged its God-given capacity to heal and perfect itself! This is why we have never managed to mature or grow up and fulfill all that God has intended for us as mature expressions of His kingdom on earth."[238]

However, this maturity is modeled. Ian Byrd shares how it is up to the individual to choose healthy relationships that create space for accountability in sharing leadership challenges in the Life Links network.[239] Atkinson agrees, stating that he is a part of a group of bishops, where accountability is embraced and effective. He referred to this as "apostolic collegiality"—that apostles are not called unto themselves, but they are a part of a company.[240] The original group was referred to as "the twelve."[241] Has the creation of space for connection, accountability,

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[237] Wagner, *Churchquake*, 122; Wagner, *Apostles Today*, 19, 91-97. I would submit that it is a natural desire amongst Godly leaders not to walk alone. I would only challenge that those systems be scrutinized, not out of lack of trust, but for the sake of presenting a common, authentic Gospel and for health and unity modeled through the five-fold to the greater body.

[238] Hirsch, *5Q*, chap. 1.

[239] Ian Byrd, interview with author,19 February 2020.

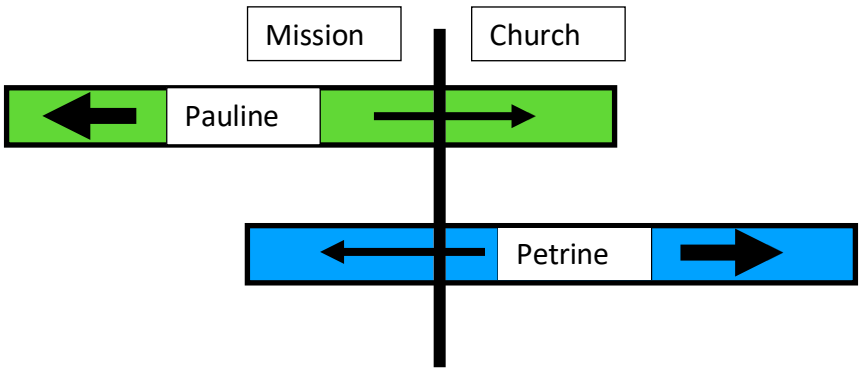
[240] Todd Atkinson, interview.

[241] Acts 6:2 ESV, 1 Cor 15:5 ESV, are examples.

and collegiality been adequately pursued? Gagne points out the necessity of collegiality as vital to protecting people, providing them with a concrete answer for their leader's accountability.[242]

4. Identifying "Pauline, Petrine," along with Wagner's "Horizontal and Vertical" Apostolic Offices versus Leadership Grace.[243]

Hirsch defines Pauline and Petrine apostles in a fashion that would reflect Wagner's Foundational and Reformational apostles.[244] While these distinctions reflect the nuance of the individual's distinctive calling, personality, and context, it is not a one-dimensional call but a leaning toward either the Church or to the world.[245] Pauline and Foundational apostles are boundary breakers, with pioneering missional focuses, to go to the world in innovative ways and bring lost souls to the Church.[246] Petrine and Reformational leaders look to regain and reframe the local Church to be missional, focusing the majority of effort and skill toward equipping the body towards the mission.[247]



[242] Andre Gagne, interview.

[243] Hirsch and Catchim, *The Permanent Revolution*, chap 6; Wagner, Apostles Today, 88.

[244] Wagner, *Apostles Today,* 88; Hirsch and Catchim, *Permanent Revolution,* 119.

[245] Hirsch and Catchim, *Permanent Revolution*, 121.

[246] Hirsch and Catchim, 122-123; Wagner, 88.

[247] Wagner, 89; Hirsch and Catchim, 123-124.

Figure 2. Visual of Hirsch's definition of Pauline and Petrine based on my interpretation.

Wagner also discusses what he would call vertical and horizontal apostles, whose anointings would carry differing "metrons" of influence.[248] Wagner identifies stewardship of authority well in *Apostles Today*, reminding leaders that they could stand to improve their understanding of "apostolic spheres."[249]

Language should be created and affirmed around these different leadership graces within the five-fold context. Moving away from governing language and leaning into gifting language, understanding that governing is a part of the gift but not its guaranteed outcome.

Conclusions: We are Commissioned

This paper examined the cessationist challenge to the continuation of the charismata and the five-fold in its expression post the apostolic age and critiqued the "straw man" nature of modern denunciation of charismatic expression. It challenged the detractors' arguments' inconsistencies and addressed four critical points of contention among the NAR critics. They are the assumption of great authority, dominionism, the requirement of apostolic unity, giving extra attention to the challenge of prophetic revelation holding the authority of canon, based on the premise of the continuation of the gifts of the Spirit. It then concluded by presenting areas of "retraditioning" in the NAR movement and, where accurate, pointed out blind spots of leadership and praxis.

There is revitalization to be found in widening the lanes of the five-fold *domas* in consideration of three outlets of expression the first being the contextual, cultural outlet. If

[248] See 2 Corinthians 10:13 ESV.

[249] Wagner, 76.

viewed through a lens of context and culture, the five-fold would take on a unique expression. The apostle speaks into what culture should look like, its values, vision mission concerning the context of the ministry's location and who they are reaching.[250] It sets the ministry's cultural standard. The prophet speaks into what the culture will evolve into based on the future, not mystically alone but conditionally and giving elements of directional cues. The teacher breaks down the culture's tenets, makes them understandable, and provides a personal application of how the individual can add value to the collaborative culture. The pastor speaks into the localized culture, creating community around the culture, ensuring that the tenets being taught are lived out. Finally, the evangelist puts on display the cultural standards of the community of believers for the peripheral community and serves as an ambassador to the contextual locale. They are proclaiming that the culture is open, not closed. That the culture is not a subculture, it is a counterculture, and as an ambassador, opening the invitation to participate in the culture.[251] This outlet equips the saints through the vision and maturation of the individuals who are a part of the culture.

Second, there is the outlet of grace on a call. There are leaders within the body of Christ who possess grace on their lives. This grace allows them to operate in a *doma* capacity due to the gift of leadership resting on them. These pioneers and reformers are leaders and equippers of people on a grander scale.[252] They travel, establish, empower, and create collegiality and

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[250] Alan Hirsch, *The Forgotten Ways: Reactivating Apostolic Movements* (Brazos Press, 2009), 114, ProQuest Ebook Central, http://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/dtl/detail.action?docID=3117193.

[251] Heath Adamson, interview, italics mine.

[252] Randy Clark, *There is More! The Secret to Experiencing God's Power To Change Your Life* (Minneapolis, MN: Chosen, 2013), 32.

continuity for other leaders.[253] Seen as mothers and fathers, these leaders possess a recognized metron of spiritual authority that has a broader effect and naturally attracts other leaders to themselves. This outlet equips the saints through developing leaders, impartation, relationships, networks, organization, and ministries.

Third is the outlet of the five-fold believer. As earlier shared, the Middle Eastern Church is growing as people are trained and equipped to revelation the five-fold Jesus. They are becoming apostolic, prophetic, evangelistic, pastoral, and they can teach and disciple. This outlet prepares the laity to live out the mission of the Gospel in their context. *Doma* leaders guide them to follow the Holy Spirit's leading in all five gifts for the sake of releasing the Kingdom of Heaven through their lives. This outlet equips the saints by preparation for and participation in ministry in their personal and corporate context.

In conclusion, the expression of the five-fold *domas* by virtue of scriptural inclusion require attention and room to operate. At the same time, there are various ways that the gifts are manifest. All leaders with integrity would want to follow the mandate of bringing the body of Christ into maturity and equipping it for the work of the ministry.[254] Our awareness towards the context of these gifts given to the Church is not only to aid in its governance, operation, and development. But also, in its purpose, to go into all the world and make disciples of all nations (Matt. 28:19-20). Let us never, in our pursuit of praxis, forget our purpose.[255]

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[253] Stanley M. Burgess and Gary B. McGee, eds., *Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements* (Grand Rapids, MI: Regency Reference Library, 1988), 14.

[254] See Ephesians 4:13 ESV.

[255] See Matthew 28:19-20 ESV.

Appendix A

Recommendation for the Stewardship of Revelation

Cessationist arguments against the prophetic and revelation essentially rob God's children of having a living conversation with Him. The apostle Paul, however, gives us an example from his revelations how to steward revelation in the following scripture:

> [2] assuming that you have heard of **the stewardship of God's grace** that was given to me for you, [3] how **the mystery was made known to me by revelation**, as I have written briefly. [4] When you read this, you can perceive **my insight into the mystery of Christ**, [5] which **was not made known to the sons of men in other generations** as it has now been revealed to his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit. [6] **This mystery is that the Gentiles are fellow heirs, members of the same body, and partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the Gospel.** Ephesians 3:2-6 (ESV Emphasis mine)

1. Revelation is Not Extra-Biblical- Perceive my insight into the mystery of Christ

Paul shares with the Ephesians that he had received a mystery. A revelation, but it not extra-biblical; it's not something outside of God's nature or character. Instead, it is the uncovering of His nature, and His word confirms it.[256]

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[256] Here Paul receives a revelation from the Lord about the Gentiles. The Spirit reveals to him that they are supposed to receive the gospel as well. God was done with the Law being the bridge of connection with Him. He wanted relationship with all men, not just the Jews. The scriptures Paul would have had access to confirms this revelation. Gagne points out that the majority of New Testament activity was established by Paul and was the result of revelation.

Speaking of Jesus Isaiah writes, "It is too light a thing that you should be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob and to bring back the preserved of Israel; I will make you as a light for the nations, that my salvation may reach to the end of the earth" (Isaiah 49:6 (ESV).

Paul, illumined by the Holy Spirit, saw the greater narrative of scripture pointing to the gospel being proclaimed to the Gentiles.

2. Challenges our Present Understanding-The mystery is that the Gentiles are fellow heirs.

To a Jew and a former pharisee like Paul, this would have been shocking, considering with new insight seeing the scriptures were saying this all along. When God speaks beyond our understanding, He is doing it to protect His word from being corrupted by our understanding.[257]

3. Perfectly Timed- not made known to the sons of men in other generations

God will reveal himself at perfectly timed moments, where there is the convergence of maturity, wisdom, position, location, and relationship to maximize the impact of what He is revealing. An even more profound truth is when we question the timing of God revealing Himself, we question His wisdom.[258]

4. Revelation Must be Stewarded- the stewardship of God's grace given to me for you

Jesus warned us to pay attention to what we hear. "And he said to them, "Pay attention to what you hear: with the measure you use, it will be measured to you, and still more will be added to you. [25]For to the one who has, more will be given, and from the one who has not, even what he has will be taken away"" (Mark 4:24-25 ESV, emphasis mine)

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[257] Furthermore, the point of revelation, the point of mystery, is to change our understanding, not yield to it. It isn't about one's understanding but one coming into understanding.

Revelation can bring change; it's meant to bring more profound connection, authority, anointing, and expression of Him to us and the world through us. However, when our understanding is offended by what God reveals, should we choose to dismiss it, we'll miss out on the power available to us had we walked in the activation of the new understanding.

[258] God will reveal new elements of His nature in perfectly timed moments. The greater issue is what we do with what He reveals.

There has not been a time in the Church's entire history where there is more information and revelation available to the Body of Christ. There is no excuse for any disciple to live in spiritual ignorance with such an abundance of rich teaching and writing in this day and age.[259]

[259] Unfortunately, believers have become more interested in acquiring knowledge than actually applying it. To the consumer, acquisition holds more significant value than application. Revelation simply acquired is fattening; revelation applied is power. Believers in Jesus, have the responsibility to apply what's revealed in the timing it's revealed because there is great purpose in responding to revelation on a matter.

Modern-Day Apostles: Critiques, Corrections, and a Response
by Will Hart

Introduction

Passion for Jesus must be preached; passion for power and authority is not the gospel. Christianity is a person, only one person that means more than anything else. We are called to be nothing so that Jesus can be everything (Gal. 6:3; 1 Cor. 2:2; 1 Pet.1:9). We cannot cling to titles or try to attain a lofty role. The goal is to love Him with all our heart, mind, soul, and strength (Mark 12:30). Our goal is not a strategic position; our goal is Jesus. We are leaving this world going towards Jesus; this world is not our home. We live for a perfect world—Heaven. However, how He chooses to use us in the temporary world is not up to us. All of this is about our attitude towards God. What is Jesus's function in your life? What do you need him for right now today? Is it to grow your church? Numbers? That is ambition. Miracles don't fill your heart; they are tools, not a person. A current twisted view of authority focuses primarily on power and control, not on the relationship. Pursuing a role and a title is equally common in the Church as it is globally; this is not a new story.

In John 9:16, some Pharisees said, “This man is not from God, for he does not keep the Sabbath.” But others said, “How can a man who is a sinner do such signs?” And there was a division among them. Unfortunately, division is far too common in the Church. There are times we need to take a stand and times we need to agree to disagree. We find people in a world of YouTube clips, heresy hunters, personal experiences, rigid orthodoxy, community, and disunity. The diversity of our brothers and sisters in Christ is necessary. As iron sharpens iron, we must fix our eyes on Him.

The term New Apostolic Reformation (NAR) has been widely used in recent years, rarely positively. Name-calling is a cause of division. False NAR nomenclature has become a means of dismissing whole groups of people without delineation. As a disciple, being obedient is foremost, but if you live by the praise of men, you die by their criticism. So many who are called NAR would simply describe themselves as obedient to the call of God. *I read New Apostolic Reformation? A Biblical Response to a Worldwide Movement* by R. Douglas Geivett and Holly Pivec and my personal experiences and relationships with many of the ministers referenced gave me a more transparent lens through which to interpret their critique and conclusions. This paper collects my response and research of blogs, books, podcasts, and websites criticizing those they consider NAR. I have pinpointed the office of the apostle for this paper leaning on my relationships with those accused.

In the book and on Ms. Pivec's blog, many claims are made about the modern-day apostolic movement and the leaders of what they deem part of the NAR. They start their book with this statement:

> The biggest innovation of NAR is the belief that apostles, working together with prophets, must take over governance of the church — taking the reins from the pastors, elders, and denominational leaders — so that God's end-time plans can be fulfilled, and Christ can return. Churches that do not submit to the authority of these present-day apostles and prophets will sit on the sidelines as mere spectators.[260]

Statements like this are entirely fear-based and misrepresent many of those the authors claim to quote. Pivec undergirds the fear-based label of NAR.

[260] Geivett, and Pivec.

First, I genuinely want to thank Douglas Geivett and Holly Pivec. Separate from their books, I also listened to hours of interviews and discussions regarding the NAR and appreciated their integrity and conviction on this topic.[261] I would like to say much of what was brought forth in their critique was accurate. Unfortunately, on the other end of things, many of their conclusions are based on either: 1) improper understanding of the terminology used; 2) lack of personal interviews with those who are labeled as NAR; and 3) putting a higher emphasis on manipulation within the Charismatic movement over the global Church.[262] I fully believe what is relevant about someone's life is not their title; instead, it is how much they love Jesus and are willing to lay their lives down for Him. We need to get closer to Jesus. The problem is some people love titles; they want to be known as an apostle. That is silly. I want Jesus more than anything else.

What is a modern-day apostle?

There is a shared acknowledgment among many Charismatic/Pentecostal denominations that Ephesians 4:11-13 refers to the apostles continuing to function today. I fully understand this view does not align with all. Like many theological differences, not everyone agrees. Nevertheless, the text clearly states and proves why the five-fold is alive and functioning in the Church today. This *doma* is "to equip his people for works of service so that the body of Christ

[261] One of my favorite research moments is when Holly tells her story of not wanting to write this book. She shared her heart of wanting to protect the Body from error. Holly also shared many stories of manipulation and misuse of the prophetic and apostolic. (At the time of publication to Academia, May 2022, Holly, Doug, and I have had numerous encouraging conversations. I admire their questions and welcome more discussions!)

[262] Holly and Douglas, if you ever read this, please know I enjoyed every moment of research, and I can say you have helped bring a clearer understanding to what I believe and where I stand. If one of your goals is to highlight issues, there is more than one raised in your books that I would stand side by side with the two of you and call for correction.

may be built up" (Eph. 4:11-12).[263] Ephesians also provide a time-stamp of the work. We will continue to move in the five-fold, "until we all reach unity in the faith and the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ" (v. 13). Until the Church fully manifests Ephesians 4:9-13, we are still in great need of the five-fold fully functioning in the Church today. Jesus gave these *doma* gifts to the body of Christ. In one sense, He was bestowing aspects of His calling. Jesus was the greatest prophet, teacher, pastor, apostle, and evangelist who ever existed (Heb. 3:1). The five-fold will continue until the eschaton.

Ephesians 2:20 supports the continuation of the modern apostolate. The cessationist perspective continues to relegate the apostolate to the original twelve. Many cessationist scholars agree because Scripture is the foundation and, therefore, the ministry of apostles and prophets has ended. Dr. Ruthven unpacks the cessationist critique of the critical term "foundation." "The term 'foundation' is necessarily a descriptor of a limited period of time. Anyone constituting this 'foundation' cannot function past this 'foundational' time-frame."[264] This stance keeps believers away from their inheritance and continues a culture of the mishandling of Scripture. Jesus is the foundation, and our relationship with Him is ongoing. Ruthven further notes,

> If the 'foundation" is necessarily limited to the first century, then the life and the essential characteristic "Jesus-class" activities, such as regeneration, justification, and sanctification, perforce have ceased and have been reduced to a body of inscripturated doctrine. On the other hand, if Christ is alive and active in His ministry in the Holy Spirit, then the "foundation" must be stretched to include the present time. If either is the case, the cessationist interpretation of Eph. 2:20 fails...[265]

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[263] All Scripture is taken from *The Holy Bible, New International Version* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2005) unless otherwise stated.

[264] Jon Ruthven, *On the Cessation of the Charismata: The Protestant Polemic on Post-Biblical Miracles* (Tulsa: Word & Spirit Press, 2011), Appendix III.

[265] Ruthven, *On the Cessation*, Appendix III.

This stance, as simple as it is, shows the foundation in Ephesians 2:20 refers to the "foundational" means of entering divine fellowship: "No one can confess 'Jesus is Lord!' except by the Spirit." This confession, then, is the "foundation of the apostles and prophets!"[266]

Correctly interpreting Ephesians will either release the Ecclesia into its fullness or remove the Spirit's work through the *doma* gifts. Many prominent cessationist Evangelical scholars like Stott, Grudem, Bruce, Best, and others agree. "Apostles and prophets referred to in Ephesians 2:20 were a unique group who were the foundation or who had laid it; as a result, it was not an ongoing ministry that could ever be repeated."[267]

The term apostle on its own is not a hot topic. However, when heresy hunters, rogue blogs, and YouTube channels are quick to paint everyone they disagree with as a heretic, a breath of fresh air came in the form of Geivett and Pivec's book. Importantly, citations used in their book quote ministers using the word apostle. But more importantly, not all of them use the same definition. You can easily take a minister out of context using the term "apostle" and define their theology, lumping them as NAR—especially if you pick and choose sermons and writings. Nuances and definitions regarding the term apostle are important when calling out errors. To fully understand each camp, we need to ask each leader what their definition is individually. That will accurately represent how they are using the word. I know this is impossible, but this should be the standard before accusing any minister or ministry of holding all NAR beliefs.

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[266] Ruthven, *On the Cessation*, Appendix III.

[267] Benjamin G. McNair Scott, *Apostles Today: Making Sense of Contemporary Charismatic Apostolates: a Historical and Theological Appraisal* (Eugene, OR: Pickwick Publications, 2014), chap. 6.

For example, Holly Pivec makes this statement on her blog: "Heidi Baker[268] does claim to be a modern-day apostle and, thus, is part of the NAR."[269] This view came from Holly after listening to a video of Heidi's testimony. In the video, Heidi explains how Dr. Randy Clark[270] (Founder & President of Global Awakening) prays for an apostolic anointing over her. When Heidi was questioned about this exact moment that Holly used to support her claim, her response was, "Randy was praying for an apostolic anointing. And by that term, I believe it's the biblical term, that an apostolic anointing would come from God, causing me to be 'sent out.'" Heidi continued to say, "...for someone to use the title apostle is in my opinion absurd for me, I would never use that term for myself." When asked, "If somebody called you an apostle, how would you respond?" Heidi responded, "I correct them."[271] There is a definite manipulation of Heidi's words to fit a NAR fear-labeling narrative: The literal definition of a straw-man argument.

The Function of Modern-Day Apostles

The interpretation and the application of the definition are where issues have arisen. I want to focus on the traditional function and more modern governmental oversight purpose and analyze the vast difference of opinion and practice of a modern-day apostle. With the NAR's rise, many Pentecostals/Charismatics are being lumped into Apostolic leadership's stance by the

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[268] Heidi Baker is the Co-Founder & President of Iris Global. A healing evangelist in Mozambique whose efforts have impacted the poorest of the country. For more information on the Baker's and Iris, please visit: https://www.irisglobal.org/about/what-we-do.

[269] Holly Pivec, "Heidi Baker's claim to be an apostle," Holly Pivec (Blog), June 6, 2016, https://www.hollypivec.com/blog/2016/06/heidi-bakers-claim-to-be-an-apostle/5987.

[270] Dr. Clark is known as a healing evangelist with a powerful impartation ministry. For more on Dr. Clark please visit: https://globalawakening.com/about-randy-clark.

[271] Heidi Baker, interviewed by Will Hart, Redding, March 1, 2021, telephone interview.

NAR critics. Therefore, it is essential to drill down to the foundation by examining the teachings of those who support and criticize a modern-day apostolate.

Apostolic language is now commonplace among many denominations; thus, defining the term becomes more complex. Some critics understand this complexity. "Are all Pentecostals charismatic? No, many Pentecostals reject the NAR view on apostles."[272] Unfortunately, many hyper-critics are using the NAR term as a blanket statement to define most continuationists. Many denominations and prominent speakers have reached an opinion and have taken a stance. The Assembly of God denomination has vacillated on the subject and is divided geographically between the United States & Canada and Australia.[273] The Church of God has adopted much of C.P. Wagner's stance in practice but refuses to emphasize it.[274] The International Pentecostal Holiness Church acknowledges that the function of an apostle exists today.[275] The United Pentecostal Church is leery of assigning "apostle" to any person but does not deny the function.[276] John Wimber, the Vineyard leader, and many Third-Wave Evangelicals took a much humbler view of modern apostles. Wimber "actively discouraged the Vineyard from embracing the Latter Rain Beliefs that a 'super breed of apostle' was to emerge in the church."[277] Wimber

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[272] Randy Clark, "Week 1 - BTHE 5283: Renewal Theology" lesson video, "Video 1 - Dr. Randy Clark: Critics Perspective on Beliefs of New Apostolic Reformation" (BTHE 5283: Renewal Theology), from Family of Faith/Global Awakening Seminary, January term 2021, retrieved from https://faithglobal.populiweb.com/router/courseofferings/10507310/lessons/10246400/show.

[273] Benjamin G. McNair Scott, *Apostles Today: Making Sense of Contemporary Charismatic Apostolates: a Historical and Theological Appraisal* (Eugene, OR: Pickwick Publications, 2014), chap. 1.

[274] Scott, *Apostles Today*, chap. 1.

[275] Scott, chap. 1.

[276] Scott, chap. 1.

[277] Scott, chap. 1.

skirted around the discussion, but he was clear that a true apostle is a servant.[278] Wimber personally rejected all attempts to label him an apostle. Wimber responded, "that he would only accept the title if the Lord himself told him and He never did."[279]

Classical Pentecostals have had a unified understanding that the *doma* is for today. They vary from denomination to denomination, but there is a general agreement of the ongoing modern-day apostolate. The International Pentecostal Holiness Church in 2007 affirmed this view but clarified the distinction of foundational and functional apostles.[280] There seems to be general agreement in the ongoing need for modern-day apostles, especially as "sent ones," pioneers, church planters, and missionaries.[281] The International House of Prayer (IHOPKC) states, "There are no individuals with the title or office of prophet or apostle within the IHOPKC leadership team. Further, the IHOPKC leadership team has robust discussions about differing theological interpretations."[282]

Many denominations use the term apostle but do not include Wagner's definition's "governmental" aspect. This authoritative "governmental" stance seems to raise red flags in the hearts of those who adhere to a more straightforward missional definition of an apostle. Wagner furthers his definition to include workplace apostles, calling them the "extended church." Workplace apostles are identified due to their level of wealth. Respect is given to them by way of

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[278] Scott, chap. 1.

[279] Scott, chap. 1.

[280] Scott, chap. 1.

[281] Scott, chap. 1.

[282] International House of Prayer, "What is IHOPKC's Stance on the New Apostolic Reformation," 2021, https://www.ihopkc.org/press-center/faq/ihopkc-part-new-apostolic-reformation/.

the title due to their accomplishments, influence, risk-taking, and "accumulated skills."[283] As understandable as this is, the broadening of the term apostle continues to raise red flags with critics and many Pentecostals and Charismatics. Does relative wealth mark an apostle? Does respect denote an apostle? Does building a business mark an apostle? I believe the call to humility and hiddenness in Matthew 19:30, 20:16, Mark 10:31, Luke 13:30, and Romans 12:3 speaks to something different. Our earthly status adds nothing to our eternal calling — all is given by His grace, not by our works.

Small "a" and big "A" Apostles

Recently I had dinner with a missionary family I have known for years. Sam and his family serve hundreds, possibly thousands, of churches. He has served for over 40 years with his family in the most rural unreached groups. They move from nation to nation, basically owning nothing. Joy, love, and compassion mark their lives, and money is never a part of any conversation. I see more Christlikeness in his family than most. In my opinion, he is a small "a" apostle. He would never take the title; he would never ask to be called an apostle. I believe that if he knew I even referred to him as in this paper, he would be upset; that is why I changed his name.

I agree that the foundational Twelve cannot and will not be repeated. However, the continuation of the small "a" apostle (sent one and missionary) will continue. The term apostle is biblical; however, issues arise with context and definition from those using the term. In addition, the use of this simple word has created much-unneeded division among brothers and sisters in Christ.

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[283] Scott, *Apostles Today*, chap. 3.

Justin Peters, a Baptist evangelist and outspoken critic of the Word of Faith movement, wrestles with the existence of modern-day apostles. The Greek word "apóstolos" means "sent one." However, there are two different kinds of apostles:

1. The Apostle of Christ, meaning the office of an Apostle, with a capital "A," which were the first twelve Apostles. Revelation 21:14 describes New Jerusalem, built on twelve foundations that were named after the twelve Apostles.

2. The apostle of the Church, meaning one who is sent out. In this sense, any evangelist and any missionary is an apostle; we use a lowercase "a."[284]

Paul Washer, teaching online, states that the word missionary comes from "mitto," meaning "to send," which is the equivalent of the word "apóstolos" or apostle.[285] So every time you call someone a missionary, you call them an apostle. Paul Washer asks an important question, "Should we use the term apostle?"[286] I believe we should use the term "messenger." The word apostle is just too interwoven with the Twelve, and we would have to explain ourselves constantly.

Furthermore, using messenger to describe "sent ones" protects from the accusation of being a false apostle, as Washer makes clear.[287] I believe the wisdom in using the term messenger; however, the biblical acknowledgment of the false apostle (2 Cor. 11:13) or prophet also affirms the continuation of the genuine. Lightfoot clarifies the fact that the use of "false apostles" in this passage is revelatory that "… only by such an extension of the office could any

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[284] Paul Washer - Justin Peters, "Are there Modern-Day Apostles?" posted by LordofTheharvest73, February 25, 2019, YouTube video, https://youtu.be/beUrn1_FX8I.

[285] Paul Washer - Justin Peters, "Are there Modern-Day Apostles?"

[286] Paul Washer - Justin Peters, "Are there Modern-Day Apostles?"

[287] Paul Washer - Justin Peters, "Are there Modern-Day Apostles?"

footing be found for the pretensions of the false apostles (2 Cor. 11:13, Rev. 2:2). Had the number been restricted, the claims of these interlopers would have been self-condemned."[288]

Scott, quoting Nee's agreement, writes,

> It seems clear from this verse that the early churches expected to have other apostles apart from the original twelve, because, when the book of Revelation was written, John was the only survivor of the twelve, and by that time even Paul had already been martyred. If there were to be only twelve apostles, and John was the only one left, then no one would have been foolish enough to pose as an apostle, and no one foolish enough to be deceived, and where would have been the need to try them?[289]

Biblical authors were not scared to use the term acknowledging the continuation of the genuine small "a" apostle.

John Wimber, who influenced Wagner, beautifully shared his stance. John believed modern apostles are different from the twelve Apostles and Paul's authoritative ministries. "People who were so gifted should not be thought of as apostles. Wimber indicated this distinction by using capitalization: there are no Apostles today (with a big 'A' to suggest an authoritative 'office'), but there are 'apostles' (with a small 'a'), who were akin to missionaries and church planters."[290] Clark shares the same message stating, "Today's apostles don't need to be called 'apostles.' It is their humility that is marking them. Their heart to serve the poor, the sick, the needy, and the broken."[291] We see unity from opposite camps in the definition and focus of the term apostle. Astonishingly, Justin Peters, Paul Washer, John Wimber, and Dr. Randy

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[288] Scott, *Apostles Today*, chap. 6.

[289] Scott, chap. 6.

[290] Scott, *Apostles Today*, chap. 1.

[291] Randy Clark, "Video 1 - Dr. Randy Clark: Critics Perspective on Beliefs of New Apostolic Reformation."

Clark appear to agree on the definition of modern-day apostles. We might have more in common than most critics believe.

When C.P. Wagner became a leading voice for the apostolic leadership structure, many Pentecostals and Charismatics adopted his views. Wagner defines an apostle (small "a") as "a Christian leader gifted, taught, commissioned, and sent by God with authority to establish the foundational government of the church within an assigned sphere and spheres of ministry by hearing what the Spirit is saying to the churches and by setting things in order accordingly for the expansion of the kingdom of God."[292] Randy Clark, who is famously labeled NAR by almost every critic, shares the same message: "Today's apostles do not need to be called 'apostles.'"[293]

Blatant Danger in the Apostolic Fringe

I would like to take note that some have adapted, in my opinion, a dangerous view of the apostolic. In the article "Apostles are Generals and Governors," Dr. Ron Cottle uses military vernacular. The militaristic terminology points away from a humble sent one to an authoritative general. The article is taken from the International Coalition of Apostles website. It is essential to acknowledge that they note, "Dr. C. Peter Wagner gave private counsel to John P. Kelly to consider forming an international council. After speaking with other apostolic leaders, Kelly believed it was God's will for him to establish an apostolic coalition. He then organized an internal council and began inviting other apostolic leaders to join ICA (International Coalition of Apostles, the original name of ICAL)."[294] They write, "Jesus did not think or speak Greek, but

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[292] Scott, *Apostles Today*, chap. 3.

[293] Clark, "Video 1 - Dr. Randy Clark: Critics Perspective on Beliefs of New Apostolic Reformation."

[294] Ron Cottle and John P. Kelly, "Apostles, What are They?" International Coalition of Apostolic Leaders, 2015, https://www.icaleaders.com/about-ical/definition-of-apostle?rq=apostles%2C%20what%20are%20they.

Aramaic-Hebrew. He took the Greek word Apostolos because Greek was the universal language of the Roman Empire. But He filled it with the content of the Hebrew Sheliach."[295] They go on to note, Gerhard Kittel says, "The Sheliach (of Jesus) is as good as his Sender in all he says and does in the execution of his mission." Dr. Ron Cottle shares that there are two important expressions; the first is the apostle as the general or governor:

> In 2 Corinthians 10:4, Paul says: 'The weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty': Warfare in this verse is strategy, and it is 'military service.' We are at war, and God has provided equipment (hopla) that is powerful and fit for demolishing enemy fortifications erected against us. All this equipment is most effective under the command of a full representative of the King — an apostle-Sheliach on assignment and under orders. In the NT, this person is a strategos, warrior-strategist, a general, or governor in his assigned sphere.[296] ~~xxx37~~

I have not reached out to the International Coalition of Apostolic Leaders (ICAL), and I do not presume I fully understand what they represent; however, what I read confused me. They claim to be a professional society of apostolic leaders recognized by a significant segment of the Church. I am not a substantial segment of the Church, but I have never heard of ICAL until now. I might have friends who are members; if I do, none of them have told me. I understand why critics gravitate toward this pocket of thought, and this feeds the narrative of an apostle as a controlling and militaristic ruler. In my opinion, many leaders on NAR lists would agree with me.

The Latter Rain movement valued the office of the apostle and took a more hierarchical view of Ephesians 2:20. Dr. Clark relays Erskine Holt's story, who prophetically brought correction to Ma Beale's church, a church within the Latter Rain movement, explaining they had

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[295] Cottle and Kelly, "*Apostles, What are They?*"

[296] Ron Cottle, "Apostles are Generals and Governors," Definition and Description of an 'Apostle,' International Coalition of Apostolic Leaders, 2015, https://www.icaleaders.com/about-ical/definition-of-apostle.

focused too heavily on the structure instead of the function of equipping the saints.[297] I would bet most Charismatic and Pentecostal leaders listed in Pivec's critique would agree that structure and hierarchy have nothing to do with the true definition of apostolic.

Yes, there are apostles today; they have never disappeared. These apostles are sent ones— they lay their lives down and pick up their cross daily. They follow Jesus. They serve, build, and model the Great Commission for the sleeping Church. These are the sent ones, and most will never know their names. These apostolic people run from the spotlight unless, in obedience to Him, they are called upfront. Paul Washer prefers the term messenger. There is wisdom in this. However, God does not pull away from the term because of misuse. I believe John Wimber said it best. Wimber believed the big "A" apostles suggested something different.

Let us define what an apostle is and establish a healthy perspective that defines their role in the Church today. I would like to use John Wimber's big "A" to suggest an authoritative "office," but there are "apostles" (with a small "a") who are akin to missionaries and church planters. If a leader adheres to the sent one definition of small "a" apostle when they say, "marketplace apostle," they would be saying, "You are sent into your job." I have no problem using the term "apostolic anointing." When I use that phrase, it is not that someone will be a new writer of cannon. In my heart, I am saying they are sent ones!

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[297] Randy Clark, "Week 3: BTHE 5283," Video 9 - Latter Rain, Charismatic, Third-Wave, Late 20th- Century Revival" (BTHE 5283: Renewal Theology). From Family of Faith/Global Awakening Seminary, January term 2021 https://faithglobal.populiweb.com/router/courseofferings/10507310/lessons/10246622/show. Dr. Clark details the conversation with Erskine, "I was restoring the apostles and the prophet for the equipping of the saints but because you have been focused on who is an apostle or prophet instead of equipping the saints, for this reason I am lifting my Spirit."

Dominion not Domination

The NAR does exist in the purest form of C. Peter Wagner's definition. It also exists in the imagination of the fearful, but the world-dominating, hyper-controlling, cannon-rewriting, super-apostles equal to the Twelve, take no prisoners NAR is utterly laughable. The fear is that NAR uses dominion theology to take control of the seven societal institutions. Holly Pivec explains that the Seven Mountain Mandate "is a revelation that many prophets in the NAR claim that they received that the way to take dominion of the earth and bring God's physical kingdom to earth before Christ's return is by taking control of the seven major societal institutions."[298]

Postmillennialism was first clearly articulated in America by a man many consider the greatest theologian in American history, New England Congregational pastor Jonathan Edwards (1703-1758). Edwards was a devoted student of Scripture, including the book of Revelation. He also entertained hopes that God might do something special among the people of New England. Edwards was circumspect when revival broke out in his congregation in the 1730s. However, when New England was convulsed by spiritual awakening in the early 1740s, he could not hold back. "'Tis not unlikely that this work of God's Spirit that is so extraordinary and wonderful is the dawning, or at least a prelude, of that glorious work of God, so often foretold in Scripture… And there are many things that make it probable that this work will begin in America."[299]

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[298] Melissa Dougherty, "Talking About Bethel and the New Age: An Interview with Holly Pivec," January 14, 2020, YouTube interview, https://youtu.be/nPAe5l_gifI. Italics mine.

[299] Steven R. Pointer, "*American Postmillennialism: Seeing the Glory*," Christianity Today, 2021, https://www.christianitytoday.com/history/issues/issue-61/dispensational-premillennialism-dispensationalist-era.htm.

Worldwide Christian Dominion

C. Peter Wagner and Bill Hammond cannot claim to be the founders of dominion theology. Not even a single charismatic or Pentecostal can claim that. The father of dominion theology is Rousas John Rushdoony, an American Calvinist philosopher, historian, and theologian credited as the father of Christian Reconstructionism.[300] Christian reconstructionism is viewed as the harsh foundation stones of the modern dominion theology claimed to exist in the NAR. "Rushdoony envisioned the millennial Kingdom as a world empire built from interconnected, self-governing family units, all bound together by their mutual adherence to biblical law and recognition of the ultimate sovereignty of Jesus Christ."[301] Reconstructionist theologian David Chilton succinctly described this view, "The Christian goal for the world is the universal development of biblical theocratic republics, in which every area of life is redeemed and placed under the Lordship of Jesus Christ and the rule of God's Law."[302]

On a Sunday afternoon in 1976, in a time of Q&A, a student asked Rushdoony, "What would happen to a Hindu in a reconstructed America?" "As long as he didn't practice his faith, the Hindu would be fine," Rushdoony responded. "And what if said Hindu did practice his faith?" "Then he'd be guilty of violating the laws of the state." "And?" "And," Rushdoony

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[300] Adam C. English, "*A short Historical Sketch of the Christian Reconstruction Movement," In New Religious Movements and Religious Liberty in America*, eds. Davis Derek and Barry Hankins (Baylor University Press, 2003), 111.

[301] Michael J. McVicar, *Christian Reconstruction: R.J. Rushdoony and American Religious Conservatism* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2015), 138.

[302] Frederick Clarkson, *Eternal Hostility: The Struggle Between Theocracy and Democracy* (Monroe, Me: Common Courage Press, 1997), 78.

concluded, he would "be subject to capital punishment." Silence. The meeting broke up soon afterward.[303]

To this day, Rushdoony's organization continues to share the message through The Chalcedon Foundation, where they educate and are devoted to the research, publishing, and promotion of Christian Reconstruction. In "The Creed of Christian Reconstruction," they state that a Christian Reconstructionist is a Calvinist, Theonomist, Presuppositionalist, Postmillennialist, and Dominionist. This stance, given Rushddoony's comment on capital punishment, is dangerous and completely off-kilter.

This idea is called a theocracy. Wagner rejected this idea and clarified all confusion with his associates. I will acknowledge some fringe movements preach this from the pulpit; however, in 21 years of ministering with many accused of NAR teachers, I have never heard anyone endorse theocracy as the goal.

The Seven Mountain Strategy

The Seven Mountain concept was never a plan for dominion. The idea was born in the heart of a missionary and YWAM founder Lauren Cunningham. It was simply a plan to impact spheres of society through engagement in family, religion, church, education, government, media, celebration, which includes arts, entertainment, and sports, and economics, which includes business, science, and technology. This is the call for Christ to go into all the world; it is not a nefarious plan like Rushdoony's vision of the millennial kingdom as a world empire. To compare a missional vision to world domination is immature and inadequate research.

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[303] McVicar, *Christian Reconstruction*, 140.

In 2010, C. Peter Wagner took this seven spheres concept and renamed it the Seven Mountain Mandate. I will summarize how Holly and Douglas describe this. Many NAR apostles and prophets claim God has revealed a new strategy. According to this revelation, the way to take dominion is by taking control of the seven most influential societal institutions—the so-called "mountains" of government, media, family, business, education, church, and the arts. These institutions are presently dominated by secular humanists and other opinion leaders who do not share God's values. Therefore, the Church must take control of them to fulfill its mandate to advance God's kingdom. The Church's mandate to conquer these seven mountains is often compared to Israel's mandate to conquer seven nations before it could enter the Promised Land (Deut. 7:1).[304]

The healthy critique the authors are attempting to bring has turned into fearmongering. "Take dominion is by taking control of the seven most influential societal institutions" and "The church must take control of them if it's to fulfill its mandate to advance God's kingdom." How does one take control of anything? The only way to have control is to have the power to do so. Such language is scary, and if the authors believe this will be done by force or dominance, they need to listen to more messages by the ones they are claiming desire this.

This point is crucial to understanding the fear set forth by critics. On the one hand, you can hear a message of the apostles working together with prophets to take over governance of the Church! Compound that with the idea that believers will be "controlling" all the spheres of influence, like Israel's mandate to conquer seven nations before it could enter the Promised Land (Deut. 7:1). The picture being painted is absurd and needs to be corrected.

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[304] R. Douglass Geivett and Holly Pivec, *A New Apostolic Reformation? A Biblical Response to a Worldwide Movement* (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2014), chap. 15.

Let's take the words of highly criticized "NAR" pastor Bill Johnson. In 2013, Lance Wallnau and Bill Johnson wrote a book titled *Invading Babylon: The 7 Mountain Mandate*, in which Bill Johnson shares this: "As with most Kingdom principles, the truths of humanity's dominion and authority are dangerous in the hands of those who desire to rule over others. Unfortunately, these concepts seem to validate some people's selfishness. But when these truths are expressed through the humble servant, the world is rocked to its core."[305]

Johnson clearly states his view of moving in influence—not as a ruler but as a humble servant. He continues:

> Jesus served with the heart of a king but ruled with the heart of a servant. This is the essential combination that must be embraced by those longing to shape the course of history. Royalty is my identity. Servanthood is my assignment. Intimacy with God is my life source. So, before God, I'm an intimate. Before people, I'm a servant. Before the powers of hell, I am a ruler, with no tolerance for their influence. Wisdom knows which role we are to fulfill at the proper time.[306]

Again, this does not sound like taking over any system. Instead, this is an image of Christ-like service. The goal is to love Him with all our heart, mind, soul, and strength. Our goal is not a strategic position; our goal is serving.

The twisting and misrepresentation of Bill Johnson's stance are dangerous. The body of Christ has debated and will continue to debate the end times; however, we need to be better than lumping someone you disagree with into the fearmongering of Christian sharia law. The stories of broken families, marriages, bad prophetic words, selling homes are true. People make mistakes, but that is not relegated to those labeled NAR.

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[305] Bill Johnson, *Invading Babylon:* An Excerpt from *Dreaming with God in Invading Babylon: The 7 Mountain Mandate* (Shippensburg, PA: Destiny Image, 2013), 22.

[306] Johnson, *Invading Babylon*, 22.

Seven Mountain Mandate

The Seven Mountain Mandate employs evangelism and discipleship as the primary strategy to bring about cultural change strategy and is not heresy; God gives us wisdom on how to impact our culture with the gospel, regardless of the theological or eschatological views of those involved. Almost every denomination I know implements some strategy on reaching its community. Some use Awana, picnics, church softball, and even events like weekly meetings with business professionals.

In Mozambique, where I lived and worked, we bring the gospel to the unreached. Typically, our strategy is to take the Jesus film to a village. We meet with the village chief and honor him by getting his permission to show the Jesus film. Most of the village will show up. After we show the Jesus film, we present the gospel. The gospel we present is not one of health and wealth, nor is it one of domination. The gospel we present is Christ crucified. As a result, thousands of churches have been planted, and Mozambicans are coming to Christ every day.

