



CHAPTER 1: ORIENTATION

1.1. INTRODUCTION TO THE PROBLEM

Researchers within the Systematic Theology, Biblical Studies, Church History, and Practical Theology have sought to identify the relevant church polity. The theological institutions of higher education do not say much about church polity. The volumes of Systematic Theology, especially those specialising with ecclesiastical studies mention church polity briefly and in passing. What one comes across on the subject is mainly booklets, periodical articles or one short chapter in a book. The fact of the matter is that the advocates of church polity had been delinquent in adequately articulating this subject. Thus this study is aimed primarily at church leaders that are caught up in the confusion and misunderstanding of the biblical church government. The purpose is to define as accurately as possible from Scriptures, Historical accounts, and Theological Traditions, what church polity is all about, with special reference to the fivefold ministry.

The twentieth century ecumenism has necessitated the introspection of how the church is to be governed. The ecumenical ideals and cooperation call for agreement upon the seat of authority. In its final analysis, a question of where authority resides within the church and who is to exercise it is inevitable.

The critics of the church are insistent on the fact that the institutional structure quenches the flow of the Spirit. It is theologically agreed that the task of the church here on earth is both ethical and missional. It is ethical because it exists to inform the moral sensibilities in the decadent societies. By so doing, it claims back the respect and enhances the integrity of life in these societies. It is expected to become the “academy of justice in the very crucible of culture creation” (Stackhouse et al 2000:37). It is missional because it was brought into being by Christ to fulfil His intention for it. It is to carry out His ministry in the world. It is here to perpetuate His deeds as if He had been here Himself. The Church is involved in the spiritual task of worshipping God, nurturing the people of God, and above all, to bear witness to the world through mission.



1.2. DESCRIPTION OF THE PROBLEM

The purpose of this study is to investigate the church polity based on fivefold ministry in terms of its evangelical character. With an emphasis on church government, there is the important role of church officers such as pastors, elders, and deacons. The concept under the scrutiny in this research is the fivefold ministry as practised by some independent Charismatic and Pentecostal churches.

Church History bears witness that Protestants reacted vehemently to Roman Catholic's universal structure. Unfortunately among the Protestants there are extremists who stress the freedom at the expense of order and decency in church discipline and life. This research seeks to provide a clearer picture of what is occurring in some independent Charismatic and Pentecostal churches and how the development has gone far to embrace the fivefold ministry as an alternative.

1.3. BACKGROUND AND IMPORTANCE OF THE STUDY

The desire to assist ministers of the Gospel to adjust and learn the theological truth is at the heart of most dogmatic teaching regardless of flaws that can be detected. One significant means of leading a healthy church is the implementation of God-ordained structure. While the secular world (businesses, hospitals, schools etc) are implementing programmes to encourage job satisfaction, the post-modern church leaders are left on their own to see what works for them in their own situations. The effort to properly prepare these servants of God theologically is minimal.

Part of the problem lies in the fact that virtually less research has been done to examine how the Biblical church structure can be applied in our post-modern society. There has been very limited research on church leadership satisfaction in this demanding task of leading God's flock. This study is done to increase the information in this area with the hope to better understand the meaning, the function, and the role of officers in church government.



This research correctly finds itself within Systematic Theology since it is part of ecclesiology, which is a classical topic in Dogmatics. The magisterial epistle to the Hebrews concludes with the exhortation, “Obey your leaders and submit to their authority. They keep watch over you as men who must give an account. Obey them so that their work will be a joy, not a burden, for that would be of no advantage to you” (13:17). Calvin’s Book Four of the *Institutes of the Christian Religion* sets out his plan of instruction, beginning with the church, its government, orders, and powers. This demonstrates the importance of the church and its government within the theological studies of the church. The church polity is determined by one’s understanding of the church. The fivefold ministry as practised by the independent charismatic churches reflects their understanding of ecclesiastical practices. As part of Systematic Theology, church polity and discipline inevitably evolved through the ages. As part of ecclesiology, church government can be located within Church History that has been evolving since time immemorial. However, as part of ecclesiology, polity cannot solely be a historical phenomenon. It is more than that since it is a way the institution is structured. It cannot find itself within Practical Theology discipline since it has the *canonical* roots and has been part of the *apostolic paradosis* and *catechesis*.

A particular important time to study church government is in its Biblical and historical development of the church. There is a proliferation and diversity in the ecclesiastical circles, and many structures emerge all the time. Macquarie (1971:343) correctly asserts: “they may have to be differently weighed in different historical situations, but each must receive some weight if the Church is to have both the stability and the dynamism necessary to her health.” These structures inevitably form some values and attitudes. Consequently, they call for dogmatic research and theological scrutiny. Research demonstrates that examining church polity, can aid both the individual and the church to function more effectively.

During the course of this study one will try to find answers on theological reflections and analysis of 1) the church government models in different ecclesiastical traditions, 2) the exegesis of Ephesians 4 passage, 3) the evaluation of the so-called fivefold ministries in



the church, 4) the evangelical critique of the local church government based on the fivefold ministry, 5) the church polity and the pneumatic community of believers. Basically, there are two questions that this research would like to answer: 1) what kind of leadership actually exists in the church of today? 2) What kind of leadership structures can be found in the New Testament and in the early church?

Historically and theologically, there have been three basic types of church government. The Episcopal type is the government by three different orders of ministers: bishops, priests, and deacons. The centre is on the bishop or overseer. The Presbyterian is the government by presbyters or elders. It provides for different strata of government: the session, the presbytery, the synod, and the general assembly. The order in the ministry has been pastors, elders, and deacons. Pastors and elders participate in the meetings of the presbytery, synod, and general assembly. The congregational type of church government vests all legislative authority in the local church. The district and general organizational structures are merely advisory with the purpose of cooperation in mission and education work of the church. Each of these has the Scriptural texts to legitimise their authenticity.

1.4. STATEMENT OF THE RESEARCH QUESTION

The fivefold ministry of Ephesians 4 passage practised in some independent Charismatic and Pentecostal churches is not a theologically legitimate church polity to be accepted by the twenty-first century church.

1.5. DEFINITION OF TERMS AND CONCEPTS

1.5.1. The **Church Government** is the structure or the organisation of the church, which best facilitates the carrying out of the ecclesiastical mandate in the world.

1.5.2. The **Church Polity** is the organised life of the church. It reflects the reigning theological consensus concerning such things as the nature of the church, the source of



authority, the reality of sin, the prospect of salvation, and the content of hope. Polity is a theological reflection on the life of the church.

1.5.3. **Evangelical** refers to the broad base of Christians who uphold and confess the orthodox Christian doctrines as they are embedded in the Apostles' Creed. It is the belief that holds to the traditional creeds of the church and a personal commitment to Jesus Christ in the life of the individual where He comes to reign as Lord and King.

1.5.4. The **Fivefold Ministry** is the church government concept based on Ephesians 4:11, made up of apostles, prophets, pastors, evangelists, and teachers.

1.5.5. **Ecumenism** is a universal definition of the church's visible unity here on earth.

1.5.6. The **New Apostolic Reformation** is a term that was coined by C Peter Wagner in 1998 and 1999 to refer to the emerging church government and leadership paradigm among certain growing congregations and church movements. It is a revival movement whereby God is restoring the fivefold ministry to govern the church and take it back to the former glory where the apostles and the prophets are the key role players in determining the vision and direction of church life.

