



New Wineskins

A Study on Church Structure and the Moves of God





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Lesson One: Understanding the Analogy of Wineskins

Mat 9:17 No one pours new wine into old wineskins. The wine would swell and burst the old skins. Then the wine would be lost, and the skins would be ruined. New wine must be put into new wineskins. Both the skins and the wine will then be safe.

The Wine

Wine in the New Testament always represents an outpouring of the Kingdom of God. It can represent the coming of the Kingdom as a whole or it could also represent a specific move of God or targeted manifestation of the Kingdom.

The Wineskin

Wineskins are vessels, or structures, forms and methods that are designed to hold and implement the move of God and his Kingdom within particular cultures and spiritual climates.

Wineskins can represent two levels of “vessel”:

1. Internal: We, individually, must be prepared to receive and hold the kingdom of God in all of its manifestations. To prepare we must examine our beliefs, our values and throw off anything that would hinder us from receiving and containing the fresh move of God’s kingdom.
 - a. Examples of Internal Wineskins
 - i. Theology (primarily our view of God and how he works in the world).
 - ii. Personal methods for developing a relationship with God.
 - iii. Personal methods for ministry to others.
 - iv. The relationship between the sacred and the secular.
2. External: As the church we create structures and practices that help us express the kingdom of God to the world. Over time, these structures lose their ability to effectively express the kingdom to the world. New and fresh structures are needed to hold the kingdom and give it effective expression.
 - a. Examples of External Wineskins:
 - i. Church Staff/hierarchy
 - ii. Methods of evangelism
 - iii. Ministries offered by a congregation.
 - iv. Religious expression (worship style, preaching style)
 - v. Logistic structure (meeting times, meeting frequency, meeting itineraries)
3. This course will focus primarily on the external forms of wineskins.

Wineskins do not represent the church.

This is very important to understand. A wineskin is not the church itself, but rather a tool to be used by the church. The analogy of wineskins and wine is intended to instruct the church on how



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to stay nimble and wise in whatever age or culture it finds itself. The church has to be able to discard an old wineskin and take up another. How to build a church that is able to do it effectively becomes the great challenge of our time.

Old Wineskins

What is it that makes a wineskin old and unfit to hold new wine?

1. The inability to recognize and respond to the move of God.
2. The inability to successfully carry out the overriding mission of the church.
 - a. Evangelism becomes nonexistent.
 - b. Leaders are not being raised
 - c. Disciples are ineffective and immature.
3. An “irreversible irrelevance” to the culture in which the church must operate.

Why are so many churches unable to let go of old wineskins and take on new wineskins?

1. A Growing dependence on the structure and form.
 - a. When the structure or form begins to hold spiritual or doctrinal significance to the church leadership, then that same structure begins to become part of the believers identity. This has the effect of making the methods, and forms of organization inappropriately sacred.
 - b. The spirit of religion takes control of this “mistaken identity” and deceives believers into measuring and comparing others to their ways or methods. This is how one denomination can conclude that they are spiritually superior to another denomination.
 - c. Examples: The Catholic Church, Almost every protestant and evangelical denomination.
2. Losing sight of the Kingdom of God
 - a. Church networks, movements and congregations often develop tunnel vision, focusing only on what they think God is doing within the confines of their own network or congregation.
 - b. Tunnel vision makes it difficult to emotionally, or practically connect with God’s design and activity in the world at large.
 - c. The result is that many churches and denominations find themselves at odds with the Kingdom of God, resisting it rather than recognizing and cooperating with it.

New Wineskins

What is it that makes a wineskin “new” or able to hold new wine?

1. An ability to let the wine, or move of God, dictate the structures and forms to be used.
2. An allegiance to the Kingdom of God that supercedes all other allegiances.
 - a. You may love your style of worship, but it does not command your loyalty.



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- b. You may love the ministries in your church, but they are only wineskins that are destined to become obsolete.
3. A commitment to successfully fulfill the overriding mission of the church.
 - a. Evangelism that WORKS.
 - b. Leaders the LEAD.
 - c. Disciples that are SPIRITUALLY MATURE.

There are components that are present in every wineskin.

1. A good foundation of doctrine.
2. Functional organization with strong leadership.
3. The Church (the people) and its overriding mission.
 - a. A group of believers that **Gather** and **Scatter**.
 - b. A group of believers that live in community with one another.
 - c. A group of believers that generates new believers and disciples them.

How does the church prepare itself to take on new wineskins?

1. The church must train itself to recognize the difference between unchangeable truth and changeable structures.
2. The church must train itself to embrace change.
3. The church must train itself to recognize the kingdom of God and the movement of God.
4. The church must learn to recognize spiritual times and seasons.
5. The church must learn how to do research on the dominant culture (in which it has to function) and the kingdom of God at large.