Drawing on insights from leaders like Bill Bright and Lauren Cunningham, Wagner stated that they have popularized what he calls the seven mountains that shape societies. Admittedly, certain advocates of social transformation have made some statements that might be interpreted as if they proposed theocracy as the ideal form of human government. Wagner states, "That is why we reject not only a theocracy, but even more so an imagined "ecclesiocracy" in which the Church would rule. The Church itself is instructed not to go in this direction by Romans 13:1-4. Referring to the government of the Roman Empire, Paul wrote: "Let every soul be subject to the governing authorities."[307]

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[307] C. Peter Wagner, *Dominion* (Grand Rapids, MI: Chosen Books, 2008), 13.

Theocracy

The usual meaning of theocracy is that a nation is run by authorized representatives of the Church or its functional religious equivalent. Everyone I know who has been labeled NAR would reject this idea. The way to achieve dominion is not to become "America's Taliban," but to have kingdom-minded people in every one of society's "seven mountains," so they can use their influence to create an environment in which the blessings and prosperity of the kingdom of God permeate all areas of society.

Wagner states his view on dominionism this way:

> Dominionism refers to the desire that some of my friends and I have to follow Jesus and do what He wants. He taught us in the Lord's Prayer to pray for one thing that He wants: 'Your kingdom come; Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.' This means we do our best to see that what we know is characteristic of Heaven works its way into our societies. Think of Heaven: no injustice, no poverty, righteousness, peace, prosperity, no disease, love, no corruption, no crime, no misery, no racism—and I could go on.
>
> Wouldn't you like your city to display those characteristics? But where does dominion come in? On the first page of the Bible, God told Adam and Eve to "fill the earth and subdue it; have dominion over the fish of the sea [etc.]" (Gen. 1:28). Adam, Eve and the entire human race were to take dominion over the rest of creation, but Satan entered the picture, succeeded in usurping Adam's dominion for himself, and became what Jesus called "the ruler of this world" (see John 14:30). Jesus brought the kingdom of God. He expects His kingdom-minded people to take whatever action is needed to push back the long-standing kingdom of Satan and bring the peace and prosperity of His kingdom on earth. This is what we mean by dominionism.[308]

I have to side with some of our critics that this is where things get messy. The use of "Whatever action is needed" could be interpreted to include some unpleasant tactics. The definition of what is one thing, but Wagner's application of his definition is something that I have to part ways on.

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[308] C. Peter Wagner, "The Truth About The New Apostolic Reformation," Charisma, accessed March 10, 2021, https://www.charismamag.com/site-archives/1475-1111-magazine-articles/features/14580-the-truth-about-the- new-apostolic-reformation

Roger E. Olson brings a centered view after researching the NAR. "Liberal Christians have long sought to integrate their values with their public decisions and actions. What was the Social Gospel? What is Liberation Theology? Liberal-leaning Christians need to be careful about criticizing conservative Christians for doing what they have done (or attempted to do) for over a century. "Christ transforming culture" is nothing new; H. Richard Niebuhr wrote about it in *Christ and Culture* years ago. "What's good for the goose…. I do not doubt that if one peers into every corner of the NAR, one can find cultish behavior on the parts of some people who associate themselves with it. As Wagner describes it, however, I have no serious qualms about it being a cult or cultic—which is not to say I agree with it."[309] Olson is not alone in saying that he has issues with Wagner's stance on dominion.

> He came to seek and to save that which was lost. What was lost? The dominion over creation was lost because Adam forfeited it in the Garden of Eden. Jesus brought a new Kingdom, the Kingdom of God, which was to replace the perverse kingdom that Satan had established. He came to reconcile the world back to Himself, and He assigned the ministry of reconciliation to us (see 2 Cor. 5:18). Since then, it has been the responsibility of the people of God, empowered by the Holy Spirit, to regain the dominion that Adam was originally supposed to have. This is the Dominion Mandate" (emphasis mine).[310]

This is the crux of the issue

On the Alissa Childers podcast, Holly Pivec acknowledges that not all Pentecostal and Charismatic churches would fall into the NAR category.[311] His point is so essential: signs and wonders and views on the gifts do not dictate if you are NAR or not. I appreciate how Holly

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[309] Roger E. Olson, "Is the 'New Apostolic Reformation Movement' a Cult?" Patheos, June 25, 2015, https://www.patheos.com/blogs/rogereolson/2015/06/is-the-new-apostolic-reformation-movement-a-cult/.

[310] C. Peter Wagner, "Stewarding Reformation: An Excerpt from the Reformer's Pledge," in *Invading Babylon*, 102.

[311] Alisa Childers, "The New Apostolic Reformation: What It Is And Why We Should Care With Holly Pivec," February 16, 2018, in The Alisa Childers Podcast # 16, MP3 Audio, 31:00, https://www.alisachilders.com/blog/the-new-apostolic-reformation-what-it-is-and-why-we-should-care-with-holly- pivec-the-alisa-childers-podcast-16.

acknowledges this is not about the debate on the continuation of the gifts. Holly shares that the critical thing that separates denominations from NAR is held in the definition of an apostle. We can differ in our interpretation of Scripture, but we can agree that if you believe in the present-day apostle governing office, you will be NAR.

Holly says in the podcast, "And so that's the key thing to recognize the defining belief of NAR that sets it apart from Protestant Christians throughout church history, including classical Pentecostals and Charismatics is the belief in these present-day governing offices."[312] Earlier in the Childers' podcast, Holly makes this point for the first time. I will not assume her personal belief that Hudson Taylor and William Carrie are little "a" apostles. However, it is important to understand Holly feels the use of the little "a" apostle term (effective missionary, sent one, or church planter) can be used about Carrie and Taylor. This use would be the same term that "non-NAR" Pentecostals and Charismatic might use for Carrie and Taylor fully knowing they would never ask or want that term to be applied to their name. Is it helpful to use this term in this situation? There seems to be grace given to the "classical Pentecostals and Charismatics" use of the term because we can assume their desire to honor them; I would agree.

I would also agree that it is not wise to put a label on anyone. However, there are times that it is helpful to acknowledge the life of a Christ-like servant. If we are going to use the word apostle or apostolic, it is vital to get an accurate definition from the person using the term. A lot of confusion can and will be avoided by doing so. I have no problem saying Carrie and Taylor had an apostolic (small "a") call on their lives. And I feel many would agree, and there is space not to be labeled NAR.

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[312] Childers, "*New Apostolic Reformation*."

I would like to tie in another conversation Holly had regarding Hudson Taylor and answer this question.

> Our concern is not about miraculous gifts but with the claim that apostles and prophets must govern. Consider, for example, Heidi Baker of the organization Iris Global. Many people regard Baker as a present-day apostle. But do they view her as an apostle in the lesser sense of the word – as merely a church planter who is breaking new ground for the gospel? Or do they regard her as something more, as holding an office as an apostle, with far-reaching authority and the ability to bring new, crucial revelations to the church? **This is the crux of the issue.** Is someone like Heidi Baker a little "a" apostle (a Hudson Taylor, church-planting-type of apostle) or a big "A" Apostle (like the Apostle Paul who exercised a far-reaching authority and whose revelation was unequivocally authoritative for Christians)? Certainly, one can understand how some may view Baker as a more authoritative, big "A" Apostle, given her claims. She claims to have had a face-to-face encounter with Christ, to have received a special "apostolic" commissioning from Him, to work miraculous signs and wonders including raising the dead, to prophesy to nations, and to give revelation to churches outside her own network (emphasis mine).[313]

Holly presented an opportunity to genuinely understand Heidi's stance. But, of course, the only way to know Heidi's stance is to ask her directly, so I reached out to Holly Pivec, knowing I could get the answer to her question by connecting her and Heidi. Holly's response was gracious, and she accepted my offer to bring clarification.

Holly was generous with her time and willing to engage in conversation. We emailed back and forth a couple of times, and I found Holly to be willing to chat, and she also offered to answer questions I had. She also let me know she was busy and would do her best to respond as time allowed; I fully understand this. If Holly does get back to me, I will amend this paper.[314] I mentioned to Holly twice that I could set up a phone call with Heidi, and as of today, she has not

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[313] Holly Pivec, and Doug Geivett, "Michael Brown's NAR Straw Man: Is the New Apostolic Reformation Just a Conspiracy Theory or Something More?" The Christian Post, The Christian Post, May 10, 2018, https://www.christianpost.com/voices/michael-browns-nar-straw-man-is-the-new-apostolic-reformation-just-a-conspiracy-theory-or-something-more.html.

[314] As of May 2022, Holly, Doug, and I have had numerous encouraging conversations. There are questions that Holly and Doug ask that I truly think are excellent. I admire their desire to pursue biblical truth and engage with me in these conversations.

responded. In my last email to Holly, I included a portion of my interview with Heidi and an invitation to speak with Heidi.

Before reading Heidi's answers, consider Holly's stance one more time.

> But this is a really important point. Many leaders of churches that embrace apostles into their government don't use that label of themselves. They don't write NAR on their websites or church signs; some flat out deny they're part of the NAR and the majority of lay people in these churches.
>
> And even many of their pastors have never even heard of the New Apostolic Reformation, but whether they've heard of the NAR or not, and whether they deny being part of the NAR or not, isn't the point and whether they ever heard of C. Peter Wagner, the man who labeled the movement and formulated much of its theology, isn't the point let's set aside the disputed NAR label for now. The pertinent issue is that they believe that it's essential for apostles to work with prophets to govern the church… Heidi Baker does claim to be a modern-day apostle and, thus, is part of the NAR.[315]

I would like to make this point clear: President and founder Dr. Heidi Baker, and Dr. Rolland Baker, as well as Will Hart, the CEO of Iris Global, do not believe that it is essential for modern-day apostles working with prophets to govern the Church: they never have and never will. Therefore, no one refers to anyone in our organization as Apostle (uppercase "A" or lowercase "a"). The Bible does not have a problem using the term apostle, but we fully acknowledge a history of confusion around this term. I never thought I would have to say this, but after research, hopefully, this helps. If Heidi, Rolland, or I (Will Hart) have used the term apostolic or apostle, it has been about "sent ones, church planters, or missionaries" never as authoritative, governing, hierarchical, on par with the Twelve Apostles, cannon creating, dominating, global church leading, business sphere dominating, Christian reconstruction or theocratic definition.

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[315] Alisa Childers, "The New Apostolic Reformation: What It Is And Why We Should Care With Holly Pivec," February 16, 2018, in *The Alisa Childers Podcast* # 16, MP3 Audio, 15:30, https://www.alisachilders.com/blog/the-new-apostolic-reformation-what-it-is-and-why-we-should-care-with-holly- pivec-the-alisa-childers-podcast-16.

We are called to be nothing so that Jesus can be everything. We do not cling to things to try to be things. The goal is to love Him with all our heart, mind, soul, and strength. Our goal is not a strategic position. We are not to rule over people; we are to serve people. We are called to influence through service, humility, and more. As we lay down our lives, Jesus is exalted, and the lost hear and witness the good news.

Heidi Baker's view of the apostolic

I spoke with Dr. Heidi Baker of Iris Global regarding the Apostolic and the accusation that she considers herself an apostle.

> **Interviewer:**
> For the sake of the conversation, I will refer to big "A" apostle and small "a" apostle. Big "A" is the founding Twelve canon authors, and small "a" is a sent one or missionary. Do you consider yourself an apostle?
>
> **Heidi Baker** (02:29):
> No.
>
> **Interviewer** (02:31):
> Okay. Do other people consider you to be an apostle?
>
> **Heidi Baker** (02:38): I don't know.
> **Interviewer** (02:41):
> If somebody called you an apostle, how would you respond?
>
> **Heidi Baker** (02:47):
> I'd correct them.
>
> **Interviewer** (02:49):
> Why?
>
> **Heidi Baker** (02:50):
> I say this because I'm a little woman in the dirt. Because I go low and slow and serve Jesus in the poor. I don't like titles, so I correct them publicly.
>
> **Interviewer** (03:06):
> Okay. Why don't you like titles?
>
> **Heidi Baker** (03:12):

Because I think there are a lot of times when there is arrogance behind titles, and I think it keeps us from really ministering deeply in the world. You know, if you were at a restaurant, would you ever want to go to a reserved table to eat and say, "I'm apostle Heidi Baker"? Of course not. That's just ludicrous. It's not something I would ever do. So I don't want a title. The only reason I have the prefix doctor on my Facebook page is that my name was taken. I have earned a Ph.D. Otherwise, I just want to use my name.

Interviewer (03:57):
Yeah. So, you recorded a video in Toronto where you're sharing your testimony. During that testimony, you shared that you received prayer when Randy prayed an apostolic anointing over you. Can you explain what that means? As far as apostolic anointing? Because for an outsider who is scared of that term, they could take that to mean that you're saying that you've now become an apostle; and Randy Clark has appointed you as an apostle.

Heidi Baker (04:34):
Yeah. That wasn't the case at all. He was praying for an apostolic anointing. And by that term, I believe it's the biblical term: that an apostolic anointing would be given so that I could be sent out. And when that happened to me, the Lord said to me, or I had an impression from the Lord saying, "the apostolic is the lowest place." And so, it was the lowest place: and I was upside down. So, I would never use the term "apostolic" for my own life. But I believe in an anointing to be sent out.

Interviewer (05:29):
Okay. So, I'm going to read something from something that somebody wrote, and it talks about this. You are mentioned, and here is what they wrote, "Pay close attention to those last words, that apostolic is upside down. It's the lowest place. So, in other words, Heidi is claiming to be an apostle, but one of great humility, that's why she doesn't claim to be an apostle directly." How would you respond to somebody that's…? (Heidi interrupts)

Heidi Baker (06:01):
I would say that is totally taken out of context. I said that the apostolic is the lowest place: an apostolic anointing is for absolutely anyone who is sent out. They do not use the term apostle for themselves. There is an anointing for missionaries who are sent out, not to govern, but to be sent out, which is what I'm talking about—being sent out that as a missionary is to be sent out. So to use the title apostle is, in my opinion, is absurd for me. I would never use that term for myself.

Interviewer (06:55):
I've known you for a long time. I've never even heard you begin to say that name or that word. I've even heard you say that you don't like even going to conferences that are titled that because it gives people the wrong perspective.

Heidi Baker (07:15):

> Yes. It's embarrassing and ridiculous. And not anything that I believe in. I would never use that term for myself, ever.
>
> **Interviewer** (07:27):
> So, one of the things that people claim to be an apostle is a face-to-face encounter. Now. I'm not saying you have to have a face-to-face encounter with Jesus. But the Twelve had a face-to-face encounter, and Paul did as well. So, how could you better clarify your encounter with the Lord and how he has commissioned you? How could you remove confusion from an outsider saying, "that just sounds like she is claiming to be an apostle."
>
> **Heidi Baker** (08:20):
> Well, for one thing, I would never deny the several encounters in over 40 years of knowing my Lord, my Savior. I would never, ever deny that I have had several, not many, several encounters that have changed my life forever. I would never deny that. But I would never use those encounters to imply that I hold the office of an apostle.

My point is this, either Heidi is lying, or people have not asked her directly. There is a danger in bearing false witness and moving away from the standard set in Matthew 18. If anyone truly wants to know the facts about Iris's stance on the apostolic, they can ask. When we post our stance, it is ignored or used as a tool against us. I genuinely apologize if someone reached out for questions, and we missed it in the barrage of emails and changing staff. I understand that all this information is out in public. One can easily infer from online messages, associations with groups, and publications; however, when so many people reject that they are in the NAR, one should dig deeper. Michael McClymond agrees, saying:

> In response, Douglas Geivett and Holly Pivec offered a stinging critique of Wagner's *New Apostolic Reformation*, which they saw as rife with prideful self-assertion and bad theology. Yet this critique focused almost exclusively on developments in the USA before Wagner's death in 2016, rather than on other global ministry networks self-designated as apostolic. Because of these differences, it may be best not to judge any such movement by its name alone but instead by a careful examination of its leaders, teachings, and ministry (Matt. 7:16).[316]

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[316] Michael McClymond, "Apostles, Apostolic Ministry," in, Brill's *Encyclopedia of Global Pentecostalism Online*, eds. Michael Wilkinson, Connie Au, Jörg Hausstein, Todd M. Johnson, online 10 March 2021, http://dx.doi.org/10.1163/2589-3807_EGPO_COM_036913, first published online: 2019.

Francis Chan's Journey of Discussion

In a recent interview on The Remnant Radio podcast, Francis Chan was questioned about his relationship with Mike Bickel. Francis told the story of joining a board with Jack Hayford and honestly shared how he thought Jack was not a legitimate scholar. He continued to share as he began to spend time with Jack and listen to him; he saw how much he loved Scripture — how Jack would use Greek and Hebrew to dissect the scriptures. As Francis grew in relationship, he saw the character in Jack's life and it shocked him. He realized that some of the people he had been against moved in the fruit of the Spirit and truly knew the Word of God. They were not all anti theology. In this interview, Francis stated, "Seriously, in my mind, a Charismatic theologian was an oxymoron." He continued to share that the more he spent time with people he was formally against, then he realized they were brothers and sisters in Christ. Francis admitted that IHOP was a stretch for him; he had studied the dangers of Mike Bickel and IHOP in seminary. Francis asked Mike questions with a heart to hear, and Mike clarified all the allegations, rumors, and misinformation. When Mike asked Francis to speak at his conference, Francis said he received hate mail. The pressure from the outside caused Francis to call John Piper, asking if he was making a mistake. Piper replied saying, "Mike loves Jesus. We differ on some theology and eschatology, but Mike loves Jesus." Francis explained that when he had conversations and developed a relationship with Mike, he saw that he loves the Lord. "My journey was not so much me studying and coming to new conclusions, but me meeting people from different streams and studying by asking them questions and trying to understand their point of view better."[317]

[317] The Remnant Radio, "An Interview with Francis Chan," March 10, 2021, Youtube, https://youtu.be/867iv-1l-8c.

We need to look past tertiary issues and grow from our brothers and sisters in Christ. I have grown from listening to Holly and Douglas. I am stronger in the word because of their work. I am shocked that raw dominion theology rooted in Rushdoony's ideas even exists. I am humbled by Lauren Cunningham's journey into the seven spheres of missional strategy. I also see how these ideas can be twisted and used to control and hurt believers. As I studied C. Peter Wagner's work over the years, there were times I could not believe a brother in Christ was saying those things. But, as I read more, listened more, and talked with people who knew him, I received a more precise image. I disagree with Wagner's stance on authority and hierarchy. I do not believe we need to give people titles. I do not think that money will solve anything or bring in the harvest faster. I do not believe that modern-day apostles should govern the church, and I do not know anyone that does.

Section 3: The Office of the Prophet

Introduction to Section 3

Dr. Randy Clark

Section Three of my response is related to the issue of prophets today and has two responses, one by Charity Cook who has been on my staff for sixteen years and who today is an official associate minister of Global Awakening, and the other by Tracy Nicole. Cook graduated from GATS with a Master of Arts in Practical studies after transferring from Regent University where she majored in interdisciplinary studies. She is presently in the Doctor of Ministry program at GATS.

Cook points out issues regarding how critics use rhetorical devices and logical fallacies in their arguments, then goes on to address the claims regarding false prophets, prophets as secret intelligence agents, prophets and governance, do prophets have extraordinary authority, do prophets receive new revelations and new truths, and new Scripture and doctrine. She concludes her paper by examining the primary Scriptures dealing with the prophetic relationship to the churches: Ephesians 4:11, 2:20; 1 Corinthians 12:28-13:13. Her conclusion is solid and well-reasoned.

The second paper on the prophetic is by Tracy Nicole. Nicole has a PhD in statistics and applied mathematics from University of California Davis and is currently working on her Master of Ministry degree at GATS to prepare for entry into the Th.D. program at GATS.

After her introduction, in which she discusses from a historical perspective the tension the church has had with prophets, Nicole divides her paper to deal primarily with two issues: prophets and their revelation, and prophets and their authority. She examines the prophets'

authority based upon Ephesians 4:11-15. Drawing conclusions from both examinations she concludes the paper with an appendix on false prophets.

Prophets: A Response to NAR Critics
by Charity Cook

Introduction

> "And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ" (Eph 4:11-13).[318]

God gave prophets to equip the saints and build up His body. Were these prophets restricted to the apostolic era, or are they among us today? There has been an ongoing debate as to whether the charismata are in operation today. A new debate has now arisen centered on whether the *doma* gifts of apostle and prophet are functioning in the church today, and if so, what their role is in the body of Christ.

One book at the center of this debate is *A New Apostolic Reformation?* by Douglas Geivett and Holly Pivec. Professing a burden for the purity of the church, Geivett and Pivec address concerns regarding what they term the "New Apostolic Reformation" (NAR).[319] They acknowledge two goals in their writing: to show "the sheer size and reach of NAR," and "to systematize NAR's key teachings and practices and evaluate them on the basis of Scripture and careful reasoning."[320] This paper will show that by artificially grouping unconnected ministers and teachings (many taken out of context) into one vast movement, the critics have misrepresented a large portion of the church. It will further show their conservative evangelical

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[318] *The Holy Bible: English Standard Version* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles, 2016), Eph 4:11–13; Unless otherwise noted, the version of the Bible used is the English Standard Version.

[319] R. Douglas Geivett and Holly Pivec, *A New Apostolic Reformation?: A Biblical Response to a Worldwide Movement*, 2nd ed. edition (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2014), 9, https://thedtl-on-worldcat-org.dtl.idm.oclc.org/oclc/1055044424; The name of the movement was coined by C. Peter Wagner, but the movement it describes has been redefined by Geivett and Pivec.

[320] Geivett and Pivec, *A New Apostolic Reformation?,* 5.

worldview has impacted their communication style, their reasoning, and their evaluation of scripture.[321] The critics' claims will be addressed after first analyzing the slant of their writing and the logical fallacies contained in their argument. Balance will be provided through an evaluation of the role of modern prophets in light of key scriptures. In conclusion, we will see prophets today remain a gift to the church.

Addressing the Critics

Critics of NAR raise some valid concerns worthy of addressing; however, they also assert many false claims. Before addressing these concerns and claims, the following section highlights some of the rhetorical devices and logical fallacies used in their writing.[322] It is assumed these were not used intentionally. Geivett and Pivec clearly state their attempt to moderate their tone, but it appears their methods are inconsistent with their values.[323] Overall, they fall short of their "goal of presenting a fair and balanced treatment of NAR."[324]

Rhetorical Devices

The first sign that *A New Apostolic Reformation?* is slanted rather than balanced is its use of rhetorical devices. Rhetoric is persuasive writing or speaking that attempt "to persuade you to

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[321] Geivett and Pivec, *A New Apostolic Reformation?,* 4. Holly Pivec states, "I hadn't encountered NAR in my conservative evangelical circles." Douglas Geivett affirms his belief in miracles as an editor and contributor of *In Defense of Miracles*; however, these miracles are in connection to special revelation, a traditional conservative evangelical theological position argued by B.B. Warfield in *Counterfeit Miracles*. See R. Douglas Geivett and Gary R. Habermas, *In Defense of Miracles: A Comprehensive Case for God's Action in History* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1997), 193.

[322] These examples are not meant to be comprehensive, but serve to show the use of rhetorical devices.

[323] Geivett and Pivec, *A New Apostolic Reformation?,* 5

[324] Geivett and Pivec, *A New Apostolic Reformation?,* 5

accept a claim not based upon good evidence and argument" but through the power of words.[325] Rhetorical devices, "often called 'slanters,' are used to sway an audience."[326]

Dysphemisms are one such rhetorical device used prominently by NAR critics. The opposite of euphemisms, dysphemisms are negative words used to evoke an unfavorable attitude toward a topic.[327] A prime example is the introduction of NAR's innovative "belief that apostles, working together with prophets, *must take over* governance of the church—*taking the reins* from the pastors, elders, and denominational leaders."[328] Rather than acknowledge a form of leadership in which apostolic and prophetic leaders are acknowledged and blessed by the community (like Barnabas and Saul in Acts 13), these apostles and prophets usurp their leadership roles.[329] They go on to cite "*astonishing* authority" and "astounding claims."[330] When questioning modern-day prophets, they refer to *dictates* and *commands*, words which conjure the image of a dictator.[331]

While dysphemisms are prominently used, several other rhetorical devices appear throughout the book. Referencing "an *alleged* prophet," exemplifies the use of a downplayer, a

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[325] Kenton Harris, FIU Faculty Website, accessed February 13, 2021, http://faculty.fiu.edu/~harrisk/Notes/Critical%20Thinking/1198%20PHI2301%20Module%208%20Rhetorical%20Devices.htm.

[326] Harris, FIU Faculty Website.

[327] Harris, FIU Faculty Website.

[328] Geivett and Pivec, *A New Apostolic Reformation?,* 9.

[329] See Acts 13:2-3; This statement also contradicts Bill Hamon's (a prophet prominently mentioned) belief that "Fivefold ministers are not independent ministries separated from one another but rather interdependent ministries vitally related to each other in Christ." See Bill Hamon, *Prophets and the Prophetic Movement: God's Prophetic Move Today* (Shippensburg, PA: Destiny Image Publishers, 1990), 189.

[330] Geivett and Pivec, A New Apostolic Reformation?, 9.

[331] Geivett and Pivec, *A New Apostolic Reformation?,* 102.

"word or phrase which is intended to devalue someone."[332] Another device used is an innuendo, used to "imply something without actually stating it."[333] Geivett and Pivec round out their introduction of NAR by stating, "Though these teachings will sound radical to Christians, they're sweeping through churches in the United States and throughout the world."[334] The implication is you must not be a Christian if the teachings they express do not sound radical. They do not explain how these clearly radical teachings have succeeded in "sweeping through churches."[335]

Logical Fallacies

Of course, the claims they attribute to NAR do sound rather radical due to the "strawman" they have created. The strawman argument is a logical fallacy in which "someone attacks a position the opponent doesn't really hold."[336] A caricature is created by "oversimplifying nuanced positions."[337] This flimsy, lifeless argument is then easily defeated. While it "can be unethical if it's done on purpose," people often fall into this "cheap and easy" attack by mistake.[338] One way to create this strawman is by taking statements out of context, thus using the opponents' own words with a new meaning. Craig Keener points to this practice,

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[332] Harris, FIU Faculty Website.

[333] Harris, FIU Faculty Website.

[334] Geivett and Pivec, *A New Apostolic Reformation*?, 10.

[335] Geivett and Pivec, *A New Apostolic Reformation?,* 10.

[336] T. B. S. Staff, "15 Logical Fallacies You Should Know Before Getting Into a Debate," TheBestSchools.org, January 31, 2017, Accessed February 13, 2021, https://thebestschools.org/magazine/15-logical- fallacies-know/.

[337] T. B. S. Staff, "15 Logical Fallacies You Should Know Before Getting Into a Debate."

[338] T. B. S. Staff, "15 Logical Fallacies You Should Know Before Getting Into a Debate."

"Some cessationists have denounced virtually all charismatics as heretics, often by cherry-picking video clips out of context or painting all charismatics by the most extreme examples."[339]

One example from *A New Apostolic Reformation?* is the claim that a key function of NAR prophets is "executing God's judgments on nations."[340] When the supporting reference is checked, Hamon does say, "The book of Revelation declares that the prophets are to be instruments of God to execute his judgments."[341] However, the context of this statement clarifies his point. In a chapter addressing "God's Purposes for Prophets," under a subheading "Prophets Are Perpetual—Genesis to Revelation," Hamon surveys purposes of prophets in the Old Testament and New Testament based on a handful of scriptures including Revelation 11:10, "Those who live on the earth will gloat over them . . . because these two prophets brought judgment to those who live on the earth."[342] Hamon follows these various references with a summary statement, "The prophet and the prophetic ministry have been and will continue to be active in every age and dispensation of God's dealing with man."[343] While Hamon does reference a scripture about prophets bringing judgment on the earth, his point is that prophets will continue until the Second Coming.

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[339] Craig S. Keener, *Gift and Giver: The Holy Spirit for Today*, repackaged ed. (Baker Academic, 2020), 9, Kindle.

[340] Geivett and Pivec, *A New Apostolic Reformation?,* 82.

[341] Bill Hamon, *Prophets and Personal Prophecy*, 10th ed. (Shippensburg, PA: Destiny Image Publishers, 1987), 18.

[342] *The Holy Bible: Holman Christian Standard Version*. (Nashville: Holman Bible Publishers, 2009), Re 11:10; Other passages cited include Amos 3:7; Eph 2:19, 3:5, 4:11-13; Acts 3:21; Rev 10:7, 18:20.

[343] Hamon, *Prophets and Personal Prophecy*, 18.

Another example of using statements out of context is the claim that Hamon authorizes prophets to begin prophecies with 'Thus saith the Lord.'"[344] While he may encourage this practice elsewhere, it certainly isn't supported by the referenced teaching. In Prophets and Personal Prophecy, Hamon uses the phrase as a colloquialism, referring to a more reliable word, "Though saints and other ministers may receive a Word of knowledge or wisdom on a matter, a 'thus saith the Lord' with specific directive words should usually come from the office of the prophet."[345] It appears to be a phrase he commonly uses as evidenced by a recommendation given to another pastor, "Prophetic Ministry involves more than a 'thus saith the Lord' once in a while, but involves all the ways God expresses His heart and mind to mankind."[346]

By taking Hamon's words out of context, his critics can proceed to another logical fallacy, that of the "slippery slope." This fallacy begins with a benign starting point and works "through a number of small steps to an improbable extreme."[347] Geivett and Pivec warn that "a great danger is that people in NAR will become overly dependent on seeking personal direction from such prophets."[348] They fail to mention Hamon's caution, "God approves of this practice as long as we do not allow personal prophecy to become a substitute for our seeking God for ourselves through prayer, fasting, and searching the Scriptures."[349] Additionally, he introduces his chapter explaining, "Probably ninety percent of my decisions have been made without

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[344] Geivett and Pivec, *A New Apostolic Reformation*?, 104.

[345] Hamon, *Prophets and Personal Prophecy*, 94.

[346] "Commendation by Dr. Bill Hamon," Gateway Prophetic Training, accessed February 13, 2021, https://www.gatewayprophetictraining.org/content.cfm?id=297.

[347] T. B. S. Staff, "15 Logical Fallacies You Should Know Before Getting Into a Debate."

[348] Geivett and Pivec, *A New Apostolic Reformation?,* 104.

[349] Hamon, *Prophets and Personal Prophecy*, 72.

personal prophecy being the dominating or even motivating factor."[350] Geivett and Pivec shift from this shared concern of overreliance on prophets to the improbable extreme "that they will obey the words of a NAR prophet much as they would the words of God. Recall Hamon's teaching [on] ... 'Thus saith the Lord.'"[351]

The strong reliance on Hamon's teaching as representative of NAR is an "appeal to authority," another common logical fallacy. Geivett and Pivec introduce him as "a leading authority on present-day prophets."[352] However, by taking his comments out of context, they effectively misrepresent his views. It is also worth noting that Hamon does not claim to be a biblical scholar but a prophet. Using his teachings and the teachings of other popular authors in their review of NAR biblical hermeneutics is a misuse of authority. As Keener acknowledges, "Some charismatics have propounded claims that contradict Scripture, at least the way they have worded them."[353] In Geivett and Pivec's analysis of scripture, they fail to engage leading Pentecostal charismatic scholars such as Jon Ruthven, Michael Brown, or Craig Keener. Though they briefly affirm Keener's work in a footnote, they do not examine his biblical studies.

In addition to a misuse of authority, using the teachings of one person to create generalized statements for a group leads to "stereotyping," "an assumption about all the members of a group that is based on an image of those in the group."[354] Painting everyone with the same extreme brush misrepresents the variety of beliefs held by individuals. Geivett and Pivec try to

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[350] Hamon, *Prophets and Personal Prophecy*, 87.

[351] Geivett and Pivec, *A New Apostolic Reformation*?, 104.

[352] Geivett and Pivec, *A New Apostolic Reformation?,* 79.

[353] Keener, *Gift and Giver*, 9.

[354] Harris, FIU Faculty Website.

avoid this mistake by cautioning, "When explaining Hamon's views we do not mean to imply that they are shared by every leader associated with NAR."[355] However, this implication cannot be escaped when supporting claims of general NAR positions with Hamon quotes, "according to NAR teachings . . . Recall Bill Hamon's words."[356] Elsewhere they claim, "NAR leaders teach that New Testament prophets have the same level of authority as Old Testament prophets and that they hold a formal governing office."[357] To support this claim the reader is referred to the examination of Hamon's teachings, which were introduced as "formative" but not "shared."

Of course, not all claims are supported by direct teachings. Many claims seem to be developed from their "careful reasoning." At times, this reasoning leads to "loaded questions," containing assumptions often drawn from their cessationist theology.[358] For example, they question, "When [Hamon] demands that all Christians must accept such prophets' new truths, is he not claiming, in effect, that their words are equal to Scripture?"[359] In this complex question, they first assume that Hamon demands acceptance. They provide no quote explicitly demanding acceptance, rather it appears they jump to this conclusion based on Hamon's belief that some people will miss out on the new move of God if they "do not advance in present truth."[360] With this assumption in place, they then conclude that Hamon's "new truths" lead to equality with Scripture. However, as they note, this conclusion is in contradiction to Hamon's directly stated

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[355] Geivett and Pivec, *A New Apostolic Reformation?,* 79.

[356] Geivett and Pivec, *A New Apostolic Reformation?,* 79.

[357] Geivett and Pivec, *A New Apostolic Reformation?,* 106.

[358] Harris, FIU Faculty Website.

[359] Geivett and Pivec, *A New Apostolic Reformation?,* 102.

[360] Geivett and Pivec, *A New Apostolic Reformation?,* 86.

and oft repeated position that "The Holy Scriptures are complete; no later writings or prophecies are to be added to, or made an equal to, the Logos Scriptures," and any such elevation of a prophetic word is deemed an abuse of prophecy.[361] Rather than seek clarity of this contradiction, they assume the worst possible understanding without considering the possibility they have misunderstood. Their conclusion is then based solely on a weak assumption of Hamon's meaning and a cessationist understanding of the purpose of revelation, which will soon be considered.

However, before delving into the critics' claims and hermeneutics, one last logical fallacy and "slanter" is worth noting. A healthy amount of "guilt by association" is employed. Initially this is done by comparing NAR to fringe and outright heretical groups on the basis of one shared teaching: the role of apostles and prophets has not ceased. However foolish it may be to assume that agreement on one teaching implies agreement in all teachings, this simple comparison is clearly slanted to give a negative impression.

In addition, this "guilt by association" is used through ad hominem attacks. While acknowledging moral failures is a valid argument when considering the character of Christian ministers, denouncing a movement on the basis of individual failures is off-base. Jonathan Edwards addressed this practice in his "Distinguishing Marks" of a move of God, "If some such as were thought to be wrought upon, fall away into gross errors or scandalous practices, 'tis no argument that the work in general is not the work of the Spirit of God."[362] *Ad hominem* attacks, like the strawman, are an attempt to "demonize opponents and discredit their views."[363]

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[361] Geivett and Pivec, *A New Apostolic Reformation?,* 16, 136.

[362] Jonathan Edwards, "Distinguishing Marks" in *The Works of Jonathan Edwards*, Vol. 4: The Great Awakening, ed. C. C. Goen (New Haven, Conn.; London: Yale University Press, 2009), 244.

[363] T. B. S. Staff, "15 Logical Fallacies You Should Know Before Getting Into a Debate."

Understanding the rhetorical devices and logical fallacies used is important when considering the critics' claims. This understanding helps recognize errors in reasoning, one of the two major foundations of Geivett and Pivec's research and conclusions. Their claims are examined below.

Critics' Claims

False Prophets

One of the primary concerns of NAR critics is recognizing false prophets, with an entire chapter devoted to the topic. There is good cause for this concern as warnings about false prophets can be found throughout the New Testament, in the writings of the early church and in the writings of modern-day prophets. Jesus warns, "Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing but inwardly are ravenous wolves. You will recognize them by their fruits" (Matthew 7:15). John likewise warns of false prophets and instructs the church to "test the spirits to see whether they are from God" (1 John 4:2). John's test is that "every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God." (1 John 4:2).

Beyond the apostolic age, we see a concern about false prophets recorded in the Didache, which likewise gives a test, "if he remains three days he is a false prophet."[364] Despite this unbiblical test, the Didache does reveal prophets continued beyond the apostolic age. Benjamin McNair Scott considers it "undeniable . . . that when the Didache was written there is a presupposition that itinerant teachers, apostle/(and?) prophets are still roaming around the church."[365]

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[364] "Church Fathers: The Didache," chap. 11, accessed March 13, 2021, https://www.newadvent.org/fathers/0714.htm.

[365] Benjamin G. McNair Scott, *Apostles Today: Making Sense of Contemporary Charismatic Apostolates: A Historical and Theological Appraisal* (Eugene, OR: Pickwick Publications, 2014), chap. 4, Kindle.

The concern of false prophets is a real concern; however, it should not be overstated. The only reason to be encouraged in discernment of the false is if the genuine exists. Jonathan Edwards makes this point, "That there are some counterfeits is no argument that nothing is true: such things are always expected in a time of reformation."[366] Furthermore, prophets are not the only leadership role counterfeited in scripture; there are also false apostles, false evangelists, false teachers, and false pastors.[367] We should be concerned that leaders of any role are genuine. We should also be careful not to reject their existence because of imitators and therefore cease to expect the real.

While addressing the concern of false prophets, Geivett and Pivec present three biblical tests for discernment: the Fulfillment test, the Orthodoxy test, and the Lifestyle test. The Fulfillment test is based on Deuteronomy 18:22, "When a prophet speaks in the name of the Lord, if the word does not come to pass or come true, that is a word that the Lord has not spoken." However, this test does not take into account Paul's New Covenant instruction which states, "we know in part and we prophesy in part" (1 Cor 13:9). New Testament prophesy is based on partial revelation.

The understanding "that genuine prophets can err" is commonly taught.[368] Geivett and Pivec acknowledge Wayne Grudem teaches prophets need not be perfectly accurate; however, they attempt to make a distinction between Grudem and NAR leaders. They explain Grudem extends grace for errors because New Testament prophets "do not have the same level of

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[366] Edwards, "Distinguishing Marks" in *The Works of Jonathan Edwards*, 244.

[367] C. Peter Wagner, *Church Quake!: The Explosive Power of the New Apostolic Reformation* (Ventura, Calif: Regal, 1999), 117; See 2 Cor 11:13, 14; Gal 1:9; John 10:12; 2 Peter 2:1.

[368] Geivett and Pivec, *A New Apostolic Reformation?,* 87.

authority as the Old Testament prophets and do not hold a formal governing office in the church."[369] While Grudem would probably agree with their assessment of governance, his allowance for error is specifically based on the difference between prophets in the Old and New Testaments.[370] Geivett and Pivec say NAR leaders claim equal authority for Old Testament and New Testament prophets; however, this assertion is based on the teaching of only a few leaders. A broader survey of apostolic leaders reveals the vast majority, over 80 percent, agree with Grudem that New Testament prophets do not have the same authority as those in the Old Testament.[371] Geivett and Pivec have agreed with Grudem that the fulfillment test of Deuteronomy 18:22 does not apply when Old Testament prophets and New Testament prophets are seen to hold different levels of authority. Since this is the majority position of NAR leaders, the criticism of the fulfillment test is an invalid argument.

The Orthodoxy test "requires that prophets' words must line up with the revelation already given."[372] Geivett and Pivec acknowledge that NAR leaders agree with this test; however, they challenge the validity of this agreement. In their estimation, "many [NAR] teachings do not line up" with scripture.[373] While all agree prophetic words should align with scripture, they do not all agree on what alignment looks like. Peter Wagner affirms prophetic revelation will not contradict scripture, and many others expect prophetic words to align with

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[369] Geivett and Pivec, *A New Apostolic Reformation?,* 106.

[370] Wayne A. Grudem, *The Gift of Prophecy in the New Testament and Today*, rev. ed. (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2000), 27.

[371] Randy Clark, "Renewal Theology Survey," electronic survey summary report, distributed by Global Awakening, accessed March 13, 2021, https://www.getfeedback.com/s/DkZdF6Yj/.

[372] Geivett and Pivec, *A New Apostolic Reformation?,* 108.

[373] Geivett and Pivec, *A New Apostolic Reformation?,* 109.

biblical principles.[374] However, these principles are not enough for Geivett and Pivec, whose interpretation of scripture is greatly impacted by their cessationist hermeneutic. Additionally, their challenge of adherence to this test based on the life of William Branham is misrepresentative. While many NAR leaders acknowledge his healing gift, they also emphatically denounce his aberrant teachings.

The Lifestyle test is based on Jesus' statement in Matthew 7:16 that we "will recognize them by their fruits." It is here that the failures of well-known prophets are examined. While they are correct that the shocking moral failures should impact the ministries of prophets, they do not acknowledge any possibility of grace or restoration. Given recent scandals in the body of Christ from the Catholic church, the Evangelical church, and the Charismatic church, higher levels of accountability are needed, not only for prophets, but for all Christian leaders.

After addressing biblical tests, they consider NAR's "unbiblical tests:" The Inner Witness test and the Spiritual Overseer test. Hamon suggests, "The inner witness of the Spirit with our spirit is one way of determining that a prophetic utterance is of the Lord."[375] Hamon supports this subjective test on the basis of Romans 8:16, "The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are the children of God." They charge Hamon's description of "deep, unexplainable peace and joy" as being unscriptural; however, we see a similar experience in the disciples who encountered Jesus on the road to Emmaus, "Did not our hearts burn within us while he talked to us on the road, while he opened to us the Scriptures?" (Lk 24:32). John Wesley had a similar

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[374] C. Peter Wagner, "The New Apostolic Reformation is Not a Cult," Charisma News, August 24, 2011.

[375] Bill Hamon, *Prophets, Pitfalls and Principles: God's Prophetic People Today*, reprint ed. (Shippensburg, PA: Destiny Image Publishers, 1991), 149.

experience at Aldersgate when he "felt [his] heart strangely warmed."[376] While Geivett and Pivec are correct that the inner witness test is not based on "rational thought processes," there is a biblical and historical precedent for it.[377]

The Spiritual Overseer test suggests submitting prophecies to spiritual overseers to help discern "whether a prophecy is scriptural, accurate, and timely."[378] The critics argue this test will cause people to blindly follow leaders rather than to test prophecies for themselves.[379] This fear appears to be a slippery slope, and ignores scripture's encouragement to have "a multitude of counselors" (Prov 11:14, 15:22, 24:6).

One may question the strong challenge against an emotional response to Truth and the wisdom of guidance from leaders, especially when considering the critics' suggested tests. They consider "the ancestry test" to be worth careful consideration. This test suggests that "to date, all universally authoritative prophets . . . have been from Israel." While it is true that biblical prophets were from Israel, this test ignores "that it is those of faith who are the sons of Abraham" (Gal 2:7). This fact expands the promises of God to include Gentiles who are now "fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God" (Eph 2:19).

In addition to the ancestry test, the critics point to the "scriptural" sign of prophets wearing sackcloth.[380] While scripture does point to this garb, it does so in a highly symbolic book of the Bible. It is reasonable to consider sackcloth to be representative of mourning. Upon

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[376] Kenneth J. Collins, *John Wesley: A Theological Journey* (Abingdon Press, 2003), 88, Kindle.