1.5.7. The **Charismatic Movement** is the section of the church that came into being at the dawn of the 1960s. In its original usage, the term "charismatic movement" refers to the practice of spiritual gifts and the baptism in the Spirit in the mainline churches since the Pentecostal Movement in its classical form already existed as separate and in various denominations.

1.5.8. The **Classical Pentecostals** refers to the mainline denominations of this stream that was born out of Azusa Street Revival in Los Angeles around 1907. The known family churches of this tradition in South Africa are the Assemblies of God, Apostolic Faith Mission, and the Full Gospel Church of God.



1.5.9. **Realpolitik**, simply known as power politics is when self-interests are prioritized over the interests of others especially over those who may be regarded as subordinates or subjects. Due to its inherent manipulative nature, it undermines the essential nature of revelation.

1.5.10. **Vox populi**, or voices of the masses is the concept whereby people's ideas or ideologies play major roles in decision-making processes. It endeavours to establish some sacred alliances of relative values that form the basis of laws, therefore rewards those who support the common ideals and punishes those who oppose them. It shuns the absolute demands of revelation by softening the radical nature of faith in favour of popular expectations.

1.6. ASSUMPTIONS OF THE STUDY

The assumptions of this study are as follows:

1.6.1. Given the nature of a church with an emphasis on government and polity, it is assumed that the related concepts of church structures do occur among Christian churches for the sake of order and effectiveness in the world.

1.6.2. Given the nature of diversity and proliferation of church polities and that each claims theological legitimacy; there is a strong need for theological clarification for the church polity that is acceptable in the twenty-first century.

1.6.3. Given the nature of limited resources on this subject, it is understood that the research findings will be broad in order to accommodate all notions regarding church government. It is nevertheless, assumed that the research findings can be applied to churches that still disregard the issues of governance and organisation.



1.6.4. An extensive research will be undertaken into the aspect of church governance based on fivefold ministry. This probably limits the scope of the research, because it is not possible to locate the research in a broader context and to review it as such. The availability of such research results will enable comparisons therefore leading to better assessment of the results of the research.

1.7. RESEARCH HYPOTHESIS

Church polity is a wide field and calls for extensive research. Proliferation and diversity within this ecclesiastical concern is complex. The fivefold ministry is a new ecclesiological challenge that needs attention. This research focuses on the history, operation and the praxis of the fivefold ministry confined to some independent Charismatic and Pentecostal groups. *Research demonstrates that examining church polity, through the evangelical lenses, can aid both the individual and the church to function more effectively.*

The point of departure is that the charismatic view of *charismata* is intertwined with ecclesiastical understanding of the church as fellowship. The dynamic of the fellowship is lived out through the *charismata*. The struggle still continues within the charismatic constructs for the balance between charism and institution. However, since the underlying message of Charismatic Movement is *restoration*, “they believe that as the church is restored, she will be brought to a higher level of supernatural performance” (Moriarty 1992:100). In other words, the church *restored* is the church *charismatized*. The gifts must be functioning in the church in order to bring its spiritual growth and health. The *charismata* are for both personal holiness and effective witnessing for Christ.

1.8. DELIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The following limiting factors are determined for this study:



1.8.1. The “evangelical” review is a broad concept that needs to be narrowed down. There are four groups that form the bulk of this brand of the Christian faith. These are the Episcopalians, the Presbyterians (Reformed), the Congregationalists, and the Fivefold Ministry Movement found among some Pentecostal and Charismatic groups.

1.8.2. The major church government systems will be surveyed by giving their main beliefs in such a way that one specific system, (Fivefold Ministry) will be chosen and researched.

1.8.3. The apex of this study is to give a critical reflection on the fivefold ministry church government as reflected in the emerging apostolic churches.

1.9. RESEARCH METHOD

This study is descriptive in approach, guided by theoretical notions with evaluative elements. A review of relevant literature will be undertaken, which should lead to the clarification and defining of different concepts employed in this field of study

1.9.1. Literature Study: This will be undertaken for the purpose of: -

1.9.1.1. Assisting in determining the theological understanding of church government and polity with a special reference to the fivefold ministry practised in some Charismatic and Pentecostal groups.

1.9.1.2. Assessing the historical development and the criteria used in understanding the different polities in ecclesiastical governance.

1.9.1.3. Evaluating the different ecclesiastical understandings of church polity

1.9.2. Development of a model and guidelines: Research will be undertaken on the rationale behind the fivefold ministry as a theologically unsound option for church



government. Criteria will be developed to formulate theological basis for the rejection of this model. These criteria will form the basis for the formulation of guidelines on understanding the fivefold ministry structure for church's self-development, not for church government.

1.10. CHAPTERS OUTLINE

Chapter 1 is an orientation or a general view and an introduction to the research.

In Chapter 2, a review of the evangelical church government provides a more extensive description of the major constructs included in this study. Facts such as the identification of evangelical Christianity, its categories, its historical development, and its beliefs (essentials) are undertaken. An overview is given of church government and the different shapes it takes in different *ecclesiastical* traditions. Some background information on church polity is given, with special emphasis on the three major polities (Episcopalian, Presbyterian, and Congregational). A brief analysis is undertaken of what these polities believe. The chapter continues with endeavours to define the Pentecostal/ Charismatic, its dogma, and identification that leads to the description of its ecclesiology. This serves as bedrock or premise from which the common polities will be surveyed and the definition of Pentecostal and Charismatic ecclesiologies attempted. The chapter concludes with the identification and definition of the emerging apostolic movement with a special reference to the fivefold ministry of Ephesians 4:11. The rationale behind the fivefold ministry will be researched. Some definitions for the study are provided. A review of the literature is given.

Chapter 3 presents the historical development of the teaching on *charismata*, and the fivefold ministry as promoted by some movements that arose within the Pentecostal and Charismatic movements since the middle of the twentieth century. Special historical references are made to the Latter Rain Movement, The Shepherding Movement, The Positive Confession Movement, The "Third Wave" Churches, and finally the New



Apostolic Reformation, which is the focus of this research. Each movement is discussed in such a way that its contribution to the development of fivefold ministry is highlighted. Chapter 4 elaborates on the critical theological reflections on the fivefold ministry. The theological roots as promoted by the emerging apostolic churches are examined and the reasons for taking that route are also scrutinized. For instance, it is alleged that the hermeneutical conclusions on the fivefold ministry are based on the allegorical interpretation, the influence of fundamentalism, the role by the New Testament church leadership, the lack of synergy and cohesion, and *Realpolitik* and *vox populi*. The chapter continues to explore the Reformed and Charismatic understanding of charismata and concludes by citing the problems related to *charismata* in general...

Chapter 5 is the exegesis of Ephesians 4:1-16, as a precursor to understanding the fivefold ministry as *domata* in the church. The chapter gives the panoramic view of the Ephesians passage and the Ephesians church in general. The biblical doctrines in the passage are explored and the ecclesiastical exegesis (Reformed and Charismatic) are critically evaluated. The theological reflection is made from the vantage point of the Emerging Apostolic Churches and this is crowned by the theological definition of *domata* (fivefold ministry). The argument against the fivefold ministry as ideal for church government is the climax of the chapter.