“The song remains the same, but it must be sung in the key of the people.”



Lesson 2: The Wineskin of Leadership

Every move of God will see strong leadership at the forefront; however, the form that this leadership takes must remain flexible and sensitive to God's direction.

Leadership Paradigms

The Pastoral Leadership Wineskin

The leadership wineskin that has dominated the last two centuries places the Pastor/Teacher at the head of the local congregation and even at the head of networks and denominations.

1. Authority over the congregational Pastor has primarily been administrative in nature and function.
 - a. A board of elders or deacons that oversee the Pastor and hold him accountable. Sometimes they have the ability to hire/fire the Pastor.
 - b. A denominational headquarters that hires/fires and monitors progress.
 - c. In some cases the congregation has the ability to vote a Pastor in or out.
2. Many churches and church networks do not have any accountability structure in place for the Senior Pastor or Senior Leader.
3. It is difficult to determine if this model of leadership was a response to God's movement or whether this "wineskin" was contrived.
4. There have been some exceptions where an Evangelist becomes the head of the church, but the highest percentage of top leaders have been Pastors.

The Plural Leadership Wineskin

A less dominant leadership wineskin has been the "plural leadership" model. This view does not allow any one man or woman to carry singular authority in the church. The top leadership is shared among a group of Elders. These elders collectively make decisions, determine direction, approve ministries, etc. They are also responsible for hiring and firing staff. Some of these churches have Senior Pastors, but he or she is under the authority of the Elders.

The "Priesthood of All Believers" Wineskin

There is an emerging leadership wineskin that completely downplays any "office" of leadership. The emphasis is on the "priesthood of all believers" and the headship of Christ *alone* over the church. This model permeates much of the House Church movement and the Emerging Church movement as well.

The following paragraph is taken from *House Church Central*, a House Church website:

House church advocates reject any human authority other than the very real and present rule of Christ, who was inaugurated the king of his church at the first Pentecost (Acts 2). The house church assembles to know the will of its king



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through the Holy Spirit and to be obedient to that will. Many in the professional clergy, however, understand their role as a "priestly" one in which they are to be intermediaries between the Lord and His flock, being thus trusted through the ordination process with a certain degree of authority. While they seek the benefits of the vibrant Christianity that manifests itself in small groups, and work hard to make small groups a part of the ministry of their churches, many harbor a concern that the groups might become a threat to their own relevance and livelihood.

The New Apostolic Reformation

This leadership wineskin is a current movement that has been building momentum over the last decade.

What is Meant by Apostolic?

The term can be rightly applied to three nuances based on scripture:¹

1. Apostolic can refer to a "signs & wonders" demonstration of power which attests to genuine spiritual authority (II Cor. 12:12)
2. Apostolic can refer to the essential "sent one" meaning of the Greek work "apostolos" which is today primarily associated with missionary outreach and pioneer church planting among unreached peoples. (Acts 13:1-4, 14:14)
3. Apostles can refer to the governmental office occupied originally by the first twelve disciples of Jesus and their successors. (Luke 6:13, Acts 1:15-26)

Dr. C. Peter Wagner's definition of apostle: The gift of apostle is the special ability God gives to certain members of the body of Christ to assume general leadership over a number of churches (or ministries) with an extraordinary authority in spiritual matters that is spontaneously recognized and appreciated by those churches (or ministries).²

How Large is this Phenomenon?

David Barrett, editor of the World Christian Encyclopedia reports 1,000 apostolic networks on record in his global database. These networks are found on six continents and account, by his estimate, for some 100 million believers worldwide.³

Dr. Wagner estimates that in the US alone there are as many New Apostolic Reformation churches as there are Southern Baptist congregations – something approaching 40,000.⁴

Growth in the Third World among these churches far surpasses the more mundane statistics found in the West. Europe's largest church is Manna Church in Lisbon, Portugal with 25,000 members. The Universal Church of the Kingdom of God in Brazil claims over 3 million congregants. The

¹ John Rowell, *New Apostolic Reformation and the Faith and Work Movement*

² John Rowell, *New Apostolic Reformation and the Faith and Work Movement*

³ John Rowell, *New Apostolic Reformation and the Faith and Work Movement*

⁴ John Rowell, *New Apostolic Reformation and the Faith and Work Movement*



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world's largest congregations are now in Nigeria where the Church of Jesus Christ in Logos assembled 10-12 million people for its Holy Spirit service in December, 2000.⁵