[377] Geivett and Pivec, *A New Apostolic Reformation?,* 112.

[378] Hamon, *Prophets, Pitfalls and Principles*, 149.

[379] Geivett and Pivec, *A New Apostolic Reformation?,* 113.

[380] Geivett and Pivec, *A New Apostolic Reformation?,* 192. See footnote 242.

further reflection, it seems just as easy for a wolf to wear sackcloth as it is for it to wear sheep's clothing. Therefore, the sackcloth uniform may not prove to be the best test of prophetic calling.

Secret Intelligence Agents

Geivett and Pivec introduce NAR prophets as "Secret Intelligence Agents," a title it appears they coined in summary of their research. "They receive secret information about the enemy's plans, the ways God is working, and strategies the church needs to defeat Satan and advance God's kingdom."[381] The Bible speaks of revelations of secrets to the prophets. In the Old Testament, Elisha revealed the enemy's plans, spoken in his bedroom, to the King of Israel allowing him to save himself "more than once or twice" (2 Kings 6:10-12). Amos explains, "For the Lord God does nothing without revealing his secret to his servants the prophets" (3:7). In the New Testament, Paul also cites the revelation of secrets as a role of the prophetic, "the secrets of his heart are disclosed, and so, falling on his face, he will worship God and declare that God is really among you" (1 Cor 14:25).

They introduce the chapter with Rick Joyner's quote, "We are the hidden prophets . . . who have been given the divinely powerful weapons. We have been shown all that the Lord is doing, and all that the enemy is planning against you."[382] In the context of Joyner's panoramic vision, this statement was made to him about the prophets, and who they are. While this encounter may be objectionable to the critics, the concepts conveyed are not outside the revelation of scripture. Paul often uses warfare language, instructing believers to "put on the whole armor of God," and explaining "the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh, but

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[381] Geivett and Pivec, *A New Apostolic Reformation?,* 75.

[382] Rick Joyner, *The Final Quest* (New Kensington, PA: Whitaker House, 1996), 58.

divinely powerful for the destruction of fortresses" (2 Cor 10:4, NASB). This warfare language is common among prayer warriors. In her Bible study on the Armor of God, Evangelical teacher and intercessor, Priscilla Shirer introduces the topic, "Because this is war. The fight of your life. A very real enemy has been strategizing and scheming against you . . . Each week, we'll employ the *secret* weapon that has been divinely authorized by God Himself to stop the devil in his tracks. We are going to pray."[383]

Governance

Geivett and Pivec claim, "One distinct emphasis of the NAR view is its promotion of a present-day office of prophet. By office, we refer to a specially recognized official position in church government."[384] They strongly object to the idea that prophets "must take over governance of the church—taking the reins from the pastors, elders, and denominational leaders."[385] They use this extreme, absolute language when challenging NAR; however, when they do so, they are arguing with a strawman.

To support their claim, they lean heavily on the teachings of C. Peter Wagner, a proponent of the apostolic and prophetic in church governance. However, as discussed previously, the views of one individual cannot represent a whole group. They further use the words of Bill Hamon who grants prophets "administrative authority," which they take to mean "through their prophetic words [prophets] govern."[386] However, this is unlikely to be Hamon's

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[383] Priscilla Shirer, *The Armor of God: Teen Bible Study Book,* sample pdf (Nashville, TN: LifeWay Press), 2018, 6.Accessed February 2, 2021. https://s7d9.scene7.com/is/content/LifeWayChristianResources/armor_of_god_student_samplepdf.pdf

[384] Geivett and Pivec, *A New Apostolic Reformation?*, 97.

[385] Geivett and Pivec, *A New Apostolic Reformation?,* 9.

[386] Hamon, *Prophets and Personal Prophecy*, 36; Geivett and Pivec, *A New Apostolic Reformation?,* 79.

position as his ministry's statement of faith places governance with the elders, "We recognize the priesthood of believers and the *serving ministry* of the apostle, prophet, evangelist, pastor, and teacher *with government by elders*."[387]

Among the NAR leaders surveyed, 76 percent agreed prophets help apostles govern.[388] It is worth noting the question did not ask if prophets "must" govern, only if "helping" to govern was a part of their role. This number rose to 93 percent when asked if prophets help provide direction for the church. However, none saw the prophets as "taking the reins" from the pastors and elders. Instead, 100 percent believed the prophet was subject to the pastor.

In response to the belief that prophets govern, Geivett and Pivec claim there is "no biblical precedent for a present–day office of prophet," and "no evidence that New Testament prophets held governing offices in the early churches."[389] However, Craig Keener disagrees. He points to several Old Testament passages that reveal "sometimes prophetic empowerment evidenced empowerment for leadership" (Num 11:17, 25-26; 1 Sam 10:6, 10).[390] He further addresses the leadership of prophets in the New Testament, "At least in the early church of Antioch, prophets and teachers seem to have filled the role of overseer (pastors; Acts 13:1), and in later Pauline churches, at least some elders (pastors) were prophetically endowed (1 Tim 4:14)."[391] While he recognizes prophecy's spiritual empowerment was primarily for prophetic

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[387] "Statement of Faith," Christian International, accessed January 31, 2021, https://christianinternational.com/statement-of-faith.

[388] Clark, "Renewal Theology Survey."

[389] Geivett and Pivec, *A New Apostolic Reformation?,* 97–98

[390] Keener, *Gift and Giver*, 135.

[391] Keener, *Gift and Giver*, 127.

speech, he leaves the door open for church leadership. This biblical understanding does not support the idea that prophets "must" govern, but suggests they may, which is the majority view of NAR leaders.

Extraordinary Authority

Another claim made by the critics is that modern prophets are said to be "comparable to the great Old Testament prophets and . . . possess extraordinary authority extending to individuals, churches, and nations."[392] Similar to the loaded question, this statement is built on the assumption that prophets have "extraordinary authority." For Geivett and Pivec this extraordinary authority is hard to overstate, and is the bedrock of much of their concern regarding modern prophets.[393] Therefore, it is worth determining if the claim is true.

The first reason critics cite extraordinary authority for prophets is the claim that "present-day prophets have the same anointing, authority and ministry they had in the Old Testament."[394] However, Hamon balances this statement by explaining prophets today are "under the grace of the New Testament" with "the completed canon of Scripture to rely on."[395] Therefore, he reasons, prophets today are "in a less responsible position than their Old Testament counterparts."[396] The critics find these two statements to be contradictory. For them, the authority of the Old Testament prophets is authority to write scripture. However, this cannot be

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[392] Geivett and Pivec, *A New Apostolic Reformation?,* 77.

[393] Geivett and Pivec, *A New Apostolic Reformation?,* 80.

[394] Bill Hamon, *Apostles, Prophets, and the Coming Moves of God: God's End-Time Plans for His Church and Planet Earth* (Santa Rosa Beach, FL: Destiny Image Publishers, 1997), 127–28; Cited in Geivett and Pivec, 79.

[395] Hamon, *Prophets, Pitfalls and Principles*, 126.

[396] Hamon, *Prophets, Pitfalls and Principles*, 126.

what Hamon has in mind, as he makes a distinction between modern prophecies and the authority of scripture.[397] Regardless of Hamon's exact understanding of the relationship between prophets of old and those today, his teaching alone is not representative of all who believe in present-day prophets. As has already been noted, the vast majority of NAR leaders surveyed do not believe New Testament prophets have the same authority as Old Testament prophets. In addition, 75 percent would not assign prophets extraordinary authority in the church.

Another reason the critics cite extraordinary authority for prophets is due to the use of the phrase "Thus saith the Lord."[398] This argument has been examined, and was shown to have taken Hamon's words out of context. However, even if he encouraged the use of the phrase, that would not signify a consensus of NAR leaders. Hamon does acknowledge that those in the office of the prophet carry a greater level of authority gained over time and testing.[399] However, he also requires words to be tested and shared in the presence of the pastors and elders; thereby limiting the authority of the prophet.[400] Hamon further limits the authority of the prophet by recognizing "all must receive from one another and be subject to correction and adjustment in methodology and interrelationships."[401] This accountability aligns with Paul's call to submit "to one another out of reverence for Christ" (Eph 5:21).

Finally, critics say this extraordinary authority is extended over individuals, churches, and nations. Their concern of authority over individuals has already been shown to be a fear-

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[397] Hamon, *Prophets and the Prophetic Movement,* 16; 136.

[398] Geivett and Pivec, *A New Apostolic Reformation?,* 80, 104.

[399] Hamon, *Prophets and the Prophetic Movement,* 170.

[400] Hamon, *Prophets and the Prophetic Movement*, 136.

[401] Hamon, *Prophets and the Prophetic Movement*, 189.

based, slippery slope logical fallacy. This fallacy is made clearer by recognizing the vast consensus of NAR leaders is that modern-day prophets do not have extraordinary authority.[402] In addition 94 percent do not believe prophets have any authority over individuals.[403] In an ecumenical spirit, Geivett and Pivec make an allowance for the modern-day prophetic gift, so long as it is "primarily for other individuals and local churches."[404] While the biblical and theological premise of this caution will be challenged below, its present effect is to narrow the objection to a prophet's ability to prophesy to nations.

Prophecy to nations and to kings is prevalent throughout the Old Testament; however, Geivett and Pivec do not see this same activity in the New Testament. They explain, "The reason post-Pentecost prophets were not sent to proclaim judgment on the nations is likely because they were busy fulfilling the Great Commission to 'make disciples of all nations' (Matt 28:19). That is, they were preaching the gospel to the nations, not pronouncing judgments on them."[405] In this statement, they reveal their assumption that prophesying to nations is equivalent to pronouncing judgments. While they claim the judgment of nations to be a prominent NAR teaching, their reference was shown to be taken out of context. In addition, it stands to reason that it is unlikely heads of state welcomed prophets such as Bill Hamon and Cindy Jacobs into their presence if the content of their prophetic message was a pronouncement of judgment.[406]

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[402] Clark, "Renewal Theology Survey."

[403] Clark, "Renewal Theology Survey."

[404] Geivett and Pivec, *A New Apostolic Reformation?,* 33.

[405] Geivett and Pivec, *A New Apostolic Reformation?,* 96.

[406] Geivett and Pivec, *A New Apostolic Reformation?,* 82.

Most prophets would probably agree with Steve Thompson that their role in prophesying to nations is "encouraging, building up, or comforting."[407] Jacobs is described as "ministering" to "heads of nations," and "her mission is to bring cultural reformation in which nations and governments are realigned with God's word and will."[408] Kris Vallotton conveys this understanding when he explains his gifting as building people and ministries, and his sphere of influence as nations.[409]

In summary, the claims that NAR leaders believe today's prophets are on par with Old Testament prophets, possess extraordinary authority, and extend this authority over individuals, churches, and nations are shown to be incorrect. These claims are built on incorrect assumptions and logical fallacies. When given the opportunity to share their actual beliefs, the majority of contributing NAR leaders do not grant modern prophets the same authority as Old Testament prophets, and view a prophet's call as one to build up people, churches, and nations.

New Revelations

In addition to extraordinary authority, the critics claim, "prophets have the right to prophesy . . . new revelation to a person, church or nation."[410] The idea of new revelation is alarming to the critics, who may not argue for cessationism, but certainly argue from it. B.B. Warfield viewed revelation as a thing of the past, "God the Holy Spirit has made it His

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[407] Steve Thompson, *You All May Prophecy* (Fort Mills, SC: MorningStar, 2007), 9 quoted in Kim Maas, "Building Prophetic Community in the Local Church: A Comparative Analysis of the Experience and Practices of Leading Prophets" (DMin diss., United Theological Seminary, 2013), 185, https://faithglobal.populiweb.com/router/courseofferings/10507310/folders/index; See 1 Corinthians 14:3.

[408] Maas, "Building Prophetic Community in the Local Church," 146-147.

[409] Maas, "Building Prophetic Community in the Local Church," 129. See footnote 15.

[410] Geivett and Pivec, *A New Apostolic Reformation?,* 80.

subsequent work, not to introduce new and unneeded revelations into the world."[411] Jon Ruthven objects to this understanding stating, "'New' revelations are 'unneeded' revelations: Warfield's equivocal use of 'new' here bans from the Holy Spirit any revelatory or miraculous charismata."[412] He further reasons, "How does the scripture teach that the Spirit can now 'diffuse' the revelation to 'bring' mankind to a 'knowledge of it' if not by some sort of revelation?"[413]

Rather than prophetic revelation being "unneeded" or even optional, Ruthven attests Jesus' "mission was to baptize people into the New Covenant Holy Spirit of prophecy."[414] It was the central theme of the New Covenant and the very purpose in his coming. In support of this claim, Ruthven points to Jesus' introduction by John the Baptist, "He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire" (Matthew 3:11). Keener likewise points to "the prophetic empowerment dimension of the Spirit" as central to Luke's writings.[415]

When considering the question, "Can people today have the gift of prophecy," the critics allow for new revelation so long as it is not for the universal church.[416] However, they later state,

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[411] Benjamin Breckinridge Warfield, *Counterfeit Miracles* (New York, C. Scribner's, 1918), 26, http://archive.org/details/counterfeitmirac00warf.

[412] Jon Mark Ruthven, *On the Cessation of the Charismata: The Protestant Polemic on Postbiblical Miracles*, Revised & Expanded edition (Word & Spirit Press, 2011), chap. 3, Kindle.

[413] Ruthven, *On the Cessation of the Charismata*, chap. 3.

[414] Jon Ruthven, *What's Wrong with Protestant Theology: Tradition vs. Biblical Emphasis* (Tulsa, OK: Word and Spirit Press, 2013), 204, pdf, accessed February 24, 2021.

[415] Keener, *Gift and Giver,* 52.

[416] Geivett and Pivec, *A New Apostolic Reformation?,* 97.

"The interval between the last book written by a New Testament apostle and the second coming of Christ brings forth no new revelation."[417] However, Ruthven has challenged this notion,

> [Warfield] nowhere notices that the Old Testament promises of the Spirit of prophecy and miracles apply to the entire time between the two comings of the Messiah; that Jesus' 'authority/power' granted in his commissions to his church is extended to all nations and is to continue until the end of the age— a frequently repeated theme in the New Testament epistles.[418]

There are two types of revelation often discussed in theology. General revelation is "what can be known of God through observation of nature."[419] Special revelation is "God's self-disclosure in the covenant history with Israel and supremely in Christ."[420] However, there is a third type of revelation that needs to be considered—Specific revelation, which is God's involvement in our lives through personal guidance and direction.[421] This specific revelation is cited by various NAR leaders in reference to prophetic revelation. Randy Clark cites "specific revelation" in reference to the prophetic word guiding a life changing decision to move his family and ministry to Pennsylvania.[422] Hamon uses similar terminology referencing "a specific rhema word."[423] He further explains the need for such a word, "While the Bible gives clear

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[417] Geivett and Pivec, *A New Apostolic Reformation?,* 74. Emphasis theirs.

[418] Ruthven, *On the Cessation of the Charismata*, chap. 4; See Ruthven's exegesis of the following biblical texts: 1 Cor 1:4-8; 13:8-13; Eph 4:7-13; 1:13-14, 17-21; 3:14-21; 4:30; 5:15-19; 6:10-20; Phil 1:9-10; Col 1:9-12; 1 Thess 1:5-8; 5:11-23; 2 Thess 1:11-12; 1 Peter 1:5; 4:7-12; 1 Jn 2:26-28; Jude 18-21; Rev 19:10 with 22:9.

[419] Daniel L. Migliore, *Faith Seeking Understanding*, 3rd edition (Grand Rapids, MI / Cambridge, U.K.: William. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2014), 464.

[420] Migliore, *Faith Seeking Understanding*, 464.

[421] Randy Clark, "Week 2 - BTHE 5283: Renewal Theology" lesson video, "Video 4 – Dr. Randy Clark: Jesus Gave the 5-Fold Offices to the Church: A Continuationist Perspective" (BTHE 5283: Renewal Theology), (13:20). From Family of Faith/Global Awakening Seminary, January term 2021, retrieved from https://faithglobal.populiweb.com/router/courseofferings/10507310/folders/index;

[422] Clark, "Video 4 – Jesus Gave the 5-Fold Offices to the Church."

[423] Hamon, *Prophets and the Prophetic Movement*, 17.

instructions for general directions and standards, how do we make decisions about particular matters for which the Bible cannot give a specific guidance?"[424] Keener recognizes non-charismatics are uncomfortable with the use of the term revelation; however, "they agree that God's Spirit can lead our daily lives, which is what most charismatics mean by the term."[425]

For Warfield, the purpose of revelation is to provide the special, inerrant revelation needed to write scripture. However, this position falls short. While Scripture reveals the special plan of salvation, it "doesn't tell us everything."[426] This position does not take into account the need for specific revelation pertaining to the timing of God and His detailed strategies.[427]

Grudem further debunks this line of reasoning by pointing to passages in which God uses revelation for other purposes.[428] God uses revelation in the process of salvation, to reveal His wrath, to convict of sin, and to bring us into greater knowledge of Him.[429] These are each ongoing reasons for prophetic revelation. Recognizing the gift of the prophetic, Paul encourages the Corinthians to "eagerly desire spiritual gifts, especially the gift of prophecy" (1 Cor 14:1).

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[424] Hamon, *Prophets and the Prophetic Movement,* 71.

[425] Keener, *Gift and Giver*, 148.

[426] Wayne Grudem, "Should Christians Expect Miracles Today? Objections and Answers from the Bible" in *The Power of the Cross: The Biblical Place of Healing and Gift-Based Ministry in Proclaiming the Gospel*, eds. Gary S. Greig and Kevin Springer (Regal Books, 1993), 74. This is a pre-release version used by permission, the published reference is: *The Kingdom and the Power: Are Healing and the Spiritual Gifts Used by Jesus and the Early Church Meant for the Church Today?,* eds., Gary S. Greig and Kevin Springer (Ventura: CA, Regal Books, 1993).

[427] Clark, "Video 4 – Jesus Gave the 5-Fold Offices to the Church," (12:19); Randy Clark, "Week 2 - BTHE 5283: Renewal Theology" lesson video, "Video 5 - Dr. Randy Clark: Validity of Modern-Day Apostles" (BTHE 5283: Renewal Theology), (56:35). From Family of Faith/Global Awakening Seminary, January term 2021, retrieved from https://faithglobal.populiweb.com/router/courseofferings/10507310/folders/index.

[428] Grudem, "Should Christians Expect Miracles Today? Objections and Answers from the Bible" in The Power of the Cross, 72.

[429] Grudem, 72; see Matt 11:27; Rom 1:18; Phil 3:15; Eph 1:17.

Based on this encouragement, the Assemblies of God likewise encourage, "The church should long for authentic prophecy with a message, which is relevant to contemporary needs and subject to the authority of Scripture."[430]

New Truths

This new revelation is often referred to by NAR leaders as "new truths."[431] These new truths "are often described as strategies for advancing God's kingdom."[432] New strategies are typically encouraged for contextualization and church growth, as we learn "to express genuine Christianity in socioculturally appropriate ways."[433] This approval is reflected by the responding NAR leaders, 100 percent of whom agreed prophets can receive "new insights for strategy."[434] The idea of new truths is not as popular. It is therefore necessary to examine the origins of this claim, its intended meaning, and whether it is used universally among NAR leaders.

The term "new truth" is adopted from Hamon's teaching. He believes God is restoring forgotten truths to the church. For Hamon, new truth is restoration truth, truth that has always been, but has been forgotten by the church. Upon its rediscovery it is "new" to those who grasp hold of it. These truths are not really new, but like the purchase of a used car, they are new in a sense.

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[430] "Apostles and Prophets (Official A/G Position Paper)," Assemblies of God, August 6, 2001, https://ag.org/beliefs/position-papers/apostles-and-prophets.

[431] Geivett and Pivec, *A New Apostolic Reformation?,* 77.

[432] Geivett and Pivec, 77.

[433] Charles H. Kraft, *Anthropology for Christian Witness*, 10th ed. (Maryknoll, N.Y: Orbis Books, 1997), 376.

[434] Clark, "Renewal Theology Survey."

This restorationist understanding sees the charismatic gifts of the Holy Spirit, active during the time of the apostles, as temporarily lost. Hamon explains, "A true Holy Spirit-inspired movement will bring enlightenment of certain scriptures that reveal truths and practices which were lost during the Dark Ages."[435] According to this view, the restoration of forgotten truths began with the Protestant Reformation of the 16th century when the scripture was illuminated to Martin Luther, "Night and day I pondered until . . . I grasped the truth that the righteousness of God is that righteousness whereby, through grace and sheer mercy, he justified us by faith."[436] Hamon sees this enlightenment as a "newly-found truth and experience."[437] However, the critics challenge this view arguing, "Was the gospel so little understood that for centuries . . . no one knew that salvation is by faith?"[438] While the terminology of "new truth" raises concerns for many, arguing that justification by faith was plainly understood ignores the historical schism caused by Luther's grasping of the truth.

While the critics do not believe God's truth will be hidden, Grudem recognizes God can use the gift of prophecy "to make us aware of things we would otherwise overlook."[439] Migliore suggests an awareness of the need for new insights into scripture,

> "The community of faith . . . must never presume to have control of the revelation that it attests. If that were to happen, revelation would be replaced by ideology, and theology by idolatry. It is an event for which the church must continually pray, "Come, Holy Spirit! Speak once again to your people through your Word."[440]

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[435] Hamon, *Prophets and the Prophetic Movement*, 82.

[436] James Atkinson, "Reform" in *Eerdman's Handbook to the History of Christianity* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdman Publishing Co., 1977), 366; quoted in Hamon, Prophets and the Prophetic Movement, 84.

[437] Hamon, *Prophets and the Prophetic Movement*, 84.

[438] Geivett and Pivec, *A New Apostolic Reformation?,* 102.

[439] Grudem, "Should Christians Expect Miracles Today? Objections and Answers from the Bible" in *The Power of the Cross,* 74.

[440] Migliore, *Faith Seeking Understanding*, 44.

The concept of new truths is tied to restorationism, which critics claim to be a key belief of NAR leaders.[441] ~~*xxx124*~~ However, there is no evidence to support this broad claim. Hamon holds this belief, and Wagner adopted it from him. However, the claim that restorationism is a position held by all or even most NAR leaders is unsubstantiated. Scott, cites a debate in England over restorationist beliefs and Renewalist beliefs, which hold the move of God as renewing the church rather than restoring it. Additionally, Eddie Hyatt lays out the presence of the charismata throughout church history in his book 2000 years of Charismatic Christianity.[442] While the NAR leaders surveyed were not asked about their beliefs on restorationism, they overwhelmingly agreed prophetic revelation should not be called "new truths."[443]

New Scripture

In considering these "new truths," the critics struggle to understand "why . . . can [prophets] not write new Scripture? Hamon never explains why; he simply says they can't."[444] At the heart of this question lies a false premise of the purpose of the prophetic gift. The fear is that "If you say . . . the prophets of today are on the level of the prophets of the Old Testament, then the revelation they receive should be made into scripture."[445] This fear is based on the

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[441] Geivett and Pivec, *A New Apostolic Reformation?,* 83.

[442] Eddie L. Hyatt, *2000 Years of Charismatic Christianity: A 21st Century Look at Church History from a Pentecostal/Charismatic Perspective* (Lake Mary, FL: Charisma House, 2002).

[443] Clark, "Renewal Theology Survey."

[444] Geivett and Pivec, *A New Apostolic Reformation?,* 101.

[445] Randy Clark, "Week 1 – BTHE 5283: Renewal Theology" lesson video, "Video 1 – Dr. Randy Clark: "Critics Perspective on Beliefs of New Apostolic Reformation" (BTHE 5283: Renewal Theology), (23:48), From Family of Faith/Global Awakening Seminary, January term 2021, retrieved from https://faithglobal.populiweb.com/router/courseofferings/10507310/folders/index.

traditional cessationist belief that "the essential role of miraculous charismata is to accredit true doctrine or its bearers."[446] If the purpose for the prophetic gift is to accredit doctrine, this concern of modern prophets would make sense. However, Ruthven denies this view explaining, "The charismata do not accredit the gospel, nor do they replace the gospel; rather, the charismata express the gospel."[447] Furthermore, it is worth noting that not all prophets wrote scripture, and not all scripture was written by apostles and prophets.

If the role of the prophet is not to write scripture, then what is their purpose? Wild explains, "The purpose of the gifts in the New Testament are not to write Scripture (or contradict it) but to build up the Church in love."[448] Paul gets even more specific, "The one who prophesies speaks to people for their upbuilding and encouragement and consolation" (1 Cor 14:3). Meanwhile, Niehaus points to three reasons God performs miracles through the Old Testament prophets: "God did them to show that he was God; He did them for evangelistic purposes; and He did them out of compassion for his people."[449] Each of these reasons is true today: God is still revealing Himself; His heart is still for evangelism; and He still has compassion for His people.

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[446] Ruthven, *On the Cessation of the Charismata*, chap. 1.

[447] Ruthven, chap. 1.

[448] Mel Wild, "An Inconvenient History for Cessationism," *In My Father's House*, April 21, 2014, accessed January 12, 2021, https://melwild.wordpress.com/2014/04/21/an-inconvenient-history-for-cessationism/.; See 1 Cor 14:4.

[449] Jeffrey Niehaus, "Old Testament Foundations: Signs, Wonders and the People of God" in *The Power of the Cross*, eds. Gary S. Greig and Kevin Springer, (Regal Books, 1993), 33. This is a pre-release version used by permission, the published reference is: *The Kingdom and the Power: Are Healing and the Spiritual Gifts Used by Jesus and the Early Church Meant for the Church Today?,* eds., Gary S. Greig and Kevin Springer (Ventura: CA, Regal Books, 1993).

New Doctrine

There is a consensus among NAR leaders that revelation is *not* meant to create new scripture, but there is a small divide in views of its role on doctrine. While Hamon believes new revelations can create new doctrine, such as the doctrine of sanctification or the doctrine of initial evidence, he warns doctrine should never be established on the basis of one person's revelation. Instead, he gives detailed guidelines for the development of doctrine. However, Hamon's view appears to be the minority.

Ninety-four percent of NAR leaders did not agree that "new truths" lead to new doctrine. Joyner emphatically states, "I do not believe that any kind of prophetic revelation is for the purpose of establishing doctrine. We have the Scripture for that."[450] Geivett and Pivec challenge Joyner's assertion, citing multiple doctrines in his book:

> the doctrine of a coming 'great spiritual civil war' in the church; the doctrine that the church must receive prophets to have victory in the end- time battle; and the doctrine that the Gospels should be used as the lens for interpreting the apostle Paul's New Testament writings, not the other way around. If these do not qualify as doctrines in Joyner's mind, then one must wonder what does.[451]

Joyner pointedly says his book is not meant to establish doctrine, but Geivett and Pivec claim it does. Who is right? Migliore helps clarify this confusion by explaining, "While the term 'doctrine' . . . is sometimes used in the general sense of any church teaching its more specific reference is to an exposition of an important article of Christian faith, for example, the doctrine of creation."[452] In light of this double meaning, we can affirm the position of both Joyner and his

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[450] Joyner, *The Final Quest*, 12–13.

[451] Geivett and Pivec, *A New Apostolic Reformation?,* 88.

[452] Migliore, *Faith Seeking Understanding*, 447. Migliore further notes that "doctrinal formulations in the Reformation tradition are not considered infallible but are subject to examination and reformulation in the light of the scriptural witness."

critics. Joyner is not creating a new "important article of Christian faith," but encouraging the church to love one another in the midst of divisive attacks.

Biblical Evaluation

Many of the critics' claims have been reviewed, but the ultimate concern in this conversation is whether the *doma* gift of prophet is meant for the present day. Due to the limited scope of this paper, this biblical evaluation for belief in modern prophets will be limited to a basic analysis of the most pertinent scriptures, identified as Ephesians 4:11, Ephesians 2:20, and 1 Corinthians 12:28.

Ephesians 4:11

The belief that prophets are for today is based on Ephesians 4:11 which states, "It was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers." The context of the passage is Paul's encouragement "to live a life worthy of the calling" (Eph 4:1). In this context, the *doma* gifts help the church attain this level of maturity. While some say the gifts of apostle, prophet, and sometimes evangelist are not for the present age, this position is not supported in scripture. Kenneth Hagin points out, there is "nothing in Scripture that explicitly states these *doma* gifts are for only a certain time."[453]

Within the context, we are given the purpose and the duration of these gifts. The purpose is to "prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up (Eph 4:12). This work continues "until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ" (Eph 4:13). To say apostles are no longer needed is to say the church has reached this level of maturity. Are

[453] Scott, *Apostles Today*, chap. 3.

people "humble and gentle, patient, bearing with one another in love" (Eph 4:2)? Until we reach this place of maturity the apostles are needed. While the Assemblies of God do not use the title of prophet, they recognize there is "no statute of limitations on the Spirit of prophecy."[454]

Many who recognize the function of these gifts, avoid the title of prophet due to concern of spiritual pride. Geivett and Pivec "caution against use of the title prophet . . . even though New Testament churches used the word to describe those with a spiritual gift of Prophecy."[455] Others apply this title based on its biblical usage. Clark suggests, "Sometimes, it is better to have a biblical title than a non-biblical title."[456] God has given *doma* gifts to the church. These gifts are needed for the equipping of the saints, and to see the body of Christ come into unity and maturity. Until we arrive at this goal, we must use every resource available to us. One of these resources is the *doma* gift of the prophet.

Ephesians 2:20

Some believe Ephesians 4:11 must be further understood in light of Ephesians 2:20 which states the church is "built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone." For some such as John MacArthur, this passage refers only to the New Testament apostles and prophets who established the church; however, not all scholars agree.[457] Clinton Arnold suggests it refers to those who "functioned in a foundational role in every church."[458]

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[454] "Apostles and Prophets (Official A/G Position Paper)."

[455] Geivett and Pivec, *A New Apostolic Reformation?,* 97.

[456] Clark, "Video 4 – Jesus Gave the 5-Fold Offices to the Church," (30:38).

[457] Clark, "Video 5 - Validity of Modern-Day Apostles," (19:40).

[458] Clinton E. Arnold, *Ephesians* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2010), 174.

The Reformers understood Ephesians 2:20 to mean the church was "built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets" through the scripture and denied "any additional divine revelation" beyond this early "foundational" phase.[459] According to Ruthven part of the reason for this stance was because they transferred "the authority of the 16th century Pope to the first century apostles."[460] To their way of thinking, building on the foundation of apostles and prophets meant that each succeeding generation was laid on top of the previous.[461] The role of apostles and prophets in Ephesians 2:20 must then, necessarily, be restricted to the first century establishment of the church.[462]

However, this "argument-by-analogy" is on shaky ground for several reasons.[463] First is the assumption of the imagery's meaning. One of the challenges of interpreting the Bible is the tendency to over-interpret metaphors, thereby giving them meaning the original author did not intend. Grant Osborne warns, "We must be careful not to over exegete figures of speech. Unlike modern metaphors, ancient figures of speech were inexact. They overlapped only at one point, and the modern reader often has trouble understanding that point."[464] Within the context of Ephesians it is clear that Paul moves in and out of images, as he shifts from a metaphor of family to one of a building through the use of a Greek word play, which is lost in translation.[465]

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[459] Ruthven, *On the Cessation of the Charismata*, Appendix III.

[460] Ruthven, Appendix III.

[461] Ruthven, Appendix III.

[462] Ruthven, Appendix III.

[463] Ruthven, Appendix III.

[464] Grant R. Osborne, *The Hermeneutical Spiral: A Comprehensive Introduction to Biblical Interpretation*, Revised and Expanded edition (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2006), 125.

[465] Klyne Snodgrass, *Ephesians*, The NIV Application Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1996), 123.

Furthermore, the church is not only "built on the foundation of apostles and prophets," but "Christ Jesus himself [is] the chief cornerstone" (Eph 2:20). For the cessationist view to hold, the metaphor for Jesus must be a stone in the foundation of the structure. However, *akrogoniaios* is rarely used and unclear in its meaning, with possibilities including "topmost, outermost, inmost."[466] Scholars are divided. Some claim it is the foundational cornerstone; others consider it to be the capstone, a finishing stone at the top of the building. This imagery would fit with the image of Christ as the head in Ephesians 4:15. Meanwhile, other scholars suggest Paul may have appreciated the ambiguity of the term and used it for that reason as a literary device.[467] The variety of plausible interpretations undermines the cessationist position.

Ruthven offers an alternative interpretation of Ephesians 2:20, revealing parallels with Peter's confession of faith.[468] Seen from this light, "the 'foundation of the apostles and prophets' symbolizes a way by which everyone on earth may enter into God's temple/ kingdom/ covenant/ citizenship/ household, that is, by the *Spirit-revealed* confession of Christ Jesus."[469]

Finally, Ruthven sites a "fatal dilemma" in the cessationist interpretation. If the foundation is limited to the first century, then the works of Christ, such as regeneration, justification, and sanctification, are also limited to the first century.[470] If Christ's work continues beyond the first century "then the 'foundation' must be stretched to include the present time.'"[471]

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[466] Frank Thielman, *Ephesians*, Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2010), 181.

[467] Thielman, *Ephesians*, 182.

[468] Ruthven, *On the Cessation of the Charismata*, Appendix III; See Matthew 16:16-19.

[469] Ruthven, *On the Cessation of the Charismata*, Appendix III.

[470] Ruthven, *On the Cessation of the Charismata*, Appendix III.

[471] Ruthven, *On the Cessation of the Charismata*, Appendix III.

1 Corinthians 12:28-13:13

1 Corinthians 12:28 contains a list of gifts similar to Ephesians 4:11; however, this verse combines supernatural gifts, such as prophecy, with service gifts, such as helping. The context of this passage is Paul's instructions on spiritual gifts, and he references a hierarchy with some gifts being "higher" than others. Immediately after encouraging the Corinthians to "desire the higher gifts," Paul identifies the "more excellent way" of love (1 Cor 12:31).

In 1 Corinthians 13:8, Paul acknowledges prophecy will pass away, and he gives the timeline of when the gift will cease, "when the perfect comes" (1 Cor 13:10). There has been some debate as to what "the perfect" references. Cessationists point to the canon, while continuationists consider this the second coming of Christ. The early church was on the side of the continuationists. When the prophetess Maximilla claimed prophecy would cease after her death, the church fathers used 1 Corinthians 13:10 to show that the perfect "was yet future at the coming of Christ," and therefore, prophecy would continue.[472]

Conclusion

The long-standing debate over the continuance of the charismata has shifted. Warfield's cessationist polemic has been debunked and deemed "internally contradictory and . . . therefore useless."[473] Cessationists now debate the validity of the prophetic office acknowledged in Ephesians 4:11. One book critical of this position, *A New Apostolic Reformation?* has been reviewed and found to be a study in rhetoric and logical fallacies. The inconsistency of its authors' claims in comparison to their practices was disappointing. Overall, their claim to

[472] Ruthven, *On the Cessation of the Charismata*, chap. 3.

[473] Ruthven, chap 2.

openness to a continuationist position appears to be more of an attempt to gain favor than genuine engagement with the theological positions. The critics' failure to engage charismatic scholars in their "biblical response" undermines their argument. It is hoped they will not fall into another logical fallacy, that of the "sunk cost," in which so much time and energy has been invested into a project they refuse to abandon it, "even when it turns out to be fruitless and futile."[474] When the role of prophets is evaluated in light of the prominent scriptures, the *doma* gift of prophet is found to be given until the return of Christ.

[474] T. B. S. Staff, "15 Logical Fallacies You Should Know Before Getting Into a Debate."

Prophets: Fathers and Mothers of Children of Revelation
by Tracy Nicole

Introduction: History and Tension of Church Prophets

From the very inception of the church, prophecy has been at the forefront of controversy. Peter needed to explain what was happening as the Spirit was poured out on Pentecost, and many spoke in new languages and seemed drunk (Acts 2:15). He recounted the promise given through the prophet Joel that sons and daughters would prophesy (Acts 2:17).[475] As Keener writes, "the immediate sign of the Spirit's outpouring at Pentecost was a prophetic empowerment for witness."[476]

The "apostles and prophets" are then definitively described as the foundation of the Church (Eph. 2:20), but there is tension as a warning is issued to be watchful for false apostles and prophets (Matt. 7:15-20; 2 Pet. 2:1; 1 John 4:1). In biblical writings, the Early Church is shown to put a high esteem on prophecy, having it be the example spiritual gift that all believers are to "earnestly desire" (1 Cor. 14:1), but with a contrasting warning "not to despise prophecy" because of its controversial nature and unexpected troublesome issues (1 Thess. 5:20).

As the first generation of apostles and prophets ended, the prophetic Montanist movement began (in the mid-100s AD).[477] But it quickly fell into disrepute due to errors in

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[475] All Scriptures are taken from the *English Standard Version*®, Copyright © 2011 by Crossway.

[476] Craig Keener, *Gift and Giver: The Holy Spirit for Today* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2001), 85, Ebook, https://thedtl.on.worldcat.org/oclc/1204139369. "As many writers have shown, Luke emphasizes particularly the Spirit's role in various kinds of inspired speech… the Spirit's prophetic activity is his activity most often emphasized in Luke and Acts" (53).

[477] For a thorough review of prophecy through church history refer to: Kim Maas, "Building Prophetic Community in the Local Church a Comparative Analysis of the Experience and Practices of Leading Prophets," (DMin diss., United Theological Seminary, 2013), 44.

prophecy and conflict with Catholic bishops who claimed they were unorthodox and possessed.[478] The church reacted with a further suspicion of prophecy, pushing it more to the margins. However, there are punctuated accounts of prophecy and miracles among various subgroups of the church throughout history. "Fox shows that the battle against the demons, lurking behind the idols and working 'wonders and visions, 'continued for centuries."[479] Irenaeus, Bishop of Lyons, writes of "utter prophetic expressions" and seeing the "dead raised," and Gregory the Great records the same in the sixth century.[480] During this time, the Catholic church viewed the Pope as a prophet, with great authority and revelation, able to write new Scripture.[481] During the Protestant Reformation, Luther in his revolution stripped the Pope of power and ability to write Scripture, threw out indulgences, removed the "enthusiasts" subjective prophecy, and all miracles.[482] Prophecy "was reinterpreted to mean simply preaching. This was

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[478] Robert I. Bradshaw, "Montanism: Heresy or Healthy Revival?" Early Church.org.uk, 1992, https://earlychurch.org.uk/article_montanism.html. "Bigg maintains that they were not only orthodox in doctrine, but that they contributed to the formation of the later Creed' …bestow[ing] the title 'God 'upon the Holy Spirit.'"

[479] Don Williams, "Following Christ's Example: A Biblical View of Discipleship" in *The Power of the Cross*, eds., Gary S. Greig and Kevin Springer (Ventura: CA, Regal Books a division of Gospel Light, 1993), 162. This is a pre-release version used by permission, the published reference is: *The Kingdom and the Power: Are Healing and the Spiritual Gifts Used by Jesus and the Early Church Meant for the Church Today?,* eds., Gary S. Greig and Kevin Springer (Ventura: CA, Regal Books, 1993).

[480] Williams, "Following Christ's Example" in The Power of the Cross, 162; Burgess," The Proclamation of the Gospel with Accompanying Charismata in Post-Biblical Early Church History," in *The Power of the Cross*, 252.

[481] Benjamin G. McNair Scott, *Apostles Today: Making Sense of Contemporary Charismatic Apostolates: a Historical and Theological Appraisal* (Eugene, OR: Pickwick Publications, 2014), chap. 6, sec. "Part 2," para. 2, Ebook; According to D. A. Carson during the Reformation protestant theologians "claimed that the deposit of truth lies in the Bible, not in the church or in the magisterium of the church." (D.A. Carson, "Recent developments in the doctrine of Scripture," in Hermeneutics, Authority and Canon, eds., D.A. Carson and J.D. Woodbridge [Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1995], 14).

[482] Burgess, "The Proclamation of the Gospel with Accompanying Charismata in Post-Biblical Early Church History," in *The Power of the Cross*, 245.

the predominant Protestant view from 1517 until the birth of the Pentecostal movement in 1901."[483] But prophetic utterance remained active within fringe groups.[484]

At the turn of the twentieth century, many more Christians found themselves having Pentecostal experiences; tongues became a regular practice in these fellowships and spurred new denominations and Pentecostalism.[485] Throughout the century, the tension continued, as there were controversial prophetic movements, for example, the Latter Rain movement or the group of Kansas City prophets.[486] Within these movements, there were problems: critical figures in moral failure, inaccurate prophecies held for years, and infighting for position and title among the prophets.[487] But in recent decades, there has been a rise in the acceptance of the prophetic movement, particularly in the Charismatic/Pentecostal circles. Bill Hamon describes a large meeting of modern-day prophets and apostles as a

> historical occasion in God's annals of Church history… prophetically orchestrated by the Holy Spirit… Numerous denominational representatives were present, with many delegates from other nations. The consensus of the panelists was that there are still apostles and prophets in the Church, and that there is an emerging Apostolic Movement that will revolutionize the 21st-century church.[488]

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[483] Randy Clark and Mary Healy, *The Spiritual Gifts Handbook: Using Your Gifts to Build the Kingdom*, (Grand Rapids: Chosen Books, 2018), 33, Kindle. According to Clark and Healy, "The Lutherans and Calvinists believed that certain gifts had ceased, those being gifts of healings, working of miracles, tongues and interpretation of tongues. Prophecy was for all intents and purposes also denied, in that it was reinterpreted to mean simply preaching" (p35); Grudem, "Should Christians Expect Miracles Today?" in *The Power of the Cross*, 86-87.

[484] Burgess, "The Proclamation of the Gospel with Accompanying Charismata in Post-Biblical Early Church History" in *The Power of the Cross*, 246.

[485] Randy Clark and Mary Healy, *The Spiritual Gifts Handbook*, 33.

[486] Geivett and Pivec, *A New Apostolic Reformation?*, 12.

[487] Jon Rising, "The Latter Rain Movement of '48: LRM - disappeared? still around? Here's an answer.," April 17, 2020. https://lrm1948.blogspot.com/2020/04/lrm-disappeared-still-around-heres.html.

[488] Bill Hamon, *Apostles, Prophets and the Coming Moves of God: God's End-Time Plans for His Church and Planet Earth*, (Shippensburg, PA: Destiny Image, 1997), 10; Scott, Apostles Today, chap. 1, sec. "Independent Charismatic Churches/Neo-Apostolic Churches/Modern Independent Pentecostal Churches: USA," para. 5. The post-denominational symposium was in 1996 at Fuller Seminary.

But today, the conflict over prophecy continues, as there remains concern over prophetic revelation and the authority of prophets. The fear and suspicion about prophetic revelation have led some critics to call prophecy part of the New Age spiritualism, assign labels like "false prophets" to some, claim prophets are trying to write new Scripture or "new truth," or imply cult-like behavior to groups that espouse prophecy.[489] Beyond the fear surrounding prophetic revelation, there is equal suspicion that prophets would have too much authority. The fear is that prophets, once given the title, will hold people to strict adherence to their words without any testing. They are concerned the prophets will "govern" over the people instead of being healthy church leadership. Ideally, prophets have a role in sharing subjective prophetic revelation (1 Cor. 14:26, 29), testing prophecies (1 Cor. 14:29), and equipping others to do ministry (Eph. 4:12). Biblically, prophets should be fathers and mothers raising, equipping, and maturing children in revelation and discernment of prophecy until unity is achieved (Eph 4:11-15).