Chapter 6 is a critical ecclesiological discovery that the fivefold ministry cannot be theologically justified for church government. The arguments are set forth to dismiss the fivefold ministry as a proper construct for church government by contradicting it with the contemporary ecclesiologies.

Chapter 7 summarises the research by highlighting the constraints, deductions, and the recommendations for further researches related to this study.



CHAPTER 2: EVANGELICAL REVIEW OF CHURCH GOVERNMENT

2.1. INTRODUCTION

This chapter investigates the *genesis* of church polity within Evangelical tradition. It is observed that the teaching on discipline, the offices of the church, and the effort to institute an autonomous ecclesiastical discipline, have been *foci* of interest and controversy within the evangelical Christianity. This chapter reviews a brief survey of the *evangelical* Christianity and the *evangelical ecclesiology* including church structures as to their theoretical bases, popular practices, and the latest research findings. There will be identification of the *Pentecostal/Charismatic ecclesiology* with special reference to the emerging apostolic churches, its categories, historical development, and authority. Church officers' role within Evangelical ecclesiology is presented as the context for this research study. The review concludes with a description of the *fivefold ministry* as encountered in the apostolic church movement today.

2.2. EVANGELICAL CHRISTIANITY

2.2.1. The Evangelical Definition

Evangelical Christianity is the stream within the Protestant faith that holds on to the orthodox doctrines of Christian faith. John Webster (2001:191) gives the unbiased definition of this as a theology “which is evoked, governed and judged by the gospel. In this sense, evangelical is simply equivalent to Christian; all Christian theology, whatever its tradition, is properly speaking evangelical in that it is determined by and responsible to the good news of Jesus Christ.” It is therefore, a Christian faith with strong conviction that *Iesus Hominum Salvator* – Jesus is the Saviour of humanity. The primacy of its agenda is that evangelism is to be expedited with a strong sense of urgency, since salvation, which is the supernatural act of God the Holy Spirit is the mandate given by Christ to the Church for the whole world.



The attempt is made to sketch the definition and the historical identity of the three major views of polity among the evangelicals. The evangelicals are historically divided into three groups. They emerged as a result of eighteenth century revival. The first group is the Methodists who came out of the Church of England after John Wesley's death. The second group is the Calvinists out of George Whitefield and the Countess of Huntingdon. The third group is the Evangelical Anglicans closely associated with Samuel Walker of Truro, Henry Venn of Huddersfield and John Newton of Olney. The later groups to join the movement include the Pentecostals and the Charismatics. The scope of this research is to concentrate on the modern-day Charismatic ecclesiological governance of the latter group.

2.2.2. The Evangelical Dogma

The evangelicals' dogma is summarised in the belief of the sinfulness of man, the atoning death of Christ, the unmerited grace of God, and the salvation of the true believer. Millard J Erickson (1993:13) refers to Evangelicals as

Those who believe that all humans are in need of salvation and that this salvation involves regeneration by a supernatural work of God. Based upon his grace, this divine act is received solely by repentance and faith in the atoning work of Jesus Christ. Further, evangelicals urgently and actively seek the conversion of all persons worldwide to this faith. They regard the canonical Scriptures as the supreme authority in matters of faith and practice.

The same sentiment is expressed by the former president of the National Association of Evangelicals in USA, Ted Haggard, that an evangelical is “a person who believes Jesus Christ is the Son of God, that the Bible is the Word of God, and that you must be born again... Evangelicalism is a continuum of theologies all the way from Benny Hinn to R C Sproul. The R C Sproul crowd has a hard time with Benny Hinn, and the Benny Hinn crowd has a hard time with R C Sproul. But they're all evangelicals” (Christianity Today,



November 2005 pp 42). However, it is to be recognised that “Evangelicals were not so much interested in polity and doctrine as in the practical expression of Christianity in a redeemed life of piety that gained its inspiration from Bible study and prayer” (Cairns 1978:432).

Evangelical faith is not a recent innovation. It is not a new brand of Christianity in the process of invention. In the words of English preacher and author, John Stott, evangelical faith “is original, apostolic, New Testament Christianity” (1999:14). It is an attempt of going back to the beginning and the recovery of the authentic, original gospel. It is not a new teaching, but the establishment of old things that were taught by the apostles and the godly teachers of the early centuries of the church. The evangelical faith is not a deviation from Christian orthodoxy. John Stott (1999:15) continues to shed light that

evangelical came into widespread use only in the early eighteenth century, in relation to the so-called Evangelical Revival associated with John Wesley and George Whitefield. But in the seventeenth century it had been applied both to the Puritans in England and to the Pietists in Germany, and in the sixteenth century to the Reformers. They called themselves *evangelici*, short for *evangelici viri*, ‘*evangelical men*,’ a designation which Luther adopted as *die Evangelischen*.

Stott’s (1994:15-18) evangelical defence continues to convey that proto- evangelicals include figures such as John Wycliffe- the Morning Star of the Reformation who was called *doctor evangelicus*; and the great church father Augustine who promoted the ideas of back to the basics of the New Testament in reference to ‘*euangello*’ from which evangelical Christians derive their name. All these attributed ultimate authority to Scripture and salvation to Christ crucified alone and that the divine grace is the only remedy for human guilt. The epitome of this notion is captured by the British evangelical preacher, Clive Calver (1996:26) in support of R T France and A E McGrath that



The distinguishing features of evangelicals have always included an insistence on four priorities:

- The supreme authority of Scripture.
- The uniqueness of redemption through Christ's death.
- The need for personal conversion.
- The urgent necessity for evangelism.

2.2.3. The Evangelical Identification

The struggle for definition and identification of evangelical Christian continues. Dr Christina Maria Brenman (1996:22-33) in her published doctoral thesis on the *Association of Evangelicals in Africa*, laboriously gives at least four scholarly definitions of evangelical faith – an exercise that reflects the polarisation of this field of study. She commences by outlining Dr Peter Beyerhaus' (1975:307-308) definition who divides evangelicals into six categories:

2.2.3.1. New evangelicals, (middle position) with people such as the internationally renowned evangelist, Billy Graham. This is a group that strives to liberate itself from the clutches of the modern science and political conservatism of fundamentalism. They are ecumenical in world evangelisation.

2.2.3.2. Fundamentalists, (the right wing) who possess separatist attitudes. They have anti-ecumenical sentiments.

2.2.3.3. Confessionals, who are very church oriented and emphasise the renewal of faith that is different from that of Ecumenical Movement.

2.2.3.4. Charismatic Movement, which accentuate the pneumatological expressions within the existing churches.



2.2.3.5. Radicals, emanating from Latin America. Their focus is the socio-political engagement associated with the proclamation of salvation in Christ.

2.2.3.6. Ecumenical evangelicals found in mainline churches and voluntarily choose to take membership of World Council of Churches, though with some reservations to certain aspects of the Ecumenical Movement.

To these categories, Brenman (1996: 25) adds Waldron Scott's two other categories:

2.2.3.7. Black evangelicals, including many African Independent Churches. This includes, until recently, the Concerned Evangelicals (CE) in South Africa. They split from the Evangelical Fellowship of South Africa (EFSA) in 1985, accusing the mother body for not playing a critical role to address the apartheid ideology. It was only after the dawn of democracy that the two re-united and became The Evangelical Alliance of South Africa (TEASA).