Distinguishing Characteristics of the New Apostolic Reformation

Dr. Donald Miller, in *Reinventing American Protestantism* notes 12 distinctives:⁶

1. They started after 1950
2. Their members are born after 1945
3. Seminary training for clergy is optional
4. Worship is contemporary
5. Bodily expression in worship (rather than cognitive or contemplative approaches) is the norm
6. Lay leadership is highly valued
7. Dress is often informal
8. Tolerance of personal styles is prized
9. Pastors tend to be understated, humble and self-revealing
10. They develop extensive small group networks
11. The gifts of the Holy Spirit are affirmed
12. Bible centered teaching predominates over topical sermonizing

C. Peter Wagner adds 20 transitions from the old order to the new that he believes are observable in these fellowships:⁷

1. From Christ as Savior to Christ as Lord
2. From Jesus the Lamb to Jesus the Lion
3. From emphasis on the cross to the crown
4. From justification themes to sanctification themes
5. From "saved from death" to "saved for life"
6. From concern about water baptism to spirit baptism
7. From living in the desert to crossing the Jordan
8. From praying with the mind to praying in the Spirit
9. From denying or fearing demons to doing spiritual warfare
10. From counseling ministry to deliverance ministry
11. From offering training to discerning anointing
12. From begin guilty over sin to gaining victory over sin
13. From liturgical worship to spontaneous worship
14. From singing in the choir to singing in the Spirit

⁵ John Rowell, *New Apostolic Reformation and the Faith and Work Movement*

⁶ John Rowell, *New Apostolic Reformation and the Faith and Work Movement*

⁷ John Rowell, *New Apostolic Reformation and the Faith and Work Movement*



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15. From the pipe organ to the keyboard
16. From traditional hymns to contemporary praise
17. From staff ministry to body ministry
18. From predicting to prophesying
19. From telling about the Kingdom to showing the Kingdom
20. From seeing and hearing to discerning

C. Peter Wagner offers “5 Compass Points” that help us track with New Apostolic Reformation churches. In these fellowships:⁸

1. Theology has absolute norms rooted in the Bible. We can agree on core truths without being creedal. We can be morally strict without being mightily dogmatic.
2. Ecclesiology looks outward. Citing Ted Haggard, the primary purpose is *“to make it hard for people to go to hell from your city.”*
3. Eschatology is optimistic. Quoting Robert Schuler, we need to know that Satan is defeated in the end. But there is no need to *“let eschatology stifle your long-term thinking.”*
4. Organization and Authority flow from relationship not structure. There is no need to create an institutional culture of distrust and legalism which allows centralized gate keepers to withhold permission. There is a deep conviction that board proliferation should be avoided.
5. It is assumed that Holy Spirit anointed leaders can be trusted. Senior leaders cast vision and others follow. Accountability should be relational not institutional. Their task is to serve people by exerting God-given influence.

The Wineskin of Five Fold Teams

Understanding the Times and Seasons

Throughout the 20th century, we have seen several “moves” of God that have brought attention to the leadership structure of the church.⁹

1. The early 1900's brought the birth of the Pentecostal Outpouring and movement. This re-awakened God's people to the person and work of the Holy Spirit.
2. In the middle of the century, beginning in the 1940's and continuing through the 1950's, we saw many evangelists rise up with a few of them making a significant impact on the world. Billy Graham, T.L. Osborn, Morris Cerillo are examples. A large wave of missionaries are sent out just after World War II.
3. Many of these evangelists also demonstrated signs, wonders and healings.
4. In the 1960's there was a renewed focus on compassion ministries. The attention of the church was turned to the poor and oppressed.
5. The 1970's brought a movement of prayer. The office of Intercessor was recognized and prayer became a great focus of the church.

⁸ John Rowell, *New Apostolic Reformation and the Faith and Work Movement*

⁹ C. Peter Wagner. 2000. *Growth Dynamics of New Apostolic Churches*



6. Beginning in the 1970's and continuing through the 1980's, we saw many prophets rise up and a great "re-awakening" of prophetic ministry. During this time there were a few Prophets that actually became leaders of church networks.
7. Also during the 1980's there were several prominent Christians that were exposed or discredited. Some televangelists and ministry leaders with a great amount of influence were caught in immorality and fraud. It was clear that God was ready to humble any leader that tried to use his authority without accepting the awesome responsibility. Examples include Jim Baker, Jerry Falwell, Larry Lea, Robert Tilton.
8. As we approached the 1990's, God appeared to be emphasizing the role of Apostolic ministry and we saw many men that began to walk in Apostolic authority.
9. As the 20th century came to a close and we entered a new century, there was a great emphasis placed on leadership and leadership teams. John Maxwell's rise in influence is an important demonstration of this "move of God".