Today's Critics

The same controversy over the role of the prophets that we see throughout the church's history continues today. The cessationist view of prophecy arose and became embedded in the Evangelical church system at the Reformation due to Luther's negative experience with prophecy.[490] According to Keener, the traditional cessationist view can be summarized as:

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[489] Douglas R. Geivett and Holly Pivec. *A New Apostolic Reformation?: A Biblical Response to a Worldwide Movement*, (Ashland: Lexham Press, 2018), 103, Ebook, https://thedtl.on.worldcat.org/oclc/1055044424.

[490] Burgess, "The Proclamation of the Gospel with Accompanying Charismata in Post-Biblical Early Church History," in *The Power of the Cross*, 245. Burgess says, "This was the position of Martin Luther, who openly rejected the schwärmer or enthusiasts of his day—who claimed gifts of prophecy and gave higher credence to the 'inner voice 'of the Spirit than to the 'external word' or Scriptures"; Scott summarizes that "Broad cessationism is a view most in vogue within the Conservative Evangelical wing of the church that asserts that all miraculous gifts died out with the first apostles. B. B. Warfield espoused this view, and it is still heralded by influential Evangelical pastor/theologians such as John MacArthur and J. I. Packer" (Scott, *Apostles Today*, chap. 7, sec. "Part 1: Appraising Charismatic Apostolates Generally.")

"supernatural spiritual gifts — that is, any (or most) gifts that we cannot also explain in natural terms — have passed away… in the past, some attributed such phenomena to demons, but psychological interpretations are more frequent today."[491] "Warfield was especially antagonistic towards defenders of revelational religious experience… He felt that these substituted *subjective* religiosity for the completeness of Scripture."[492] We agree with Warfield that prophecy is subjective; however, still highly valuable in our relationship with God. As Ruthven aptly states:

> cessationism, then, is not simply an odd, tolerable doctrine of traditional theology. It strikes at the very heart of biblical revelation—at the core message of the Bible: that the normative pattern for God and man is the goal of immediate, direct revelation as the essential part of the intimate, divinely-ordained relationship, so that "I will be their God and they shall be my people" (Jer. 31:33).[493]

Keener claims, "proponents of this [cessation] view usually argue their position based on 1 Corinthians 13:8-10 or Ephesians 2:20 and especially from history."[494] We will now address these Scriptures (and Eph. 4:11 as well), as we have shown a survey of history to be unsupportive of the cessationist view of prophecy. Ruthven states the cessationist biblical interpretation of Ephesians 2:20:

> cessationists support their view that the gift of prophecy is presently inoperative by their increasing appeal to an argument-by-analogy from Eph. 2:20, namely, that since apostles and prophets appear as the "foundation" of the temple/Church, and since the "foundation" can only represent one generation of time, then these "foundation" gifts necessarily passed away before the second generation of Christianity.[495]

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[491] Keener, *Gift and Giver*, 91.

[492] [italics added] Burgess, "The Proclamation of the Gospel with Accompanying Charismata in Post- Biblical Early Church History," in *The Power of the Cross*, 245; "The logic precedes the exegesis" according to Gordon Fee (Keener, Gift and Giver, 110).

[493] Jon Mark Ruthven, *On the Cessation of the Charismata: the Protestant Polemic on Post-Biblical Miracles* (Tulsa: Word & Spirit Press, 2011), "Preface," para. 23, Kindle.

[494] Keener, *Gift and Giver*, 91.

[495] Ruthven, *On the Cessation of the Charismata*, "Footnotes," ref. 444.

Keener refutes this saying, "by pressing chronology into the image, so that all parts of the foundation must belong to the first generation, possibly making Paul's illustration more specific than he intended."[496] And Ruthven addresses the Ephesians 4:11 passage: "it would also require the cessation of the other categories of ministry, evangelists and pastor teachers since they all are placed in parallel construction" linguistically; therefore, they all must cease or continue.[497] Keener rebuts the 1 Corinthians 13:8-10 cessationist interpretation:

> Although some older interpreters argued that Paul's "perfect" referred to the completion of the canon,… [it] has left few evangelical scholars who continue to use this text to support cessation of the gifts. Richard Gaffin, a prominent cessationist, concedes that "the view that they describe the point at which the New Testament canon is completed cannot be made credible exegetically."[498]

Presbyterian Pastor Bottomly comments that these arguments cannot withstand scrutiny, as "cessationism leaks in too many places to be a useful or coherent theology."[499]

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[496] Keener, *Gift and Giver,* 109; Certain critics hold a cessationist view of apostles and prophets and claim this is the orthodox view by misrepresenting Arnold's work as their source. They state: "Today however, nearly all Protestant interpreters believe that Eph. 2:20 refers to first-century (not Old Testament) prophets who jointly established the first churches in the Christian era." Geivett and Pivec, A New Apostolic Reformation?, 43. They conclude that biblically the only acceptable orthodox position is the cessation of modern apostles and prophets. They cite that this fact is taken from Arnold E. Clinton, Ephesians, Zondervan's Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament, (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2010), 245, E-book. But later, on page 245, Arnold clarifies his view that Eph. 2:20 roles have ceased by not the Eph. 4:11 apostles and prophets. In the section on Eph. 4:11, Arnold states, "This passage is different than 2:20, however, in that Paul is not reflecting back on the beginnings of the church but is speaking about its present and ongoing structure. Christ is continuing to give these leaders to the church for the equipping of the individual members and facilitating their growth to maturity." The critics have misrepresented Arnold's view of modern-day prophets and apostles as ceasing.

[497] Ruthven, *On the Cessation of the Charismata*, chap. 3, sec. "3.2.1.3", para. 7; Keener comments on Eph. 4:11-15 prophets: "As long as the church needs more maturity and unity, these gifts therefore remain." Keener, Gift and Giver, 111; According to Williams, "the Risen Lord continues to gift his Church with charismatic leaders: apostles, prophets, evangelists, and pastor-teachers, in order to equip the saints, that is, the whole Church, for ministry (Eph. 4:7-12)." Williams, "Following Christ's Example: A Biblical View of Discipleship" in *The Power of the Cross*, 159; Also, the grammar shows the ongoing nature of the gifts: "Eph 4:13 'until'…functions as a conj. which introduces an indef. temp. clause that has both a prospective and a final force… Καταντήσωμεν… in this context means 'to attain or arrive at a particular state.'" Benjamin L. Merkle, Ephesians (Nashville, TN: B&H Publishing Group, 2016), sec. "Eph. 4:1-13," para. "Verse 13," E-book.

[498] Keener, *Gift and Giver*, 105-106.

[499] Bottomly, "Coming Out of the Hangar" in *The Power of the Cross*, 235.

"The exercise of gifts clearly commended in Scripture, such as healing, words of knowledge, prophecy, working of miracles, speaking in and interpreting tongues, are discouraged, forbidden, and even demonized by these cessationist churches."[500] The understanding of cessationism is important, not because the majority is trending to this position,[501] but because it is the backbone of many doctrines and practices inside continuationist Evangelical churches. Such churches, while theologically open, can remain cessationist/deist[502] in practice, particularly regarding corporate prophecy, equipping of the gift of prophecy, discernment of prophecy, and accepting modern-day prophets.[503] We need to know that our starting points and biases can affect our view[504] and fear toward experiences.[505]

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[500] [italics added] Bottomly, "Coming Out of the Hangar" in *The Power of the Cross*, 234.

[501] "The next generation appears to be moving away from cessationism… I don't see it as common in seminaries or in scholarly commentaries. Most people I encounter believe in some form of sign gifts at work today, but they are simply not sure how to apply them." Ed Stetzer, "Continualist Christians: An Overview." Christianity Today (Blog Forum). The Exchange with Ed Stetzer, October 17, 2013. https://www.christianitytoday.com/edstetzer/2013/october/continualists-overview.html?paging=off; "One of the interesting results of the Strange Fire conference and book may be the point of John MacArthur's concern—the reaction shows that more and more evangelicals are, indeed, continualists… Simply put, belief in the sign gifts seems to be a mainstream view now. (I'd not be surprised if it is a majority view)," Ed Stetzer, "Continualist Christians: The 'Third 'Wave of the Holy Spirit." Christianity Today (Blog Forum), The Exchange with Ed Stetzer, November 26, 2013, https://www.christianitytoday.com/edstetzer/2013/november/third-wave-of-holy-spirit.html.

[502] "Both the mainline denominations and evangelicals have had difficulty with healing and other supernatural ministry;" Bottomly claims most in these circles are deists. Bottomly, "Coming Out of the Hangar" in *The Power of the Cross*, 227.

[503] Scott has thorough research on which denominations and groups believe there are apostles (and prophets) today. People like Presbyterian theologian Rodman Williams, The International Pentecostal Holiness Church, Church of God in Christ, Anglicans, and The United Methodist Church, to name a few, affirm the role of apostles (and prophets) today (Scott, *Apostles Today,* n.p.); But as Evangelicals may be starting to affirm the gift of the apostolic or prophecy but do not regularly affirm the role of the apostle or prophet.

[504] "Although I have heard of miracles such as those in Acts happening regularly in some places, I frankly confess that I have not witnessed many miracles on that scale. I could seek theological rationalization for this lack, contending that God simply does not want to do such miracles today but seeking an argument to validate my experience would violate my commitment to read my experience in light of Scripture. Because I affirm that Scripture is God's Word, I must submit to it rather than make it say what is convenient… I must conform my experience to the Bible rather than the Bible to my experience." Keener, *Gift and Giver*, 111.

[505] Bottomly, "Coming Out of the Hangar" in *The Power of the Cross*, 229.

There is this fear of the supernatural or miraculous in some, a fear that we might be deluded, deceived, inadvertently find ourselves in a cult, or "catch" a demon.[506] Speaking about manifestations of the Holy Spirit, miracles, healings, and deliverances, an Evangelical pastor says, "when these stories came from the mission field in Africa and Latin America, evangelicals had far less trouble with them than more recently when they came from Christian neighbors in the same suburban tract. Suddenly it's spooky and disturbing."[507] This fear of "spooky stuff" can easily be exploited by the critics of prophecy instead of posing a valid doctrinal argument based on Scripture.

To discredit apostles and prophets today, some selectively choose incidents, phrases, or practices that do not fit well within the Evangelical paradigm or understanding. They fail to address fundamental issues about the biblical understanding of prophecy, church leadership structures, and the working of the Holy Spirit, thus creating a straw man argument. Dr. Clark explains, "to confront these critical issues… we must approach them with a solid exegesis of the biblical passages and the resultant arguments… instead of making the thrust of our emphasis identifying names and calling out leaders, let us be wholly committed to a Sola Scriptura approach to the text."[508]

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[506] "Sick people are cured by the power of God and demonic powers are broken…" this "wins their heart's allegiance… Are Third-World people simply more naive and susceptible to faith than more sophisticated and skeptical Westerners?" Bottomly, "Coming Out of the Hangar" in *The Kingdom and the Power*, 230.

[507] Bottomly, "Coming Out of the Hangar" in *The Power of the Cross,* 226; "If you are a pastor and healing, deliverance, and supernatural gifts are not part of your Christian experience, you seem to be stuck with an awkward choice: either those experiences are sub-Christian (phony or self-induced) or you are sub-Christian." (227- 228).

[508] Randy Clark, *The Essential Guide to the Power of the Holy Spirit: God's Miraculous Gifts at Work Today*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Chosen Books, 2018), chap. 5, sec. "B.B. Warfield and Counterfeit Miracles," Kindle.

There have been these recent straw man attacks against non-denominational Charismatic/Pentecostal movements. For example, authors Geivett and Pivec assign an ad hoc label to a wide swath of primarily non-denominational Charismatics/Pentecostals leaders as New Apostolic Reformation (NAR).[509] In the apostolic group, they describe some of the leaders as knowing each other and others who do not, and some are part of denominations. The grouping is based primarily on the view of apostles and prophets for today. These Charismatic/Pentecostal leaders seem to share some core Christian doctrines (even the critics Geivett and Pivec do not seem to cite any core doctrinal issues like the deity of Christ, the resurrection, salvation, or Jesus sinless life).[510] The critiques seem to center around prophetic revelation, leadership structures, authority within these non-denominational Charismatic/Pentecostal movements, and misrepresentation or misunderstanding of the beliefs of these groups. Because the core biblical text and the theological starting point are not addressed, this leads to a rather poorly constructed

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[509] The title New Apostolic Reformation (NAR) is an actual organization founded by C. Peter Wagner and there is official membership. For the critics to take this term to mean something different and assign people to it that did not join NAR is not intellectually honest. Michael Brown, "Dispelling the Myths About NAR (the New Apostolic Reformation)," *The Christian Post*. May 3, 2018. https://www.christianpost.com/voices/dispelling-myths- new-apostolic-reformation-michael-brown.html; It is hard to tell who is in this grouping that Geivett and Pivec describe as they only name a few individuals. Many of the practices and doctrines described may be widely accepted by most Pentecostal/Charismatics and not some spurious unorthodox group they have assigned the title NAR. Geivett and Pivec, *A New Apostolic Reformation?,* 9; The continuationist belief is a more widely held Pentecostal/Charismatic one, with the NAR title assigned first by C. Peter Wagner. Professor "Vinson Synan is very skeptical of Wagner's grouping these growing churches under this new heading 'New Apostolic Reformation, 'as he sees them as fundamentally Pentecostal/Charismatic and flowing from that movement, rather than anything distinctively new." Scott, *Apostles Today*, ch. 1, sec. 3, para 7; Synan says, "it seems that most of these networks [C. Peter Wagner's NAR] were planted and inspired by the Pentecostal/Charismatic Movement in the first place since almost all of them operate in the gifts of the Spirit. Most of them were previously listed as 'denominational Pentecostals 'by David Barrett until his New World Christian Encyclopedia (2000) began to designate them as 'neo- Charismatic. 'Rather than being part of a 'New Apostolic Reformation, 'most of them are actually part of the 'Pentecostal/Charismatic reformation. 'It seems that Wagner has tried to impose a new title for movements that were already dynamic churches originally inspired by the Pentecostals and to create an artificial apostolic structure with himself as 'presiding apostle'" in Vinson Synan, "Apostolic Practice" written for Assemblies of God publication on Apostolic Ministry, 2004.

[510] Geivett and Pivec, *A New Apostolic Reformation?,* 5; Geivett and Pivec state that they "believe that leading NAR figures are believers and genuine disciples of Jesus" but then compare them to unorthodox cults like Mormons and Jehovah Witnesses (10, 113).

argument over their view of current practices and hand-picked examples that fit their narrative. Here we attempt to recenter the discussion around a biblical understanding of prophecy and survey current leaders' actual beliefs and practices.

Revelation of the Prophets

The current critiques center around a distorted view of the prophet's revelation and authority; this section will be devoted to biblical revelation, specifically prophecy, and the next section to the biblical authority of the prophet.

"MacArthur [a leading cessationist] complains that cults and charismatics both affirm new revelation," but Keener describes that "guilt by association is a form of reasoning that leads to unpleasant results."[511] The critics seem to have a negative or "spooky" connotation attached to modern revelation. At times, prophecy is referred to as overly spiritual "secret knowledge" and the prophets as "secret agents."[512] Present-day revelation is called "new truth" or "doctrine setting," with a view that prophecy or revelation is an attempt to add to Scripture and write doctrine.[513] There seems to be a lack of understanding of different types of revelation, precisely the subjective (testable) nature of modern prophecy. There is also a general lack of knowledge about spiritual discernment and its role in testing prophecy. Some erroneously advocate testing prophecy by the faculty of the mind, calling the witness of the Holy Spirit in the believer too

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[511] John F. MacArthur Jr., *Charismatic Chaos*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1992), 80-81; Keener, Gift and Giver, 193.

[512] Prophecy is sometimes referred to as "mysteries of God" or "secret information" because it is information unknowable by just human means. "For the Lord God does nothing without revealing his secret to his servants the prophets" (Amos 3:7). There is biblical precedent for using "spy" or "secret agent" type of reference coming from the narrative of Elisha about the prophet hearing prophetically the distant king's bedroom and accused of being a spiritual spy (2 Kings 6:12). See Geivett and Pivec, *A New Apostolic Reformation?,* 75, for the critic negative portrayal of this type of prophecy.

[513] Geivett and Pivec, *A New Apostolic Reformation?,* 103.

"arbitrary" a spiritual method.[514] The critics also point to an over-dependence on the prophets' revelation for ministry direction. We will discuss the nature of true godly revelation today, which still esteems Scripture as the standard of truth, and give a biblical understanding of the Spirit inside every believer for revelation and discernment.

Introduction to Biblical Revelation

Jesus' mission was to bring us into a relationship with God again. Jesus states, "no longer do I call you servants, for the servant, does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all that I have heard from my Father I have made known to you" (John 15:15). Revelation is part of our friendship with God. Keener describes the link between revelation and relationship: "the foundation of knowing God, however, is not simply being able to determine specific guidance from him" through revelation but to know Him deeply and personally.[515]

A general definition of revelation is "an act of revealing or communicating divine truth,"[516] and a Biblical definition is "a special, historical, supernatural communication from God to man.[517] Not merely information about this revelation of the knowledge of God can come through His fingerprints in nature, His written word as Scripture, the voice of the prophets, angelic visitations, visions and dreams, and other forms of knowledge transfer. Revelation can be categorized by the mode in which it is revealed: general revelation from nature, *special revelation* from the Bible, or subjective revelation like visions, miracles, or prophecies.

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[514] Geivett and Pivec, *A New Apostolic Reformation?,* 113.

[515] Keener, *Gift and Giver*, 39.

[516] *Merriam-Webster Dictionary*, s.v. "Revelation," accessed February 4, 2021, https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/revelation.

[517] *Dictionary of the Bible*., s.v. "Revelation," 795.

General, Special, and Subjective Revelation

Every human has access to the general revelation of God available to them as they view His creation in all of nature.[518] This type of revelation is described in Romans 1:20: "for his invisible attributes, namely, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the world, in the things that have been made. So they are without excuse." This revelation is "the disclosure of God in nature, in providential history, and in the moral law within the heart, whereby all persons at all times and places gain a rudimentary understanding of the Creator and his moral demands" as classically defined by Demarest and Lewis.[519]

Scripture is a type of *special revelation*, but it is a perfect revelation. Paul reminds Timothy that "all Scripture is breathed out by God" (2 Tim. 3:15-16) and "…no prophecy of Scripture comes from someone's own interpretation. For no prophecy was ever produced by the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit" (2 Pet. 1:20-21). Any perceived contradiction between general revelation and Scripture is due to misinterpretation errors on the receiver's part. "God cannot contradict His speech in Nature by His speech in Scripture. If the Author of Nature and Scripture are the same God, then the two

[518] J.R. Moore, "Geologists and Interpreters of Genesis in the Nineteenth Century," *God and Nature*, eds. D.C. Lindberg and R.L. Numbers (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1986), 322.

[519] B.A. Demarest.and G.R. Lewis, *Integrative Theology: Knowing Ultimate Reality, the Living God*, vol. 1 (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1987), 61.

books of God must eventually recite the same story," according to Baptist theologian Bernard Ramm.[520]

Special revelation is a broad category that includes Scripture, the history of salvation, prophecies, the audible voice of God, visions, dreams, and various other means. Scripture in a subcategory of its own as the inerrant word of God[521] and all further special revelation is called *subjective revelation*[522] (or *specific revelation* depending on the author).[523] The term *subjective revelation* is used because these prophecies must be tested for their source and accuracy (1 Thess. 5:21). According to Gentile, "no present prophecy, however even if absolutely accurate, is considered in the same class as the inerrant, infallible Scripture."[524] In regard to illuminating Scripture, "prophecy is not meant to replace or supersede the Bible, but when used properly, it

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[520] B.L. Ramm, *The Christian View of Science and Scripture* (Exter, UK: Paternoster Press, 1967), 25.

[521] J.C. Whitcomb, "Biblical Inerrancy and the Double Revelation Theory," Grace Journal, vol. 4, 1963, n.p. https://www.biblicalstudies.org.uk/pdf/grace-journal/04-1_03.pdf; John F. Walvoord, "Inspiration and Interpretation" (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., 1957), n.p.; Alan M. Stibbs and Pierre Marcel, *Revelation and the Bible*, ed. Carl F. H. Henry (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1958), chap. 7-8.

[522] The terms subjective or specific revelation are used synonymously by different authors; Grudem, "Should Christians Expect Miracles Today?" in *The Power of the Cross*, 73-76; Keener, *Gift and Giver,* 148; There is another way revelation can be categorized given in the Westminster Confession of Faith that "separates prophetic utterance on par with Scripture ('immediate') and revelation from dreams, angels, visions, Scripture ('mediate')." Mediated means the revelation comes by means of an angel or Scripture but not directly to people/prophets. Maas, "Building Prophetic Community in the Local Church: a Comparative Analysis of the Experience and Practices of Leading Prophets" (50-51).

[523] Randy Clark, "Week 2 – BTHE 5283: Renewal Theology," lesson video, "Video 4 - Randy Clark: Jesus Gave the 5-Fold Offices to the Church - A Continuationist Perspective" (BTHE 5283: Renewal Theology), 11:20-14:55. From Family of Faith/Global Awakening Seminary, January term 2021, retrieved from https://faithglobal.populiweb.com/router/courseofferings/10507310/lessons/10246616/show.

[524] Ernest B. Gentile, *Your Sons and Daughters Shall Prophesy: Prophetic Gifts in Ministry Today*. (Grand Rapids, MI: Chosen Books, 1999), 175; "The gift of prophecy today is not adding words to Scripture. This is because words spoken in prophecies today have less authority than Scripture and must always be tested by Scripture." Grudem, "Should Christians Expect Miracles Today?" in *The Power of the Cross*, 69.

does make Bible truths more relatable by awakening people to realize God is interested in them, both now and in their future."[525]

Current prophetic utterances defined by Grudem as "reporting something that God spontaneously brings to mind"[526] are classified as a subjective revelation. For example, this might include where to move or what ministry to do. Paul's dream with strategic revelation to go to Macedonia is a biblical example (Acts 16:6-10). Clark describes, "the foundation, which the apostles and prophets built upon, is misunderstood when their primary purpose is to be writers of Scripture."[527] There is a long history of prophetic utterances that did not become Scripture but are a subjective revelation.[528] Numerous New Testament (NT) prophets did not write Scripture, yet they had essential messages from God's heart.[529] Jesus spoke for the Father here on earth continually, and yet only a tiny portion of His words are recorded as Scripture. These subjective and sometimes strategic prophecies are not Scripture but are important, nonetheless.

G.P. Fisher describes the spiritual life: "the subjective basis for religion inherent to the very constitution of the soul is the spur to the search for God, the condition of comprehending

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[525] Jon Rising, "The Latter Rain Movement of '48," August 6, 2020. https://lrm1948.blogspot.com/2008/12/the-restoration-of-prophecy-in-latter.html

[526] Grudem, "Should Christians Expect Miracles Today?" in *The Power of the Cross*, 69.

[527] Clark, *The Essential Guide to the Power of the Holy Spirit*, chap. 5, sec. "Apostolic Authority, the Prophetic Voice, and Writing Scripture."

[528] The role of the ancient prophet was far more than to write Scripture, as many Old Testament (OT) prophets never wrote any, for example, Noah, Abraham, and others along with prophetic companies (1 Kings 18:4; 2 Kings 9:1-13; 2 Kings 2:3,5). "Some prophets 'words were not even recorded in Scripture and their books have been lost, like those of Iddo and Ahijah the Shilonite (2 Chron. 9:29)." Geivett and Pivec, *A New Apostolic Reformation?,* 91; Jesus was the ultimate prophet as He claims: "…I have not spoken on my own authority, but the Father who sent me has himself given me a commandment—what to say and what to speak" (John 12:49).

[529] The critics understand this point and give the examples of prophets in the Antioch church, Judas and Silas, Agabus, the four daughters of Philip and the Corinth church. Geivett and Pivec, *A New Apostolic Reformation?,* 93.

Him when revealed (whether in nature or in providence, or in Christianity), and the ultimate ground of certitude as to the things of faith."[530] By the very nature of entering into a relationship with God, our understanding of Him is subjective. But when does subjective revelation like prophecy produce doctrine that becomes the erroneous over-reach called "new truth"?[531] Rick Joyner, a prophet that has been heavily criticized for over-valuing prophecy, gives a strict warning: "I must state emphatically that I do not believe that any kind of prophetic revelation is for the purpose of establishing doctrine. We have the Scripture for that."[532]

Doctrine is not the same as truth;[533] forming doctrine is a subjective process.[534] "While systematics is centered in an understanding of the mysteries of faith,… even when 'mysteries of faith 'is taken to include more than dogmas, even when it includes the elemental meanings that… are closest to the form of divine revelation itself."[535] Doctrines evolve with greater understanding

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[530] [italics added] G. P. Fisher, *The Grounds of Theistic and Christian Belief*, (Boston, MA: Franklin Press, 1883), 36.

[531] Geivett and Pivec, *A New Apostolic Reformation?*, 33.

[532] Rick Joyner, *The Final Quest* (New Kensington, PA: Whitaker House, 1996), 12-13; Geivett and Pivec, A New Apostolic Reformation?, 12, 18. Geivett and Pivec put Rick Joyner's views under extreme scrutiny calling him an "outspoken dominionist" and have him speak for the group as one of the few prophets they cite (from his book Final Quest.) They claim that many who have the title prophets should be well described by his views. But Rick Joyner found himself for a time on the fringe after the Kansas City Prophets were pushed aside by some Charismatic denominations and may or may not represent the group well. We will quote him fairly and let him speak for himself.

[533] Wayne A. Grudem and Jeff Purswell, *Bible Doctrine: Essential Teachings of the Christian Faith* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1999), 11.

[534] Chas Ford, "Religious Doctrine Subjective not Objective," Westminster Review, Volume 152, Issue 3 (Sept. 1899): 332-345.

[535] [italics added] Robert M. Doran, *What Is Systematic Theology*, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2005), 28; "Doctrines are concerned to state clearly and distinctly the religious community's confession of the mysteries so hidden in God that man could not know them if they had not been revealed by God." Ivo Coelho, *Hermeneutics and Method: A Study of the "Universal Viewpoint" in Bernard Lonergan* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2001), n.p.

and further illumination, while truth and Scripture are fixed.[536] As one interprets Scripture and forms doctrine, the resulting doctrine does not become "new truth;" similarly subjective prophecy never forms "new truth."

Some believe that subjective prophetic words about the rise of an apostolic movement or upcoming revival in the church age are setting "new truth" as it may challenge current doctrines or Scriptural interpretations. But having doctrine challenged is not the same as writing Scripture or "new truth." The Church needs strategic subjective prophecy to advance the Kingdom and rely on the Holy Spirit for direction, just as when Paul was sent to a new territory in Macedonia (Acts 16:6-10).[537]

OT and NT Prophet's Revelation

"Just as the Old Testament (OT) prophets knew God well before they proclaimed him, our proclamation should flow from a deep and intimate knowledge of God," according to Keener.[538] Some refer to the role of OT prophets as Mosaic "covenant enforcers," referring to the judgments against the people of Israel and other nations stemming from the Law.[539] This seems

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[536] "While the term 'doctrine' (derived from the Latin *docere*, 'to teach') is sometimes used in the general sense of any church teaching its more specific reference is to an exposition of an important article of Christian faith, for example, the doctrine of creation. In the Reformation tradition doctrines are based on the witness of Scripture and are attempts to interpret and summarize its witness in a clear and precise manner. While serving as indispensable guides for the preaching and teaching of the church, doctrinal formulations in the Reformation tradition are not considered infallible but are subject to examination and reformulation in the light of the scriptural witness" Daniel Migliore, *Faith Seeking Understanding: An Introduction to Christian Theology*, third ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., 2014), 447.

[537] Geivett and Pivec say that Joyner and others correctly state the position that subjective revelation is for strategy and not doctrine setting. But they conclude with the criticism that this is not what happens in practice as there are prophecies about a great spiritual civil war, prophets are needed for the end time battle, and that the Gospels should help interpret the Epistles. They claim all of these examples are setting doctrine and therefore "new truth." Geivett and Pivec, *A New Apostolic Reformation?,* 87-88.

[538] Keener, *Gift and Giver*, 40.

[539] Geivett and Pivec, *A New Apostolic Reformation?,* 339.

like a misrepresentation of the heart of prophecy as we see those such as Abraham (Gen. 20:7) and Noah (2 Pet. 2:5) being labeled as OT prophets and predating the Mosaic Law by centuries. The heart of prophecy continues to be communicating God's heart, will, and intention to others.[540]

Under the Mosaic Covenant, the people did not have the Law written on their hearts (Jer. 31:33; Rom. 2:15; Heb. 8:10) or a personal relationship with God, so the prophet was responsible for 100% accurate communication from God to man. The people were 100% reliant on the prophet to hear from God. Under the New Covenant, the Holy Spirit indwells believers (Rom. 8:11; 1 Cor. 3:16; Ezek. 36:27; Joel 2:28) and every believer can hear God for themselves (John 10:27), desire to prophesy (1 Cor. 14:1), and test prophetic words (1 Thess. 5:20-21; Heb. 5:14).[541] Virkler describes that "through the indwelling Holy Spirit, God has given us direct communion with Himself… through insight, we receive revelation from Him, and He illumines Scripture to us… so, our life in the spirit, our relationship with God, is an inner, intuitive, spiritual, heart experience."[542]

In the Church age, Christ is the head of the Church; He is the Prophet, Priest, and King.[543] "Jesus came as the perfection of revelation" (John 1:14).[544] "The testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy" (Rev. 19:10). He rent the veil of separation, so each believer now has

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[540] Gentile, Your Sons and Daughters Shall Prophesy, 143.

[541] Gentile, *Your Sons and Daughters Shall Prophesy*, 144.

[542] Mark Virkler, *How to Hear God's Voice* (Shippensburg, PA: Destiny Image Publisher, 2005), chap. 1, sect. "Divine Revelation within our Spirits," para. 2, Kindle; Rom. 8:14.

[543] Gentile, *Your Sons and Daughters Shall Prophesy*, 145.

[544] Gentile, *Your Sons and Daughters Shall Prophesy*, 145.

access to the Father; without intermediary human priests or prophets like in the OT. And now, Jesus has given us access to revelation (Eph. 1:17). Ruthven expresses the concept in this way: "the New Covenant (Isa. 59:21, cited in Acts 2:39) is the transfer of the prophetic spirit from Jesus to his' children and their children's children forever.'"[545] Stronstad describes what he calls "the prophethood of all believers" and how this began at Pentecost when the prophetic Spirit of God came on all who believed.[546] Maas states, "all of God's people may function in the prophetic (practicing the gift of prophecy) by hearing God's revelatory word personally and directly and giving charismatic witness to the world."[547] Prophecy drastically changed from the OT into the Church age; it is the spiritual gift that all believers are to "earnestly desire" (1 Cor. 14:1). All can spiritually discern and test prophetic utterances.

Testing Prophetic Words

Modern-day prophecy is considered subjective revelation and not equivalent to Scripture. Critics suggest that using language like "thus saith the Lord," used in the Pentecostal tradition,[548]

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[545] Ruthven, *On the Cessation of the Charismata*, chap. "Preface," para. 18.

[546] Roger Stronstad, *The Prophethood of All Believers: A Study in Luke's Charismatic Theology* (Cleveland, TN: CPT Press, 2010), 1- 2; Maria Khaleel, "Equipping and Releasing Believers to Minister in the Gifts of the Spirit for Effective Ministry and Evangelism," (DMin. diss., Assemblies of God Theological Seminary at Evangel University, 2014), 22; "First, Luke presents the empowerment of the church at Pentecost as a normative experience for Christians. As we noted above, this experience includes empowerment to speak by the Spirit's inspiration, especially for witness, and in Acts it at least often includes 'inspired' utterances such as prophecy or tongues" (Keener, *Gift and Giver*, 95).

[547] Maas, "Building Prophetic Community in the Local Church a Comparative Analysis of the Experience and Practices of Leading Prophets," 3.

[548] Kris Vallotton (who claims the title of prophet) writes about the long-standing Pentecostal culture. He describes an account from decades ago which shows that some of the criticisms leveled by the critics against this group called NAR are actually against Pentecostalism as a whole. Kris writes, "on the other hand, the Pentecostals were a completely different bunch. They prophesied only when the 'Holy Ghost 'anointed them to speak. If they did not speak at the moment He 'anointed 'them, they felt that they had quenched the Spirit. They had deep theological convictions about the moving of the Holy Ghost that were often based on a mixture of the Old Testament prophets, with some New Testament Scriptures added in for flavor. They almost always spoke in tongues before they prophesied, and their prophecies usually began with, 'Thus saith the Lord. 'Of course, they only read the King James Version of the Bible, so almost every prophecy sounded like a line from a Shakespearean play, with nearly as

makes subjective revelation sound authoritative and untestable.[549] But Peter states concerning prophecy: "whoever speaks is to do so as one who is speaking actual words of God" (1 Pet. 4:11, NASB). There needs to be significant weight and caution taken that what is said as prophecy reflects God's words, heart, and intents. But there is a tension because subjective prophetic words are to be considered "speaking the actual words of God," but they first must be tested and spiritually discerned to be from Him.

John said, "beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits, whether they are of God; because many false prophets have gone out into the world" (1 John 4:1).[550] Concerning prophecy, we are told to "test everything," and we are to "keep what is good," which implies some of it will not be good (1 Thess. 5:21). A prophecy is given by the Spirit, which arises as a spontaneous thought that is captured and relayed by the mind: "Your mind is used as you approach God, but your mind has now found its proper place. Although it is the organ that processes revelation, it is not the organ through which revelation is received."[551] Some advocate that testing should be done by "evaluating prophecies critically" and that testing should not be "too subjective" or be an "oddly spiritualistic test."[552] To assume that prophecy or any spiritual revelation should be tested by a "critical" means is a worldly philosophy stemming from the

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much drama." Kris Vallotton, *School of the Prophets: Advanced Training for Prophetic Ministry* (Bloomington, MN: Chosen Books, 2015), sec. "The challenging years," chap. "Introduction," Kindle.

[549] Geivett and Pivec, *A New Apostolic Reformation?,* 80; Bill Hamon, *Prophets and Personal Prophecy: God's Prophetic Voice Today* (Shippensburg, PA: Destiny Image, 2001), 73; Grudem, *The Power of the Cross*, 70.

[550] Keener, *Gift and Giver*, 187.

[551] Virkler, *How to Hear God's Voice*, chap.1, sec. "Experiencing Scripture, Not Just Codifying It," para.9.

[552] Geivett and Pivec, *A New Apostolic Reformation?,* 113.

Enlightenment and a deistic treatment of reality.[553] Sometimes testing prophetic utterances can be done by testing for Scriptural alignment or resort to the OT accuracy measure by empirical means. Still, biblically the spirit/Spirit that generates a prophecy should be tested immediately by the Holy Spirit inside us. Bill Hamon describes this as the "inner witness" of the Holy Spirit to his spirit, as others prophesy, that he uses for testing words.[554] Prophecy needs other gifts like interpretation and discernment in synthesis (Dan. 2:26; Gen. 41:16).

In 1 Cor. 14:29, within the corporate gatherings of the church, weighing/testing of prophecies is biblically done immediately through spiritual means by the other prophets.[555] There is no suggestion in the NT to wait to do an accuracy test based on rational thought and empiricism like in the OT. We are now a spiritual people, with the Holy Spirit inside us, and we can test and discern prophecy by the Spirit.

Conclusions

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[553] Ruthven speaks of the Enlightenment's influence, moving from acceptance of spiritual revelation and miracles to reliance on human ability, "the Deists, who, in their defense of 'natural' (as opposed to revealed) religion, were concerned, in some cases, not only to deny divine revelation but also the miracles from which it received its accreditation." A deistic lens will distort a spiritual and thus godly understanding of prophecy, revelation, and discernment. Ruthven, *On the Cessation of the Charismata*, chap. 1, sec. "1.3.11," para. 1.

[554] Geivett and Pivec, *A New Apostolic Reformation?*, 113; Geivett and Pivec put Bill Hamon's views under extreme scrutiny and have him speak for those they deem as NAR almost exclusively in their citation of prophets. They claim he is the "father of the prophetic movement," but cite no source for this reference or that his beliefs are held by others. Bill Hamon may hold some of the most extreme views on prophetic authority due to his involvement in the Latter Rain movement, which was widely rejected by Pentecostal denominations (see the 1949 General Council of the Assemblies of God resolution and Geivett and Pivec, *A New Apostolic Reformation*?, 12).

[555] "In 1 Cor. 14:29 'other 'comes with the article: οἱ ἄλλοι meaning all others, the remainder, the rest, which is referring to other prophets. The prophetic utterances are to be weighed by the other prophets present." (Strong's Lexicon "g243," Blue Letter Bible. 2020. Online, https://www.blueletterbible.org/); Keener agrees by stating: "maturing prophets had to mentor each other by evaluating one another's prophecies" (Keener, *Gift and Giver*, 122); But Gentile opposes this interpretation of the Greek and does not believe "the others" to be prophets, as he cites Pytches and Robeck. Gentile claims that from his pastoral experience "the resident leadership — that is, the senior pastor and eldership" should weigh corporate prophecy. His experience may not extend well to other contexts (pastors and elders without prophetic discernment) because he is a prophet and "the other" would include him in either interpretation of other prophets or senior leaders. Gentile, *Your Sons and Daughters shall Prophesy*, 332, 335-336.

Significant concerns arise from some critics when it comes to *subjective revelation*. Prophecy is spiritual knowledge from the heavenly Kingdom that God communicates to us to know Him and His ways in this age until we know Him fully in the next age (1 Cor. 13:12). Keener describes that Paul in Ephesians "often couples prophets with apostles as contemporary expositors of God's mysteries found in the Bible (2:20; 3:5)."[556] First, for critics, to make the mysteries of God through prophecy sound like spurious "secret knowledge" or label prophets as suspicious "secret agents" is not respectful to God or His ways. Second, critics claim prophets will erroneously try to establish doctrine (or an extreme concern they might try to write Scripture or "new truth"). This fear, however, should not end the prophetic practice because subjective revelation is still necessary today and is not the same as writing Scripture or establishing "new truth." Prophecy should make us more interested in Scripture, illuminate it, further our knowledge of God, and bring strategies to forward the Kingdom's mission. A third concern is that subjective prophetic words can be given with wording that seems untestable, like an OT prophetic delivery. This can quickly be addressed in practice by using the 1 Corinthians 14:29 framework and have other prophets weigh every utterance immediately, no matter the wording. A fourth concern is that the testing of prophecy should be done by human intuition or external accuracy metrics, but we see in 1 Corinthians 14:29 that prophecy should be tested immediately by the same Spirit that gave the prophecy, and an "inner witness" is not an "oddly spiritual test."[557] We have the Holy Spirit inside of us to test prophecies and not be led astray by demons

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[556] Keener, *Gift and Giver*, 131; "The Spirit reveals 'mysteries 'to prophets that they then communicate to the church for its edification and encouragement (1 Cor. 13:2; 14:3-4,31)" (Frank Thielman, *Ephesians*, Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament, (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2010), 274, ProQuest Ebook.)

[557] Geivett and Pivec, *A New Apostolic Reformation*?, 113.

or cunning men. As we learn to trust the Holy Spirit inside us, we become less fearful that we will inadvertently be deceived. A final concern is that if a prophecy is embraced, it puts an over-dependence on the prophet's revelation (particularly in their relationship with directing ministries with apostles). As we have stated, every believer has the Holy Spirit and access to revelation (Eph. 1:17). The prophets may hear more often or clearly, but they in no way replace each individual's relationship with God and His direction.

We want to end this section with a discussion of current practices concerning revelation and prophecy. First, no orthodox Charismatics today believe that Scripture is still being written," according to Keener.[558] A survey was returned by about twenty lead apostolic figures,[559] and 75% of them self-identified as apostles.[560] The question was posed: Do you believe the revelation you receive from the Lord to be equal to Scripture?" and all responded with a resounding no." The vast majority (96%) said that prophecy should not be considered new truths" that lead to new doctrine. They all believe prophets can receive new insights from the Lord that involve strategies and creative ideas for advancing the Kingdom of God." So the majority agree, there is a need for prophets today for strategy and specific ministry direction but not to establish new truth."

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[558] Keener, *Gift and Giver*, 128.

[559] This survey is meant to be a representative sample of those, who Geivett and Pivec have described as their NAR classification. Geivett and Pivec, *A New Apostolic Reformation?,* 9; In the survey, none described themselves as prophets but some self-identified as pastors or evangelists. And we are in no way suggesting that any of these leaders wish to be associated with NAR; as that is their personal choice. The survey was sent to (and most responded): John Kelly, John McElroy, Dennis Balcomb, Paul Botha, Barry Wissler, Craig Keener, Daniel Juster, Wayne Grudem, SoPhal Ung, John Arnott, Bill Johnson, Rolland & Heidi Baker, Georgian Banov, Che Ahn, Leif Hetland, Charles Stock, David Watson, Jon Ruthven, Mark Chironna, Joseph Mattera, Mark Pfeifer, Henry Madava, Randy Clark, and Abe Hubers.

[560] Randy Clark, "Renewal Theology Survey," electronic survey summary report, distributed by Global Awakening, accessed March 12, 2021, https://www.getfeedback.com/s/DkZdF6Yj.

But in practice, only 71% of these leaders surveyed said they "work with a prophet(s)" who help to hear from God for their church or apostolic network "regarding strategies for ministry." 53% said they felt it was necessary to work with prophets (but did not specify if they were in leadership or an itinerant role). The fear of an over-reliance on direction given by prophets seems invalid as this is not what is happening in practice. The actual beliefs and practices of those leaders surveyed align with the Scriptural understanding of revelation, in stark contrast to the characterization of the critics.

Authority of the Prophets

There has recently been a set of criticisms waged against the non-denominational church system, particularly toward the Pentecostal/Charismatics. While some of these critics affirm doctrinal statements put forth by denominations,[561] they openly reject those coming from leadership teams within the non-denominational structure,[562] implying these leadership teams have no biblical standing to set the doctrinal position of their group. Primarily, these criticisms are aimed at leadership teams with named apostolic (and prophetic) figures. In these newer non-denominational systems, authority is viewed much more relationally than positionally, which does not align with the critics' understanding. There is negative wording by critics like "governing," which connotes strict obedience. This stems from an understanding of positional authority only, claiming the apostles and prophets "govern" the church together. The implication is that prophets are like those of the OT; and have extraordinary authority over individuals, churches, and nations.[563] And that the revelations of the prophet have strict adherence because

[561] Geivett and Pivec, *A New Apostolic Reformation?,* 103.

[562] Geivett and Pivec, *A New Apostolic Reformation?,* 73.

[563] Geivett and Pivec, *A New Apostolic Reformation?,* 75-76.

they are like Scripture or the very words of God (OT idea). We will set a biblical foundation for the authority of the prophets as much more relational than positional.