2.2.3.8. Pentecostals, the classical group that see themselves as evangelicals. Not all these churches are in the Charismatic Renewal Movement.

The book that explores the controversial field of Anglican ecclesiology from an evangelical Anglican viewpoint; *The Olive Branch*, by Bradshaw (1992:129) admits:

It is becoming increasingly hard to pin down today precisely what the term '*evangelical*' means. It can indicate a certain zeal for the Lord; a particular attitude to the Bible; a tradition of 'low church' ritual in liturgy. In terms of 'church ministry and sacraments', however, the classical reformed heritage remains the presupposed foundation for evangelical Anglicans.



In a nutshell, evangelicalism is not something fundamentally ecclesial but a renewal movement with a distinctive ethos, an ethos uniquely compatible with free church ecclesiology

2.3. EVANGELICAL ECCLESIOLOGY

2.3.1. Definition

How does one define the evangelical ecclesiology? The definition of evangelical ecclesiology is murky and it will continue to be so. Jonathan R Wilson (2005:63) in his paper to *The Community of the Word: Toward an Evangelical Ecclesiology* conference, held in April 2004 by the Wheaton College Graduate School highlights: “To explore evangelical ecclesiology, we must turn to more popular authors, who tend to be other pastors and practitioners of church leadership, not theologians located in the academy, not even the evangelical academy.” After laborious exegesis of evangelical ecclesiologies of Francis Schaeffer, Charles Colson, Rick Warren, and Brian McLaren, Wilson (2005:70) concludes that “Both the best and worst of evangelical ecclesiology are rooted in the passionate evangelical commitment to mission.” Recently, Bruce Hindmarsh (cited in Stackhouse 2003:15-37) labelled evangelical ecclesiology as oxymoron – false truth or two ideas opposite each other. They are united in mission and friendship, but not united under one visible church order. Their unity is not sacramental. It does not reside with authorized orders, forms, or rites. The principle by which unity is discerned is evangelical piety itself. The evangelical ecclesiology is the ideal of narrative community i.e. radical congregationalism. Their ecclesial outlook is *ecclesia intra ecclesium* i.e. the small church within the mixed church. The broader evangelical ecclesiology dominating the modern though is the interconfessional and international brotherhood.

The conference further affirmed that “evangelical ecclesiology is so frequently charged with being ‘in crisis’ or even ‘nonexistent’ that we could no longer ignore the question of what constitutes an ‘evangelical ecclesiology’ (Husbands & Treier 2005:9). This is due to criticism labelled against evangelical Christianity for the lack of scholarly debates and



production of rational matters relating to Christian faith. The critics of evangelicals attach misnomers such as right-wing zealots, religious nuts, fanatics, demagogues, hopelessly out of date, anti-intellectual, and simplistic brethren in our midst. As a result, evangelical ecclesiology experienced less pressures to devise a clear and binding polity by which the church could conduct its own affairs.

2.3.2. Distinctives

The strength of *evangelical ecclesiology* rests in its practices of *missio Dei*. The evangelical ecclesiology holds itself accountable to the gospel. For evangelicals, the church is called into being through Jesus Christ and is empowered for witness to the gospel. Evangelical ecclesiology is *missional* in character and form. The theological study field is in agreement that despite the downplay of evangelical faith, the fact remains, *fax mentis incendium gloriae*. The real passion that glorifies God is when God is known from the heart. This is *bona fides* – the real faith. Bruce Hindmarsh (Stackhouse 2003:31-37) outlines the evangelical ecclesiology as follows (summarised):

1. There is no distinctively evangelical doctrine of church order. Evangelical ecclesiology is articulated around the local fellowship of true believers and the consciousness of the universal church. The ecclesiastical constructions e.g. church orders are radically reduced to *adiaphora*.
2. The mystical church is discernible among the divided visible churches. True believers recognise in one another a mystical bond, as God's own love causes them to love one another. The religious affections are accepted as ecclesiological principle. The church is not constituted by stated ecclesiastical authority but by elective affinity of a spiritual sort.
3. The oxymoron of evangelical ecclesiology is that while celebrating the spiritual union of all the truly regenerate, the movement itself was dogged by separatism. This characterises the evangelical history. For instance, Whitefield split in the free grace controversy in 1739 over Calvinism. Wesley, Whitefield, and the Moravians split in 1740



over quietism. The Anglican evangelicals and the Nonconformist evangelicals divided over regularity. This is prevalent in evangelical movement of today – they proclaim unity, but so often they experience schism. In many circumstances, they reject visible order, but sooner or later fill the vacuum with another form of visible organisation. However, the inability to cooperate organisationally does not abort spiritual fellowship.

The above definition gives an impression that there is no clear, coherent evangelical ecclesiology. Evangelical theology lacks a clear understanding of its own identity since it is driven by a pragmatic understanding of the church and its mission. The church is seen as a pragmatic organisation to fulfil certain tasks. It is this lack of coherence that leads to proliferation when dealing with church polity and governance in the Charismatic stream of evangelical Christianity.

2.4. THE COMMON PROTESTANT POLITIES

2.4.1. The Episcopal Church Structure

2.4.1.1. Definition

The proponents of episcopalianism such as P Ton (Engle & Cowan 2004:24) attach patristic origins to this polity. This is a strong belief that this

polity is based upon that which developed in the providential guidance of God from the apostolic age through the first few centuries of the Christian church... it is both wholly in accord with apostolic teaching and takes into account the practical results of the evangelization, church planting, and teaching of the apostles, their fellow workers, and their successors

The scholars inclined to this ecclesiastical governance argue that from the second century, a *threefold* ministry of bishops, presbyters, and deacons was evident among the



churches. This is supported by the Letters of St. Ignatius of Antioch who was insistent that there should be one bishop in charge of each congregation. In **A Lion Handbook of the History of Christianity**, David F Wright, highlights the fact that, “by Ignatius’s time churches in Asia Minor were ruled by the three-fold ministry... This pattern became universal before the third century, though the churches of Rome and Greece had no single bishop in Ignatius’s day, nor did Alexandria until about AD 180” (1977:117).

According to Peters (2000:315), different scholars of this century are unified in the fact that Episcopal polity “is the church ministry of oversight, continuity, and unity in the church to be carried out by the bishops.” It is the institution by which bishops govern the visible church. It is in short the government of the church by bishops or overseers. Dr Paul F Zahl (in Brand & Norman 2004:225-228) agrees with Peters that within this polity there is a “*threefold Order of Ministry*.” First, there is a diaconal (presbyters in training) ministry to the world. It is when an individual is ordained (set apart) to serve the next orders of polity, which are presbytery and a bishop in their work. The presbyteral (priest in Episcopalian/Anglican polity) ministry is that of preaching, teaching and pastoral care in the local congregation. This function includes officiating at the Holy Communion and also administering the other sacrament, which is baptism.

The basic ministry of the bishop is that of oversight. Some evangelical traditions, such as the Lutherans and the United Methodists, refer to it as “superintendent.” The Catholics and Anglicans see episcopacy as guardians of unity and continuity. The other Episcopal function is to ordain presbyters and deacons; and also to perform the rite of confirmation. Dr Paul F Zahl (Brand & Norman 2004:228) captures it on the dot that “Episcopacy is thus the form of church government by which bishops represent the true catholicity, continuity, and Christianness of the Christian family. This catholicity of the church is expressed in its ministry.”