As we observe the pattern of God's moves in the last century, it is important for us to discern God's intent. What has he been communicating to the church?

1. The prevailing models of leadership have not been keeping in step with God's plan.
2. Is God trying to draw our attention back to the 5-fold model of leadership found in Ephesians chapter 5?
3. Is God trying to restore the role of Apostolic leader, functioning in tandem with the Prophet, Evangelist, and Pastor/Teacher?

How can the 5-fold ministry model be practically implemented?

Embracing a New Wineskin

Even though the concept of the 5-fold ministry is as ancient as the Ephesians text, we face it as a brand new wineskin. Charismatic and Pentecostal teachers have spoken about it for years, but we have yet to see a viable manifestation.

There can be no doubt that trying to implement a contemporary model of the 5-fold ministry is problematic. There are many questions and issues that must be faced if it is to be successful. For instance, if we closely examine the past 20 years, we will find that many of the current day "Apostles" and "Prophets" have not been good team players. There have been many attempts to join efforts, but when things get difficult, most find it easier to work on their own. There are some examples of successful teams, but so far these examples remain rare.

Some other questions that highlight the difficulty of implementing 5-fold ministry include:

1. How much authority should the Apostle have and how do we determine his scope of authority? Can anyone be an apostle if they did not physically walk with Jesus?
2. Is the 5-fold ministry primarily a trans-local model? How can it be practically seen in the local congregation?
3. Should we expect current Apostles and Prophets, et al to coordinate their efforts and ministries into more coherent teams?



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4. You may have other questions to add to this list.

Difficulties notwithstanding, we cannot escape the mandate that God's model of church leadership can be best realized through functional "5-fold" teams. Here are some important ingredients that can help us.

1. Recognizing the importance of teams in the Kingdom of God.
 - a. God created us with different personalities.
 - b. We are all strong in some traits and weak in other traits.
 - c. We are designed in such a way that we can accomplish more together than we can individually.
 - d. The principle of teamwork permeates the Kingdom of God.
 - e. Learning how to work in a team could perhaps be considered a spiritual discipline.
2. Recognizing and making room for the other 5-fold ministries.
 - a. There are vast personality and value differences between each 5-fold anointing.
 - b. None of these offices can function properly without easy access to the others.
3. Creating new models for learning how to work together.
 - a. Setting an environment to engage in strategic planning that involves all 5 offices.
 - b. Setting clear boundaries and ground rules for cooperating.
 - c. Setting clear guidelines for co-mingling money.

An Important Caution

The wine must come *before* the wineskin or the wineskin is useless.

1. Structures must be made to hold new wine.
2. Without the coming of the new wine, the structures are contrived and ill-fitting.
3. Churches can become empty shells; having new forms with no life.



Lesson 3: The Wineskin of Structure

Structure represents, perhaps, the most obvious demonstration of the wineskin metaphor. Over the years there have been multiple discussions concerning the best, or most effective, structure for the church. Most often the discussions turn to the “biblical” or “scriptural” structure for the church.

It is important to note the lessons of the past few decades. The truth is that many have claimed to have identified the “scriptural church”. The reality is that the Bible is not particularly prescriptive about *how* to do church. As we discussed in Lesson 1, there are components found in scripture that should be common to all church structures, but those components still do not prescribe how to design the functional structure of the church.

What we can learn from the lessons of history:

1. There have been several viable church structures.
2. All structures have a limited life span of effectiveness.
3. Changes in culture, dominant thought, education levels, economic status, technology and media can all have an effect on the success of any particular church structure.
4. The proper approach seems to be; find a structure that can effectively evangelize, disciple, teach unchanging truths, change lives and replicate leadership.

Wineskins of the Past and Present

Ecclesiastic Structure

These structures focus on centralized leadership, with the highest ranking leaders retaining all authority and power. This model trains a “clergy” to administer spiritual rites to the “laity” or the common believer. Ministry is done by professional ministers or priests and the common believer is not expected to take on responsibility for ministry. These types of churches are centered on traditions and highly regulated methods. Services tend to be formal and liturgical in nature. Order, predictability and familiarity are what appeal to the membership.

Examples of this type of structure are:

1. The Catholic Church and Eastern Orthodox Church
2. Anglican, and mainstream Protestant churches.
3. Older evangelical denominations.

Business Structure

These structures take on the persona of an “organization”. They generally have some form of a “board of directors”, and a pastor that takes the role of Chief Executive Officer (CEO). They hire a professional staff to run the ministerial programs and administrative processes. Many of these organizations seek to “employ” (as volunteers) larger numbers of their membership, but there is still a clear distinction between the “professional” ministers and the “common” member. This distinction is most notable in the amount of time the professional staff devote to ministry as contrasted with the member.