Introduction to Biblical Authority

Modern apostles (not speaking of the twelve) are a part of the leadership structure and the ones tasked with establishing leadership teams (Acts 14:23; Acts 6; possibly Titus 1:5 and 1 Tim. 3). The apostles and prophets worked closely together (Eph. 2:20) regarding new works. The role of the prophet in the church is discussed in 1 Corinthians 14 concerning revelation, where they are seen prophesying and weighing revelation, and again in Ephesians 4:11-15, where they are mature members of the body, equipping, bringing unity, and leading others. How much authority does a prophet need to do these functions, and what type of authority is it?

OT and NT Prophet's Authority

"The Septuagint, the popular Greek edition of the OT used by many Jews of the time, translated the Hebrew *nabi* into the Greek *prophetes* consistently throughout the OT. The NT writers continued the use of the same word, without any abrupt redefinitions or explanation, in their discussion of local Christian churches."[564] But there are some differences; prophets of the OT were to be completely accurate; obeying the words of the prophet was obeying the words of God.[565] But in the NT, as already discussed, everyone has the Holy Spirit and can hear God and test prophetic utterances. Kim Clement, who is regarded as a prophet, explains this

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[564] Gentile, *Your Sons and Daughters Shall Prophesy*, 143.

[565] "A survey of the prophets mentioned historical books of the Old Testament reveals that most of them, in fact, did not write Scripture." Keener, *Gift and Giver*, 109.

understanding of NT prophets: "no longer would God selectively communicate to chosen individuals."[566] The priests of the OT represented the people to God, and the prophets were messengers/spokesmen of God to the people.[567] But NT prophet's subjective revelation is not to be obeyed as the very words of God unless first tested. Their prophecies are to be tested and only keep what is good and never considered the standard of truth—Scripture. The NT prophet's positional authority is diminished from the OT. But NT prophets are not somehow inferior (Luke 7:28), as "Jesus calls us as disciples to even costlier commitment than OT prophets (Luke 9:61-62; compare 1 Kings 19:19-21) indicates the seriousness of His call."[568] The Holy Spirit inside every believer brings us to less reliance on prophets; therefore, the prophet as the "spokesmen of God" of the OT is the wrong framework to understand NT prophets.

NT Prophet's Authority

The NT is very clear; Christ is the head of the Church (Eph. 1:22; 5:23; 1 Cor. 11:3; Col. 1:18).[569] He is the Prophet, Priest, and King.[570] We are God's children with access to our Father, without intermediary human priests or prophets because of Jesus (Heb. 10:19-20; Rom. 8:15). Grudem explains:

> In no case do we read exhortations to "give heed to the prophets in your churches" or to "obey the words of the Lord through your prophets," etc. Yet, there certainly were prophets prophesying in many local congregations after the death of the apostles. It seems that they did not have authority equal to the apostles, and the authors of Scripture knew that.[571]

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[566] Gentile, *Your Sons and Daughters Shall Prophesy*, 146.

[567] Gentile, *Your Sons and Daughters Shall Prophesy*, 143.

[568] Keener, *Gift and Giver*, 63.

[569] Thielman, *Ephesians*, 247.

[570] Gentile, *Your Sons and Daughters Shall Prophesy*, 145.

[571] Grudem, "Should Christians Expect Miracles Today?" in *The Power of the Cross*, 71-72.

Speaking words of revelation is not enough to make someone a prophet, just as doing miracles is not enough to make someone an apostle.[572] Prince notes that 1 Corinthians 12:28 gives prophets "administrative authority only second to apostles."[573] There is no explicit role of leadership stated for the prophet like that of the apostles (2 Cor. 10-13), elders (1 Tim. 3:1-7), or deacons (1 Tim. 3:8-13). Ephesians 4:11 reveals to us that prophets are given to the Church[574] with a role of maturing and equipping believers, and that role requires some level of authority.[575] And Ephesians 2:20 refers to them as alongside the apostles and foundational to the church. Apostle Paul says, "for even if I boast a little too much of our authority, which the Lord gave for building you up and not for destroying you" (2 Cor. 10:8); he is showing that authority is necessary to build up the church.[576] Ladd explains: "the gifts of both apostleship and prophecy were given by the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 14:4, 28; Eph. 4:11) and were not offices to which men could be elected by the church. The authority of both was spiritual and not appointive or official or legal."[577] This understanding of authority as position or appointment leading to wording such

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[572] Grudem, "Should Christians Expect Miracles Today?" in *The Power of the Cross*, 49.

[573] Derek Prince, *Derek Prince on the New Testament Church* (New Kensington, PA: Whitaker House, 2006), chap. 21, sec. "Mobile and Residential Relationships," Kindle; Keener, Gift and Giver, 131.

[574] Clark and Healy, *The Spiritual Gifts Handbook*, 28.

[575] Prince describes the relational authority needed to lead: "The work of those in spiritual authority is to admonish the believers, straighten them out, correct them, tell them when they are doing wrong. It takes a true friend to do that." Prince, *Derek Prince on the New Testament Church*, chap. 3, sec. "Your Giftings."

[576] We are not suggesting that prophets have the same authority as apostles but only that some level of authority is needed to fulfill the role of a prophet. "Apostolic authority seemed to flow from the apostles 'special message, a message often more authoritative than that of prophets (Acts 2:42; 4:33, though compare Luke 11:49, Eph. 3:5)." Keener, Gift and Giver, 129; "The apostles exercised an authority in ruling the churches that apparently was not exercised by the prophets." George E. Ladd, *A Theology of the New Testament*, (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1974), 353.

[577] Ladd, *A Theology of the New Testament*, 353.

as "govern" or "obedience" is not well suited to the prophet.[578] Thielman comments on the Ephesians 4:11 text that "the most plausible understanding of the text places the emphasis less on the positions that certain people hold in the church and more on the activities that Christ has equipped certain people to perform."[579]

Ruthven explains a view of authority and servanthood well: "Each of these 'gifts' in Eph. 4:11 are people: the idea of 'office' here seems alien, at least in the more modern ecclesiastical sense."[580] He further identifies apostles as "slaves" of Christ in service to the Church (2 Cor. 4:5; Rom. 1:1; Gal. 1:10; Eph. 6:6).[581] Paul pointed not to miracles but indications of his character and Christlike ministry when he wanted to show "what marked a true apostle in contrast to self-seeking pretenders to that office" (2 Cor. 10-11; 2 Pet. 2:1, 22).[582] Even the view of apostles and prophets as a foundation (Eph. 2:20) does not put them at the top of the Church's governmental structure but at the base as servant-leaders.[583] Prophets (or other *doma* gifts) cannot fully be a gift to the Church without giving up their life in surrender as a slave to Christ.

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[578] Gentile may not agree with this wording in that he states: pastors are meant to "govern and supervise people," Gentile, *Your Sons and Daughters Shall Prophesy*, 332.

[579] Thielman, *Ephesians*, 274.

[580] Ruthven, *On the Cessation of the Charismata*, "Preface," chap. 3, sec. "3.2.1.3," para. 6. We agree with Ruthven and will not be using the term "office prophet" because it conveys a sense of governmental or positional authority. Prince uses the term "office" more generally than the doma gifts in Eph. 4:11: "God has given certain offices in the assembly: apostles, prophets, shepherds, teachers, miracles, gifts of healing, tongues, and so on," Prince, Derek Prince on the New Testament Church, chap. 10, sec. "The Assembly."

[581] Ruthven, *On the Cessation of the Charismata*, "Preface," chap. 3, sec. "3.2.1.3," para. 6.

[582] Grudem, "Should Christians Expect Miracles Today?" in *The Power of the Cross*, 54.

[583] Randy Clark, "Week 2 – BTHE 5283: Renewal Theology," lesson video, "Video 4 - Randy Clark: Jesus Gave the 5-Fold Offices to the Church - A Continuationist Perspective" (BTHE 5283: Renewal Theology), 35:40. From Family of Faith/Global Awakening Seminary, January term 2021, retrieved from https://faithglobal.populiweb.com/router/courseofferings/10507310/lessons/10246616/show.

Ruthven states that in 1 Corinthians 12-14, "again Paul stresses a Christocentric focus for the charismata (12:3; cf.11:23–33) which implies service (12:5), not status."[584] Keener notes that "not only those in subordinate positions but also those in positions of authority must humbly serve others."[585] But leadership must not just serve but submit (Eph. 5:21). Keener further explains that "Christians who cannot submit to others, cannot take responsibility, and cannot humble themselves in loving service to others are not yielding to the full life of the Spirit."[586] Authority cannot be viewed as governmental models but rather a biblical service, slavery, and submission.

A Prophet's Authority from Ephesians 4:11-15

> And [Christ] gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds, and teachers, *to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ*, until we all attain to the *unity of the faith* and of the k*nowledge of the Son of God*, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, so that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning, by craftiness in deceitful schemes. Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ (Eph. 4:11-15, emphasis mine).

We will show that authority centers around relationships; ideas of mothering/fathering or discipling are much more appropriate here than that of governmental or positional authority. Keener remarks, "here, the first gifts the exalted Christ gives to his body are a special group of persons who will, in turn, mobilize the other members of Christ's body for their ministries."[587]

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[584] Ruthven, *On the Cessation of the Charismata*, ch. "Preface", chap. 3, sec. "3.2.1.2," para. 5; Keener shares this sentiment: "A Spirit- filled life… mean[s] that we must value nothing so much that we cannot readily surrender it for God's call. I suspect that too many of us, for all our claims to be people of the Spirit, are so in love with our worldly comforts, resources, and pursuits that if God is calling us to give them up for the gospel's sake, we cannot hear him." (Keener, *Gift and Giver*, 63).

[585] Keener, *Gift and Giver*, 83, this was in reference to Eph. 5-6.

[586] Keener, *Gift and Giver*, 84.

[587] Keener, *Gift and Giver*, 110.

We assume the prophets mentioned here are well known for their use of prophetic gifting and ability to weigh the prophetic utterances of others (1 Cor. 12, 14). They are mature enough to be equipping others and discipling them to maturity. Teachers build up others to teach, and prophets build up others to prophesy and discern. These prophets need enough authority to accomplish the goals of Eph. 4:11 of equipping discerning/prophetic disciples toward maturity.[588] A successful prophet will prophesy, speak words of upbuilding and encouragement and consolation (1 Cor. 14:3), bring unity to the church (Eph. 4:13), weigh prophetic utterances (1 Cor. 14:29), equip others to do the same (Eph. 4:12), disciple discernment (Eph. 4:14), cultivate leaders (Eph. 4:13), and delegate authority (Eph. 4:12-13). This passage gives roles and functional needs for these gifted and mature people. But there is no explicit role of leadership, governance, or amount of authority explained here.[589]

Prophets need to equip others to do ministry.[590] The goal is for all to minister "for building up the body of Christ," in verse 12 - εἰς οἰκοδομὴν τοῦ σώματος τοῦ Χριστοῦ. This prep. phrase conveys the ultimate purpose or goal of why Christ gives leaders who equip saints for the work of the ministry."[591] To do ministry effectively, the prophethood of all believers needs to receive revelation, speak in love, share comforting, exhorting, and uplifting messages, and discern doctrine and schemes." As leaders, prophets should advocate prophecy both by what

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[588] "The very same Christ who has conquered every enemy power in every corner of the universe, whether high or low, is the one who now distributes gifts to each believer 'for the building up of the body of Christ'" (Thielman, *Ephesians*, 262).

[589] Thielman, *Ephesians*, 274.

[590] "The three phrases describe three purposes for which Christ gave apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers to the church. He gave them 4:12 for (πρός , pros) the 'equipping 'of the saints for (εἰς , eis) [the] work of ministry for (εἰς) [the] edification of the body of Christ." Thielman, *Ephesians*, 277.

[591] Merkle, *Ephesians*, sec. "Eph. 4:1-13," para. "Verse 12."

they teach and how they demonstrate servant-leadership. This means instilling a desire for all to prophesy and minister from a place of love (1 Cor. 14:1).[592] Bill Hamon states,

> If a prophet does not have a right spirit and motivation, Christ's character, and biblical principles, he or she has the potential to control and manipulate people with supernatural knowledge, visions, revelation, and miracles. But if a prophet does have the right spirit and motivation, he or she has great power to influence people for God toward unity, obedience, humility, and Christlikeness.[593]

Prophecy is a grace gift in that new/immature believers may have extensive prophetic gifting that far outruns their love and character. There is less need for rule-based prophetic protocol if the children mature and live out the fundamentals of love and humility.[594]

Keener describes this idea of building up others into maturity and the relationship to authority: "This gave him [Paul] authority mainly to build them up… (2 Cor. 3:10). This is the language of a loving relationship, not pure institutional authority."[595] Early apostles describe their familial bond referring to spiritual children regularly (1 Cor. 4:14,17; 2 Cor. 6:13; 1 John 2:12; 1 Thess. 2:7, 11; 1 Tim. 1:2, 18; 2 Tim. 1:2; 2:1; Titus 1:4; Philem. 1:10; 3 John 1:4). John also refers to mothers and fathers of the faith in a similar manner (1 John 2:12-14). This understanding of relational authority applies well to apostles and also prophets in the role of a spiritual parent or discipler, rather than referring to "office" or "governor" of the church.

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[592] Arnold describes Eph. 4:15 "Paul wants these Christians to to reach maturity that comes with a full knowledge of Christ. This involves maintaining a corporate confession of the faith, by doing so with a heart of love for brothers and sisters," Arnold, *Ephesians*, 257.

[593] Hamon, *Prophets and the Prophetic Movement* (Shippensburg, PA: Destiny Image, 1990), 14.

[594] Shawn Bolz discusses the topic of prophecy and love, particularly when prophecies concern spouses, death, and babies. Shawn Bolz, *Through the Eyes of Love: Encouraging Others through Prophetic Revelation*, (Nashville, TN: Emanate Books, 2019), chap. 3, sec. "Hearing about Marriage as a Single Person," Kindle.

[595] Keener, *Gift and Giver*, 129.

Grudem points out that Paul gives the marks of a true apostle in (2 Cor. 10-13), and there is no room for greed or self-serving (similarly for a true prophet.)[596] Likewise, fathers and mothers sacrificially provide everything the child needs.[597] The prophet is to be part of this leadership team that raises others to "mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ" (Eph. 4:13). Spiritual parents understand their role is not to make dependent children but fully mature fathers and mothers in the faith who can reproduce. A father or mother with reproducing children does not just have offspring; they now have a lineage.

Prophets are to raise others to maturity, and Hebrews shows that maturity is linked to growing in discernment: "but solid food is for the mature, for those who have their powers of discernment trained by constant practice to distinguish good from evil" (Heb. 5:14). Ephesians 4:14 establishes part of the *doma* gifts role is nurturing discernment in children[598] "so that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning, by craftiness in deceitful schemes." The entire *doma* leadership team is needed to grow discernment through good leadership modeling and teaching sound doctrine,[599] but the prophet has a crucial role in imparting/training spiritual discernment, particularly in weighing subjective revelation (1 Cor. 14:29). Discernment is trained by constant

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[596] Grudem, "Should Christians Expect Miracles Today?" in *The Power of the Cross*, 54-55.

[597] Apostle Paul says as a father: "behold, the third time I am ready to come to you; and I will not be burdensome to you: for I seek not yours, but you: for the children ought not to lay up for the parents, but the parents for the children" (2 Cor. 12:14). Fathers and mothers are to be full of faith and provide for their children's needs; they are different from teachers or nannies who are paid to train and tutor (2 Cor. 10-13).

[598] Arnold says, Paul in "his reference to 'children' (νήπιοι) here is in sharp contrast with the 'mature man' (ἄνδρα τέλειον) of the previous verse," Arnold, Ephesians, 255.

[599] "This places a significant stress on the importance of gifted teachers," Arnold, *Ephesians*, 255.

use (Heb. 5:14) to discern what is from man (human cunning and deceit), or demonic (winds of doctrines and deceitful schemes)[600] (Eph .4:14), or what is pure from the Spirit.

The word empowering is not in Ephesians 4, but the sense of equipping others to do ministry implies it.[601] Empowering means delegating authority; as others mature, they get authority too; this is part of the ideal of mutual submission. The goal is mature disciples with similar authority, not subjects that need ruling over. Some prophets may have disciples eclipsing them, as Elisha gained a double portion of Elijah's ministry and had twice as many recorded miracles (2 Kings 2:9). The ego of the prophet must be ready to empower others further than they have been and raise those children with more incredible giftings. Promoting others can happen in several ways: encouraging others to prophesy, by doing prophetic presbytery and helping others find their callings and giftings (not limited to prophetic ministry) and delegating ministry to those around them. Prophets are to be promoting others into ministry, as has been the long-held egalitarian view of roles within the church.[602]

Conclusions

Now that we have set the biblical ideal of relational authority instead of positional/governmental authority for the prophet, we can revisit the critics' points. Prophets are

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[600] Early Christian interpretation of Ephesians 4:14 imply demonic overtones and not just human craftiness, Arnold, *Ephesians*, 256.

[601] "The temperature of the debate begins to rise when interpreters suspect that the exegesis of the text has been driven more by concerns about the structure of the modern church than by dispassionate scholarship. According to this text, who does the work of ministry in today's church: the officers of the church or the people whom the officers equip?" Thielman, *Ephesians*, 277.

[602] "Is this view of 'the work of ministry' in 4:12 a relatively recent innovation that is suspiciously supportive of the egalitarian and democratic spirit popular in some circles at the end of the twentieth century… Scholars as early and diverse as De Wette, Robinson, and Westcott have argued for forms of this view. Westcott's remarks are particularly instructive: 'However foreign the idea of the spiritual ministry of all 'the saints 'is to our mode of thinking," he says, "it was the life of the apostolic church'" [edited quote]. Thielman, *Ephesians*, 279.

not offices in the sense of positional authority; Ephesians 4:11 shows them as equipping and discipling children, more as fathers and mothers with relational authority. "Govern" is rarely a good description of a parent or discipler. The critics claim that within NAR, the apostles and prophets need to "govern" together as a pair. Biblically, this is not an instruction we see clearly stated as there is strength in having various giftings of the *doma* to accomplish the task together of equipping, discipling, unifying, and maturing the body. There should not be a fear of the undue authority of the prophet concerning individuals, churches, and nations because they operate within teams. Gentile remarks, "prophetic and healing ministries, sensitive and susceptible to spiritual influences, need the stability of apostolic oversight." Gentile, Your Sons and Daughters Shall Prophesy, 300.[603] The prophets may present strategies and direction for Kingdom advancement but are always mutually submissive to others. The criticisms stem from a misunderstanding that NT prophets are like OT prophets, where their words are to be 100% accurate and the very voice of God to the people requiring strict obedience. We have thoroughly addressed the issue of modern-day prophecy needing to be tested—obedience is not required, thus diminishing the authority of the revelation of modern-day prophets.

While much of the current criticism focuses on the apostolic role in non-denominational Charismatic/Pentecostal structures, similar critiques could be made of non-denominational Evangelical leadership structures with head pastors of megachurches, or prominent figures of ministries having great authority, to set doctrine and strategy. Here, we will focus on the criticism only against the role of the prophet and address concerns of authority over-reach and

[603] Gentile, *Your Sons and Daughters Shall Prophesy*, 300.

what is being done in practice. Again, a survey[604] was returned by about twenty lead apostolic figures, and 75% of them self-identified as apostles. 39% of these apostolic leaders said they govern by hierarchical position with authority to make decisions for their ministry or church direction. But 100% further clarify that they "govern on a relational basis… from a more collegial position that involves others on the team's input before the decisions are made." This shows a great understanding of relational authority compared to positional authority with its strict obedience. Only a minority of 33% believe that they need to "share the responsibility of governance with a prophet." The idea of having an apostle and prophet "govern/rule" together is not common in those surveyed; the critics misconstrue what is happening in practice.

An even smaller number of leaders believe that NT prophets have the same authority as OT prophets (19%) or that they have "extraordinary authority" in the church (25%), and only one said prophets "should exercise authority over individuals." This shows there are a few leaders that believe in the greater authority of the prophets. Still, it is in the minority and not a good representation of the group, unlike the critic's characterizations. Only one person thought that "prophets should demand obedience from the church(es) to these insights that involve strategies and creative ideas." There is not a belief in strict adherence to revelations, doctrines, or strategies that arise prophetically. All believed that a "prophet should be subject to the pastor of the church in which he/she is ministering." With this final view, we see the absolute authority limits on the prophets; they are always in submission to every head pastor or another leader. No apostolic leader or pastor would allow a prophet a rulership type of positional authority.

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[604] Randy Clark, "Renewal Theology Survey," electronic survey summary report, distributed by Global Awakening, accessed March 12, 2021, https://www.getfeedback.com/s/DkZdF6Yj.

Finally, the prophets are seen primarily to have two roles: 93% say a "special responsibility to hear from God and to work with the apostles, helping with the direction of the church" and 100% say "to equip the members of the local church(es) in how to move in the prophetic gifting." This shows a strong understanding of relational authority aligning with the biblical view. Prophets are best understood to have relational authority for equipping other believers in subjective revelation done in love and spiritual discernment.

Appendix: False Prophets

As Wagner notes, "Satan does not limit himself to counterfeiting the apostolic ministry. He also counterfeits prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers."[605] 1 John 4:1-3 describes a false prophet being one who perpetuates erroneous teachings about Christ, particularly that He did not come in the flesh. 2 Peter 2:1 further instructs against heresy: "false prophets also arose among the people, just as there will be false teachers among you, who will secretly bring in destructive heresies, even denying the Master who bought them." The distinguishing characteristic of a false prophet is that he/she does not affirm Jesus. Jonathan Edwards states:

> How can one spot a genuine, as distinct from a false, prophet? And in expounding the whole of 1 John 4, he answers: by noting whether his preaching affirms the historic Jesus as the crucified and risen Messiah; whether it opposes sin and worldly lust; whether it awakens respect for Scripture by affirming its truth and its divine source; whether it

[605] C. Peter Wagner, *Church Quake!: The Explosive Power of the New Apostolic Reformation* (Ventura, Calif: Regal, 1999), 117; For biblical reference for a description of false doma: apostles (2 Cor. 11:13,14), prophets (Matt. 7:15), evangelists (Gal. 1:9), pastors (John 10:12), and teachers (2 Pet. 2:1).

> awakens an awareness of the shortness of life and the coming of judgment; and finally, whether it awakens genuine love both toward God and one's neighbor.[606]

The label false prophet" is for those false religions and cults that reject the Lordship and knowledge of Jesus.

But even the true NT prophet is a fallible person receiving revelation from God. Yes, *subjective revelation* is a God and human combination. We are to test the spirit behind the prophecy and prophet (1 John 4:1). Accuracy in communicating for God is not only the words; it is the subtext, the tone, the heart, love, and the Spirit/spirit behind it. Charismatic theologian Ruthven addresses this:

> the motive for expressing spiritual gifts is not for self-aggrandizement or accreditation, but for edification of others in love... the most spectacular evidence of divine power is pointless without a loving motive… love is eternal, the charismata are temporary. The present time is characterized by the charismata of prophecy, tongues, and knowledge, as well as faith, hope, and love. But love is greater because it appears both in the present and in eternity.[607]

At times, even unbelievers prophesy by the Spirit of God (1 Sam. 19:21-24; Matt. 7:21-23), as "one can prophesy without being saved."[608] But more often, those prophesying can be immature with a significant grace gift of prophecy. There is a difference between a false prophet and an immature one. "Paul says that if we have the gift of prophecy, we should use it 'in proportion to our faith' (Rom. 12:6), indicating that the gift can be more or less strongly developed in different people, or in the same person over a period of time."[609] Keener describes a

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[606] John White, "A Psychiatrist's View of the Power of the Holy Spirit and the Behavioral Phenomena Associated with Revival, Healing, and Gift-Based Ministry" in *The Power of the Cross*, 274.

[607] Ruthven, *On the Cessation of the Charismata*, chap. 3, sec. "3.2.1.2", para. 5.

[608] Keener, *Gift and Giver*, 112.

[609] Grudem, "Should Christians Expect Miracles Today?" in The Power of the Cross, 94.

time in his life as a pastor when he was getting prophecies wrong and he is so thankful God corrected him before he hurt anyone.[610] He was not a "false prophet" as he was a pastor who affirmed Jesus and correct doctrine but his *subjective revelation* was not from God. In this case, his spiritual discernment was immature, and he was not representing God well. "Of course, Christians have often abused the promise of hearing God's voice, hearing instead only what we wanted or expected to hear."[611] As prophecy is a God and man interaction, prophets should be on a quest to know God more and not just informational knowledge. This means aligning his or her heart priorities with God and having others test the revelation.[612]

Ideally, human involvement would be wholly submitted to God. The prophet needs "the less of me and my opinions and the more of God and His Spirit in me" mentality. A prophet empty of self is the most useful, devoid of self-striving, empty of pain, empty of rejection, empty of opinions, empty of theories. And a Pentecostal voice, Bill Hamon states:

> if a prophet does not have a right spirit and motivation, Christ's character and biblical principles, he or she has the potential to control and manipulate people with supernatural knowledge, visions, revelation and miracles. But if a prophet does have the right spirit and motivation, he or she has great power to influence people for God toward, unity, obedience, humility and Christlikeness.[613]

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[610] Keener, *Gift and Giver*, 47.

[611] Keener, *Gift and Giver*, 41.

[612] Keener, *Gift and Giver*, 41.

[613] Hamon, *Prophets and the Prophetic Movement*, (Shippensburg, PA: Destiny Image, 1990), 14.

Section 4: Strategic Level Spiritual Warfare (SLSW)

Introduction to Section 4

Dr. Randy Clark

The fourth section of my response is related to the issue of strategic level spiritual warfare (SLSW) with a response written by Ty Yoshimura. Beginning with a critique of SLSW that includes an overview of Geivett and Pivec's critique of SLSW, he utilizes the writings of Dr. Clinton Arnold's definition of SLSW and his critiques of it as well as addressing the various subjects related to SLSW such as, how old someone should be to do SLSW, the development of SLSW, the original needs that brought about SLSW, the different levels of SLSW, discerning the territorial spirits assigned to a city, how to deal with the corporate sin of a city or area, and the issue of engaging in aggressive warfare prayer against territorial spirits. He also addresses the focus of Geivett and Pivec's analysis of SLSW in chapters 15 and 16 of their book and their claims of a new apostolic reformation, and how uniform is SLSW among those who practice it? Yoshimura ends by considering the objection by Clinton Arnold that the SLSW advocates pragmatism.

Strategic-level Spiritual Warfare: Overview and Critique
by Ty Yoshimura

In this paper, I provide an overview of Strategic Level Spiritual Warfare (SLSW) and then examine its description and critique in *A New Apostolic Reformation: A Biblical Response to a Worldwide Movement*, 2nd edition by R. Douglas Geivett and Holly Pivec.[614]

SLSW is a set of strategies for fostering evangelistic breakthroughs in resistant areas by identifying and defeating high-ranking evil spirits ("territorial spirits") that hold sway over the regions. Missiologist C. Peter Wagner identified several practices emerging among churches and ministries in Argentina and other areas and organized them into the conceptual framework of SLSW in several mass-market publications. In addition, other leaders had emerged in areas that Wagner included in his SLSW framework. These included George Otis, Jr., who developed the technique of spiritual mapping, and John Dawson, who created the concept of identificational repentance.

As part of their 2018 second edition book, *A New Apostolic Reformation: A Biblical Response to a Worldwide Movement*, R. Douglas Geivett and Holly Pivec examine SLSW in Chapters 15 and 16. As with other New Apostolic Reformation (NAR) topics in this book, they first provide an overview from an outside research perspective (Chapter 15, "Strategic-Level Spiritual Warfare") and then provide their analysis and response (Chapter 16, "A Biblical Analysis of Strategic-Level Spiritual Warfare").

In Chapter 15, as with the other descriptive sections of the book, the authors attempt to balance describing research-oriented details from an outside perspective with creating a mass-

[614] R. Douglas. Geivett and Holly. Pivec, *A New Apostolic Reformation? A Biblical Response to a Worldwide Movement*, 2nd ed. (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2018).

market-readable and simplified narrative. The resulting strawman created is that SLSW is an integrated, monolithic set of strategies dictated and controlled by authoritative apostles who must be obeyed. Additionally, the SLSW chapters include not only SLSW but some related topics such as the Seven Mountain Mandate and Kingdom Now Theology; these could be broken out into separate chapters for better clarity.[615]

In Chapter 16, the authors refer heavily to critiques of SLSW from the 1997 book *3 Crucial Questions About Spiritual Warfare* by Clinton E. Arnold. Arnold served as a theological adviser to groups involving Wagner and therefore had a detailed, interactive understanding of SLSW as it was practiced in the late 1990s.[616] Where applicable, I refer to both Geivett and Pivec's and Arnold's books when discussing their objections to provide more comprehensive sourcing.

The Question of Age

Any discussions about SLSW today, including its pervasiveness, practice, and issues, may not reflect the current state of SLSW due to the age of the source materials and the fact that thought leaders such as Wagner and critic John Paul Jackson are no longer living.[617] The practice and documentation of SLSW began in the 1980s. Wagner's last book on the subject was in 2015, a reissue of a 1993 book.[618] Among the critics, Arnold's book was published in 1997, and

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[615] I exclude those topics from this paper, focusing only on SLSW.

[616] Clinton E Arnold, *3 Crucial Questions about Spiritual Warfare* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Publishing Group, 1997). Note: page numbers differ in this electronic copy from physical page numbers referenced in *A New Apostolic Reformation?*; all page numbers in this paper use the electronic page numbers.

[617] By 2012, Wagner no longer considered SLSW to be a field in which he had "kept [himself] sufficiently up to date on the subject," as he indicated in James K. Beilby and Paul R. Eddy, eds., *Understanding Spiritual Warfare: Four Views* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2012), "Introduction."

[618] C. Peter Wagner, ed., *Breaking Spiritual Strongholds in Your City* (Shippensburg, PA: Destiny Image Publishers, 2015), Kindle.

Jackson's in 1999.[619] Even for *A New Apostolic Reformation?* in 2018, the primary book sources date from 2010 and earlier.[620] Consequently, what is often described is the state of SLSW as seen in books and articles written ten to thirty or more years prior. To provide a more current view of SLSW and other topics covered in the book, Dr. Randy Clark initiated a survey project to gather information from global Third Wave leaders about the state of these topics today.

Overview of SLSW

In this section, I briefly describe SLSW as developed and conceptualized by C. Peter Wagner. I use Clinton Arnold's succinct three-point breakdown of SLSW to organize the information.

Development

C. Peter Wagner compiled SLSW as he observed the Pentecostal activities of Argentine preachers who were experiencing revivals and major evangelistic success. Wagner first began a relationship with Omar Cabrera in the 1970s and witnessed major miracles at meetings during a visit to Argentina in the early 1980s.[621] By 1989, after Wagner had begun developing and teaching spiritual warfare principles, he partnered with his wife Doris, Cindy Jacobs, and Ed Silvoso of Argentina to "field test" these principles in Resistencia, Argentina. The city's Evangelical church population increased from 5,143 in 1988 to over 100,000 (presumably at the time of his memoir's writing), and Wagner's test was judged to be successful.[622]

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[619] John Paul Jackson, *Needless Casualties of War* (Fort Worth, TX: Streams Publications, 1999), Kindle.

[620] Geivett and Pivec, *A New Apostolic Reformation?,* Bibliography (entries 399–457,) 316–20.

[621] C. Peter Wagner, *Wrestling with Alligators, Prophets, and Theologians: Lessons from a Lifetime in the Church – a Memoir* (Grand Rapids, MI: Chosen Books, 2014), 137–8, Kindle.

[622] Wagner, *Wrestling with Alligators*, 180–2.

The Original Needs

Such organic developments arose in Argentina and elsewhere to confront difficult spiritual obstacles that may seem unimaginable to rationalistic audiences such as many American Christians. For example, Omar Cabrera describes the environment and his first breakthrough with spiritual warfare (translated from Spanish to English):

> When you talk with the people, when you go to Brazil, that was the dancing place of the devil, with witchcraft, with spiritualism, and you go to Central America and even here in Argentina, this issue of spiritual warfare came out because of the situation. To tell you the truth, I didn't know there was any spiritual warfare. I didn't have that technical terminology. (The theology of SLSW came after I had been doing it.) In the day when I got started, I did not know . . . I went to a city there was some kind of power that hold the people down and I started to pray and that power was broken . . . in one moment I have to continue 545 nights straight without stopping because the people were coming and coming.[623]

George Otis, Jr. (writing in 1993) describes the heightened challenges in the world's remaining primary frontier mission areas.

> While the remaining task of world evangelization may be getting smaller (at least insofar as territorial and people group statistics are concerned), it is also becoming more challenging. In the last few years, intercessors and evangelists arrayed on the windowsill of the 10/40 region have found themselves eyeball-to-eyeball with some of the most formidable spiritual strongholds on earth . . . Christian warriors at the end of the twentieth century can expect to face challenges on the spiritual battlefield that are unique in both type and magnitude. Commonplace methods of discerning and responding to these challenges will no longer do.[624]

Levels of Spiritual Warfare

Wagner categorizes Christian spiritual warfare against the forces of Satan that oppose God as occurring at three levels: 1) Ground-level warfare – delivering individuals from

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[623] Omar Cabrera, unpublished interview by Randy Clark, June 16, 1996.

[624] George Jr. Otis, "Chapter One: Overview of Spiritual Mapping," in Breaking Spiritual Strongholds in Your City, ed. C. Peter Wagner (Shippensburg, PA: Destiny Image Publishers, 2015), 34–5, Kindle.

demonization;[625] 2) Occult-level warfare – dealing with powers in New Age, Satanism, Eastern religions, and witchcraft; and 3) Strategic-level warfare – opposing high-ranking territorial principalities and powers.[626] SLSW is, as the name suggests, targeted at the third level, although stories in SLSW-related books may show activities at multiple levels.

Clinton Arnold's Definition of SLSW

Clinton Arnold's definition of SLSW consists of three core elements. From his critical and knowledgeable vantage point, he has produced a concise summary based on Wagner's views:[627]

1) Discern the Territorial Spirits Assigned to a City[628]

   Determine the spiritual landscape of the area through detailed research on religious history and practices so that efforts can be more correctly targeted. Assumptions: a) demons exist in hierarchies with scope and responsibilities for geographic areas, b) these demons actively sabotage peoples' ability to respond to the gospel, and c) these demons support and are bolstered by non-Christian beliefs, customs, deities, and practices. Veteran missionary George Otis, Jr. developed the concept of spiritual mapping to fulfill this goal.[629]

2) Deal with the Corporate Sin of a City or Area

   Identify what past sins of the city were committed and repent for those, loosening the footholds of evil spirits that resulted from the sins. Veteran missionary John Dawson developed the concept of identificational repentance to describe this activity. Assumptions: a) Sin and unforgiveness provide footholds, and at the city level, it provides footholds for territorial spirits that become strongholds; b) corporate

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[625] While a critic of strategic-level spiritual warfare, Arnold is a wholehearted supporter of ground-level spiritual warfare, as documented in Chapter Two of *3 Crucial Questions about Spiritual Warfare*.

[626] C. Peter Wagner, *Spiritual Warfare Strategy: Confronting Spiritual Powers* (Shippensburg, PA: Destiny Image Publishers, Inc, 2011), 252, Kindle.

[627] Titles of 1 through 3 are quoted verbatim from Arnold, 3 Crucial Questions about Spiritual Warfare, 115–7.

[628] "City," "Area," and "Region" are used interchangeably in this paper.

[629] Clinton E. Arnold, *3 Crucial Questions about Spiritual Warfare,* 116-7.

humility and repentance along with forgiveness from the offended parties breaks these strongholds and removes the spirits' legal rights to area control.[630]

3) Engage in Aggressive Warfare Prayer against the Territorial Spirits

After adequately preparing spiritually and receiving "peace and faith" from God that the time is right to do so, pray against the previously identified territorial spirits, commanding their power to be broken.[631] Assumptions: a) It is possible to command higher-ranking spirits when God permits and directs that it can be done; b) such commands can result in the weakening or binding of the spirits; c) for the duration these spirits are rendered ineffective, people will be able to respond to the gospel without their hindrance, and many more will be saved.[632]

I describe the three parts of SLSW in the following sections.

Discern the Territorial Spirits Assigned to a City

Spiritual Mapping

Spiritual Mapping is a term coined by George Otis, Jr., with the definition, "Superimposing our understanding of forces and events in the spiritual domain onto places and circumstances in the material world."[633] This view adds to physical knowledge so that Christians can see the reality of the spiritual world to go alongside the viewable physical world. While much of its discussion centers on the demonic, it also includes the operation of God.[634]

Its goal is evangelistic, involving "researching of a city to discover any inroads Satan has made, which prevent the spread of the gospel and the evangelization of a city for Christ."[635]

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[630] Clinton E Arnold, *3 Crucial Questions about Spiritual Warfare*, 117.

[631] As discussed later, "pray" is not the accurate term if it used to describe the acts of speaking against spirits or commanding spirits to leave.

[632] Clinton E Arnold, *3 Crucial Questions about Spiritual Warfare*, 117-8.

[633] George Otis, *The Last of the Giants* (Tarrytown, N.Y: Chosen Books, 1991), 85.

[634] George Otis, *Breaking Spiritual Strongholds in Your City*, 35.

[635] Cindy Jacobs, "Chapter Three: Dealing with Strongholds," in *Breaking Spiritual Strongholds in Your City*, ed. C. Peter Wagner (Shippensburg, PA: Destiny Image Publishers, 2015), 76, Kindle.

It is based on the understanding that:

1) Territorial strongholds exist, as described above, such that evil and spiritual oppression occurs along discernable geographic lines.[636]

2) The spiritual situation has a significant effect on the physical condition of cities, nations, and regions.[637]

3) Spiritual darkness is becoming worse and more complex.[638]

4) Those involved in local and mission evangelism are increasingly realizing that they need to know what is specifically opposing them.[639]

5) Demons' mission is to further Satan's plan to "kill, steal, and destroy" people; therefore, they exist where people live, in more significant numbers where greater numbers of people live (cities).[640]

Strongholds begin in history when people accept solutions other than God when presented with the need for help.[641] They are continued and amplified through religious festivals and other events, as these are "conscious transactions with the spirit world" that continue the demonic pacts.[642]

Paul describes the spiritual reality of the unseen, explaining that "our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms" (Eph. 6:12, NASB)[643]

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[636] Otis, *Breaking Spiritual Strongholds in Your City*, 37–8.

[637] Otis, *Breaking Spiritual Strongholds in Your City*, 41.

[638] Otis, *Breaking Spiritual Strongholds in Your City*, 37.

[639] Otis, *Breaking Spiritual Strongholds in Your City*, 39–41.

[640] Otis, Breaking Spiritual Strongholds in Your City, 42.

[641] Otis, Breaking Spiritual Strongholds in Your City, 35.

[642] Otis, Breaking Spiritual Strongholds in Your City, 44.

[643] All Scriptures are taken from the *New American Standard Bible*®, Copyright © 1960, 1971, 1977, 1995, 2020 by The Lockman Foundation. Used with permission. All rights reserved.

and that "the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh, but divinely powerful for the destruction of fortresses" (2 Cor. 10:4).[644]

Activities in spiritual mapping may include research, such as learning the religious history, background, customs, festivals, beliefs, and other spiritual aspects of a region,[645] as well as receiving prophetic insights about the spiritual situation.[646]

Deal with the Corporate Sin of a City or Area

Identificational Repentance

Based on spiritual mapping results, intercessors may become aware of past sins of an area. These sins have become "strongholds of the forces of darkness, allowing them to keep multitudes in physical misery and spiritual captivity."[647] Corporate confession (as a body) of those sins as representatives of the offenders is what is called "identificational repentance." Such confession allows for the strongholds to be removed. Wagner views this aspect of spiritual warfare prayer to be the most important of all elements. It ousts the evil spirits' legal jurisdiction to remain; without such repentance, they may return.[648]

Kjell Sjöberg describes the effect of such proxy repentance and its difference from personal repentance:

It is important to understand the difference here between individual sin and collective sin.

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[644] Jacobs, *Breaking Spiritual Strongholds in Your City*, 77.

[645] Otis, *Breaking Spiritual Strongholds in Your City*, 44.

[646] Kell Sjöberg, "Chapter Four: Spiritual Mapping for Prophetic Prayer Actions," in *Breaking Spiritual Strongholds in Your City*, ed. C. Peter Wagner (Shippensburg, PA: Destiny Image Publishers, 2015), 103–4, Kindle.

[647] Wagner, *Spiritual Warfare Strategy*, 255.

[648] Wagner, *Spiritual Warfare Strategy*, 255.

> When unbelievers repent and confess their personal sins and believe in Jesus, they are saved. No one else can take their place and confess their sins for them. This, however, is not true for collective sin. Intercessors can confess collective sin even though they did not personally participate in the sin, and something that has displeased God can be removed. When that happens, God can pour out His Holy Spirit. It then becomes easier for unbelievers to hear the gospel of Christ, repent of their personal sins, and be saved. This is how strategic-level intercession paves the way for effective evangelism.[649]

Sjöberg lists Ezra 9:7 as an example of confessing his forefathers' sins.[650]

Engage in Aggressive Warfare Prayer against the Territorial Spirits

The third activity is that which is most controversial and most criticized. Intercessors engage in various prayers as directed by God, including direct commands and binding against territorial spirits.[651] It is important to note that warfare prayer is "not an end in itself, but a means of opening the way for the Kingdom of God to come, not only in evangelism but also in social justice and material sufficiency."[652]

Who Participates and When?

Wagner expects that strategic warfare pray-ers who deal with territorial spirits such as the prince of Persia or Greece are "relatively few" — in most cases, Christians will oppose ground-level spirits, as seen in many instances in the Gospels.[653]

Wagner would seek intercessors — those gifted at intercessory prayer. (Although intercession is not a biblically specific gift, he would see that some had a special gift to pray for

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[649] Sjöberg, *Breaking Spiritual Strongholds in Your City*, 105–6.

[650] Sjöberg, *Breaking Spiritual Strongholds in Your City*, 106.

[651] Arnold, *3 Crucial Questions about Spiritual Warfare*, 117–8.

[652] C. Peter Wagner, *Warfare Prayer: What the Bible Says About Spiritual Warfare* (Shippensburg, PA: Destiny Image Publishers, 2009), 153, Kindle

[653] C. Peter Wagner, "Chapter One: Spiritual Warfare," in *Territorial Spirits: Practical Strategies for How to Crush the Enemy Through Spiritual Warfare*, ed. C. Peter Wagner (Shippensburg, PA: Destiny Image Publishers, 2012), 33, Kindle.

long durations and see dramatic results.) They must sense they were called to strategic warfare prayer. They would not follow rote patterns based on spiritual mapping information but rather would seek God's specific revelation of what to pray and when. They would have the gift of discernment of spirits to understand what they are dealing with at a detailed level. For example, sometimes, the root issue would not be a spirit but rather the consequences of sin.[654]

Obeying and following God is crucial at all times. As Sjöberg says, "Prophetic prayer actions are done only at the Lord's command in His perfect timing according to a strategy the Lord has revealed for the team."[655]

God's timing for engaging spirits may be relatively short as well, as seen in the case of Omar Cabrera. Cabrera was known for spending five to seven days in "aggressive prayer" by himself in a hotel room before a meeting. Published accounts describe how he would pray for the "binding of the strong man" that controls the area's evil until he sensed victory.[656] But rather than spending those days in warfare with territorial spirits, he actually would spend "99.99% of it" in God-focused activities, including prayer to God, worship, Bible reading, making himself right with God, and drawing close to God. Then, at a specific moment, he would feel his body alive with power, and at that moment, God would reveal the strongholds of demonic forces and sin in the area. Only then would he sense God's authority and power to bind the spirits. After this victory, thousands would come to Christ in his meetings, and the spirits seemed to be held in check for a few days, although not permanently. His approach was so unique to him that he did

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[654] Wagner, *Warfare Prayer,* 153.