Peters (2000:314-315) alludes to the fact that the Episcopal polity sometime embraces a “*Twofold Order of Ministry*” of deacons and pastors (presbyters). The two are separated



by some special rite, where the bishop, like other pastors, is ordained to the ministry of word and sacrament, but later separated for the particular service in the office of a bishop.

2.4.1.2. The Mainstreams within the episcopacy

There are some varying emphases of episcopacy. Edward Leroy Long Jr (2001) has done some scholarly research that the governance by bishops is divided into three mainstreams. These are the monarchical, managerial, and pastoral episcopacies.

2.4.1.2.1. The *monarchical episcopacy* is where “the functions of episcopacy are carried on by persons of immense symbolic stature, who bear full responsibility for maintaining the integrity of the church as an institution” (2001:13). This is basically a Catholic episcopacy in which a single official has three official responsibilities of *protecting the faith, preserving the right doctrine, and supervising the church life within a given territory*. Erickson (1999:343) captures it sensibly that the “Roman Catholic has the most complete system of hierarchy, with authority being vested especially in the supreme pontiff, the bishop of Rome, the pope.”

2.4.1.2.2. The *managerial episcopacy* is when “the bishop uses clearly defined and officially delineated authority to see that an ecclesiastical organisation functions with maximum effectiveness” (Long 2001:13). This is the simplest form of episcopal government with one level of bishops, found within the Methodist tradition. The point of reference for Methodist polity is “**The Book of Discipline**”. The primary function of managerial episcopacy is the effective functioning of the church. The office of the bishop is functional, and involves managerial skills, rather than theological affirmations. The bishops are both the administrative and the executive heads of the church. The bishop’s leadership functions include guarding the faith, order, liturgy, doctrine, and discipline of the Church. The functions are extended to seeking and becoming the sign of the unity of the Church, supporting and supervising Church’s life, work and mission throughout the world. This is furthered by leading those entrusted with worship, the celebration of sacraments, and the mission of witness and service to the world.



2.4.1.2.3. The *pastoral episcopacy* is when “the bishop facilitates the conduct of affairs within the church, primarily by means of nurture and persuasion” (Long 2001:13). This is a polity commonly found within the Episcopalian or Anglican tradition. The Anglican Communion is held together by common experience of worship, not by any form of dogma or conformity to any ethical expectation. The Anglican polity is measured by doctrinal standards as laid out in a “**Canon Law**”, sometimes referred to as a “**Book of Common Prayer**”. This book is a symbol of unity and it embodies the ceremonial and symbolic functions of the bishop. The bishops rely greatly on persuasion in order to govern their parishes. In other words the Church “preserves its togetherness by allowing individual bishops and parishes to act, regarding many matters, on their own convictions, rather than by imposing strict demands for conformity” (2001:43). Conformity in liturgy and vestments do not necessitate common doctrinal persuasion. Bishops “can vary enormously in their theological positions, church practice, and social advocacy” (Long 2001:44). The Anglican bishop’s role is that of unity and the preservation of the apostolicity and the catholicity of the church. His liturgical functions of ordination and confirmation of the new church members makes his role not merely managerial. He acts as a mentor to win people’s hearts to respect the policies and procedures of the church.

2.4.2. The Presbyterian Structure of the church

2.4.2.1. Definition

This structure accentuates authority in a particular office referred to as elder. Millard J Erickson (1999:343-344) captures this church government system correctly that

This authority is exercised in a series of governing assemblies. At the level of the local church the session (Presbyterian) or consistory (Reformed) is the decision making group. All the churches in one area are governed by the presbytery (Presbyterian) or classis (Reformed). The next grouping is the synod, made up of an equal number of lay elders and clergy chosen by each presbytery or classis. At the highest level the



Presbyterian Church also has a General Assembly, composed again of lay and clergy representatives from the presbyteries. The prerogatives of each of the governing bodies are spelled out in the constitution of the denomination.

Normally, this polity has only the teaching elder or a pastor. There is no higher level such as the bishop. Certain individuals are selected from below to preside or to supervise, with no special authority attached to their position since there is no special ordination attached to their office. The Presbyterian system has the deliberate coordination of clergy and laity. These groups are included in all governing assemblies, still with no special powers or rights to make them distinctive from others. This sentiment is echoed by the late Presbyterian theologian and teacher, R B Kuiper (1998:135), in the debate of the relation of the universal and special offices of the church, that

the members of the church choose their own special officers, that they are governed with their own consent by those officers, and that they choose their officers from their own number – all this exemplifies the truth that the special offices in the church are rooted in the universal office.

The hallmark of the Presbyterian polity is the centrality of Christ. Christ is viewed as supreme king and head of his church. As a result (Brand & Norman 2004:87), he

has given to his people all the oracles, ordinances, and officers necessary for their edification and maturation in this world. In his messianic role as king, from his throne of glory he rules and teaches his people by his Word and Spirit through the oversight ministry of these officers. Moreover he has ordained for his church, in order that all things might be done decently and in order therein, a system of government, the details of which are either expressly set forth in Scripture or may be deduced there from by good and necessary inference.



This Christological centrality of the Presbyterian Church government dominates many scholars of this tradition. For instance, Clowney (1995:203) in his voluminous work of *Contours of Christian Theology* asserts that “Christian obedience to church rule is obedience in the Lord, for his Word governs the church, not the other way round.” In the same work, Clowney (1995:15) minces no words that “a doctrine of the church that does not centre on Christ is self-defeating and false.”

The Christological approach to church government as reflected in the Presbyterian Church is also of the unwavering opinion that there is the sufficiency of Scripture for church government. There is a strong appeal to the Pauline writings in defence of the church polity by the evangelical thinkers of our day. Furthermore the evangelical Presbyterians scrutinize the etymologies and usages of “*presbyteros*” and “*episkopos*” to prove that the scriptural church government is both Presbyterian and Episcopal, though the two terms are the same in reference to the overseers or the same officeholder. The Episcopalian notion should not be attached to hierarchical description of the elders. The proponents of this polity are in agreement that “Scripture knows nothing of the governmental church polity of a hierarchical episcopacy, and if the church has an archbishop (or “arch-elder”), that archbishop is Jesus Christ” (Brand & Norman 2004:93).

The latest research development on Presbyterial government, as discovered by Long Jr (2001) points out that there are three types of the recent Presbyterial government.

2.4.2.1.1. First, there is a polity of ***representative eldership***. This is common in “the Reformed tradition, where governance is by elders who are elected by democratic procedures” (2001:63). These are the functional elders elected to operate in the covenanted communities according to constitutional provisions. The polity allows for the elders to lead the church, protect the church from false doctrines, visit the sick and pray for them. They share the governance of the church with elected representatives chosen by their own congregations. They are ordained for governance that calls for commitment and



competency. They are called the *Session* and their responsibility is the spiritual oversight of the parish members. These elders in session “participate in the policy making of the denomination as a whole by being designated as a delegate to a higher judicatory” (2001:64).

The notable observation of this polity is the role of deacons. They are not ordained in every case, and where they are ordained, this is for life. Their primary responsibility is to serve the physical aspects of the church such as the addressing the needs of the poor, the church property, and the finances of the church. The Presbyterian polity is heavily *connectional*. This means that the local congregations are subject to considerable control by higher ecclesiastical authority relating to matters of common interests. As a result, the Presbyterian polity creates a widely and carefully recognised denominational identity.