Most evangelical denominations fit this structure. Many business model churches openly teach the priesthood of all believers and regularly encourage their members to become involved in evangelism, teaching, leading small groups, etc. Success at involving members varies greatly.

Mega Church Model

The Mega Church is identified by the following traits:¹⁰

1. A large number of attendees. The average is 2000.
2. A large full-time staff. The average staff is 40.
3. A large budget. The average is 4 million dollars per year.
4. A distinctive Visionary Identity
5. Usually led by an extraordinarily gifted, entrepreneurial leader.
6. Experienced sudden and rapid growth.
7. Many choices for membership involvement.
8. There is usually coordinated small group ministry.
9. Large facilities, often called campuses.
10. Tend to shy away from denominational loyalties and network with like-minded churches.

Mega churches are still very popular and new ones are emerging every year. This structure is still gaining momentum in the United States, South America and Africa. It's strength in Asian countries such as Korea seems to have peaked and appears to be in decline.

Cell Church Model

This structure emphasizes the membership over the professional staff. They focus on experiencing church in small groups that meet in homes. They often have a corporate assembly but de-emphasize the importance of the assembly as compared to the "every member ministry" that happens in the home. Important traits are:

1. Leadership oversees the non-professional network of home group leaders.
2. Professional staff is lean, usually between 4 and 10.
3. Size of congregations vary widely. There is no standard size.
4. The "common" member is expected to take on ministry responsibility. Every member is expected to grow into a leader and take their appropriate place in ministry.
5. There is a lot of organization and administrative tasking to maintain communication and consistency between home groups.
6. Doctrinal training, leadership training and discipleship are implemented through the home groups.

¹⁰ Scott Thumma, Phd. 1996. Exploring the Megachurch Phenomena: their characteristics and cultural context



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House Church Model

The House Church structure is a departure from the Cell Church model. The goal of the House Church movement is to make church life as simple as possible. They reject the idea of hierarchical authority to the point that they do not give any one leader authority over the membership. They reject any programmatic approach to church life and ministry. The house churches themselves do not formally connect themselves or network to any notable degree. In fact, some house churches are difficult to locate because they are an entity unto themselves and are fairly isolated from other house churches and the church at large. This is where they diverge from the cell church model which often includes many house groups in one church, with a leadership overseeing the church.

House church meetings are generally casual gatherings that invite all participants to participate equally. Many do not structure the meetings, but invite the Holy Spirit to come and do he wants. This simple, unencumbered way of doing church is currently growing in its appeal.

The New Apostolic Church Model

The New Apostolic model is not a strict structure. Rather it seems to come in many structural forms. What makes it a structural wineskin is the structural principles that it is built upon. This model is based on the belief that the ministry of Apostles is vital for successful churches today. This model affirms the 5-fold ministry and seeks to restore these spiritual offices and giftings to the church.

The foundation of this model is diametrically opposed to the foundation of the House Church Movement. An Apostolic church emphasizes that the church is still built on the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets. Apostolic churches believe that God raises up leaders to provide vision and direction to the church. Some of these leaders can carry prophetic and apostolic authority.

Some Apostolic churches are cell based, others are mega churches, while still others are taking on new and creative structures. Here are some of the structural characteristics of New Apostolic Churches:

1. Authority is given to those recognized as God-anointed leaders. This is in contrast to designated authority (having authority because someone gave you a title).
2. Church structures tend to be relational rather than bureaucratic.
3. Leaders and staff tend to be identified from within the congregation rather and hired from without.
4. A lot of emphasis is placed on training, teamwork and leadership development.
5. A growing commitment to biblical grounding.
6. A new and radical attitude is forming about giving and how finances are to be used in the Kingdom of God.
7. The Holy Spirit is a priority and the gifts of the Holy Spirit are expected and encouraged.
8. Pastors are seen as equippers and trainers of the "body" rather than ministers and shepherds.



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9. Missions and evangelism are central focuses (in both teaching and action).

Any developing 5-fold models will tend to fit into the New Apostolic model.

New and Creative Structures

Experimenting with new and radical church structures is picking up momentum. Every week we are getting reports of a new kind of church. A few examples are:

1. Seeker sensitive churches have become common, but are a radical departure from traditional structures.
2. Internet based churches
3. Post-modern churches that attempt to communicate through art, music and multi-media rather than preaching. Some of these churches do not meet on Sundays and some do not have formal assemblies at all. Instead of church buildings, they own coffee houses.
4. One location, one church, multiple "congregations". This structure seeks to create smaller autonomous congregations that collectively represent the diverse membership. These smaller congregations are usually formed around age/time-of-life, interest or vocation.
5. New Apostolic churches are a creative expression of church structure.