[655] Sjöberg, *Breaking Spiritual Strongholds in Your City*, 102.

[656] Edgardo Silvoso, "Chapter Eleven: Prayer Power in Argentina," in *Territorial Spirits: Practical Strategies for How to Crush the Enemy Through Spiritual Warfare*, ed. C. Peter Wagner (Shippensburg, PA: Destiny Image Publishers, 2012), 137, Kindle.

not teach it to others, even his son.[657] Later, Cabrera's approach changed as his church network grew into the high tens of thousands. Instead of spending the days in a hotel room, he instead employed 500 intercessors underneath his stage during his meetings. Thus, his time in personal SLSW was for a season and only for brief moments in time.[658]

A New Apostolic Reformation? Chapters 15 and 16

In this section, I discuss highlighted areas of Chapters 15 and 16 along with my commentary.

As Geivett and Pivec explain, their SLSW chapters include not only SLSW but related topics tangential to SLSW (boldface mine):

> This chapter explains some of the key strategies NAR apostles and prophets have revealed to advance God's physical kingdom, **many of which are related to an overarching strategy** they call "strategic-level spiritual warfare." We will also **detail a few aspects of this movement's conception of the kingdom of God.**[659]

As described earlier, I focus on the core of SLSW and do not discuss some of the tangential topics.

Although the adversarial writing style obscures it, their position on SLSW as a standalone concept (minus the connections to the NAR that they make) seems as though it could be summarized as something like, "We applaud and share the fervent desire to see the world evangelized. We do not see a biblical basis for the specific practice of rebuking high-ranking

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[657] Randy Clark, "Jesus Died to Release the Power and Authority to Heal, to Disarm and Triumph Over the Powers and Authorities," n.d., video, https://faithglobal.populiweb.com/router/courseofferings/10507310/lessons/10246628/show. Clark is summarizing what he learned from interviews with Cabrera in Argentina in 1996.

[658] Randy Clark, "The Issue of Strategic Level Spiritual Warfare," n.d., video, https://faithglobal.populiweb.com/router/courseofferings/10507310/lessons/10246400/show.

[659] Geivett and Pivec, *A New Apostolic Reformation?,* 185.

spirits directly. If that one practice was changed to praying directly to God to take action against them, we could agree with most of SLSW's supporting activities that we describe."[660]

How Uniform is SLSW?

Arnold also makes an essential caution regarding attempts such as Geivett's and Pivec's to form a single picture of SLSW from literature:

> I have come to realize, however, that there really are a variety of strategies even within the [Spiritual Warfare Network] and that it is not correct to speak of one uniform strategic-level spiritual warfare method. Although it may not be readily apparent in the literature, some would disagree with Wagner on certain aspects of the strategy, emphasizing certain parts to the minimization or exclusion of other parts.[661]

Examples of such disagreement among the SLSW thought leaders include:

1) George Otis, Jr., the leading voice for Spiritual Mapping, does not advocate the SLSW practices of attempting to cast demons out of a city or learning their names. Arnold "is convinced, however, that there is a significant role for 'spiritual mapping' in the way that it is described by [Otis, Jr.]."[662]
2) John Dawson, a leader in identificational repentance, says, "I'm not really interested in territorial spirits. What God is up to, that is the question."[663] His study guide for *Taking our Cities for God* says, "It is important to note that there are no stories that

[660] The authors indicate that if the objectionable portion involving territorial spirits were not present, then they could support certain forms of spiritual mapping (200–1), prayer walking (201), and identificational repentance (202–3).

[661] Arnold, *3 Crucial Questions about Spiritual Warfare*, 116.

[662] Arnold, *3 Crucial Questions about Spiritual Warfare*, 139.

[663] Arnold, *3 Crucial Questions about Spiritual Warfare*, 139.

depict an individual identifying principalities and powers and then singlehandedly overcoming them."[664]

Preliminary Survey

Very early returns of an online renewal theology survey conducted by Global Awakening with its US-based network of leaders seem to bolster the assertion that NAR positions on SLSW may vary significantly and be different from the original literature:

Table 1: Preliminary SLSW Survey Responses[665] ~~xxx52~~

#	Question	Yes	No
	SLSW Prerequisites and Foundations		
1	Do you believe there are geographical powers and authorities in the heavenlies over geographical/territorial areas or cities?	13	2
2	Do you believe Daniel 10:13, 20 contributes to a biblical basis for SLSW study?	9	5
3	Do you believe traditional intercessory prayer for revival that doesn't engage in binding or calling down the powers and authorities is as effective as SLSW's binding the powers and authorities or principalities?	13	2
4	Do you believe territorial spirits must be addressed through spiritual warfare prayer for the Kingdom of God to come more effectively to an area or for revival to come more powerfully?	3	11
5	Do you believe high level spiritual powers must be taken down or bound before revival can come to that area or city?	1	14
6	Do you believe spiritual mapping is important prior to an evangelistic campaign?	4	11
7	Do you believe the apostle has a special authority in binding and loosing, and in coming against powers and authorities or powers and principalities in the heavenly realm?	10	6
	SLSW in Practice		
8	Do you believe some members of the church(es) should be trained in how to address these powers and authorities in the heavenly realm?	11	3
9	Are you engaged personally in such practices?	8	7

[664] Arnold, *3 Crucial Questions about Spiritual Warfare*, 139.

[665] Randy Clark, "Renewal Theology Survey," Electronic survey summary report, distributed by Global Awakening, accessed March 14, 2021, https://www.getfeedback.com/s/DkZdF6Yj/.

10	Other than yourself, does your church practice Strategic Level Spiritual Warfare?	8	7
Eschatology			
11	Do you believe the Kingdom of God is to be fully established on earth prior to the return of Christ?	2	13
12	Do you believe the kingdom of God is Now but Not Yet, meaning it won't be established completely until the consummation of the age at the second coming Christ?	15	0
13	Do you believe in an end-time army or Joel's army that will be so empowered by God that they manifest God so powerfully that they will not be subject to sickness, disease, or death and will live just before the second coming of Christ?	1	13
14	Do you believe those who walk in such health and power are the fulfillment of the Scripture and will be known as the Manifest Sons of God?	0	14
15	Do you believe the Kingdom of God is to be ever-increasing on earth prior to the return of Christ?	13	2

If the proportions were to hold true in larger sample sizes, then:

- Responses 3–6 would imply that Wagner's classic definition of SLSW is not the dominant model; instead, the traditional focus on intercessory prayer may be more critical.
- Responses 7–10 would indicate that some churches and leaders are still interested in SLSW as a possible means of progress.
- Responses 11–15 would indicate that while optimistic eschatology predominates, the Manifest Sons of God version does not.

If the proportions were to vary when the survey is expanded across other NAR networks and other countries, then the results would also reflect wide variability of the beliefs and practices of SLSW today.

Commentary on Chapter 15

Since most of Chapter 15 is descriptive in a way that mostly matches Arnold's definition of SLSW, I offer less commentary on it than for Chapter 16.

Introductory Information Section

The first paragraph of Chapter 15 summarizes the context into which the authors place SLSW. I comment on the text in boldface (boldface mine) following this quote:

> A major difference between NAR leaders and other Christians is their view on how to advance God's kingdom. According to NAR leaders, the way to do this is not just through the historical means of evangelism and world missions. Rather it's through the implementation of divine strategies that have been revealed by NAR apostles and prophets for this purpose and to the authority of which the church is required to yield. This view is known as dominionism or the Kingdom Now view.[666]

"NAR leaders"

The term "NAR leaders" appears 154 times in the book, excluding the Table of Contents. Pivec has included the disclaimer in the Preface that "because one leader in this movement promotes a particular teaching does not necessarily mean that all other leaders we have identified in this book also promote that particular teaching,"[667] but their use of the term sometimes represents one or two sources, often from decades ago. A more accurate depiction would be to describe the scope and timing of the sources in these cases, rather than declaring that "NAR leaders" currently take a specific position.

"Revealed by NAR apostles and prophets."

SLSW was predominantly synthesized and disseminated by Wagner as part of his missiology work. Arnold says, "Without the publication of [C. Peter Wagner's] many books on the topic, there would be little awareness of 'Strategic-Level Spiritual Warfare.'"[668] As described

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[666] Geivett and Pivec, *A New Apostolic Reformation?,* 184.

[667] Geivett and Pivec, *A New Apostolic Reformation?,* 14.

[668] Arnold, *3 Crucial Questions about Spiritual Warfare*, 116.

previously, it is a collection of ideas and practices taken from multiple sources who developed them out of need, rather than strategies received through NAR apostolic or prophetic offices.

"To the authority of which the church is required to yield."

This phrase seems to be derived from earlier chapters on apostles in which the authors use leaders such as C. Peter Wagner's views on apostolic authority as a proxy for general NAR views.[669] To the degree that those classified in NAR originate from other streams such as John Wimber and the Vineyard, they may support apostles in function as opposed to apostles in governmental authority, and a "requirement to yield" is not relevant.[670]

"Dominionism or the Kingdom Now view"

As expressed by Wagner, this view is the expectation that praying Jesus' words in the Lord's Prayer — "Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven" (Matt. 6:10) — will result in the "values, blessings, and prosperity of His kingdom for everyone."[671] The word "dominionism" is thought by many to imply that adherents want to create a theocracy. Wagner disagrees, explaining that 1) a theocracy is to begin when Christ returns, rather than being attempted by imperfect people beforehand, and 2) the view represents the desire for Christians or others who agree with God's original design for human life to be in positions of influence so that they can participate in moving life on earth toward more "peace, justice, prosperity, health, righteousness, joy, harmony, love, and freedom."[672]

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[669] See Geivett and Pivec, *A New Apostolic Reformation?,* Chapter 4.

[670] See Benjamin G McNair Scott, *Apostles Today: Making Sense of Contemporary Charismatic Apostolates: A Historical and Theological Appraisal* (Eugene, OR: Pickwick Publications, 2014), "1. Apostles Today: USA."

[671] C. Peter Wagner, *On Earth as It Is in Heaven: Answer God's Call to Transform the World* (Grand Rapids, MI: Chosen Books, 2014), 8, Kindle.

[672] Wagner, *On Earth as It Is in Heaven*, 10–11.

Dominionism and spiritual warfare in general are related in that Satan and his forces oppose the idea of God's values permeating society, so they must be fought.[673] They are also linked in their concern for the well-being of others — one for temporal well-being and the other for eternal — so it is logical to see both together. However, SLSW, with its primary concern to free up cities, regions, and nations so that many can respond to the gospel and be saved, does not require dominionism.

"An Overview of Strategic-Level-Spiritual Warfare" Section

"NAR leaders teach that the apostle alone has the authority to cast out territorial spirits."

This is a generalization derived from two works twenty-five and twenty years ago[674] and it should be updated to current thought.

Commentary on Chapter 16

Chapter 16 contains the authors' refutations of the tenets of SLSW, mainly reflecting Arnold's arguments but also at times going slightly further in opposition than what he says. In their writing style and tone of view, they imply but do not explicitly state that if an activity is not described in the Bible, it should be considered invalid and not be pursued. Arnold is less confident, cautioning, "*These observations do not instantly make this facet of the strategic-level spiritual warfare strategy wrong or unbiblical, but it should cause us to pause and reflect on just how important or key this new strategy is*" (italics his).[675]

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[673] Wagner, *On Earth as It Is in Heaven*, 18.

[674] Geivett and Pivec, *A New Apostolic Reformation*?, 187.

[675] Arnold, *3 Crucial Questions about Spiritual Warfare*, 127–8.

Introductory Section

Daniels' Prayer in Daniel 10

In Daniel 10, a chapter often used by SLSW proponents, critics agree that territorial spirits exist, partly based on the mentions of the "prince of Persia" and the "prince of Greece" in this chapter. However, Daniel only prays; he does not discern, engage with, or bind territorial spirits and is not even aware of them until informed by the angel.[676]

Commentary. The fact that Daniel did not perform SLSW actions does not establish that those actions are invalid in another context, such as the New Covenant or a particular time when God directs certain Christians to rebuke territorial spirits. However, it does limit Daniel 10 as an example.

Engaging Territorial Spirits

Neither the Bible nor the early church fathers discuss engaging territorial spirits even though they were evangelizing demon-infested pagan cultures.[677] Arnold concludes, "It appears, then, that we bear no responsibility for discerning, naming, or tearing down territorial strongholds."[678] Geivett and Pivec paraphrase Arnold, saying, "We see no indication that Christians have been given the authority or responsibility to engage territorial spirits directly."[679]

Advocates point out Jesus' words to the seventy: "Behold, I have given you authority to walk on snakes and scorpions, and authority over all the power of the enemy" (Luke 10:19,

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[676] Arnold, *3 Crucial Questions about Spiritual Warfare*, 128; Geivett and Pivec, *A New Apostolic Reformation?*, 200.

[677] Arnold, *3 Crucial Questions about Spiritual Warfare*, 126.

[678] Arnold, *3 Crucial Questions about Spiritual Warfare*, 134.

[679] Geivett and Pivec, *A New Apostolic Reformation?,* 200.

NASB) and point out that biblical silence does not preclude a new strategy from God.[680] Arnold counters that in v. 17, the seventy's context was seen by what they said: "Lord, even the demons are subject to us in Your name!" In other words, they were performing ground-level deliverance.[681]

Commentary. The absence of an explicit biblical mention does not preclude specific direction from God for Christians to move in an unmentioned area. There are many instances of concepts and activities not specified in the Bible that are accepted today. Wagner lists a few: the label "Trinity" to refer to God; the canon of 66 books; Sunday as the day of worship; Sunday schools; church buildings; and denominations.[682] However, these were not overtly spiritual activities involving contact with malevolent evil forces.

The absence of biblical reference to a practice or activity can serve as evidence but cannot conclusively establish that the activity is not to be undertaken. As Otis says, "there is an ocean of difference between that which is 'extra-biblical' and that which is 'unbiblical.' Extra-Biblical is a yellow light that encourages passage with caution; unbiblical is a red light that requires travelers to halt in the name of the law and common sense."[683]

Even though he does not believe in attempting to command or speak against territorial spirits, Arnold provides the same advice that Wagner and others give when addressing these spirits, albeit in the context of praying to God: "We should also pray according to the guiding

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[680] Arnold, *3 Crucial Questions about Spiritual Warfare*, 126.

[681] Arnold, *3 Crucial Questions about Spiritual Warfare*, 130.

[682] C. Peter Wagner, *Spiritual Warfare Strategy: Confronting Spiritual Powers* (Shippensburg, PA: Destiny Image Publishers, Inc, 2011), 80–1, Kindle.

[683] Otis, *Breaking Spiritual Strongholds in Your City*, 38.

and prompting of the Spirit (as Paul instructs in Eph. 6:18, where he says, 'pray in the Spirit on all occasions'). If the Spirit clearly impresses someone or a prayer group to pray for a particular matter in a certain way, they should by all means follow his guidance."[684] The difference is that if led by the Spirit, one could address territorial spirits based on this same guidance.

Finally, at times, experience or testimonies can cause someone to go back and reevaluate his theology, and the theology may even change. An example is Merrill Unger, author of Unger's Bible Dictionary. He wrote that demons could not inhabit Christians, but later, after reading testimonies of missionaries worldwide and experiencing demonic inhabitation by Christians both in his cross-cultural ministry and in the United States, he reversed his position.[685]

The Danger in Rebuking High-Ranking Spirits

Rebuking high-ranking spirits can involve physical and ministry dangers. Wagner points out that "there are horror stories where people's ministries were wiped out when they tried this."[686] John Paul Jackson's initial alarm about SLSW registered when he became aware of several believers who were unexplainedly experiencing miscarriages, sudden illnesses and operations, child rebellion, and marriage breakups. I describe his story in detail because of the critically important lessons it imparts.

Jackson experienced a terrifying dream in which people threw hatchets at the moon and were subsequently viciously attacked by evil figures who dropped from it. As the vision faded, he heard God tell him, "to attack principalities and powers over a geographic area can be as

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[684] Arnold, *3 Crucial Questions about Spiritual Warfare*, 147.

[685] Arnold, *3 Crucial Questions about Spiritual Warfare*, Chapter 2, "Background Perspective."

[686] Steve Lawson, "Chapter Two: Defeating Territorial Spirits," in *Territorial Spirits: Practical Strategies for How to Crush the Enemy Through Spiritual Warfare*, ed. C. Peter Wagner (Shippensburg, PA: Destiny Image Publishers, 2012), 62, Kindle.

useless as throwing hatchets at the moon. And it can leave you open to unforeseen and unperceived attacks." Finally, God showed him Isaiah 27:1 and Job 41:1–11 to point out that it is His role alone to punish Satan and that it is presumptuous and foolish for people to attempt to oppose Satan directly.[687]

Jackson tells of how he spoke to some of the affected individuals the next morning. One pastor whose church had three women on the verge of miscarriage had increased his church's level of spiritual warfare, opposing the principalities of pornography and abortion. Another pastor whose son had rebelled had been engaging in spiritual warfare for the past year. Three others were experiencing problems after warring in the heavenly realms against principalities.[688]

Commentary. Jackson's story of what he prophesied to the individuals that morning shows the mistakes made that opened the individuals up for a counterattack. Here are the first two:

1) To the first pastor, he told him that by opposing principalities without first learning how to do so and how to oppose Satan's counterattacks, he had exposed himself and his church to an unexpected attack. Jackson prophesied that if the pastor stopped and repented, the children would live. The pastor obeyed, and the bleeding stopped that day; all were born.[689]

2) To the second pastor, he prophesied that "If God has not directly commanded you to do this kind of spiritual warfare, you are engaged in presumptive behavior. In essence, that is rebellion. Your son is manifesting that rebellion." The pastor and church stopped, and his son came home.[690]

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[687] John Paul Jackson, *Needless Casualties of War* (Fort Worth, TX: Streams Publications, 1999), 28–32, Kindle.

[688] Jackson, *Needless Casualties of War*, 33.

[689] Jackson, *Needless Casualties of War*, 33.

[690] Jackson, *Needless Casualties of War*, 33.

The essential principle of warring with territorial spirits found in the literature is: One must participate only if one has received a specific calling from God to do so, and only when He prescribes for the situation He presents. In other words, He must be Lord of all of it. Otherwise, a person is open to counterattack. Jackson calls this "careless spiritual warfare" that reveals "a lack of strategic wisdom."[691] In both of the above cases, the pastors were seemingly acting outside of God's direction and will; otherwise, would they have so readily repented when confronted by Jackson's prophetic insights?

"Spiritual Mapping" Section

Learning Names of Demons

According to Wagner, knowing the names of the spirits being opposed is not required, but that in his experience, believers seem to have more authority over them when they do; this is also true for ground-level warfare.[692]

Arnold asserts that when Paul wrote that Christ had been raised "far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and every named that is named" (Eph. 1:21), "It seems to me that Paul wrote precisely against this mindset."[693] Geivett and Pivec quote Arnold and interpret that he "points out that this belief . . . contradicts the teaching of Scripture."[694]

Commentary. Here Arnold seems to apply a prohibition from the text that is likely not the intent of Paul, taking this verse out of context while making a logical deduction about what it

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[691] Jackson, *Needless Casualties of War*, 35.

[692] Wagner, *Spiritual Warfare Strategy*, 193.

[693] Arnold, *3 Crucial Questions about Spiritual Warfare*, 129.

[694] Geivett and Pivec, *A New Apostolic Reformation?,* 200.

means for naming spirits. Also, in Mark 5:9, Jesus asks for and receives the name of the demons (although He could have been asking the man's name, not the demons).

"Prayerwalking" Section

"Warfare Prayer" as a Term

Confronting evil spirits is not "prayer" but rather confrontation of evil spirits. Thus, the entire concept of "warfare prayer" is misleading.[695]

Commentary. I agree that if that terminology is used to indicate commanding evil spirits, it is an incorrect usage. Wagner clarifies that we address evil spirits with "commands and rebukes," not what is called "prayer."[696]

"Identificational Repentance" Section

Corporate Confession and Remission of Sins

The Bible does not contain evidence that believers can confess the sins of others and have God remove His curse on their sin. There is no example of any Old Testament leader confessing sins in pagan countries, nor does Paul attempt to confess the sins of others. Further, the sins of a city can be confessed, but if the same people with the same sin habits remain, they will re-establish the offense to God immediately.[697]

Commentary. As Arnold points out, where this practice can have the most value is within the body of Christ itself. This is where the examples of Daniel and Nehemiah, who both

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[695] Arnold, *3 Crucial Questions about Spiritual Warfare*, 129–30; Geivett and Pivec, *A New Apostolic Reformation?,* 202.

[696] Wagner, *Spiritual Warfare Strategy*, 192.

[697] Arnold, *3 Crucial Questions about Spiritual Warfare*, 143; quoted in Geivett and Pivec, *A New Apostolic Reformation?*, 203.

confessed the sins of their nation even though they were not the ones who sinned, apply as examples. Daniel's prayer was:

> So I gave my attention to the Lord God, to seek Him by prayer and pleading, with fasting, sackcloth, and ashes . . . we have sinned, we have done wrong, and acted wickedly and rebelled, even turning aside from Your commandments and ordinances. Moreover, we have not listened to Your servants the prophets, who spoke in Your name to our kings, our leaders, our fathers, and all the people of the land . . . Indeed, all Israel has violated Your Law and turned aside, not obeying Your voice; so the curse has gushed forth on us, along with the oath which is written in the Law of Moses the servant of God, because we have sinned against Him. (Dan. 9:3, 5–6, and 11, NASB)[698]

The confessed sins sometimes relate to the past only, such as how a town was founded. Such past sins are not in danger of reoccurring, so it seems like there is a greater chance of removing demonic strongholds in those cases.

2 Chronicles 7:14 and Identificational Repentance

The example commonly used in SLSW of 2 Chr. 7:14 — "[if] My people who are called by My name humble themselves, and pray and seek My face, and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and I will forgive their sin and will heal their land" — is a covenant promise to Israel and cannot apply to today's areas because God's covenant is no longer by country, but worldwide as the body of Christ.[699]

Commentary. It seems like God is more concerned with units of people than simply the worldwide body. While it is true that God's covenant is with the body of Christ rather than directly with nations such as the United States, the Bible seems to indicate localized concerns. For example, in Genesis 18, God explicitly addresses the fate of Sodom and Gomorrah by the

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[698] Arnold, *3 Crucial Questions about Spiritual Warfare*, 145.

[699] Arnold, *3 Crucial Questions about Spiritual Warfare*, 143–4; quoted in Geivett and Pivec, *A New Apostolic Reformation?*, 203.

count of righteous men there. In Matthew 11:23 and Luke 10:13, Jesus pronounces woes on two villages — Chorazin and Bethsaida — because their inhabitants did not repent after seeing His miracles. These passages imply that localized righteousness and repentance can lead to favorable localized decisions by God.

2 Chronicles 7:14 seems like it can be boiled down to the following: if believers humble themselves, pray, seek God, and repent from sin, then God will forgive them and bring blessing and healing. It seems reasonable that this action and reaction could occur at the level of a city, region, or nation, without having to single out a nation as being required to be a covenantal unit and without requiring application worldwide to the entire body of Christ.

Arnold's Additional Objection: If It Works, Can It Be Wrong?

I discuss one additional objection that Arnold raises, but Geivett and Pivec do not because of its importance. He recognizes that there are success stories in places like Argentina and Guatemala where SLSW has been practiced but questions whether SLSW is the cause. He notes that other activities that would foster growth, such as organized prayer meetings, increased prayer, repentance and turning from personal sin, an emphasis on unity, outreach events, and witnessing are likely occurring as well. Other factors, such as economic, government oppression, and catastrophes, may also contribute to openness to the gospel. In Argentina, many such factors were in play, and churches and evangelists not practicing SLSW were also experiencing the same as those that were. Therefore, warring against territorial spirits may not be what is causing the successes described in the stories.[700]

[700] Arnold, *3 Crucial Questions about Spiritual Warfare*, 137–8.

Commentary. It seems possible that the other factors contribute to God moving in a region and demonic forces being weakened. Additionally, the acts of such united godly actions are bound to increase corporate faith that God will move; such faith can foster greater moves of God. However, many accounts of smaller-scale SLSW activities, such as those of Kjell Sjöberg and his teams, are so elaborately specific that they could seemingly only be orchestrated by God.[701] Also, if churches that are not practicing SLSW also grow in a city where SLSW is occurring, does that not bolster the argument that as city-level spirits are neutralized, people in the city will come to Christ?

Conclusion

SLSW emerged as C. Peter Wagner, and others observed the results of spiritual warfare in other parts of the world and synthesized it into a system that could be disseminated and applied.

Based on the critiques by Arnold and thus Geivett, and Pivec, there appears to be little unassailable evidence in Scripture or church history for the practice of SLSW as it pertains to directly addressing territorial spirits. Some Bible passages could provide support, but they can be challenged based on context or other questions. SLSW is not found to be unbiblical, however. Therefore, it is certainly possible that God can direct certain believers at certain times to address territorial spirits, and cases can be found that seem to show favorable results for those who are called and are obeying Him to do so when and how He directs.

Addressing territorial spirits entails risk because it appears that they can counterattack, especially if one is not acting fully under God's direction and lordship. Such counterattacks have

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[701] See Kell Sjöberg, "Chapter Four: Spiritual Mapping for Prophetic Prayer Actions," in *Breaking Spiritual Strongholds in Your City*, ed. C. Peter Wagner (Shippensburg, PA: Destiny Image Publishers, 2015), Kindle.

manifested in health problems and other calamities. The late prophet John Paul Jackson issued especially ominous warnings about the dangers of SLSW in such scenarios based on prophetic dreams and words he received from God.

Even without directly addressing territorial spirits, some aspects of SLSW can be valuable. Spiritual mapping can provide helpful information for evangelism and can foster a more informed and compassionate approach toward the people of an area or country as Christians understand their spiritual opportunities and challenges. Also, the same prayer efforts to dislodge territorial spirits can be made biblical simply by praying to God to act against them rather than directly addressing them. Identificational repentance, even if it does not dislodge or weaken territorial spirits, can improve the spiritual climate and remove strongholds through the active application of repentance and forgiveness between people groups, since pride and unforgiveness are two significant sources of footholds for demons and hindrances to God's work.

In contending for spiritual breakthroughs for an area then, it seems like a wise approach would be to do all that can be done in SLSW, but instead of automatically assuming that we are to address territorial spirits directly, rather pray to God to act against the spirits while also asking Him for His direction on how He wants us to pray. Then, only when it becomes clear that God is granting authority to speak against these spirits for a time would it be appropriate to do so.

Section 5: End-Times Miracle-Working Army

Introduction to Section 5

Dr. Randy Clark

The fifth section of my response is related to the End-Times Miracle Working Army by Vineyard pastor Michael Yoder. Together he and his wife Julie pastor one of the largest Vineyards churches in the USA, in Urbana, Illinois, with several thousand in attendance. Michael's father-in-law, Happy Leman, and his wife Di were the pioneer church planters of the Urbana Vineyard as well as several other churches. Michael and Julie Yoder have a Third-Wave theology with a strong emphasis upon "kingdom now not yet" theology. They serve as the regional leaders for the Vineyard Midwest Central Region. In his response, Michael considers the concept of present and past teachings regarding an end time army, presenting end time views and discussing the unconventional miracles in the NAR. An important focus is his consideration of whether it is necessary for churches to be submitted to apostles and prophets to fulfill the church's mission. The conclusion is based upon his research. One of the highlights in Yoder's chapter is his contrast of the view of Geivett and Pivec with that of Jon Ruthven in his book *On the Cessation of the Charismata: The Protestant Polemic on Postbiblical Miracles*.[702] Ruthven's work is the classic and best exegesis on this subject that has been written, based upon his doctoral dissertation.

[702] Jon Ruthven, *On the Cessation of the Charismata: the Protestant Polemic on Postbiblical Miracles* (Word & Spirit Press, 1993, 2011).

End-Times Army: A Response to NAR Critics
by Mike Yoder

Introduction

For better or worse, the world of Christian faith has been polarizing over the centuries. It is the story of passionate and compassionate followers of Jesus who seek to love as He loved. But too often, they seek to find fault in their brothers and sisters, who think and practice differently. There is a human tendency to cling to what we know and see differences as threatening our way of life or our very identity. When that human tendency is pointed at correcting theology or doctrine, we often see a zeal that seeks for us to become the protectors of Christendom from the potential of evil heresy. Too often, we use our directive to "speak the truth in love" (Eph. 4:15 NIV) as a club over the head of those we disagree with. The desire for "truth" often kicks love to the side.

To be fair, there are many times where correction of practice and doctrine are needed. But that is part of the journey we must accept with a God who seeks to live out an active relational faith with each of His followers. He is looking for our lives lived for Him, not just His words memorized. His words and instruction in Scripture are our highest authority, so they should never be diminished. But, when it comes to Scripture, John Wimber famously tells us, "Don't eat the menu," by which he means we cannot just read the words of Scripture; we must do our best to live them out.[703]

In their book, *The New Apostolic Reformation*?, R. Douglass Geivett and Holly Pivec address what they see as some of the dangers and abuses they observe from people and churches

[703] Vineyard USA, "What Is the Vineyard? Our Uniqueness," https://vineyardusa.org/library/what-is-the-vineyard-our-uniqueness/, accessed March 5, 2021.

connected to what is being called the New Apostolic Reformation or NAR. They have taken on an immense task to capture commonalities and places of concern for a collection of churches, organizations, and people that have no formal connection or authority. NAR is a descriptor given by C. Peter Wagner for what he saw as a move towards greater recognition of the offices of modern-day apostles and prophets, especially in the role of church governance. Geivett and Pivec admit a lack of unifying doctrines, beliefs, or even practice amongst those they would classify under the NAR umbrella. Their primary qualifier for belonging to the NAR is a belief in the modern-day offices of apostles and prophets.[704] However, the language used in their book paints a much broader brushstroke. This creates a connection between all they place within the NAR and makes each of them complicit in anything deemed unhealthy in theology, practice, or as participatory in the NAR.

Geivett and Pivec have indeed identified some areas of concern that do require some clean-up or correction. They have identified some situations and errors that the charismatic church should take seriously. The charismatic church carries a desire and encouragement to connect to a God who speaks and moves today. The strength of this move is seen in the incredible growth of Christianity happening through churches that have embraced this charismatic model over the past ~100 years. Unfortunately, it also has the opportunity for humans to misuse and manipulate when it is not tempered with accountability and love. Unfortunately, abuse and manipulation of power is not a unique trait to those in the NAR circles, as evidenced by the church and even human history.

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[704] Douglas R. Geivett and Holly Pivec, *A New Apostolic Reformation?: A Biblical Response to a Worldwide Movement* (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2014), chap. 1, Kindle.

The challenge raised in this paper is in the conclusions drawn from some of these carefully curated examples within their broadly defined NAR umbrella. Therefore, this paper seeks to address the three following ideas put forth by Geivett and Pivec in their books.

> Critics of those considered NAR also believe that the pursuit of signs, wonders, and miracles relates to an end-times miracle-working army under the leadership of apostles and prophets. This army will usher in the Kingdom of God and is based on Joel 2, the Manifest Sons of God teaching, a NAR interpretation of Romans 8:19.
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> Geivett and Pivec state that there are three aspects of the miracles within NAR circles that are not conventional: 1. under the leadership of apostles and prophets, the miracles will be unprecedented in types and frequency; 2. there will be new truths revealed by apostles and prophets that will activate miracle-working power; 3. the followers of the apostles and prophets will grow in the miraculous and become instruments to lose God's judgments while becoming immortal.
>
> It is also believed that without submission to the authority of today's apostles, the church will be unable to fulfill its mission to transform cities and advance the kingdom of God. Additionally, critics against those whom they consider NAR state that under the authority of the apostles and prophets, the church will eventually have dominion over all spheres of influence, and they declare that this is the primary goal of NAR teaching.

End Time Army

Let us begin by looking at one of the central tenets of the NAR as proposed by Geivett and Pivec. It is an understanding that the continuing pursuit of signs, wonders, and miracles is connected to the purpose of raising an end-times miracle-working army. The church is to become this army, and it will fall under the leadership of NAR-style apostles and prophets whose goal is to usher in the kingdom of God. A common name for this army is Joel's army, based on the description given in Joel chapter 2. Additionally, this army is sometimes described as the "Manifest Sons of God" as Geivett and Pivec represent a NAR interpretation of Romans 8:19 which reads, "For the creation waits in eager expectation for the children of God to be revealed" (Rom 8:19 NIV).[705] Other translations read it as the creation waiting on the sons of God.

[705] Geivett and Pivec, *A New Apostolic Reformation?,* chap. 18, Kindle.

This is a common term that can be traced back to the Latter Rain movement of the 1940s. As Joel is a prophetic book, it is not uncommon to see this term threaded into prophetic voices throughout history. An example of this is quoted from self-identified prophet Bobby Connor who said this in 2003, "For years now, premier prophets such as Paul Cain and Bob Jones have been prophesying, predicting the arising of an end-time army identified as Joel's Army. These predictions are long-standing and are now in the process of being fulfilled."[706]

Critics of the NAR see the influence of the Latter Rain movement and theology as having a defining impact on the current NAR movement and many charismatic churches and organizations. The primary concerns related to this paper are connected to the issues of the restoration of the governing offices of apostles and prophets and a "latter rain," or outpouring of the Holy Spirit that will occur in the end times. With this latter rain, a great evangelistic harvest will come through the church's work to do incredible miracles along with Joel's army, as mentioned above, or the manifest sons of God. This army will allow the church to have dominion over key realms of influence on the earth.[707]

The critical verses from Joel 2 regarding both the latter rain and this outpouring of the Spirit are from Joel 2:23 and 28. "Be glad, people of Zion, rejoice in the LORD your God, for he has given you the autumn rains because he is faithful. He sends you abundant showers, both autumn, and spring rains, as before…. And afterward, I will pour out my Spirit on all people.

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[706] Bobby Connor, Elijah List, "Joel's Army Now Commissioned—The Cry of Heaven is 'Advance!'", http://www.elijahlist.com/words/display_word/1760, accessed Feb 27, 2021.

[707] Thomas D. Ice, "The Latter Rain Revival Movement," *Article Archives*, 48 (2009): 1-3 https://digitalcommons.liberty.edu/pretrib_arch/48.

Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your old men will dream dreams, your young men will see visions" (NIV).

Prophetic voice, Paul Cain, saw this training for the end time army as a need for the church in his time to be trained, which he attributed to a prophetic vision he had at 19 (~1948) from a billboard which read, "Joel's Army: Now in Training." This type of militant language from Cain, and others, has been propagated in certain NAR circles and has been influential in creating some of the pushback we see from critics who consider this unbiblical.[708]

One NAR leader that is often quoted by Geivett and Pivec, especially regarding end-times beliefs, is Mike Bickle, founder of the International House of Prayer Missions Base of Kansas City, more commonly referred to as IHOPKC or IHOP. Bickle recognizes Cain as a spiritual father but later distances himself after disclosing Cain's moral failures. Regarding the outpouring of miracles in the end times, Bickle is quoted as saying, "The end times is the church's finest hour when miracles will occur, and supernatural prophetic direction will be released. The miracles of Acts and Exodus will be multiplied and combined on a global level."[709] This connection to Exodus comes from his interpretation of Micah 7:15, which says, "As in the days when you came out of Egypt, I will show them my wonders." IHOP connects their understanding of Joel's Army primarily to a group of people giving themselves over to prayer and fasting, a significant tenet of IHOP's organizational work.[710] They do not believe there will

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[708] Ice, "The Latter Rain Revival Movement," 3.

[709] Mike Bickle, "Mike Bickle Answers the 100 Most Frequently Asked Questions About the End Times," in Charisma online, accessed February 25, 2021 from https://www.charismamag.com/spirit/bible-study/35597- mike-bickle-answers-the-100-most-frequently-asked-questions-about-the-end-times.

[710] IHOPKC, "What does IHOPKC believe about "Joel's Army?", https://www.ihopkc.org/press-center/faq/ihopkc-believe-joels-army/, accessed Feb 25, 2021.

be an army to come and destroy or release judgment: instead, they are a people committed to a lifestyle of prayer and holiness.

One interesting note that Geivett and Pivec acknowledge is that IHOP specifically distances itself from some of the Latter Rain theology. Their website affirms the understanding of Joel 2:28-32 that there will be a great outpouring of the Spirit that will result in a great gathering of souls. They also acknowledge the presence of the five-fold ministry today to equip the saints. However, they specifically deny teachings of the Latter Rain that go "beyond Scripture." The doctrines beyond Scripture are not specified, but they deny any connection to the Latter Rain movement.[711]

End Time Views

While there are certainly some views within those classified as NAR that are more extreme regarding their interpretation of this end-time miracle-working army, there are certainly those with that same NAR classification that would have a more widely held understanding of these issues.

Part of the challenge comes from the view of eschatology. One of the critiques of NAR beliefs by Geivett and Pivec is a victorious view of the church with a tremendous end-time harvest that is ushered in with an increase in signs, miracles, and wonders to the end of this age. This great harvest is portrayed as a Latter Rain belief in the post-World War II era. However, we see this belief in a great end-time revival ordinary even in the 17th-and 18th-centuries with the prevalence of Postmillennial eschatology. It was believed that the Kingdom of God would be ushered in by the preaching of the church, revival, and missions. Even the much-renowned orator

[711] IHOPKC, "What does IHOPKC believe about "the Latter Rain" theology?", https://www.ihopkc.org/press-center/faq/ihopkc-believe-latter-rain-theology/, accessed Feb 25, 2021.

and Baptist minister, Charles Spurgeon, prophesied that everything that had been seen to that point was nothing compared to what God was about to do. There would be a new action of the Holy Spirit, unlike anything we had seen since the days of the Apostles. This idea that God would expand His kingdom through revival and expansion of the church was not new in this era. This was a widely held view among protestants far before the Latter Rain movement.[712]

A different view of eschatology would automatically make the view of a victorious church nearly impossible to reconcile. Suppose one holds to dispensationalism or pretribulation rapture premillennialism viewpoint. In that case, one will see the world on a downward spiral with the churches moving ultimately to a lukewarm (not victorious) church right before Jesus comes back. This is based on an understanding of the seven churches in Revelation recognized as a chronological view of the church through history into the future. Jesus will come to rescue the church (rapture) right before the time of great tribulation in the time of a lukewarm church. This has become a prominent view of the church, especially in America, since the 1830s with the influence of John Darby and a revival in southern Scotland that brought visions, new revelation, and eschatology.[713] Ironically, it is often a belief held by cessationists and others who would dismiss any new revelation as unbiblical because of their belief that Scripture is complete and no new revelation is needed.

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[712] Randy Clark, "Week 1 - BTHE 5283: Renewal Theology" lesson video, "Video 1 - Dr. Randy Clark: Critics Perspective on Beliefs of New Apostolic Reformation" (BTHE 5283: Renewal Theology), From Family of Faith/Global Awakening Seminary, January term 2021, retrieved from https://faithglobal.populiweb.com/router/courseofferings/10507310/lessons/10246400/show, (17:40).

[713] Randy Clark, "Week 6 - BTHE 5283: Renewal Theology" lesson video, "Video 17 - Dr. Randy Clark: Eschatology: Most Reject Dispensationalism With its Negative View of the End-Times Weak Lukewarm Church" (BTHE 5283: Renewal Theology), From Family of Faith/Global Awakening Seminary, January term 2021, retrieved from https://faithglobal.populiweb.com/router/courseofferings/10507310/lessons/10246640/show (16:40).

One eschatological view that aligns with amillennialism is understanding the "now and the not yet of the kingdom" held by the Vineyard churches. This view understands that Jesus inaugurated the kingdom of God in his Incarnation, death, and resurrection, but he has not fully consummated the kingdom. This will happen in the future at his Parousia. This would put us in the "end times" age ever since the time of Jesus.[714] We can combine that with a Vineyard (and others) understanding that everybody gets to play—all believers are called to do the same and greater works of Jesus (John 14:12) and not just the anointed leaders.[715] From this viewpoint, it could be argued that the end-time army is the church that Jesus established, and we are all called to train and equip the saints for the work of ministry (Eph. 4:11). We have been living in the end times already with a clear mission to expand the kingdom by introducing more people to Jesus and the empowerment He has extended to us to live our lives submitted to His model and example for life.

Dr. Randy Clark also holds to a different understanding or distinctive of eschatology. This would recognize that the church will not bring about the Second Coming by establishing the kingdom without opposition. There will be great conflict because we fight a genuine enemy in Satan and his demonic kingdom. This conflict will bring challenges, but it will also be a time of great victory and miracles as the kingdom advances. The church will come to a time of purity

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[714] Vineyard USA, "What Is The Kingdom? | The Now And The Not Yet Of The Kingdom," https://vineyardusa.org/library/what-is-the-kingdom-the-now-and-the-not-yet-of-the-kingdom/, accessed Feb 27, 2021.

[715] Jay Pathak, "Everyone Gets To Play: Ordinary People Doing Extraordinary Things," https://vineyardusa.org/library/everyone-gets-to-play-ordinary-people-doing-extraordinary-things/, accessed Feb 27, 2021.

power and will increase instead of shrink. When Jesus returns, He will finish anything that the church could not accomplish.[716]

Additionally, Geivett and Pivec's narrow classification of signs, miracles, and wonders to equip this end-time army contributes to the larger negative narrative that they are attempting. In contrast to this, John Ruthven's dissertation explains the purpose of miracles by proving that the charismata (gifts of the Spirit) do not accredit or replace the Gospel. Instead, they express the Gospel. Just as the act of preaching the Gospel does not invalidate the message, neither does the gift of prophecy invalidate the Gospel. The methodology used to communicate a message does not replace the content of the message. The charismata are the "power of God unto salvation" (Rom 1:16 KJV).[717] They do not replace the Bible or establish new doctrines because they are utilized. Instead, they amplify and establish the authority of the Gospel.

We can observe throughout the New Testament that miracles are most often used to bring power to the preaching and presentation of the Gospel. The fact that we have the established canon of Scripture today does not change this. Miracles still bring power to and certainly do not weaken the Gospel today.[718] Clark articulates that the argument for Scriptures alone carrying enough authority for sharing the Gospel today does not hold up when we minister in a non-Christian culture, especially when there is a dominant alternate religion. The Bible has no

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[716] Clark, "Eschatology: Most Reject Dispensationalism With its Negative View of the End-Times Weak Lukewarm Church" (16:40).