2.4.2.1.2. The second type of Presbyterian government is the ***leadership by appointment and seniority***. Since this practice is common among the “non-evangelical” group known as the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (Mormons), it will not be given much attention here. “The governance of this church is highly controlled; it is authoritarian rather than democratic. Those on top appoint most of the lesser officials while they themselves come into governance by fidelity and influence and, at the very top, strictly by seniority” (Long 2001:79). The governance of this group is very complex, and very rhetoric in the levels of priests, elders, and bishops. The higher governance roles in the church work from top down rather than from the bottom up. The president of the church is at the top, and is regarded as a prophet, seer, and revealer of truth. He has the authority and legal power, as one of their scholars asserts; “to act or command, as exercised by a person through virtue of his office, trust, or calling, whether original or delegated” (Keeler 1904: III). In the volumous work of the Mormon scholar, James Vernon Bartlet (1899:476-508), the church leadership is a moral obligation and responsibility than just a position. This group attempts to convey the truth that the early and apostolic church was popular in its government and simple in its worship. The lesser priesthood in the early church as perceived by the Mormons is the criteria for the authentic church. This notion is stressed in the writings of Lyman Coleman and Augustus Neander (1844).



2.4.2.1.3. The third type is *leadership by discernment*, commonly practised by the Mennonites and the Quakers. The leaders are traditionally selected from the community in a process of discernment. Decision making is designed to attend to the Spirit. The gifts and graces upon an individual are taken into consideration as opposed to a popular vote. The evangelical distinctive of the Mennonites is not a belief system, but the ethical response to the gospel. As the descendants of the Anabaptists, the Mennonites see Christianity not merely as churchmanship but as a community lifestyle.

The Mennonites govern themselves according to some Articles of Schleitheim Confession of Faith that was adopted by the Swiss Brethren in 1527, and Dordrecht Confession of Faith of 1632 respectively. Both these documents exemplify the need and the teaching functions of spiritual leaders. The documents are widely open to allow the different Mennonite groups to formulate the polity regarding church leaders. The diversity among them ranges from those with elders and/or bishops who work like anybody else for living, those who are in full time ministry and are being paid by the communities they serve, some are strictly led by males – with no consideration for female leadership. The leader is expected to live an exemplary life. His role has some expectations attached to it. Long (2001:89) highlights the fact that “the role of the leaders is facilitative rather than domineering, symbolic and pedagogical rather than sacerdotal.” The local church reflects the community, and it is a locus of decision making. All the practices and the governance of the church are determined or decided by the local congregation. The congregations confer with other congregations of the like-mind and deliberate on issues of standards of faith, polity and administration, and common mission and projects.

The Quakers’ governance is a matter of discerning the Spirit than the institutional structures or the exercising of official roles. It is of great interest to note that “The Quakers have no paid clergy, they do not take votes in order to make decisions, they eschew formally designated rankings that carry unique authority; and they rely for



support on generosity stemming from devotion rather than on assessments imposed by fiat” (Long 2001:95).

The elders’ role is to guide and counsel the gathering of Friends. Their qualifications to do this are spiritual quality, exemplifying of Quaker characteristics, maturity, and depth of character. Elders lead by stature. There is no ordination ceremony. The typical Quaker procedure is to deliberate according to the Spirit rather than according to parliamentary rules. The sense of the meeting leads to decision, not the majority vote. The minority opinion is won over, not voted down. For them the process of deliberations leads to agreement and concession. The governance empowers the community rather than dividing it.

2.4.2.2. The Presbyterian *editio princeps*

The original edition of this church government is seen as *ex gratia*, the act of grace. There are some minor diversions within the Presbyterian structure. The fundamental factor is that the Presbyterian church government asserts that its principles are directly derived from the Scripture. Church polity is the theological science which should, in the light of the written Word of God and the normative response of the confession to the Word of God, and under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, study and formulate the justice of God and, consequently, the reign of Christ in the church, and to make all these available to serve and build up the ecclesiastical *ethos* and structure. In other words, church polity is a theological science that studies the fundamental principles of the subject as they are taught in Scripture (the *ius constituendum*) and the order (*ius constitutum*) in a specific ecclesiastical context. This conviction is confirmed by recent writers such as Elsie Anne Mckee (1988:22) who once wrote that; “Reformed theologians claimed to base their teaching (doctrine) on scripture alone, but unlike many other reformers, they also maintained that the proper form of church order is given (or at least sketched) in the Bible.” The similar train of thought can be traced in the popular reformed theologian, Berkhof (1941:581-584) who lists the following five fundamental principles regarding the Reformed tradition’s polity:



1. *Christ is the head of the Church and the source of all its authority.* His authority is manifested in the following considerations:

- 1.1. He instituted the Church of the New Testament
- 1.2. He instituted the means of grace which the Church must administer, namely the Word and the sacraments.
- 1.3. He gave to the Church its constitution and officers, and clothed them with divine authority, so that they can speak in his name.
- 1.4. He is ever present in the Church when it meets for worship, and speaks and acts through its officers.

2. *Christ exercises his authority by means of his royal word.* “The reign of Christ is not in all respects similar to that of earthly kings. He does not rule the Church by force, but *subjectively* by His Spirit, which is operative in the Church, and *objectively* by the Word of God as the standard of authority” (1941:583).

3. *Christ as King has endowed the Church with power.* The ecclesiastical power is committed by Christ to the Church as a whole. This to the ordinary members and the officers alike, though the officers receive some additional measure of power in order to perform their respective duties in the Church of Christ. They receive their power and authority as officers directly from Christ. They are representatives, not just deputies or delegates of the people.

4. *Christ provided for the specific exercise of this power by representative organs.* The officers are called and confirmed by the Lord Himself, and it is from Him that they receive their authority in order to serve His Church responsibly.

5. *The power of the Church resides primarily in the governing body of the local Church.* “It is one of the fundamental principles of Reformed or



Presbyterian government, that the power or authority of the Church does not reside first of all in the most general assembly of any Church, and is only secondarily and by derivation from this assembly, vested in the governing body of the local Church, but that it has its original seat in the consistory or session of the local Church, and is by this transferred to the major assemblies, such as classes (Presbyterian) and synods or general assemblies” (1941: 584). It is out of this statement that conclusion can be arrived at that the Reformed system honours the autonomy of the local church, though with some limitations in matters of cooperation with other congregations. The local church is expected to maintain the unity with other churches on a common confessional basis for mutual growth.

The Reformed notions above express the fact that in the light of the Scripture, the field of study of church polity as an ecclesiological subject is the church itself. In the ecclesiological subjects, church history focuses on the church of the past, whereas church polity concentrates on the present and the future church. The primary function of the church polity is to enable the church in the world and to render the services determined by God to be the task of the church. Like du Plooy (1997:175) highlights: “Church polity is not merely a chain of rules and regulations, but constitutes a theological science which should study the rules for the architecture of the church (as a building) and for people’s conduct and existence in the building. It has to study in Scripture the justice of God which obtains, and should obtain in the church.”

2.4.2.3 Summary

The Presbyterian polity is the government of the church by presbyters or elders. It provides for the following four courts:

- The Session is governance by elders who are elected by democratic proceeding in the local congregation.