Lesson 4: A Closer Look at the Antioch Church and How it Relates to the New Apostolic Reformation.

The Antioch church as described in the book of Acts is gaining attention as a viable church structure for today. In fact, if you look closely, you will find a lot of similarities between the Antioch church and New Apostolic Churches today. Some identifying characteristics of the Antioch church were:

1. An experimental church. The Antioch church was born because some Christians broke the mold, took a risk and spoke to the Hellenists. Acts 11:19-21 makes it clear that the scattering Christians made it a point to speak only to the Jews abroad. But certain men from Cyprus and Cyrene went to the Hellenists (Greeks) and spoke the Gospel. Once this new church began, all the old traditions and methods were no longer applicable. This was something completely new.
2. A church of the Word. Acts 11:26, 12:24
3. Took the Holy Spirit and spiritual gifts seriously. They sought the Lord in worship, fasting and praying; and when they heard from the Holy Spirit, they took action. Acts 11:27-29, 13:1-3
4. It was built on the teaching and ministry of Apostles and Prophets. Acts 11:25-28.
5. They were generous with their money. Acts 11:29-30
6. They developed leaders. 13:2, 12:24-25, 15:40, 16:3
7. They did everything in teams. Acts 17:15, Acts 13:1
8. They were a sending, resource church. They sent out missionaries. They sent out their best. They became a center for worldwide church planting and apostolic ministry.

There is a growing desire on many churches to become a resource church, able to train and send out ministers and missionaries that will plant churches and duplicate themselves. Many New Apostolic churches are expressing this vision for their churches and we are seeing some phenomenal results.

Is A Modern-Day Expression Of Apostolic Ministry Biblical?¹¹

Cessationists will likely say no, denying Christians the expectation of this role with the sign gifts that may confirm it.

Even non-cessationists will likely struggle to overcome traditional neglect of this gifting and a presumption that it does not continue. Biblical support for the notion that this ministry function was intended to continue in time beyond the twelve 1st Century disciples and to extend beyond their number includes:

1. The term is applied to at least 12 others in the New Testament beyond Jesus' first disciples: Andronicus, Apollos, Barnabus, Epaphroditus, James the brother of Jesus, Junia

¹¹ This entire section is adapted from John Rowell's article identified in the previous footnotes.



- (probably a female), Matthias, Paul, Silas, Timothy and two designated apostles but unnamed in the text of scripture.
2. Peter asserted the appropriate step after Judas' suicide was to let another assume the office Judas' treachery left vacant. Casting lots between two who had been with the disciples from the beginning Matthias was the first by—but not the only apostle to be added to the eleven. (Acts 1:15-26).
 3. Paul and Barnabas were ordained as apostles in Antioch in the absence of the Jerusalem apostles. Their authority for this ministry is clearly recorded in scripture and is uncontested by the Jerusalem elders. (Acts 13:1-3, Acts 15:25, Gal. 2:7-10)

There seems to be no exegetical justification for drawing a line in Ephesians 4:11 between the references to apostles and prophets in the first portion of the verse and the three more "acceptable gifts" of evangelist, pastor and teacher in the balance of the verse. If one functional ministry is applicable after the ascension (the time these leaders were bestowed to the church according to verse 8) then it would seem to follow that all five were and are available leadership roles in the church. In fact, contextually, this five-fold governmental grouping of gifted leaders is specifically presented to the church for the equipping of the saints for the work of service (v. 12) until (v. 13) *"we all attain to the unity of the faith, and to the knowledge of the Son of God, to a mature man, to the measure of the stature which belongs to the fullness of Christ"*. Does not verse 13 tell us these giftings (all five of them) remain functional?

Two verses are sighted as pointing to the priority function of apostolic ministry.

1. I Cor. 12:28 *And God has appointed in the church, first apostles, second prophets...* "First" is translated from the Greek word "protos" an ordinal indicating the first in priority, rank, place, ie. the foremost.
2. Eph. 2:19-20 *So then, you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints, and are of God's household, having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone.*

The notion, in Wagner's understanding of these verses is that apostolic and prophetic leadership are necessary "foundation stones" for proper governmental order in the church. Without them, and we have been without them inexplicably for centuries, we are severely crippled. The dynamic guidance apostles and prophets should offer are instead overshadowed and constrained by administrators and teachers.

Are We Not Warned About False Apostles In II Cor. 11:13-14?