[717] Jon Ruthven, *On the Cessation of the Charismata: the Protestant Polemic on Post-Biblical Miracles* (Tulsa: Word & Spirit Press, 2011), chap. 11, Kindle.

[718] Gary S. Greig and Kevin N. Springer, *The Power of the Cross: The Biblical Place of Healing and Gift-Based Ministry in Proclaiming the Gospel* (California: Regal Books, 1993), 46. This is a pre-release version used by permission, the published reference is: *The Kingdom and the Power: Are Healing and the Spiritual Gifts Used by Jesus and the Early Church Meant for the Church Today?,* eds., Gary S. Greig and Kevin Springer (Ventura: CA, Regal Books, 1993).

authority in that setting as a religious text. But when signs and wonders accompany the message, it establishes the authority of Scripture and causes them to listen. In this case, it is the message and not the messenger being validated.[719]

Another correlation that could explain why it seems logical to see a sizeable end-time harvest in conjunction with an increase in the charismata is what has been happening over the last 100 or more years within cessationism. Cessationism was an overreaction of the Reformers to reject heretical Catholic practices and doctrines.[720] Reformers, such as John Calvin, sought to limit the primary work of miracles to the accreditation and establishment of Scripture as a means of bringing balance to some of the issues within the Roman Catholic church. He saw the Catholic church's miracles as counterfeit as they were used to validate false doctrine and their belief in the "apostolic succession" of the Roman Catholic church from the first Apostles.[721] Today, what was a considerable hold over much of the church is beginning to lose its grip, with 80% of Protestant Christians reporting that they have had a Pentecostal experience in the last 120 years.[722] In light of this understanding, it would seem that the church needs to have a broader account of miracles, signs, and wonders to lead the Christ-followers of today.

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[719] Randy Clark, "Week 2 - BTHE 5283: Renewal Theology" lesson video, "Video 6 - Dr. Randy Clark: Validity of Modern-Day Prophets" (BTHE 5283: Renewal Theology), From Family of Faith/Global Awakening Seminary, January term 2021, retrieved from https://faithglobal.populiweb.com/router/courseofferings/10507310/lessons/10246400/show, (53:00).

[720] Mel Wild, "An Inconvenient History for Cessationism," *In My Father's House*, (2014), https://melwild.wordpress.com/2014/04/21/an-inconvenient-history-for-cessationism/.

[721] Ruthven, *On the Cessation of the Charismata*, chap. 1, Kindle.

[722] Clark, "Critics Perspective on Beliefs of New Apostolic Reformation" (43:10).

Unconventional Miracles in NAR

According to Geivett and Pivec, one defining characteristic of the NAR is that there are three separate views about miracles:

1) Under the leadership of apostles and prophets, the end-time church will perform unprecedented miracles in terms of their grandeur and frequency.
2) New truths revealed by the new apostles and prophets are crucial to "activating" miraculous gifts among individuals.
3) The followers of apostles and prophets will grow in miraculous gifting until they "lose" God's judgments on earth and become immortal.[723]

Let us address the first issue. One of the main points of contention is the role of apostles and prophets within the NAR. Do they have absolute authority in their sphere of influence and the governance of their respective church or ministry? Does the authority of the apostle and prophet put everyone else "under" them, or is it better to consider their role as a leader? Let us set aside for a moment whether the office of apostle or prophet is still viable today and look at the issue of authority.

One of the concerns is the level of governing authority that the apostle or prophet has today. Look at the organizational structures of churches and ministries across denominations. We can see the status of authority held by those who might simply be called Pastor, Senior Pastor, Senior Leader, Priest, Bishop, President, Elder, etc. Some of these may hold minimal power under a board or other denominational leadership function. Others have tremendous authority to govern their church or organization. They set direction, establish theological direction, hire and fire, and many other functions. For many of these, the issue of assuming the title of apostle or prophet is not a matter of concern, even if they might be operating in an apostolic or prophetic function. Utilizing the title of apostle or prophet for any of these roles does not suddenly bestow an added

[723] Geivett and Pivec, *A New Apostolic Reformation?,* chap. 18, Kindle.

layer of potential for abuse. It would simply recognize where "some" of these people might already be functioning. The real issue at stake is not whether they can lead, but does that leadership title allow for a revelation that would sit on par with the authority of Scripture? This will be addressed a little later.

The second part of this first critique supposes that the miracles will be unprecedented in grandeur and frequency under the apostles and prophets. Geivett and Pivec point out that the NAR leaders say that end times miracles will be greater than even some of Jesus' miracles. They list eight examples of possible miracles that could be considered more significant than what Jesus performed.

1. Healing every patient within entire hospitals and mental institutions through the simple laying of hands on the buildings
2. Diverting raging floods with a single word
3. Possessing authority over all natural laws, such as gravity, time, space, and mass
4. Commanding mountains to be literally cast into the sea and having the mountains obey them
5. Routinely multiplying food and resources
6. Prophetically revealing simple, natural cures for fatal diseases
7. Prophesying with comprehensive knowledge of everything that happens before it occurs (nothing will take them by surprise)
8. Participating in regular counsels with angels

This is meant to paint a broad picture of the NAR, but seven of the eight examples listed are from the same source—Rick Joyner and his ministries. Unfortunately, space in this paper does not afford the ability to break down every one of these claims. Notably, the fact that this has been highlighted in this paper is not meant to condemn Rick Joyner or to say his ministry is an outlier. However, it is an excellent example of a broad stroke being used by Geivett and Pivec from selective sources to make a point that supports their argument and casts a negative light on the broader collective. This is a strawman approach, and it is faulty.

Geivett and Pivec describe these claims as "astonishing" and then quote the central passage that the NAR misuses. Jesus says in John 14:12, "I tell you the truth, anyone who believes in me will do the same works I have done, and even greater works, because I am going to be with the Father" (NLT). The astonishing claims made by the NAR are immediately repeated by quoting Jesus in Scripture.[724]

What is missing is a view that Jesus' life and ministry are to be our model for our own life and ministry. We consistently see this reinforced in the Scriptures. We are told to be imitators of God (Eph. 5:1 ESV). Paul says again we are to imitators of both himself (as an example of a follower of God) and the Lord (1 Thess. 1:6). Jesus himself reinforces our need to see Him as our model when He tells us that we are to do the same and greater works than He did when He was here on the earth (John 14:12 NLT).

How are we as human followers to live out this example of Jesus' supernatural life? We must first examine our understanding of how Jesus performed His miracles when He was here on earth. The traditional view sees Jesus retaining His deity when He took on flesh. All the miracles that Jesus performed are done from His divine nature or divinity. The natural interactions that happened were done from His human nature. He gave set aside portions of His deity, such as omnipresence, omnipotence, and omniscience, for a time.[725] This is the official view of the Roman Catholic Church since the Sixth Ecumenical Council (680-681).[726]

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[724] Geivett and Pivec, *A New Apostolic Reformation?,* chap. 18, Kindle.

[725] Clark, "Kenotic and Non-Kenotic Views," (6:30).

[726] Randy Clark, *Destined for the Cross: 16 Reasons Jesus Had to Die* (Nashville, TN: Emanate Books, 2020), chap. 15, Kindle.

A second *kenotic* view comes from Paul writing about Jesus in Philippians 2:6-8, "Who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but **emptied** himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross" (NLT, emphasis added).

The term **emptied** is where we get the word *kenotic*. This view sees Jesus as emptying or sometimes seen as setting aside His divine nature when He came as a man. This was a choice or humbling of His divine right so that he might instead show us an example of humanity in partnership with the Holy Spirit so that He could be our model for how to live our lives.[727] The author of Hebrews tells us that Jesus had to share in our humanity to defeat the Devil and set us free. He had to become fully human in every way (Heb. 2:14-17). This does not mean that He chose to empty Himself of His divinity. Instead, He intentionally decided not to draw on His divine nature and accepted the limitations of His human nature. He added to His divinity humanity.

Eastern Orthodoxy has a strong tradition of the concept of deification. In deification, the believer becomes more like God through His grace or divine energies. Peter states that believers become "partakers of the divine nature" (2 Peter 1:4), which means the believer becomes like God in character and nature—it is not becoming God. Instead, it focuses on being filled with His grace in union with God.[728] Just as Jesus added to his Divinity humanity, He gives the believer

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[727] Clark, "Kenotic and Non-Kenotic Views" (8:00).

[728] The *Orthodox Study Bible*, "Deification," "What deification is" (Thomas Nelson, 2008), 1695, Kindle.

His Spirit and thus adds divinity to our humanity, thereby empowering the believer to perform healings and miracles by the Holy Spirit through the believer.

In Galatians, we are told that we are now dead because we were crucified with Christ, and it is Christ who lives in us (2:20). 1 John 4:13 says, "This is how we know that we live in Him and He in us: He has given us of His Spirit" (NIV). We are to live in this union with Christ. It is not a believer who performs the same and greater works of John 14:12, but instead, it is the power of Christ in us through this union with Him. We do not outperform Jesus' miracles in our power. If He chooses to perform more incredible miracles, it is in partnership with us through His power.

A second concern raised is that "new truths" revealed by the new apostles and prophets are crucial to "activating" miraculous gifts among individuals. But first, we must understand what new truths are seen as a concern. This is the list that Geivett and Pivec consider to be new truths or taught with "new" truth.

- Laying on of hands
- Fasting from food
- 24/7 prayer
- Soaking
- Speaking in tongues

They do admit, however, that most of these do have a biblical basis and practice outside of NAR circles. However, it is the implication that the gifts will somehow be activated or stirred up in people through these practices that seems to cause concern. A serious problem is given regarding training schools like Bethel School of Supernatural Ministry or BSSM. They question whether schools like this exist with a strategy to activate and train people to operate in spiritual gifts.[729]

[729] Geivett and Pivec, *A New Apostolic Reformation?,* chap. 18, Kindle.

The biblical critique comes against the idea that gifts can be imparted from individuals to one another through things like laying on of hands or other activations. They argue that these gifts are only to come directly from the Holy Spirit and cannot be given (1 Cor. 12:11). They reference the series of questions Paul asks regarding whether all are apostles, prophets, teachers, workers of miracles, have gifts of healing, speak in tongues (1 Cor. 12:29-30). As they interpret it, we assume that the answer is no. They assert that activating gifts is out of step with mainstream Christian practice, based on 1 Corinthians 12:7-10, which explains how each receives a gift for the common good or building up of the church.[730] Geivett and Pivec, however, miss the fact that the greater message of these passages confirms the need for the gifts to be in operation and practice for the church to be fully functioning as one body. This is ignored to discredit the methods used by those in the NAR.

Furthermore, when we look to Scripture, we see this modeled when Paul tells Timothy, "Do not neglect your gift, which was given you through prophecy when the body of elders laid their hands on you" (1 Tim. 4:14 NIV). Or, when Paul reminds Timothy, "For this reason, I remind you to fan into flame the gift of God, which is in you through the laying on of my hands. For the Spirit God gave us does not make us timid, but gives us power, love and self-discipline" (2 Tim. 1:6-7 NIV). Each of these gives a scriptural basis for the gifts imparted through the laying on of hands, prophecy, and through the elders. Geivett and Pivec reject these by citing that an original apostle (Paul) was present, and that is why it was acceptable. They lay claim to their assertion that the office of apostle does not exist today, and therefore this is no longer possible.[731]

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[730] Geivett and Pivec, chap. 19, Kindle.

[731] Geivett and Pivec, chap 19, Kindle.

The assertion misses the point that their first argument was that only the Spirit could impart the gifts. When Scripture contradicts this claim, the assertion is changed by claiming a particular office no longer exists to impart the gifts. At some point, when we treat Scripture this way, we begin to lose any text from which we can start to model our own lives and ministry. The declaration that schools that activate and train people in the spiritual gifts are working against the Scripture is contradictory by its very nature. The same schools that Geivett and Pivec attended and worked from indicate this. The very idea that we can go to seminary or ministry school to learn how to use wisdom to understand the word better and become better teachers and preachers would become a violation according to this logic.

The authors quote Vinson Synan as saying, "The practice of learning to prophesy in a classroom setting seems to take a gift of the Spirit, which is given and controlled by the Holy Spirit, and place it in human hands apart from a worshiping community."[732] But wait, are not teaching and discernment gifts of the Spirit? Should those gifted as teachers simply be given their gift by the Spirit and be allowed to start training in our churches and schools? As Geivett and Pivec claim, the schools of the prophets in the Old Testament were not explicitly indicated to teach prophecy. Instead, they were simply made up of people who were already prophets.[733] This seems like a tough stretch of logic. Was there no method or process to help them become better at operating in their gift? Why then did the schools exist?

To make this claim is to misunderstand or ignore the Jewish culture and its methods of teaching and raising disciples. This idea of a teacher raising others to be like them is the very

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[732] Geivett and Pivec, chap 19, Kindle.

[733] Geivett and Pivec, chap 19, Kindle.

mindset Jesus would have been operating in and addressing in the Jewish culture of His time. A quote from a 2nd-century Jewish educator, Ben Sirach, describes it this way, "When his father [teacher] dies, it is as though he were not dead. For he leaves behind him One like himself."[734] This is the same context in which Paul exhorts Timothy and his followers to imitate him just as Paul is an imitator of Jesus. (1 Cor. 4:15-17). The apostles would have received this type of instruction from Jesus and continued this practice in those they raised after them. The kingdom teaching chain would have logically continued and should continue to each generation instead of being seen to end at the Apostolic Age.[735]

A third NAR characteristic to be examined by Geivett and Pivec is that the followers of apostles and prophets will grow in miraculous gifts until they "lose" God's judgments on earth and become immortal. The losing of judgments and becoming immortal is an extreme belief that would seem to sit at the fringe of most classified as NAR. The releasing of judgments by the end times followers of apostles and prophets is primarily cited from Mike Bickle and teaching from the book of Revelation that portrays the prayers of the saints as participating in Pharoah-like judgments from Exodus upon the Antichrist and his followers.[736] One is not the same as the other. Bickle also connects them to the same and greater works of John 14:12.[737] The immortal or divine health connection is primarily cited from Bill Hamon and Latter Rain teacher George

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[734] Greig and Springer, *The Power of the Cross*, 152.

[735] Greig and Springer, *The Power of the Cross*, 152-159.

[736] Greig and Springer, *The Power of the Cross*, 152-159.

[737] Mike Bickle, "Session 1 Introduction and Overview of the Book of Revelation", International House of Prayer University, (2014), 7-8, https://backup.storage.sardius.media/file/akamaiBackup-ihopkc-103762/IHOP/344/803/20140207_Introduction_and_Overview_of_the_Book_of_Revelation_BOR01_study_notes.pdf.

Warnock from the 1950s. Warnock's teaching was not mainstream, even in the Latter Rain movement, and Geivett and Pivec admit that Hamon's teachings are often vague and would be considered extreme within the NAR.[738] Geivett and Pivec make good arguments as to why this teaching is unbiblical, but it is a stretch to make either one of these beliefs a mainstream belief of the NAR, as they insinuate. Joyner is cited as claiming the elderly will become young as a sign of divine health. Still, in looking more closely at the source, it could more easily be referring to the elderly growing more youthful in their mind and being rejuvenated by the Spirit through healing.[739] Again, one is not the same as the other. The authors are being misunderstood or misquoted, and the NAR is painted with a fell brush.

Clark recently surveyed leaders who would be classified as NAR according to Geivett and Pivec's criteria. In this survey, the respondents were asked this question "Do you believe followers of apostles and prophets will grow in the miraculous and become instruments to lose God's judgments while becoming immortal?" One hundred percent of the respondents said "No," they do not believe this.[740]

Submission to the Apostles & Prophets to Fulfill the Church's Mission

A final claim from Geivett and Pivec that this paper seeks to respond to is summarized,

> It is also believed that without submission to the authority of today's apostles, the church will be unable to fulfill its mission to transform cities and advance the Kingdom of God. Additionally, critics against those they consider NAR state that under the authority of the apostles and prophets, the church will eventually have dominion over all spheres of influence, and they declare that this is the primary goal of NAR teaching.

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[738] Geivett and Pivec, chap 18, Kindle.

[739] Rick Joyner, *The Apostolic Ministry*, (Fort Mill, SC: Morningstar Publications, Inc, 2010), 72.

[740] Randy Clark, "Renewal Theology Survey," electronic survey summary report, distributed by Global Awakening, accessed March 6, 2021, https://www.getfeedback.com/s/DkZdF6Yj/.

Geivett and Pivec claim that NAR believes that the unifying of the church is a fundamental goal of the five-fold ministries, but only under submission. The church's unity is to come about as cities and regions submit and unite under apostles' authority. This is how the church will transform cities. Geivett and Pivec see this NAR premise as prioritizing apostles and not pastors as the primary gatekeepers of a city. However, it is understood in their book that the five-fold is commissioned to equip the saints for the work of the ministry until we attain unity of faith (Eph. 4:11-13). An example given is the ministry, The Call, which was founded by the apostle Chè Ahn and the prophet Lou Engle, who hold large stadium events around the United States intending to unite denominations in fasting and praying for the end of societal evils and the restoration of the USA to Christian roots. They also take issue that the unity among and under apostles appears to come at the expense of Christian doctrine. A quote from Bethel senior pastor Bill Johnson is given,

> For centuries the people of God have gathered together around specific truths. Denominations and organizations have been formed to unite these groups of Believers. Having common belief systems has helped to build unity within particular groups and define their purpose. . . .But there is an inherent problem with this approach—unity of this nature is based upon uniformity. . . .When agreement in nonessential beliefs is considered necessary for fellowship, the division is natural and expected. While doctrine is vitally important, it is not a strong enough foundation to bear the weight of His [God's] glory that is about to be revealed through true unity. . . .There are major changes in the "wind" right now. For the last several years, people have started to gather around fathers instead of doctrine. . . .Apostles are first and foremost fathers by nature. . . .In the same way that a father and mother are to bring stability to a home, so the apostles and prophets are the stability of the church.[741] ~~xxx39~~

While this is given as an example of the disregard for doctrine, it clearly emphasizes its importance while pointing out the evident weakness of everyone gathering around their unique doctrine, with the fruit being a fractured church with little unity. When we read a few verses

[741] Geivett and Pivec, chap 18, Kindle.

further in Ephesians 4, we see that in verse 14, Paul is calling us to unity so that we will no longer be children tossed about by every wind of doctrine (Eph. 4:14). Doctrine is very important and should be sought as a source of unity. Still, as our only source of connection, it has proven entirely ineffectual in bringing the global church together.

When it comes to submission under the authority of apostles and prophets to see dominion over all spheres of society, we see some interesting results among NAR leaders. Many NAR leaders who consider themselves apostles would not see themselves operating with unilateral/hierarchical authority. In Clark's survey, 94% of respondents said they would choose to govern from a more collegial position that included input from a team before making decisions for government, budget, spending, and staff appointment. One hundred percent said they would utilize this approach to select other leaders. Eighty-one percent said they don't believe apostles today should hold the same authority as the Twelve Apostles and Paul. One hundred percent agree that any revelation they receive from the Lord is NOT equal to Scripture. Additionally, 81% deny the need for submission to the authority of today's apostles for the church to fulfill its mission. When asked if there is a need for the apostles and prophets to see the church eventually have dominion over all spheres of influence, the response was an overwhelming 94% who said NO.[742]

Those who have been surveyed do not seem to be a group that claim to have unilateral authority or to the adherence of one set of beliefs that is driving the entire group. The issue of having dominion over all spheres of influence as a primary goal would speak to a Theocracy. Even C. Peter Wagner would reject this interpretation and instead see it as seeking to have

[742] Clark, "Renewal Theology Survey," accessed March 6, 2021.

kingdom-minded people in all areas of influence of the seven mountains: Religion, Family, Education, Government, Media, Arts & Entertainment, and Business.[743]

Conclusion

As it was noted at the beginning, it is essential for the whole church to recognize where corrections and clarification are needed. The history of the Christian faith is full of incredible victories for the Kingdom of God. Still, there have also been too many instances of abuse when unhealthy practice or doctrine was allowed to flourish. Geivett and Pivec have sought to point out where there is potential for this to happen within the connections of those who are classified under the banner of the New Apostolic Reformation.

They have identified some beliefs that, if increased and were widely accepted (as they interpret them), could lead the greater church towards some unhealthy places. For that desire and purpose, they should be commended for seeking the best for the whole church. However, as more clarity and perspective on some of these assertions are connected, it is clear that the broader picture being painted by their conclusions is overreaching in its scope. It is unfair to create a false image of a very loose network of people and organizations and characterize it with the worst views of those you place under that umbrella. It is a logical fallacy to say that all their subsequent conclusions about the group are proven correct because they identify potential problem areas. One does not validate the other. Instead of throwing the proverbial baby out with the bathwater, let us look at places that may need correction as opportunities for growth and healthy discussion. There is hope that we can look at the best that each part of the body of Christ

[743] C. Peter Wagner, "The New Apostolic Reformation Is Not a Cult," *Charisma News* (2011), https://www.charismanews.com/opinion/31851-the-new-apostolic-reformation-is-not-a-cult, accessed Feb 25, 2021.

carries and move forward without the baggage of rebuke when redemption may be the better tool.

It is also essential that discussions of difference do not turn into discussions of division. Far more can be accomplished when we find it in ourselves to seek the unity of faith that Ephesians 4:13 calls us into. Let us focus instead on what brings us together instead of what holds us apart. As the Apostle, Paul tells us, “There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to one hope when you were called; on Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all” (Eph. 4:4-6 NIV). Let us make our purpose to live in hope from that one Spirit under the banner of one God whom we all seek to serve in humility and unity.

Section 6: The Ways of God

Introduction to Section 6

Dr. Randy Clark

The sixth section in my response is related to Ministry Misconceptions and the Ways of God: A Renewalist Response to the NAR by Anne Watt, who recently graduated from GATS with her Master of Divinity with a Bible concentration. This class was one of her final courses. Watt points out the misconceptions of the critics regarding Third Wave theology's perspective on training in the gifts of the Spirit. This perspective is contrary to what Geivett and Pivec wrote, does not teach people can be taught how to heal, prophesy, receive words of knowledge, work miracles, but instead, they are taught the ways of the Holy Spirit so they can learn how to co-labor with Him in these gifts that are from him and are grace-based not knowledge based. The true emphasis is upon learning the ways of God so the disciple can learn how to recognize the moving of God in and through His gifts. Watt deals with three misconceptions of the critics regarding people they accuse of being NAR, and a supposed NAR perspective on training. She deals with the NAR critics regarding a wrong definition for miracle, a misconception of "New Truths," and the misconception that people can learn how to do their own miracles. To clear up these misunderstandings Watt explains the Third Wave view of spiritual gifts, of the laying on of hands, of spiritual impartation, of schools of supernatural ministry, of revelation in supernatural ministry, and of doing the greater works than Jesus. Drawing upon her research she then gives her conclusion. Watt also provided a case study on physical healing she wrote for another GATS class that required 16 case studies explaining how she received a word of knowledge, and her prayer for the person and the outcomes, all of which helps move the discussion from the academic to the practical and makes clearer the art of hearing the Spirit. Finally, in her second

appendix she provides seven ways God speaks, helping the reader to gain understanding on how to discern God's voice.

Because all of these papers deal with the NAR and the critics of NAR, readers will find some redundancy of themes and scriptural citations. My desire in all of this is to clarify misunderstandings and create a more irenic spirit within the body of Christ.

Ministry Misconceptions and the Ways of God: A Renewalist Response to Critics of the New Apostolic Reformation by Anne Watt

Since about the early 2000s, the label "New Apostolic Reformation (NAR)" has been applied to a range of Pentecostal and Charismatic Christian leaders and their ministries. The name has become associated with the acceptance of modern-day apostles and prophets (along with the other gifts in Ephesians 4:11), belief in the continuation of supernatural signs and wonders, a focus on the kingdom of God, and even the interests of conservative politics. Much of what has been written about the NAR is negative and has caused alarm in the church and derision in secular society.

But what is the NAR? Who are its members? Is it an aberrant Christian movement, or are its beliefs misunderstood and misrepresented? Two pairs of writers who have leveled criticism against the NAR include R. Douglas Geivett and Holly Pivec in *A New Apostolic Reformation? A Biblical Response to a Worldwide Movement*,[744] and Costi W. Hinn and Anthony G. Wood in *Defining Deception: Freeing the Church from the Mystical-Miracle Movement*.[745] This paper responds from a renewalist perspective to these writers, their designation of people they deem part of the movement, and their presentation of NAR theologies and ministry practices. This author's aim is to address misconceptions and allay the fear of a so-called NAR coalition by showing that attributions of NAR membership are often unfounded and the Third Wave theologies and practices these writers criticize are actually based on sound biblical and

[744] R. Douglass Geivett and Holly Pivec, *A New Apostolic Reformation? A Biblical Response to a Worldwide Movement* (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2014).

[745] Costi W. Hinn and Anthony G. Wood, *Defining Deception: Freeing the Church from the Mystical- Miracle Movement* (El Cajon, CA: Southern California Seminary Press, 2018).

theological precedents. While the authors address numerous and important theological and ecclesiological issues in their work, the heart of this paper will limit the focus to select points that relate to Third Wave ministry practices and will argue that activating and growing in supernatural ministry springs out of intimacy with God and learning his ways.

Before pressing forward, clarification is warranted. The terms "renewal," "Third Wave," and "Charismatic" are meant to communicate the historic Christian movement that began in the United States around the 1980s. These words are used synonymously and broadly and are not intended to convey diverse theological concepts but an overarching belief in the Holy Spirit's present-day, supernatural work through spiritual gifts.

What Is the New Apostolic Reformation?

Essentially, the NAR is a name. During his 30-year career as the professor of church growth at Fuller Theological Seminary, C. Peter Wagner noticed that the fastest-growing segment of Christianity was in the global South and that churches in the various regions there bore similar characteristics. Chief among them were Pentecostal roots and supernatural experiences in the power of the Holy Spirit.[746] Therefore, in 1994, he developed the name New Apostolic Reformation in an attempt to define the movement he saw sweeping across the southern hemisphere and in churches throughout North America that accepted the ongoing ministry of apostles and prophets and the supernatural activity of the Holy Spirit.

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[746] C. Peter Wagner, "The New Apostolic Reformation Is Not a Cult," Charisma News, August 24, 2011, accessed February 27, 2021, https://www.charismanews.com/opinion/31851-the-new-apostolic-reformation-is-not-a-cult; Benjamin G. McNair Scott, *Apostles Today: Making Sense of Contemporary Charismatic Apostolates: A Historical and Theological Appraisal* (Eugene, OR: Pickwick Publications an imprint of Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2014), 134; Randy Clark, "Week 1–BTHE 5283: Renewal Theology," lesson video, "Video 1 – Dr. Randy Clark: Critics' Perspective on Beliefs of the New Apostolic Reformation," (BTHE 5283: Renewal Theology) 43:25–44:17. From Family of Faith/Global Awakening Theological Seminary, Jan term 2021, retrieved from https://faithglobal.populiweb.com/router/courseofferings/10507310/lessons/10246400/show

The NAR has no official leader, although Wagner has been closely associated with it because he was the first to see the growth trend and he described and named it. Neither is the NAR an organization; there is no membership.[747] Consequently, there are two ways to be affiliated with the NAR: Either people may claim the designation for themselves, or the designation is placed upon them. In their writings, Geivitt and Pivec and Hinn and Wood engage in the latter.

Who Identifies with the NAR?

Among leaders they deem members of the NAR, Hinn and Wood mainly focus their polemic against Bill Johnson, senior pastor of Bethel Church in Redding, California, a single figure whom they use to represent all of the NAR.[748] Geivett and Pivec also highlight various Third Wave leaders and include listings of what they consider NAR networks. Among these is the Revival Alliance, which was formed due to a global revival in the 1990s that impacted the lives of several leaders around the world.[749] Based on their mutual relationships, these leaders originally came together informally and created a network to encourage one another, offer support, and hold one another accountable in ministry. The members of Revival Alliance include John and Carol Arnott (Catch the Fire Partner Network of Churches), Georgian and Winnie Banov (Global Celebration), Rolland and Heidi Baker (Iris Global), Randy and DeAnne Clark (Global Awakening), Bill and Beni Johnson (Bethel Church and Global Legacy), and Ché and Sue Ahn (Harvest International Ministry).[750] None of these leaders associate themselves with the

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[747] Wagner, "The New Apostolic Reformation Is Not a Cult," https://www.charismanews.com/opinion/31851-the-new-apostolic-reformation-is-not-a-cult

[748] Hinn and Wood, *Defining Deception*, vii.

[749] Randy Clark, "A History of Revival, Part II," Global Awakening (blog), accessed February 27, 2021, https://globalawakening.com/blog/video/a-history-of-revival-part-ii

[750] Clark, "A History of Revival, Part II," https://globalawakening.com/blog/video/a-history-of-revival-part-ii

NAR on their websites, and only the Bakers mention it to deny any involvement or endorsement of supposed NAR teachings.[751] A skeptic could say none of these leaders mention their NAR affiliation because the movement has become so controversial; however, a realist would counter, they offer no claim to the association because they are not affiliated.

Geivett and Pivec and Hinn and Wood assign leaders undeservedly to the NAR who do not themselves identify with it or agree with the radical claims these authors make about the movement. Geivett and Pivec even put forth the possibility of people being involved in the NAR without knowing they are participating in it. They note "participants in NAR hold to a spectrum of beliefs. … Indeed, many people taking part in NAR don't even realize it is a movement."[752] What amount of confusion and anxiety might this cause people? Yet, ironically, this has happened to a so-called NAR leader.

Randy Clark, founder, and president of Global Awakening and the key leader in the revival in the 1990s in Toronto, Canada, learned in a phone call from a concerned friend that he was charged with being a prominent NAR leader. This was news to him.[753] Responding to Geivett and Pivec's book, he states, "A lot of my friends are listed as a part of the NAR; most of them don't know they are listed."[754] Geivett and Pivec have also chosen only to quote the writings of supposed NAR leaders but have not discussed their views with them. If they had,

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[751] Iris Global, "What We Believe: Statement of Faith," accessed February 27, 2021, https://www.irisglobal.org/about/statement-of-faith

[752] Geivett and Pivec, *A New Apostolic Reformation?*, 3.

[753] Randy Clark, "Session 4, Network Advance at VOA 2020," MP3 (Woodbridge, VA, September 29, 2020), 1:20-1:49.

[754] Clark, "Week 1, Video 1, Critics' Perspective on Beliefs of the New Apostolic Reformation," 1:08–1:17, https://faithglobal.populiweb.com/router/courseofferings/10507310/lessons/10246400/show

would they have found some of the leaders they mentioned from years ago had since changed their positions, or might they have been able to clarify their meaning? Randy Clark notes further, "I think it would have been nice before they wrote the book … if they'd talked to some of us."[755]

Additionally, in their attempt to "systematize NAR's key teachings and practices,"[756] Geivett and Pivec have created a theological framework they believe speaks in general for the leaders and ministry models they deem NAR. Although they acknowledge a variety of thought among supposed NAR leaders (but do not explain in what ways), their systematizing has created a false mold that fails to adequately consider these leaders' diverse theological viewpoints, education, life experiences, God-given ministry mandates, and whether or not the people they label NAR agree with the claims and quotations they promote as its teachings.

Thus, the NAR is professed to be a movement: a leaderless, freeform, decentralized non-entity with a broad range of so-called participants and leaders. Some of them may not even know they are associated with it. Geivett and Pivec and Hinn and Wood honorably wish to warn church attendees of something they perceive as a threat to their spiritual well-being. And some of the issues they raise are legitimate and deserve further conversation; however, one of the dangers of their work is how the term NAR is used as a dragnet that catches up the unsuspecting and genuinely unaffiliated.

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[755] Clark, "Week 1, Video 1, Critics' Perspective on Beliefs of the New Apostolic Reformation," 52:17– 52:26, https://faithglobal.populiweb.com/router/courseofferings/10507310/lessons/10246400/show. Hinn and Wood write they did attempt to speak with Bethel Church leaders and Bill Johnson but their request was refused. However, they include no information about trying to contact any of the other Third Wave leaders they mention in their book. Hinn and Wood, *Defining Deception*, x.

[756] Geivett and Pivec, *A New Apostolic Reformation?,* xiv.

Ministry Misconceptions vs. God's Ways

In Exodus 33:13, Moses asked God, "Teach me your ways so I may know you and continue to find favor with you."[757] God complied because the psalmist states, "He made known his ways to Moses, his acts to the people of Israel" (Ps 103:7).[758] The book of Exodus details how the Israelites were spectators; they were satisfied with merely seeing God's acts on their behalf. But Moses learned God's ways and for this was richly rewarded. He not only came to know and love God intimately, but he co-labored with him, found favor with him, and was known as God's friend (Exo 33:11). Today, Christians are called to no less than knowing and loving God and learning his ways, even as Moses did. By understanding God's character and presence, and learning how he speaks—through circumstances, nature, Scripture, a "still small voice," other people, spiritual gifts, and more—Christians may become more intimate with God, co-labor with him, and enjoy ongoing favor.

Knowing God and developing the ability to hear him and respond is as vital today as it was in ancient times—and is as crucial for effective ministry now as then. But sometimes, distinctions in the ways of God can be subtle. For example, God told Moses to strike the rock one day (Exo 17:6) and to speak to it on another (Num 20:8). Also, then as now, people understand God's ways differently. This can result in misconceptions. In a similar vein, what follows are ministry misconceptions Hinn and Wood and Geivett and Pivec have about Third Wave perspectives.

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[757] *The Holy Bible, New International Version*® NIV® Copyright © 1973, 1978, 2011 by Biblica, Inc., ® Used with Permission of Biblica, Inc. ® All rights reserved.

[758] All Scripture quotations, unless otherwise indicated, are from *The Holy Bible, English Standard Version (ESV)*, copyright © 2001 by Crossway Bibles, a division of Good News Publishers. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

Misconception #1: "NAR Enthusiasts" Use the Wrong Definition of Miracle

Early in their work, Hinn and Wood state, "This book is intended as a refutation of modern Third Wave style charismata, specifically the version practiced by Bill Johnson and apostles of the New Apostolic Reformation."[759] To begin their argument, they offer two definitions of miracles. Hinn and Wood developed the shorter of the two as an aggregate of views from evangelical theologians such as Millard Erickson, Wayne Grudem, and John MacArthur (who authored the Foreword of their book).[760] They state, "*A miracle is God suspending, or working counter to, natural laws and personally reaching into life to rearrange people and their circumstances according to his will* (emphasis theirs)."[761] They explain this definition does not claim miracles have ceased but holds to a higher standard what qualifies as a miracle according to Scripture and that this measure is "much more robust than often offered by Third Wave/NAR and many charismatic proponents."[762] They assert that this standard, rather than being a position against miracles, intends to create greater respect for them "because if we define everything a miracle we lose the ability to recognize when a real miracle takes place."[763]

As examples of true miracles, they note the account of the floating ax head (2 Kgs 6:6), Jesus turning water to wine (John 2:1-11), and the disabled man healed at the Beautiful Gate (Acts 3:8), which are events "clearly outside the observable laws of nature."[764] Based on their

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[759] Hinn and Wood, *Defining Deception*, ix.

[760] Hinn and Wood, 7n11.

[761] Hinn and Wood, 7.

[762] Hinn and Wood, 8.

[763] Hinn and Wood, 8.

[764] Hinn and Wood, 7.

definition and understanding of the biblical evidence, they conclude, "many, if not most, of the miracles done by modern healers or self-styled prophets are not really miracles at all."[765] Their reason is that today's faith healers have not stopped the sun, walked on water, turned water into wine, or instantly healed a lifelong debilitation.[766] They pose any amount of healing less than complete and instantaneous as evidence of God's providence—his orchestration of natural events—rather than a suspension of nature and God breaking in and accomplishing what he desires through miracle power. To strengthen their view, they quote well-known pastor and cessationist, John MacArthur:

> The types of miracles that are being claimed today are absolutely nothing like New Testament miracles. … In fact, the types of miracles today could be distinctly seen as different than New Testament miracles. Jesus and the apostles instantly and completely healed people born blind, a paralytic, a man with a withered arm—all obvious, indisputable miracles. … They never did a miracle that was slow, they never did a miracle that took time, they never did a miracle that was less than permanent. By contrast, most modern miracles are partial, gradual, temporary, sometimes reversed, and almost impossible to verify. … I recently watched a televangelist interview a man he had supposedly healed of lameness. The man said he was free from his wheelchair for the first time in several years; however, the man was walking with crutches and had heavy braces on his legs. That's not a miracle at all like any in the Scripture.[767]

Thus, Hinn and Wood (and MacArthur) present the traditional Protestant definition of miracle developed by Benjamin Breckinridge Warfield, professor of theology at Princeton Seminary in the late-nineteenth to early-twentieth centuries. As Jon Ruthven explains, Warfield's book, *Counterfeit Miracles*, is the "authoritative and representative expression of cessationism

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[765] Hinn and Wood, *Defining Deception*, 9.

[766] Hinn and Wood, 9.

[767] Hinn and Wood's quotation of MacArthur ends after the word "verify." I record more of MacArthur's words from his own website because I believe they illustrate the kind of definition of miracle Hinn and Wood support. Because they approve of MacArthur's explanation of miracle, I think they are likely also to accept his example, which immediately follows. John MacArthur, "Does God Do Miracles Today?" Grace To You, August 11, 1991, accessed February 28, 2021, https://www.gty.org/library/sermons-library/90-56/does-god-do-miracles-today; Hinn and Wood, *Defining Deception*, 9.

for American Evangelicalism."[768] Warfield's definition of miracle in *Counterfeit Miracles* was influenced by his Calvinism, which had cessationist roots that had developed in the Reformation when Calvin and other reformers found it necessary to contest the miracles of the Catholic Church, which claimed their history of the supernatural accredited their doctrine. The reformers cited *Sola Scriptura* as the basis of their credibility. At that time, the Catholic Church was mired in excess and corruption, which showed their doctrines were false; therefore, their miracles must also be false.

Warfield was further influenced by an Enlightenment-era philosophy called Scottish Common-Sense Realism. This form of rationalism affected his hermeneutics of Scripture and definition of a miracle, which had to be of such a pronounced quality as to be discernable to anyone of "common sense."[769] Warfield created a distinction between the miraculous activity portrayed in Scripture and the providential acts of God that occurred throughout history after the apostolic era.[770] He argued that when faith healers—the charismatic "enthusiasts" of his day, such as the Quakers, Methodists, and adherents of the Keswick Higher Life movement—prayed for healing, if healing did occur, they were not miracles but general acts of the supernatural.[771] As Ruthven explains, "Warfield, then, emphasizes that miracles are unconnected with any process of nature; that they are directly and immediately caused by God and are to be

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[768] Jon Mark Ruthven, *On the Cessation of the Charismata: The Protestant Polemic on Post-Biblical Miracles*, rev. ed. (Tulsa, OK: Word & Spirit Press, 2011), 10.

[769] Ruthven, *On Cessation of the Charismata*, 172.

[770] Ruthven, 47.

[771] Ruthven, 47.

distinguished from 'providential' works of God in which some natural means is used to produce an unusual effect."[772]

All these points developed by Warfield echo throughout the views of Hinn and Wood in their definition of a miracle. To state as MacArthur does, and presumably Hinn and Wood agree, that Jesus "never did a miracle that was slow" or "took time" is simply untrue—progressive and incomplete healings are portrayed in the Scriptures. For example, Jesus prayed at least two times to heal a man of blindness (Mark 8:23-25); the ten lepers were healed as they went to show themselves to the temple priests (Luke 17:11-19); the servants of the official in Capernaum "told him that his son *was recovering*" and the official asked them "the hour when *he began to get better*" (John 4:51, 52; emphasis mine); and Ananias prayed for Paul to regain his sight, yet Paul could not identify the high priest and noted his weak eyes to the Galatians (Acts 23:3-5; Gal 4:15; 6:11).

As for MacArthur's charge of the impossibility of verification, Third Wave leaders make efforts to verify reported healings.[773] Keener notes John Wimber witnessed "few if any healings" when he began praying for the sick.[774] But by 1982, "fifty to 100 people a week" were healed in his Anaheim Vineyard church due to the prayers of congregation members.[775] Social anthropologist David C. Lewis researched claims of healing in Wimber's ministry and concluded

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[772] Ruthven, *On Cessation of the Charismata*, 50.

[773] A board of medical doctors and researchers have partnered with Global Awakening to form Global Medical Research Institute. This independent nonprofit organization is dedicated to reviewing evidence-based testimonies from various ministries and applying rigorous research methods to show the effects of prayer on conditions that would otherwise have a poor prognosis. See globalmri.org.

[774] Craig S. Keener, *Miracles: The Credibility of the New Testament Accounts* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2011), 1:485.

[775] Keener, *Miracles*, 1:485.

noteworthy healings had indeed occurred. In one meeting, he determined about one-third of those prayed for received a high degree of healing, and about another quarter claimed to have received some degree of healing.[776] And in 2009, Randy Clark, founder of Global Awakening, and Heidi Baker, founder of Iris Global, granted permission to Professor Candy Gunther Brown and her team of researchers to use an audiometer and vision charts in their healing conferences in Brazil and Mozambique, respectively.[777] Brown notes, "The post-prayer diagnostic tests did indicate significantly improved function for many, but not all, subjects who claimed healing."[778]

Therefore, returning to MacArthur's argument, whether one calls healing an act of providence or a miracle, does dismissing the "unscriptural" testimony of a man who no longer needs a wheelchair but must use crutches and braces miss the greater event—that God's gracious power has relieved human suffering? Unfortunately, the Pharisees missed Jesus' miracle when he healed a man's withered hand because they were distracted by their traditions laid upon the Scripture's command to do no work on the Sabbath (Mark 3:1-6). Sadly, their misguided focus robbed God of the gratitude and glory he deserved.

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[776] Keener, *Miracles*, 1:485.

[777] Candy Gunther Brown, *Global Pentecostal and Charismatic Healing* (Cary: Oxford University Press, Incorporated, 2011), 363, accessed March 9, 2021, ProQuest Ebook Central, https://thedtl.on.worldcat.org/oclc/702111007

[778] Brown, *Global Pentecostal and Charismatic Healing*, 364. Can science prove the power of healing prayer? Brown states: "Even if researchers employ a range of methodological perspectives and explanatory models, there are inherent limits to what scientific testing can prove. … Empirical research can measure only certain effects of religious practices and illumine how religious practitioners—as well as scientists—construct their understandings of these practices. … To ask the question of whether science can prove or disprove the healing power of prayer points toward the unparalleled cultural authority of 'science' in the Western world. Yet science in its current form is itself a culturally constructed category, simultaneously incorporating both scientific approaches and a variety of core sensibilities about the nature of the material world. Indeed, the arguments wielded in debates over prayer studies illustrate that scientists do not always behave dispassionately but can be just as driven by doctrinaire philosophical and theological agendas as can adherents of religious communities." Candy Gunther Brown, *Testing Prayer: Science and Healing* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2012), 10-11, 276-277.

