

The NAR and the Restoration of Apostolic Ministry Today

In this two-part series, we will explore the necessity of restoring apostolic ministry today. Click [here](#) to read part one. In part two, we look into what God is doing today.

I believe that the present embrace of the fivefold ministry of the evangelical pastors in the USA is going to bring a convergence between the charismatic, independent apostolic networks, evangelical networks and ultimately even evangelical Bible-confessing denominations.

The implications of this will be extraordinary.

1. The church will go from being pastorally led to apostolically led and prophetically inspired.
2. This emerging apostolic paradigm will shift the missionary focus from planting local churches to planting movements of churches and Christ-followers that will permeate every facet of society.
3. The apostolic paradigm will shift the focus from gathering crowds on Sunday to developing disciples who will manifest the reign of Christ from Monday to Saturday!
4. The present apostolic paradigm will restore the church back to “the way of Christ and His apostles”.
5. The present apostolic paradigm will bring a course correction to the New Apostolic Reformation (NAR) and view the apostolic as a ministry function—not an office—as an adjective—not a title.
6. The present apostolic paradigm will correct the autocratic top down hierarchical government of many in the NAR and mimic the servant leadership style of Jesus, who came not to be

served but to serve and give His life as a ransom for many! (Mark 10:42-45).

7. The present apostolic paradigm will not spout triumphalist dominion rhetoric like “the church is called to take cities” when rather, the church is called to love and serve our cities (those who serve the best are the greatest problem-solvers, who eventually lead anyway).

Furthermore, when the “cultural mandate” of Genesis 1:28 was given to the first Adam the earth was not populated with humans; hence, Adam was called to have “dominion” over the created order—it was never about having dominion over other humans but merely to steward the land as well as the plant and animal kingdom.

In the New Testament, Jesus modeled the New Testament way of having influence with people when He wrapped a towel around His waist and washed the feet of His apostles (see John 13). This is how the church is called to lead as well.

The Ultimate Goal

God said that the fivefold ministry gifts of Ephesians 4:11 will continue until we all come to the unity of the faith (see Eph. 4:11-16 for the whole context). Jesus said the world will not believe He was sent by the Father until the church is united as one in Him (see John 17:20-24).

It seems to me that the greatest hope we have of seeing the church become one is the broader body of Christ embracing the apostolic function—not merely as a title, hierarchy or administrative function. But as the ministry gift as described in the Gospels, Acts and epistles of the New Testament.

There are some who say this is heretical, because I am speaking about the restoration of a personality or ministry rather than continuing the historic witness of the church—others would say it is heretical because the Scriptures

alone continue the apostolic ministry; to that I would say a few things:

First, the apostolic function (as all those mentioned in Eph. 4:11) is a ministry expression and/or gift from Christ Himself; hence, it is a function of His body which is His church—not a separate entity or personality outside the church, although it is encased in an individual leader. (The New Testament was not a nameless and faceless movement—God used individual apostolic leaders in an extraordinary way to plant churches as we see the way He used Paul in the nineteenth chapter of Acts.)

The individual apostolic leader has no authority outside of the cooperation and affirmation of the New Testament church as we see in Galatians 2 :1-10. Hence, his role as a “sent one” is a missional extension and leader of the church’s call to fulfill the Great Commission (Matt. 28:19).

Secondly, the restoration of the apostolic function is based on the New Testament pattern of church ministry—hence, it is a true continuation of the Scriptures that is bringing a correction to certain historic streams of the church that have neglected and or denied this biblical norm for the church. So, I would say that we who embrace the restoration of this ministry function more biblically than those who reject or neglect it.

Let’s pray that the full restoration of the church takes place, so we can reach the nations with the gospel and hasten the bodily return of Jesus who will come to unite all things in heaven and on earth in Him (Eph. 1:9-11).

May the Lord Jesus, who alone can build His church, continue to restore His bride back to the biblical pattern as demonstrated by His original apostles in the New Testament. Amen.