In fact we are warned in this text about false apostles; and in Gal. 1:9 about false evangelists; and in Matt. 7:15 about false prophets; and in John 10:12 about false pastors or hirelings; and in II Pet. 2:1 about false teachers. The realization that Satan counterfeits these gifts should make us cautious to confirm legitimate anointing, grateful for the genuine giftings released by God and certain that Satan would not waste his time counterfeiting a gift no longer available to the church. In context, the work of a false apostle is to usurp the authority of God's truly anointed leader by trying to discredit, defame and deny his proven worth. This observation should also make us cautious about abruptly opposing apostolically gifted leaders.



Are These Modern-Day Apostolic Leaders Claiming Authority Equal To The Twelve Original Disciples Who Held The Office At Jesus' Bidding?

No. In fact, I Cor. 9:1 and II Cor. 10:8-16 make it clear that those who minister with apostolic authority do so only within a God-given sphere of influence. In I Cor. 9:1-2, Paul's authority is questioned by opposing "false apostles" and he appeals to the undeniable fruit of his work in Corinth to defend his anointing and authority. In I Cor. 9:2 Paul plainly states, *"If to others I am not an apostle (and doubtless to many he was not), at least I am to you (and you can't deny it!), for you are the seal of my apostleship"*. In Corinth, Paul is clearly within his "sphere of influence. In fact he was recognized as having broad authority to take the gospel to the known Gentile world (Gal. 2:7-9). In II Cor. 10:8-16 Paul is careful to guard against "overextending" his influence (see v. 14) by boasting beyond the measure of his anointing (v. 13). Again, proof of his being within his proper limits is the incontrovertible evidence that he planted the church in Corinth – his authority certainly reached to that local assembly! In these nine verses, the word "sphere" (province or rule from the Greek "kanon") is used three times; the word "measure" is used five times. Paul seems to acknowledge that even his anointing has limits. This would seem to follow the progression of thought in I Cor. 12:4-6 that in the variety of gifts bestowed by the spirit there is a variety of ministries and a variety of effects as the entire Godhead superintends the outworking of their anointing released in the body. Part of the challenge of acknowledging apostolic anointing is to discern the limitations of an individual's sphere of influence, that is their measure of grace from God.

Where Does Apostolic Authority Come From?

I Cor 12:28 tells us that God appoints (can we not imply anoints?) such leaders in the body. As Paul often writes in the introductory verses of his epistles, he saw himself as an apostle "by the will of God". This authority comes first from God.

I Cor 9:2 indicates that such leaders are recognizable by virtue of the fruit of their ministry, i.e. by the churches planted in new, pioneering situations. New churches are the seal of a leader's apostleship and those churches are expected to honor the anointing of their founders.

I Cor 9:1 Also asserts that the Corinthians were Paul's special work in the Lord, the fruit and proof of his ministry as an apostle. Does his claim in this verse that he had seen the Lord Jesus mean that this becomes a universal criterion for acceptance of an individual's apostolic anointing? Or is this simply another part of Paul's defense of his credibility as a leader with authority over the believers in this church? It would seem to me that this is icing on the cake of Paul's apostolic credentials. There is no evidence that others referred to as apostles (those listed in number 6 above) were able to make the claim that they had seen Jesus. Certainly those who came to faith after the ascension and who had no recorded Damascus road type experience as Paul had, could not make that claim though they too were recognized as apostolic ministers.

I Cor 12:12 suggests that signs, wonders and miracles are evidences of apostolic anointing though these phenomena are not unique to apostolic leaders.



II Cor 11:23-28 notes the kind of dangers that apostolic leaders are willing to face in order to see the gospel advanced in unreached areas of the world. They suffer willingly, taking risks that others would shrink back from, all the while carrying in their hearts and minds an ongoing burden for the well being of the congregations they have started or influenced.

I Thes 2:5-13 Tells us that apostles gain influence by impacting the lives of their followers in a redemptive way. They are recognized and received as influential without having to point to their authority or press their influence. That is to say, there is generally no need for an apostolic leader to assert a hierarchical role or to Lord authority over others. Others recognize that these leaders as bondservants of the Lord, and see plainly that they are anointed for ministry. Paul also speaks in this context of his affection for his spiritual children. He was, in a way, both a father and mother to believers in Thessalonica. In this sense, people recognize that apostles are eager to raise up and release the spiritual children that are born from their ministry to exert their own influence in the body. This is the way that apostles attempt to extend the Kingdom. Apostles are also appreciated for offering wise counsel (note verse 13) and their ministry is intended to bless and build up, not to tear down. Look also at II Cor 10:8-11 to see how Paul defended his leadership authority when it was challenged. Apostles are also appreciated for their unusual strength of godly character.