- The Presbytery, which is the geographically defined body consisting of all ministers residing within it, together with an equal number of governing elders from the area churches. It is the body by which congregations are established, legitimised, and monitored.
- The Synod is geographically larger than the presbytery and their primary purpose is to advance the mission and the programme of the church's life in their specified area.
- The General Assembly is the highest governing body that meets at least annually to deal with various issues affecting the church.

The typical Presbyterian ministry is ordered by pastors, ruling elders, and deacons. Both the pastors and ruling elders take part in the meetings of the Presbytery, the Synod, and the General Assembly.

It is understood that church polity is *sui generis*, since the church has a unique character. The Reformed Church is expected to have a true and legitimate constitution, and a well-organised form of government. This was the spirit of Calvin in the Institutes regarding the church polity. In the paper, *The Foundation and Relevance of Reformed Church Polity as a Theological Science*, du Plooy (1997:169) points out that “from the angle of scientific theory, it is imperative that church polity as a theological science should be able to account for its points of departure, fundamental principles, sources, presuppositions, and its function and task.” This puts a huge demand on church polity since it *is scientia sacra regendi ecclesiam visibilem*.

2.4.3. The Congregational Structure

2.4.3.1. Definition

The seat of authority is the local congregation. The two fundamental principles are autonomy and democracy. The local congregation is independent and self-governing. Every member of the local congregation has a voice in its affairs. “The congregational type of church government vests all legislative authority in the local church. District and



general organizations are merely advisory in power and instituted simply for the purpose of cooperating in missionary work, educational work, and so forth” (Thiessen 1979:317-318). There is no external power that can dictate to the local church as to what direction it should take or action to undertake in its own context. It is a polity that clearly states (Akin et al 2004:157) that

it is that form of church government in which final human authority rests with the local or particular congregation when it gathers for decision-making. This means that decisions about membership, leadership, doctrine, worship, conduct, missions, finances, property, relationships, and the like are to be made by the gathered congregation except when such decisions have been delegated by the congregation to individual members or groups of members.

There is a range within this polity, where one finds the liberals who are liturgical, and the conservatives who are against any form of formality in worship. One finds that among these Congregationalists, there are two main streams. These are the ***connective and associational*** congregationalism (Long 2001:103-136).

2.4.3.2. The ***connective*** congregationalism is when the local churches come together in agreement of the spread of the gospel and for the sustenance of catholicity. The churches have some supervisory interaction with each other. The authority in the local church can be extended over that of other congregations. It is further asserted by E L Roy (2001:104) that

there is an effort to obtain commonality in faith and practice that provides distinguishing features to the ecclesial family. Creeds are usually involved and considered important. Patterns of worship may also be similar. Acceptance of such standards comes about, however, because they are adopted by the congregations acting together and not because



they are imposed by a supervisory “over-body” with an existence prior to, or an authority superior to, that of the local congregations.

From 1838 when the Missouri Synod was enacted, until 1988 when the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America was formed, the American Lutheran polity had always reflected connectional congregationalism. This fact is attested by Lull (1983:140) that “the strength of the Lutheran church continues to be at the parish level... Most (Lutherans) have felt the congregations to be the primary reality, and the wider church a secondary and more problematic matter.” Lull continues to engross the fact that assuring validity for the word and sacraments requires connections among congregations in order to guard against idiosyncratic manifestations of local control, or a parish life that bears little resemblance to practices of the wider church. This polity have not developed as a response to historical and contingent circumstances, but from deliberate and theoretical design.

This had put Lutheran polity in a dialectical contradict between the local determination and denominational control. The Lutheran bishops’ role is not sacerdotal like that of the Episcopalians. The bishop’s responsibilities cover the areas of worship and spiritual oversight, pastoral care, mission planning, mission interpretation, mission administration, ecumenical relations, and liaison. The Lutheran Presbyterial leniency does not clarify the role of the clergy and laity at the local congregation level. The unifying factor is faithfulness to the Word and sacraments. As Long (2001:111) further highlights; “while theoretically free to determine their own sense of what it means to be a Christian community, local congregations cannot ignore the oversight of a body seen as a means of guiding proper practice and insuring correct doctrine.” It is clear then, that Lutheranism stresses the primacy of the local parish. The local parish is the centre of their strength.

2.4.3.3. The *associational congregationalism* gives local churches the freedom to shape their practices according to their own judgement about the gospel’s requirements. Freedom is given greater emphasis than control. The group of denominations following this government is sometimes called the *Free Church Tradition*, sometimes known as



Independency. Cooperation among churches is for support and reinforcement. The serious note is that the associational congregationalism has less control over local churches than connective congregationalism.

The Baptist traditions are well-known for this tradition. The lengthy quotation from Long (2001:129-130) is critical

The foundational unit of Baptist ecclesiology is the local congregation. While the local congregation enjoys the right to govern its own affairs – to admit (and dismiss) members, to call (and, if necessary, ordain) its own ministers, to possess (or dispose of) its own property, and to write its own covenants of purpose (which in some sense serve as doctrinal standards) – most Baptist churches conform to recognizable patterns that do much to counteract the otherwise centrifugal consequences that might flow from purely local decision making. To be sure, there are often differences (particularly in theological stance) between one local Baptist church and another, or between one Baptist association and other Baptist associations. Yet churches within the various Baptist associations have similar set of worship practices (marked by fervour and informality). Although this similarity in posture and practice is voluntary, it is sufficiently in evidence to give Baptists a recognizable identity, despite the differences.

The diversity within the Baptist tradition is remarkable. Some groups allow for congregational freedom that tolerate theological diversity and ecumenical cooperation, while others cling to theological rigidity and ecumenical cooperation is frowned upon.

2.5. THE PENTECOSTAL/CHARISMATIC ECCLESIOLOGY

2.5.1. Introduction



The predecessors of the twentieth century Pentecostal Movement are the “Irvingites” stemming from Edward Irving (1792-1834), a Scottish Presbyterian minister who believed that the Church should enjoy the *charismata* that it had during the apostolic era. His followers emphasised speaking in tongues and the imminent return of Christ. They were organised in 1842 and were called the Catholic Apostolic Church. Vidler (1974:66) refers to this church that “its apocalyptic character” emphasised miracles, judgement, prophecies, and the coming of Christ to the world. Irving’s ministry in Rowe became vocal to for the need of restoration of apostles and prophets in the church. Moriarty (1992:32) stresses the fact that Irving “believed that the church lost most of its spiritual dynamic because it had abandoned the fivefold offices of apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers. Irving believed the full restoration of these offices would enable the church to be the dominant force it was intended to be.” He is seen as a forerunner of today’s Pentecostal Movement that raise a question whether the historic, institutionalised churches have not lost something that was essential in apostolic Christianity.

Since its *annus mirabilis* (1906) at Azusa Street, Los Angeles, the hallmark of Pentecostal movement has been the experience of a free flow of *charisms* in the church. The realisation of this Pentecostal experience was never only for enthusiasm, but transcending denominational and ideological chasms without demanding structural or doctrinal constructs in any ecclesiastical grouping. In the words of Quebedeaux (1983:185), Pentecostals were “a non-sectarian movement that could unify Christians.”