As for Hinn and Wood, their proposed definition of miracle is influenced by a Protestant tradition of Enlightenment rationalism within a Reformed cessationist framework.[779] Ruthven states, "Warfield's concept of miracle required an essentially deistic view of nature invaded by a supernatural force so utterly transcendent that, to an impartial observer acquainted with the facts, no possible natural 'means' could produce such an effect."[780] It then begs the question of MacArthur's example; would it be a miracle if the man walked on water yet with his crutches and braces? Thus, rather than creating more respect for miracles, a narrow definition can leave them more difficult to appreciate. As Grudem explains, one will see far fewer miracles. This definition "may not encompass all the kinds of things Paul had in mind when he talked about miracles in the churches of Corinth (1 Cor 12:10, 28-29) and Galatia (Gal 3:5), and may prevent people from recognizing a gift of miracles when it is given to Christians today."[781] Keener also warns against those with anti-supernatural assumptions who profess a willingness to accept evidence yet establish the bar of proof so high that they "exclude even evidence that would normally be acceptable in law or historiography."[782]

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[779] Hinn and Wood reject *On the Cessation of the Charismata*, arguing Ruthven's "base premise is mired in inference and unsound exegesis, confusing Scripture, merging and distorting distinct promises for national Israel with the modern church, misrepresenting classical cessationism, and using hermeneutical ploys to offer an unsupported study of the New Testament word 'power.'" Yet, as in their definition of miracle, Hinn and Wood also employ a Reformed/dispensational framework in their view of Ruthven's work, as evidenced by their dispute about promises for the nation of Israel vs. the modern church.

[780] Ruthven, *On the Cessation of the Charismata*, 173.

[781] Wayne Grudem, "Should Christians Expect Miracles Today? Objections and Answers from the Bible" in *The Kingdom and the Power: Are Healing and the Spiritual Gifts Used by Jesus and the Early Church Meant for the Church Today?,* eds., Gary S. Greig and Kevin Springer (Ventura: CA, Regal Books a division of Gospel Light, 1993), 110n80; see also 100-102.

[782] Keener, *Miracles*, 1:108.

Discerning a miracle involves more than evidence or a presupposed framework. Before the age of metrics and meters, a miracle based on biblical standards was an event perceived with spiritual understanding (John 12:29): "The natural person does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are folly to him, and he is not able to understand them because they are spiritually discerned" (1 Cor 2:14).[783] As a young man, early church father Augustine had claimed miracles and healings had ceased. But in his later years, he retracted this position when supernatural healings and episodes of deliverance from demonic oppression began occurring in his ministry. He stated, "I call miracle whatever proves to be arduous and uncommon and above the expectation … and capacity of those who admire it."[784] A broader view then makes room for miracles that are "arduous and uncommon" as well as healings "above expectation." According to Grudem, a definition that allows room is "more consistent with biblical patterns."[785] Third Wave adherents view healing and miracles that include total healing to a range of improvement. Yet, instead of creating disregard, a broader definition provides space to see more clearly and appreciate more deeply the myriad ways God touches those he loves.[786] People need miracles and healings. They not only alleviate human suffering but they express and manifest the gospel

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[783] Ruthven, *On the Cessation of the Charismata*, 173.

[784] Joseph Bentivenga, "The Witness of St. Augustine on the Action of the Holy Spirit in the Church and the Praxis of Charismata in His Time," Studia Patristica 22 (1989), 194, citing De Utilitate Credendi 16, 34, quoted in Randy Clark, *The Essential Guide to the Power of the Holy Spirit: God's Miraculous Gifts at Work Today* (Shippensburg, PA: Destiny Image Publishers, 2015), 85.

[785] Grudem, "Should Christians Expect Miracles Today? Objections and Answers from the Bible" in *The Kingdom and the Power*, 100.

[786] I had the privilege of praying for a woman with back pain. I prayed three short prayers in a span of about two minutes. Within a range of 10 to 1, with 10 being unbearable, her starting pain of level 8 went down to level 2. Although after praying she still had some discomfort that remained at level 2, I saw in her face amazement at God's love and care for her. While seemingly small, this was no little event for her.

message and reveal God's goodness in perceptible ways. This creates faith in people's hearts and gives glory to God.

Misconception #2: "New Truths" Activate Miraculous Gifts

Third Wave View of Spiritual Gifts

Geivett and Pivec argue, "A major emphasis of NAR is that miraculous gifts can be activated through receiving new truths revealed by present-day apostles and prophets."[787] While they do not explain what these particular "new truths" are that supposedly activate wonder-working gifts or who is teaching them, they strongly defend the idea that spiritual gifts are indeed just that: gifts. They have not activated powers within believers. Gifts are distributed to believers at the discretion of the Holy Spirit, and individuals cannot acquire them at will. Geivett and Pivec seem not to realize Third Wave adherents agree with these views of the spiritual gifts.

The apostle Paul appears to have penned the Greek word *charisma*, meaning *gift*, as it appears only twice in variants of the Septuagint, not at all in the works of Josephus, and in but a few secular Greek works much later than Paul's time.[788] Its range of meaning overlaps greatly with the word *charis*, meaning grace.[789] Charisma could be called a "gracelet," a droplet from God's ocean of grace.[790] According to Dunn, "*charisma is divine energy accomplishing a particular result*" (emphasis his). When Paul uses the term charismata (plural of charisma) in 1

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[787] Geivett and Pivec, *A New Apostolic Reformation?,* 196.

[788] James D. Dunn, *Jesus and the Spirit: A Study of the Religious and Charismatic Experience of Jesus and the First Christians as Reflected in the New Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1997), 205-206.

[789] Dunn, *Jesus and the Spirit*, 206.

[790] Randy Clark and Mary Healy, *The Spiritual Gifts Handbook: Using Your Gifts to Build the Kingdom* (Bloomington, MN: Chosen Books, a division of Baker Publishing Group, 2018), 24.

Corinthians 12, he refers to actions and events, not "latent possibilities and hidden talents."[791] The charismata, then, are dynamic and active endowments—gracelets—freely given by the Holy Spirit. Because charismata originate and are entirely dependent on the Spirit, and are not latent human abilities or talents, supposed NAR apostles or prophets cannot activate them by "new truths" or any other methods. When people are endowed with gifts, the dynamic energy they receive is of the Spirit, given at the initiative of the Spirit, to be used according to the will of the Spirit. Charismata are not personal superhero powers: Aim and zap! Instead, "the Lord is the Spirit" (2 Cor 3:17).

Consequently, here is a critical truth: People are not the Holy Spirit's master; instead, he is their Lord. Third Wavers would agree on this distinctive: If we have the gift of healing, we may grow in learning the Holy Spirit's ways as he leads us in prayer for healing, but we may not heal someone whenever we wish.[792] Initiative, endowment, leading, and empowerment originate in the Spirit; as we become familiar with how he communicates, we become more adept at following him.

Geivett and Pivec claim NAR leaders teach that people may have all of the spiritual gifts they wish activated in their lives. As an argument against this view, they cite 1 Corinthians 12:29-30, where Paul rhetorically conveys no one may attain *all* of the gifts he mentions, including being apostles, prophets, or teachers, working miracles; having gifts of healing; speaking in tongues, and interpreting tongues.[793] Here again, Geivett and Pivec cast wide their

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[791] Dunn, *Jesus and the Spirit*, 209.

[792] Clark and Healy, *The Spiritual Gifts Handbook*, 25.

[793] Geivett and Pivec, *A New Apostolic Reformation?,* 196.

net over all those they label NAR because they make no mention of who teaches that all of the gifts may be activated. And, contradicting Geivett and Pivec, Randy Clark teaches that everyone has gifts, yet no one has them all.[794] The Holy Spirit gives gifts to all Christians: "To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good" (1 Cor 12:7, emphasis mine). But no one has all of the gifts because then the members of Christ's body would no longer need one another (12:17-21).[795] Each gifted member is vital and serves a critical function: The eye needs the hand needs the foot.

Third Wave leaders acknowledge and teach the Bible's encouragement to pursue spiritual gifts to build up the church (Rom 12:6-8; 1 Cor 12:31; 14:1, 12-13, 26-39; 1 Thess 5:19-22; 1 Pet 4:10-11), but that the Holy Spirt distributes them as he will (1 Cor 12:11). Bodine states, "It is still a bedrock conviction in the Vineyard and other third wave churches, that the full range of the Spirit's activity described in the New Testament is intended to be operational throughout the Church age (though at His discretion and under His control) and is vital to ministry that God wants to grant and that we all need."[796] Third Wave Charismatics would also agree with Keener, who writes, "To be sure, Paul wants the church as a whole to seek gifts, so his exhortation may not mean that God will necessarily grant every gift that every Christian desires (12:11). Also, Paul surely does not imply that all Christians should exercise all gifts (12:28-30). But God often grants requests, especially when Christians offer them for his honor."[797] Christians in the renewal

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[794] Clark and Healy, *The Spiritual Gifts Handbook*, 26.

[795] Clark and Healy, *The Spiritual Gifts Handbook*, 26.

[796] Walter R. Bodine, "Power Ministry in the Epistles: A Reply to the Evangelical Cessationist Position" in Greig and Springer, *The Kingdom and the Power,* 200.

[797] Craig S. Keener, *Gift and Giver: The Holy Spirit for Today* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2020), 133.

tradition believe we may ask God for gifts, which in his wisdom he grants according to his will. And whether through natural or supernatural gifts, we acknowledge we are called to serve people in love to God's pleasure and renown.

Third Wave View of the Laying On of Hands

Although Geivett and Pivec acknowledge prayer with the laying on of hands is a biblical concept, they oppose the idea of "NAR" apostles and prophets laying hands on people to activate spiritual gifts in their lives.[798] But the five-fold leaders Paul mentions in Ephesians 4:11 are not checkout clerks: "I see you've ordered the gift of prophecy. Here you go!" Nor do Charismatic believers treat them as such. Renewalists accept the practice of the laying on of hands based on it being a foundational doctrine of the universal Christian church: "Let us leave the elementary doctrine of Christ and go on to maturity, not laying again a foundation of … the laying on of hands" (Heb 6:1-2). The Scriptures also portray other key examples.

In the Old Testament, blessing and commissioning were conferred through the laying on of hands, as when the people laid their hands on the Levites to serve in the tabernacle (Num 8:10), and Moses laid hands on Joshua to set him apart for leadership (27:18). The laying on of hands was also used in substitutionary roles. The Levites laid their hands on the heads of sacrificial bulls to be offered for their cleansing (8:12), and the high priest conferred the guilt of the nation of Israel on the scapegoat through the laying on of hands (Lev 16:21-22). In the New Testament, Jesus brings a new, positive expression to the laying on of hands: to heal people as well as to bless. Jesus in the Gospels most often uses touch to heal (Matt 9:18; Mark 1:40-41;

[798] Geivett and Pivec, *A New Apostolic Reformation?,* 185, 198.

6:5; 7:32; 8:23-25; Luke 4:40; 13:13).[799] Then, following his ascension, what began as a trickle in the Old Testament becomes a living stream in Acts as the apostles lay hands on believers and they receive the Holy Spirit (Acts 6:5-6; 8:14-17; 19:6).

Geivett and Pivec argue the offices of Ephesians 4:11 apostles and prophets have ceased. Because they closely associate impartation with apostles, they logically conclude the laying on of hands to impart gifts has also ceased. This explains their skepticism of impartation today, despite the elementary teaching of Hebrews 6:1-2.[800] They see the scriptural evidence for the laying on of hands to impart gifts as belonging only to the original twelve apostles and Paul (Acts 19:6; 1 Tim 4:14; 2 Tim 1:6). They state, "If it takes an apostle to impart a spiritual gift, those lined up today for the gifts they desire will be waiting for quite some time!"[801]

But Charismatics have a strong scriptural basis for believing in the continuation of modern-day apostles and prophets (which is beyond the scope of this paper) and the laying on of hands by them and all Christians to confer blessing, healing, commissioning, and impartation. Jesus instructed Ananias, a non-apostle, to lay hands on Saul that he might receive his sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit (9:10-19), and non-apostles laid hands on Barnabas and Saul to commission and send them out from the Antioch church (13:1-3). And most significantly, before he ascended, Jesus authorized all who would follow him: "These signs will accompany those

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[799] David Mathis, "The Laying On of Hands: A Precious (and Misunderstood) Means of Grace Today," Desiring God, February 8, 2018, accessed March 12, 2021, https://www.desiringgod.org/articles/the-laying-on-of-hands

[800] Randy Clark, *Authority to Heal: Restoring the Lost Inheritance of God's Healing Power* (Shippensburg, PA: Destiny Image Publishers, 2016), 102-103.

[801] Geivett and Pivec, *A New Apostolic Reformation?,* 198.

who believe: in my name they will … lay their hands on the sick, and they will recover" (Mark 16:17-18).

Furthermore, the Pentecostal tradition, from which some features of the renewal movement come, has a rich history of prayer with the laying on of hands for healing, commissioning, and impartation of the Holy Spirit. The Pentecostal movement essentially began because of the laying on of hands. In 1901, Agnes Ozman was a student at Charles Parham's Bethel Bible College in Topeka, Kansas. While meditating in her devotional time, she was reminded of believers in the early church who were baptized in the Holy Spirit through the laying on of hands. She asked Parham to lay hands on her and pray that she might receive the Spirit. At first, he refused, but eventually, he relented and granted her request. When he laid his hands on her head, the Holy Spirit fell, and she began to speak in tongues.[802]

Today, the laying on of hands with prayer is a common practice among Third Wave believers. In her study of healing prayer, Brown notes Pentecostal-Charismatic Christians envision prayer as a relational practice. Being in a relationship with a personal God, they request and participate in distant intercessory prayer, but many consider "in-person, direct-contact prayer … to be especially efficacious."[803] A point of contact established through human touch can make prayer with the laying on of hands noticeably effective.[804] Brown explains, "Anointing for

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[802] Stanley M. Burgess and Eduard M. van der Maas, eds., *The New International Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2002), 835.

[803] Brown, *Testing Prayer*, 89.

[804] However, people may experience healing or a powerful release of the Holy Spirit even without human- to-human touch. Church father Augustine tells of a brother and sister, Paulus and Palladia, who both suffered with physical tremors. On Easter Day, Paulus was praying and holding the bars to the vestibule containing the relics of Stephen in the basilica in Hippo. Suddenly he fell down as if asleep. He arose and his tremors were gone. Three days later, Palladia went to pray before the relics and touched the bars. She, too, was healed. Stanley M. Burgess, *Christian Peoples of the Spirit: A Documentary History of Pentecostal Spirituality from the Early Church to the Present* (New York: New York University Press, 2011), 60-62.

healing presumably can be communicated through human touch because physical bodies function as conduits of spiritual power."[805] Thus, believers today are Jesus' hands on the earth because of the Holy Spirit dwelling within. God's anointed leaders and God's anointed people may bring blessing, commissioning, healing, and impartation through the Holy Spirit, as he wills it so.

Third Wave View of Spiritual Impartation

In addition to Third Wave views involving spiritual gifts and the laying on of hands, Geivett and Pivec criticize so-called NAR leaders for what they perceive as their illegitimate practice of spiritual impartation: "NAR teaching on the activation of a gift has more in common with New Age teachings than with biblical Christianity. New Agers believe that everyone is born with supernatural powers they can 'activate' or 'awaken' or 'unlock' by engaging in various New Age practices. This concept of activating the gifts is foreign to the New Testament."[806] In this objection, Geivett and Pivec confuse both source and practice in Third Wave ministry.

As to the source, all orthodox Christian believers accept Jesus' teaching that the Holy Spirit is with and dwells in his followers (John 14:17). Speaking to the Samaritan woman, Jesus described the Spirit as water that would quench a thirsting heart and also spring forth, "welling

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As extraordinary as reliquary healing may sound to non-Catholics, 2 Kings 13:20-21 establishes the biblical precedent when a corpse is raised to life after touching the bones of Elisha. However, De Arteaga states: "The tragedy of this philosophical misunderstanding—that relics have an eternal rather than a temporary deposit of God's energies—meant that the church (both East and West) would settle for a sub-biblical mode of healing ministry. Its clergy would often 'expose' a relic to a sick person, or process with a statue and relic in times of plague or illness, rather than do the biblically mandated acts of laying on of hands or anointing with oil by the elders in faith. Those were the things that could really and regularly transit God's healing energies." William L. DeArteaga, *Agnes Sanford and Her Companions: The Assault on Cessationism and the Coming of the Charismatic Renewal* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock Publishers, 2015), 34.

[805] Brown, *Testing Prayer*, 89.

[806] Geivett and Pivec, *A New Apostolic Reformation?,* 198.

up to eternal life" (4:14). God the Holy Spirit, the water within believers, wells up as he will, not as the well he lives in may wish. Indeed, how a person lives will affect whether his or her well is clear or obstructed, but the Spirit within determines how he desires to flow because the water has a mind and will of his own. Jesus gives the Spirit (Luke 24:49; John 7:39; Acts 1:5; 2:1-4; Titus 3:6); his followers receive him. As Keener states, "A believer may have a well of water springing up inside (4:14), but Jesus is the source of living water, and this text says that those who believe in him would receive the Spirit, not give it (John 7:39)."[807]

In the Old Testament, the source and action of impartation were no different. The first biblical depiction of spiritual impartation is in Numbers 11:16-17. God instructs Moses to assemble 70 elders from among the people of Israel. Then God says, "I will take some of the Spirit that is on you and put it on them" (11:17, emphasis mine). Without any mention of the laying on of hands, God himself transfers spiritual power from one person to other people. Second, Deuteronomy 34:9 states, "Joshua the son of Nun was full of the spirit of wisdom, for Moses had laid his hands on him." Here Joshua having received the spirit of wisdom connects to the laying on of Moses' hands. And third, in 2 Kings 2:9-15, before Elijah's departure, Elisha asks him for "a double portion of your spirit" (2:9), meaning the powerful spirit anointing God had given him, which he does receive later. These examples depict the concept that people can receive an anointing similar to others and that God himself does the transference.[808]

In the New Testament, an impartation of the Holy Spirit along with spiritual gifts may occur through the laying on of hands (Acts 8:14-19; 19:6; 1 Tim 4:14; 2 Tim 1:6) and without

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[807] Keener, *Gift and Giver*, 142.

[808] Clark, *Authority to Heal*, 103-104

(Acts 10:44-46). Geivett and Pivec misconstrue the source and action of the impartation people may receive when they criticize a "new truth" of supposed NAR leaders: "Miraculous gifts, such as those of physical healing or prophesying, can be 'transferred' from apostles and prophets, to others through a practice known as the laying on of hands."[809] The laying on of hands is not an at-will, New Age "channeling" of spiritual power to "activate" or "awaken" or "unlock" Christians' in-born gifts as Geivett and Pivec claim. A Christian's role in impartation is to yield and listen to the Holy Spirit, being sensitive to what *he* wishes to do by blessing his work and agreeing with his will at any given moment.[810] The measure of grace with which God manifests his presence and touches his people is his choice (Eph 4:7).

As to practice, Geivett and Pivec argue the "concept of activating the gifts is foreign to the New Testament," which they compare to "engaging in various New Age practices."[811] They do not explain what they mean by New Age practices. But in terms of a Third Wave perspective, to activate gifts—meaning to seek impartation—Clark and Healy offer 12 practical and relational keys for quickening and growing in the spiritual gifts. These steps represent biblical practices

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[809] Geivett and Pivec, *A New Apostolic Reformation?,* 185.

[810] While the following account is extreme, I share it in regard to source. Any spiritual impartation or healing that does not originate in Christ with the action of the Holy Spirit comes from a satanic source, even if that source is supposedly a "Christian-oriented" tradition. As in the case below, the spiritist may think he is accessing God but he is actually employing the assistance of a demon masquerading as an angel of light (2 Cor 11:14):

Researcher Sidney Greenfield describes a spiritist healing in Brazil conducted by "a follower of the Christian-oriented Kardecist tradition." Greenfield reports, the healer, Jose Carlos, shook violently as a spirit overtook his body. He notes further: "The soft tone of his previous speech was replaced by a sharp accent that sounded almost like a native speaker of Spanish trying to communicate in Portuguese. I did not yet know that the spirit believed to possess him was St. Ignatius of Loyola, the sixteenth-century founder of the Society of Jesus. … He commanded: 'Think of God! Think of God!'" Carlos then plunged a scalpel under the lid of his patient's eye, lifted the eye from the socket, and scraped the cornea with the scalpel several times before putting it back in place. His patient did not move throughout the procedure and was aware of what happened but felt no pain. Sidney M. Greenfield, *Spirits with Scalpels: The Cultural Biology of Religious Healing in Brazil*, (Walnut Creek: Taylor & Francis Group, 2008), 24-25, accessed October 7, 2020, ProQuest Ebook Central, https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/dtl/reader.action?docID=677810&ppg=26

[811] Geivett and Pivec, *A New Apostolic Reformation?,* 198.

that flow out of one's ongoing life in Christ and the body of Christ. They include: 1) being filled with the Spirit, 2) staying close to Jesus, 3) developing compassion for the lost and broken, 4) asking God for the gifts, 5) taking steps of faith, 6) being obedient, 7) knowing one's authority in Christ, 8) learning from others, 9) allowing testimonies to build one's faith, 10) growing in the truth, 11) being sensitive to not squelch the Spirit, and 12) taking ministry out of the church to the world.[812]

Finally, the heart of impartation is communion with God. Often this means pursuing God and waiting on his response: "O God, you are my God; earnestly I seek you; my soul thirsts for you; my flesh faints for you, as in a dry and weary land where there is no water" (Ps 63:1). Growing in grace—anointing—is born of an ongoing, maturing relationship with Christ that flows from the desire to know him and make him known. As MacNutt states, "I am not God, but only share in his life … I want to grow closer in union with Jesus Christ, so that more of his life, his wisdom, his authority and healing power will work through me to heal others. But this, too, is a process and takes time."[813]

Misconception #3: People Can Learn How to Do their Own Miracles

Third Wave View of Schools for Supernatural Ministry

Geivett and Pivec are skeptical of training people in their supernatural gifts. First, they object to Third Wave schools of supernatural ministry and "the NAR idea that people can learn to prophesy" (emphasis theirs).[814] Second, they mention the Old Testament schools of the

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[812] Clark and Healy, *Spiritual Gifts Handbook*, 197-215.

[813] Francis MacNutt quoted with no citation in Brown, *Testing Prayer*, 90.

[814] Geivett and Pivec, *A New Apostolic Reformation?,* 197.

prophets, but reason "there's no indication that these companies of prophets were schools where people learned to prophesy. Rather, they were communities made up of people who already were prophets."[815] We will respond to the second objection first and the first objection second.

First, if indeed the Old Testament schools or companies of prophets (1 Sam 19:18-24), also called the "sons of the prophets" (2 Kgs 2:1-15; 4:1-7), were communities of individuals who were already prophets, Third Wave theology embraces the prophethood of all believers and therefore has precedent for supernatural schools. Jesus' baptism is an antecedent of Pentecost: As the Father anoints Jesus with the Spirit, so then Jesus baptizes his followers with the Spirit.[816] Similarly, as the theophany at Mt. Sinai established Israel as a kingdom of priests, Pentecost's theophany established Jesus' followers then and after that as a community of prophets.[817] This is possible because the prophetic New Covenant Spirit—who enables God's sons and daughters to prophesy, young men to see visions, and old men to dream dreams—has been given to ongoing generations of Jesus' followers (Isa 59:21; Acts 2:17-18, 38-39). Believers today are the fulfillment of Moses' wish: "Would that all the LORD's people were prophets, that the LORD would put his Spirit on them!" (Num 11:29).

Second, schools of supernatural ministry reflect the heart and purposes of biblical discipleship. Williams describes how an ancient rabbi would train his pupils to be like himself, and his students would emulate him in all he said and did.[818] Likewise, he explains, Jesus' goal

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[815] Geivett and Pivec, 197.

[816] Roger Stronstad, *The Prophethood of All Believers: A Study in Luke's Charismatic Theology* (Cleveland, TN: CPT Press, 2010), 6.

[817] Stronstad, *The Prophethood of All Believers*, 53.

[818] Don Williams, *Signs, Wonders, and the Kingdom of God: A Biblical Guide for the Reluctant Skeptic*, (Ann Arbor, MI: Vine Books, 1989), 127.

was to "reproduce himself in his disciples,"[819] who would bear his message and do his ministry. The apostle Paul taught the early church in this way. He wrote to the church in Corinth: "Be imitators of me as I am of Christ" (1 Cor 11:1). And he commended the Thessalonians for being "imitators of us and of the Lord" (1 Thess 1:6). But what did they imitate? Before he commends the Thessalonians, Paul states he modeled the gospel to them "not only in word, but also in power and in the Holy Spirit" (1:5). Ruthven explains that as Jesus transferred his mission and authority to his disciples, so Paul passed on his mandate and method of presenting the gospel in power to the Thessalonians. They, in turn, advanced its spread throughout Macedonia and Achaia (1:8).[820]

Also, if Geivett and Pivec can reason, "there's no indication that these companies of prophets were schools where people learned to prophesy,"[821] we can reason no indication exists that they did not learn how to prophesy in their schools. The companies were led by mature prophets who had mentoring roles in the lives of novice prophets (Samuel: 1 Sam 19:20; Elijah: 2 Kgs 2:15, and Elisha: 2 Kgs 4:38).[822] In the New Testament era, Paul instructs the Corinthians, "Let two or three prophets speak, and let the others weigh what is said" (1 Cor 14:29). The more mature prophets in the early church mentored those less experienced by evaluating their prophecies. Because "we know in part and we prophesy in part" (13:9), God provides the safety measure of testing prophecies to help the church use prophetic gifts wisely rather than to quench

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[819] Williams, *Signs, Wonders, and the Kingdom of God*, 129.

[820] Ruthven, *On the Cessation of the Charismata*, 154.

[821] Geivett and Pivec, *A New Apostolic Reformation?,* 197.

[822] Keener, *Gift and Giver*, 122.

them for fear they may be influenced by human error.[823] Therefore, if Christian students can learn how to preach and teach, knowing they may minister clumsily in their gift at first but grow in knowledge and ability, then people may also learn how to prophesy and mature in that gift.[824] The problem is few Bible schools and seminaries offer practical teaching for supernatural ministry.[825] Without training students how to serve others with their supernatural gifts, the church falls short of Jesus' instruction to teach disciples to "observe *all* that I have commanded you" (Matt 28:20, emphasis mine; Mark 16:15-18).

Similarly, in addition to teaching the Bible, theology, and church history, schools of supernatural ministry also encourage students to learn God's ways. They teach how to discern the varieties of expressions God may use to invite them into co-laboring with him in a spontaneous moment in life or a ministry setting.[826] In a safe environment, students can explore following God's lead and receive sound guidance and feedback (Acts 18:24-26; 22:3). Supernatural training programs also stress God is the One who works miracles. "God is still the King," states Randy Clark, "and He is the one who heals."[827]

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[823] Keener, 122.

[824] Keener, 125.

[825] C. Peter Wagner states: "They do not teach you anything about power ministry or the supernatural at most seminaries. At Princeton, they did not teach me anything about prayer either, and it has taken me nearly three years to recover my reverence for Scripture. The deistic spirit, which informs nearly all seminary training (including evangelical seminaries such as Fuller, Dallas, Trinity) succeeds in inoculating most graduating pastors, even evangelical pastors, against any Spirit-anointed, supernatural ministry unless God somehow undoes it or endues it." Kirk Bottomly, "Coming Out of the Hangar: Confessions of an Evangelical Deist" in Greig and Springer, *Kingdom and the Power*, 268. For an example of learning how to minister in supernatural gifts and its outcome, please see Appendix 1.

[826] See Appendix 2 for seven key ways God speaks to lead his followers in supernatural ministry.

[827] Randy Clark, *Biblical Basis for Healing, Message Series*, 3rd ed. (Mechanicsburg, PA: Global Awakening, 2010), 50.

Ancient rabbis were pleased when their disciples followed their teaching. However, only one passage of Scripture states Jesus rejoiced. The occasion was when the 70 disciples he had sent returned with good reports of fruitful (supernatural) ministry: "'Lord, even the demons are subject to us in your name!' … In that same hour he rejoiced in the Holy Spirit" (Luke 10:17-21).[828] As Jesus was "mighty in deed and word" (24:19), may his disciples be anything less?

Third Wave View of Revelation in Supernatural Ministry

In *A New Apostolic Reformation?,* Geivett and Pivec argue at length about the revelation or "new truths" so-called NAR apostles and prophets teach, the validity and authority of these teachings in light of Scripture, and their influence on church governance. In terms of ministry praxis, they offer less attention; however, they repeatedly focus on "new truths" and the activation of "miraculous power in individuals."[829] The practices they object to and only briefly examine include teaching about different kinds of prayer, fasting, and speaking in tongues.[830] This paper seeks to clarify and argue for activation (or impartation) and growth in spiritual gifts as a legitimate and orthodox concept. We focus on revelation and its function in supernatural ministry. But to begin, we wish to explain what kind of revelation is needed.

In almost any Systematic Theology book, the first few chapters will likely cover the issue of revelation and its three-part divisions. First is *general revelation*, which includes how God reveals himself in nature, through humankind created in his image, and the workings of human history.[831] Second is *special revelation*, which is God's progressive self-disclosure portrayed in

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[828] Clark and Healy, *Spiritual Gifts Handbook*, 13-14.

[829] Geivett and Pivec, *A New Apostolic Reformation?,* 185.

[830] Geivett and Pivec, 185-187.

[831] J. Rodman Williams, *Renewal Theology: Systematic Theology from a Charismatic Perspective: Three Volumes in One* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1996), 1:33-34.

both the Old and New Testaments and the person of Jesus Christ (2 Tim 3:16; 2 Pet 1:20-21).[832] Third is the type we will consider, *subordinate revelation*,[833] but which, for our purposes, we call specific revelation. This type is personal, particular revelation, which is always subordinate to but based on the authority of special revelation, the closed canon of Scripture, and Jesus himself.[834] Specific revelation does not supplant or add to the Scriptures and is of a wholly different nature and authority than the Bible. Instead, knowing the word of God and the person of Christ becomes the sure foundation on which one tests specific revelation—such as a word of prophecy, a dream, or sign—and if sound, then takes action by faith.

In Acts 16:6-10, the Holy Spirit prevents Paul from preaching the gospel in Asia. Paul then has a night vision in which he sees a Macedonian man imploring him to come and help him and his people. The Old Testament Scriptures, Paul's Bible, would not have been able to tell him at what particular time to go to Macedonia. He had to rely on the Holy Spirit's leading in "real-time" to give him a strategy to advance the gospel. His responsibility was to weigh the information he received by his understanding of Scripture and the nature of Jesus. If his revelation did not conflict, by faith, he could follow through on what he believed God was speaking. Verse 10 states: "When Paul had seen the vision, immediately we sought to go on into Macedonia." The word "immediately" implies faith arose in their hearts. Here is why specific revelation is so important to supernatural ministry. A word of knowledge in the form of a

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[832] Williams, *Renewal Theology*, 1:36-43.

[833] Williams, 1:43-45.

[834] Randy Clark, "Week 2–BTHE 5283: Renewal Theology," lesson video, "Video 4 – Dr. Randy Clark: Jesus Gave the 5-Fold Offices to the Church: A Continuationist Perspective" (BTHE 5283: Renewal Theology) 11:40-12:27. From Family of Faith/Global Awakening Seminary, Jan term 2021, retrieved from https://faithglobal.populiweb.com/router/courseofferings/10507310/lessons/10246616/show

prompting thought, a dream, or an illuminated Scripture—creates the faith needed to pray for healing, and an environment of faith welcomes miracles. Even Jesus was hindered in prayer by an environment of unbelief (Mark 6:5).

Learning God's ways, how he prompts and leads human hearts, is a process that requires openness to the various means by which he may speak. Keener offers wise advice, "We should not straightjacket God's workings. God spoke differently to different prophets and others in the Bible, and we do not all need to hear him in the same way. … If we seek his voice most of all so we can be and do what pleases him, we will hear his voice in every way we need to hear it."[835]

Third Wave View of Doing Greater Works than Jesus

Geivett and Pivec object to so-called NAR teachings claiming the end-time church will perform unprecedented miracles under the leadership of apostles and prophets. They state, "Even the greatness of Jesus's miracles will be trumped by end-time miracles. For this astonishing claim, NAR leaders appeal to Jesus's promise that those who believe in him would do the same works he did and even 'greater works' (John 14:12; emphasis added)."[836] They follow this statement with a list of eight so-called "greater" miracles NAR apostles, prophets, and their followers will perform. The list is admittedly objectionable, with extreme claims of healing all patients in hospitals and mental institutions by laying hands on the buildings, literally casting mountains into the sea by command, diverting floods with a word, regularly multiplying food, and more. Geivett and Pivec cite Rick Joyner as having made seven of the eight claims.

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[835] Keener, *Gift and Giver*, 49.

[836] Geivett and Pivec, *A New Apostolic Reformation?,* 183.

Certainly, his assertions seem more suited to an Avengers movie than end-times miracles. Joyner ought to be held to account; however, Geivett and Pivec could have asked him about his claims, yet they offer no indication of having contacted him. Further, none of the statements they list are actual quotations, and at least three of them are cited from works published fourteen years before their book. Has Joyner changed his position on any of these assertions?

Last, we object to the idea that Geivett and Pivec insinuate guilt by association for a broad spectrum of Third Wave leaders and their followers based on the extreme claims of one man. And now, because John 14:12 is a significant verse often cited in Third Wave teachings, we consider views on this passage.

A great deal of debate exists about Jesus' meaning of the "greater works" his followers will do. The Greek word, *meizōn*, means "great" or "big."[837] When John the apostle relates this word to miracles in his Gospel, he builds a progression. In John 1:50, Jesus tells Nathanael he will see greater things than the demonstration of his foreknowledge; heaven will open and reveal his glory (1:51). In 5:20, after healing the invalid man at the Sheep Gate, Jesus tells the disciples the Father will perform even greater works—raising the dead (5:21)—that they may marvel. And in 14:12, Jesus says believers will do the works he has done and even greater works when he goes to the Father.[838] These miracles will be greater or bigger in some way than Jesus' own.[839]

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[837] Gerhard Kittel and Gerhard Friedrich, *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament: Abridged in One Volume*, trans. G. W Bromiley (Grand Rapids, MI.: W.B. Eerdmans, 1985), 573.

[838] Kittel and Friedrich, *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament: Abridged in One Volume*, 575.

[839] I record the following account about the modern-day miracle of raising the dead because it touches on several points discussed above, including learning God's ways, specific revelation, and greater works.

Randy Clark writes about Mr. Tanueque, a leader in Iris Global in Mozambique, who by way of the personal and particular nature of specific revelation has learned one of God's ways in raising the dead. When asked by an interviewer how he knew who to pray for, and did he pray for all the dead, Mr. Tanueque replied, "Of course not; it would be an embarrassment to the church to pray for all the dead. I place my hand on the dead person's foot or near the ankle, and if the place I am touching begins to grow warm, or if while praying for the person under my breath,

Ruthven claims the consensus of recent scholarship understands "greater" as referring to those miracles performed in a more eschatologically advanced time.[840] Williams sees the Great Commission behind Jesus' promise. His followers will do greater miracles because, from his place in heaven, Jesus has greater authority than when he was on earth: "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations" (Matt 28:18-19).[841] Meanwhile, Keener concludes "greater works" are miracles greater in magnitude than in Jesus' earthly ministry. He notes how Elisha did more miracles than Elijah because he asked for a double portion of Elijah's spirit.[842]

But, as cited above in Luke 10:21, might Jesus rejoice at the idea of his followers doing greater works than he did in his earthly ministry? Yes! He has no insecurities, and he is more generous than we realize. While we search the Scriptures for what Jesus means by "greater works," we risk failing to do what he says. Perhaps in allowing him to use us in doing miracles we will find his meaning.

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while my wife is talking to the family, I feel a large bolt of energy go through my body, then I give my wife a sign and she announces, 'We are going to pray for so-and-so to be raised from the dead.' When we do this we see people raised from the dead." Randy Clark, *Authority to Heal*, 127.

God has used Mr. Tanueque and his wife to raise four people from the dead, and he has used a brother-in- law to raise seven people from the dead. The Scriptures record three instances where Jesus raised the dead (Mark 5:21-24; 35-43; Luke 7:11-17; John 11:38-44). While the Scriptures may not depict all of the times Jesus raised the dead, could these multiple, modern-day resurrections, which God performed using these individuals and which outnumber Jesus' own recorded miracles, be examples of greater works?

[840] Ruthven, *On the Cessation of the Charismata*, 93.

[841] Williams, *Renewal Theology*, 1:157-158.

[842] Craig S. Keener, *The Gospel of John: A Commentary* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2003), 2:947.

Conclusion

This writer aimed to examine the origin and nature of the New Apostolic Reformation. The NAR is less a movement and more a label that has been inappropriately placed on some people who deny affiliation or may even be unaware they are guilty by association. Additionally, this writer engaged with and refuted arguments made by Geivett and Pivec and Hinn and Wood while arguing for the legitimacy and validity of Third Wave ministry practices based on their biblical and theological soundness.

God has not created Christians to think alike. However, he has undoubtedly called all of us to unity. Whether we are traditional cessationists or Third Wave continuationist Protestants, we are members of one body of Christ. Therefore, for the sake of unity, leaving behind accusations and assumptions, let us move forward together in future conversations outside of the NAR construct, which is overburdened with contention and discord. May we return to the grace of listening to one another and reasoning together, for the God we love is greater than our doctrinal differences.

Appendix 1

Case Study: Prayer for Physical Healing

I am honored to attend a seminary that teaches and encourages students to grow in supernatural ministry. In my Physical Healing course, I was trained in seven ways God often communicates words of knowledge, which are helpful for praying for the sick. As part of a class assignment, I was instructed to seek the Lord for words of knowledge, asking him what ailment he would like me to pray for and who to pray for. What follows is an abridged case study of praying for physical healing.

While at a church service, I asked the Lord what kind of ailment he wanted me to pray for. I received a quick, faint impression; an image of a gastrointestinal tract and the phrase "intestinal problems" flit briefly through my thoughts.

I thanked the Lord and asked who he wanted me to pray for.

The name, "Pam," (not her real name) passed lightly in my mind.

Pam is in her mid-forties, a gentle, kind woman. I went up to her and told her I was in a physical healing class in seminary. I explained I'm learning how to receive words of knowledge and how to pray for the sick. I said the Lord had shown me an image of a GI tract, followed by the words "intestinal problems." He had given me her name. I asked if she had been having any digestive problems lately. She said she had.

"Can I pray for you?" I asked.

"Yes. Sure," Pam said.

I prayed for a little bit and the word "wound," came to my mind. I asked Pam if she had ever had an abdominal injury. She said, "No." I asked if she had ever experienced something emotionally traumatic that felt like she'd gotten kicked in the gut. She said, "I don't think so."

I prayed again and the word "baby" passed through my mind.

"Pam," I said gently, "did you ever lose a baby?"

Tears started streaming down her face. "Oh, no, I didn't want to go here," she said. She hesitated and then said, "Before I knew the Lord, I had three abortions and then my next baby miscarried. No one knows this except for me, my husband, and the Lord—and now you."

Now tears welled up in my eyes. I was awed by her courage. "Pam," I said, "I sense only God's love and compassion right now. There's not a bit of anger or judgment in his heart for you."

Tears continued to roll down her cheeks. "I know the Lord's forgiven me," she said, "but I think forgiving myself is the hardest part. I think of my babies every day. And I keep forgiving myself, but I just don't have peace."

"Pam, God is not mad at you and your babies aren't mad at you," I said. "The Lord has wanted to heal you all this time. You didn't know it, but God had an appointment with you on his schedule today. It's time to get free. Let's pray a bit more, okay?"

"Yes, let's do that."

I asked Pam if she would be willing to confess her sin and ask the Lord for forgiveness. She agreed and asked him to forgive her. Then I asked if she would be willing to forgive herself. She said yes. This was harder for her, but she prayed and I affirmed she was forgiven in Jesus' name. I blessed her and prayed for the blood of Jesus to cover her mind.[843] I then prayed healing and blessing over Pam's womb and intestinal area. I felt joy as I prayed for her. I affirmed that instead of regret, Pam's womb and intestinal area would now be filled with joy and that God's joy would be her strength from then on.[844]

I asked Pam, "How does your abdomen feel?"

"It feels better. And … and … I feel giddy inside! Like I'm God's favorite!" We laughed!

Pam's countenance was bright.

I said, "You *are* his favorite! He's wanted you to know that for a long time. Somehow, we all get to be God's favorite, but you needed to know that personally."

Pam said she couldn't wait to get alone with God and cry some more and thank him. I gave her Isaiah 43:18-19.[845] She didn't have to think of her children with shame and regret any more. Now she could think of them with joy and have the expectation of seeing them again.

Conclusion

I am learning God's ways in leading me. He most often speaks to me through inspired thoughts or impressions of words and occasionally impressions of images. I also learned how important it is to follow God's prompting one step at a time. What began as prayer for a gastrointestinal problem developed into ministry for a much deeper need. When you think God is doing one thing, he's not only doing that, but so much more as well. I also marveled at God's gentleness in working with Pam to slowly draw her out and face her past. Pam's physical ailment

[843] According to Hebrews 9:14, the blood of Christ is able to "cleanse our consciences from acts that lead to death, so that we may serve the living God!" (NIV).

[844] "Do not be grieved, for the joy of the LORD is your strength" (Neh 8:10).

[845] "Forget the former things; do not dwell on the past. See, I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it? I am making a way in the wilderness and streams in the wasteland" (Isa 43:18-19, NIV).

had been the result of her past trauma and ongoing anguish. Although she had previously confessed her sin, asked for forgiveness, and forgiven herself in private, breakthrough came by bringing her past into the light and allowing another person she trusted to pray for her.[846] Days later when I asked Pam how she felt, she had no recurrence of her physical ailment and her heart was full of joy.

Appendix 2

Discerning God's Voice: Seven Ways God Speaks[847]

God gives specific revelations in different ways. This includes words of knowledge for healing. Some of the more common ways he gives words of knowledge for healing include:

1. Feeling

You may have:

- A sharp pain in some part of your body
- A throbbing sensation
- Some other sensation
- A strong, sudden emotion such as fear or sadness

2. Seeing

You may receive a quick mental picture, such as:

- A body part; perhaps a heart, foot, and eye
- A person with a certain ailment or disability
- A person carefully holding his arm
- Crutches, eyeglasses, a person walking with a cane
- An automobile accident, an open window

3. Reading

[846] "Confess your sins to one another and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person has great power as it is working" (Jas 5:16).

[847] Randy Clark, *Ministry Team Training Manual* (Mechanicsburg, PA: Apostolic Network of Global Awakening, 2004), 75-76. Used with permission.

You may see in your mind:

- A person with a word written across his front or back or over his head
- A word written near someone on the wall or floor
- Words written like a tickertape, newspaper headline, or banner

4. An Impression ("Thinking" the word of knowledge)

You may sense or know someone has a particular condition or you receive a thought you sense is different than your own thoughts. This is a mental impression.

5. Speaking

While talking or praying, unpremeditated words may tumble out of your mouth relating to a physical condition or ailment you were not aware of.

6. A Dream

You may have a vivid dream or vision in which:

- You have a new health problem
- You see someone with a health problem
- You hear someone talking about a health problem

7. Experience It

Similar to dreaming, you may have a vivid vision while awake. It may be so strong that you are actually a part of what is happening, not just an observer.

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