Acts 10:9-24 and 16:9-10 are texts that offer evidence of the value that apostolic leadership adds to the body. Part of the authority that apostles exercise stems from the clear vision they receive from the Lord. Following such vision keeps the Kingdom moving but, as the book of Acts so richly reveals, it is not always a guarantee of trouble free ministry.

How do prophets function in relationship to apostles?

Acknowledging the ordinal placement of apostles vis a vis prophets in I Cor 12:28 and the joint significance of both these giftings as recorded in Eph 2:20, it would seem that prophets are to assist the apostles in being attuned to what the Spirit is saying to the churches at any give time. Prophets are specially equipped to provide discernment, direction and encouragement for apostolic leaders as Ananias and Agabus did in the book of Acts. As both gifts function, these leaders must exercise wisdom by walking in mutual submission and respect for what the Lord is doing through their respective anointings. In the final analysis, apostles have a higher governmental role to play but they should humbly receive what the prophetic ministers are sensing the Spirit is saying as they exercise their leadership and make application of the revelation God provides.

To whom are apostolic leaders accountable?

Scripture seems to teach that apostolic leaders are accountable first to God for the proper stewardship of the grace He manifests through them (I Pet 4:10). Secondly, they are accountable to the churches that send them out for ministry. We see this clearly in the case of Paul and Barnabas in their relationship with Antioch (Acts 14:25-27). They are on certain occasions also accountable to one another in the course of ministry that brings them together. Note how Paul and Barnabas relate to each other in Acts 15:36-41 and how Paul confronts both Peter and Barnabas in Gal 2:11-14. Finally, these gifted leaders can be accountable to appropriate church councils as is demonstrated in the authoritative gathering called by James in Jerusalem (Acts 15:1-20).



What ministries are specifically identified with apostolic anointing?

In an effort to help us grasp the diversity of ministries apostolic leaders display, Dr. Wagner offers some extra-biblical terminology for our consideration. His primary categories include:

Vertical Apostles - have direct authority over other the leaders they have raised up and released for service in specific churches and para-church ministries. Paul is a biblical example of a vertical apostle. Under this category, Wagner includes:

1. Ecclesiastical Apostles – who oversee church networks (Chuck Smith and Bill Hybels)
2. Functional Apostles – who oversee para-church ministries (Lorne Cunningham and Bill Bright)
3. Apostolic Team Members – serve under more senior apostles as a part of their extended ministry. International Leadership Team members serving under Lorne Cunningham in directing YWAM could be an example as could Dale Kaufman, who leads the global Kings Kids ministry as a distinct and separate ministry arm of YWAM.
4. Congregational Apostles – Wagner believes those leading mega-churches have this gifting.

Horizontal Apostles – have significant spiritual influence over other leaders even where there is no organizational connection that would provide direct line authority or personal accountability. James, the brother of Jesus, fits this role in the first century. Under this category, Wagner includes:

1. Convening Apostles – those who can sound a call that gathers men and women of God for divine purposes. Dr Wagner includes himself in this category and suggests that his anointing extends to the academic community, the intercessors of the world, the apostolic leaders of our day and to the mission community. When he calls, they generally come and they expect his influence to count for the kingdom.
2. Ambassadorial Apostles – have an at-large impact for the body of Christ and they can fulfill a statesman role where wisdom and experience is required. Barnabas was sent to Antioch on such an assignment. Perhaps Billy Graham or James Dobson in America function that way today.
3. Mobilizing Apostles – rally God's troops for war. When they sound the trumpet, Kingdom warriors respond and prepare to go to battle. Bill Mcartney has demonstrated that capacity through Promise Keepers.
4. Territorial Apostles – exercise special influence over defined geographical areas. Perhaps a leader like Dr Peter Kuzmic illustrates this in former Yugoslavia, or Ed Silvano does in Argentina or Peter Dynika did before his death over Russia.

Marketplace Apostles: these are men and women who are anointed for special spiritual influence for God in the business and professional realm. Their ministry is an extension of the church but it occurs primarily outside the four walls of the church facility. Luke, a first century medical doctor, and Lydia, a seller of fine fabrics, are possible biblical examples of this kind of



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apostle. Dr Wagner has developed no subcategories for marketplace apostles because he is not yet familiar enough with the 21st Century outworking of this anointing. He does, however, say that he believes that God has revealed prophetically that marketplace apostles will have greater global impact in the period from 2001-2010 than any other kind of apostle. He wants others more involved with marketplace ministry to help provide appropriate language to describe the modern-day ministry of marketplace apostles.