2.5.2. Ecclesiastical Definitions

This Christian renewal movement of the twentieth century embraces *ecclesiastical* definitions as

2.5.2.1. *Koinonia*. The genesis of Catholic ecclesiology post Vatican II, especially the one embraced by Küng (1986:222-241), highlights ecclesia as the *fellowship* of the redeemed of the Lord- *communio* with the glorified Lord. This fellowship was never, until recently, associated with *ecumenism*. The use of the language of fellowship is



favoured above the *hierarchical* and *institutionalised* church. The church is a charismatic fellowship, a *pneumatologically* constituted reality. The church of today should reflect the New Testament *koinonia*. This New Testament fellowship is “a common experience of baptism into the body of Christ through the Spirit (cf. 1 Cor 12:13). This fellowship is something to be experienced, a shared experience in the everyday life of the community” (Kärkkäinen 2002:75). The community and the Spirit are inseparable. The community enjoys fellowship through the *charismata*. The community lives in the expectation of *auxilium ab alto*. The waiting for the power from on (The Holy Spirit empowerment) high is a motivating factor for the survival of *koinonia*.

2.5.2.2. *The People of God*. The Charismatic ecclesiology perceives the church as the disciplined community of those obedient to Jesus Christ. They are the believing people of God that are built together into a spiritual building for God’s habitation. In some detailed quotations of the Shepherding Movement teachers, Moore (2003:72) concludes that Charismatics believe that “the church was to be a visible alternate society which sets forth unequivocal norms for behaviour and community life that will produce the kind and quality of people capable of influencing our society...” The same notion is paradoxically expressed by Bishop Payne (2004:46) of Christ Churches of God in Christ, that “the visible, physical church is a community of believers who are under constant development by the principles of the kingdom of God. These principles of the kingdom are the standards, rules, and guides for church’s procedures.” The Charismatic leaders are of one opinion that Christ is busy building His church, making an alternate society – the righteous nation that keeps faith. This society, which is sometimes referred to as the third nation is different from the Jews and the Gentiles. It is a new people of God made up of the believers in Christ from both the Jewish *Diaspora* and the Gentile *societas*.

2.5.2.3. *The Kingdom of God*. The Pentecostals and Charismatics interpret the New Testament Church as the expression of the kingdom of God where God’s plan and purpose are effected. The church is where God is to rule and reign. The church is where God is the source of all activities and the source of wisdom, knowledge, and directions in life. The kingdom of God is greater than the church, but can be experienced through or in



the church. This notion is prevalent in the emerging Apostolic/ Charismatic churches that had impacted the Pentecostal theology in the recent decades. One of its proponents, Payne (2004: viii) strikes the differences between the New Testament Church and the Kingdom of God

The New Testament Church is that body created by Christ to carry forth the last day mission of Christ and his Kingdom in the earth. The Kingdom of God through the New Testament Church is much greater than simply the physical Church we see today in the earth. The New Testament Church is a mystery of God and is involved in the eternal purpose of God in this present earth. The greater apostle Paul was given an understanding and a revelation of what God was moving toward in the church in bringing forth His' will into the earth through the church. The Pauline Epistles teaching on God's Kingdom through or in the Church is clearly made known and the clarity is that the Kingdom's order, principles, and design must be operational in the present church.

2.5.2.4. *The Covenant community.* In the early eighties, the Pentecostals and Charismatics were grappling with their ecclesiological understanding. In the midst of these wrangles, the voice of one of their significant teachers, Don Basham echoed what a Covenant church ought to be. Moore (2003:150) quotes Basham's article in the New Wine Magazine

A community of God's redeemed people: bound together in covenant love, submitted to compassionate authority and rulership, and manifesting peace, holiness, and family fidelity expressed through revered fatherhood, cherished woman and motherhood with secure and obedient children. A community where loving correction and instruction produce healthy growth and maturity, where dedication to excellence produces the finest results in arts, crafts, trades and commerce, providing prosperity and abundance for all its members. A community of faith, worship, praise and a selfless ministry, manifesting individually and



corporately the gifts and the fruit of the Holy Spirit. A continuity where all life is inspired and directed by the Spirit of Jesus Christ and is lived to His glory as a witness and testimony to the world.

These teachers believe the church to be God's expression of love in the world. It is intertwined with Christ in a covenant relationship and love. This love is expressed by the church's fulfilment of the Great Commission here on earth. Since its inception at the dawn of the twentieth century, the Pentecostal/Charismatic ecclesiology has been a very low priority. The *ecclesiastical* focus has always been the preaching of the Gospel throughout the whole earth as preparation for Christ's *Second Advent* (Matt 24:14). The missional mandate was to be accompanied with Pentecost experience. This *charismata* was speaking in tongues, and the gift of healing. The purpose of *charismata* was to equip God's people for personal holiness, and evangelistic endeavours for the end-times. This *ecclesiological* outlook is emphasised *missiologically* by a South African missiologist, J J Kritzing (1994:11) that "for Pentecostals the essence of the Christian church is to be found in the Pentecost experience, revealing itself in the charismata (spiritual gifts) given at Pentecost to equip the church for its task to be witnesses to the ends of the earth and the end of time (Acts 1:8)."

2.5.3. Charismatic Ecclesiology: A Debatable Issue?

There is a debate within theological studies regarding the Pentecostal or Charismatic ecclesiology. Does it exist or is it a hidden revelation still to be unfolded? This question covers not only ecclesiastical concerns, but other theological avenues. Pentecostal theology is not thematised or systematised. Kärkkäinen (2002:72) captures it rightly that "the central point to note is the accent on lived Charismatic spirituality rather than on discursive theology." There is, to a certain extent, a rejection of traditional evangelical premise *littera scripta manet*- that what is written is permanent and cannot be altered. In this case, the Scriptures, though *sacrosanct*, cannot contain God since He is continuing to reveal Himself through the ministry of the Holy Spirit in the *koinonia*. Moore (2003:191) asserts that "ecclesiology has never been a strong point in Evangelical theological study,



and this is especially so for Pentecostal – Charismatics. This must change. Instead of simply mimicking the latest successful models and methods for church growth, what is needed is the wedding of ecclesiological orthodoxy and orthopraxis.” There is a dire need for more theological dialogue. The dialogue must be rooted in biblical texts

2.6. THE EMERGING APOSTOLIC MOVEMENT: THE FIVEFOLD MINISTRY OF THE CHURCH

2.6.1. Definition and Biblical Bases

The five-fold ministry is a concept of church leadership based upon the ministry of men and women who are divinely called and anointed with one of five ministry gifts found in Ephesians 4:11. These are Apostle, Prophet, Evangelist, Pastor, and Teacher. The proponents of this church government are insistent that these gifts are not the gifts of the Holy Spirit, but an extension of Christ’s headship ministry of the Church. Their primary ministry and function are to teach, train, activate, and mature the saints for the work of their ministries as directed in Ephesians 4:12-13. The *Christian Research Institute Journal, Volume 22, Number 1 (1999)* carries a full article on the background of the five-fold ministry. On page 1 it states: “The doctrine of fivefold ministry dates at least as far back as the Latter Rain movement, which emerged in 1948.”

2.6.2. The Marks of the Apostolic Churches

It is of great interest in ecclesiology to identify the marks or identities of any ecclesiastical body. The following marks of the emerging apostolic churches are identified:

2.6.2.1 The marks identified by Donald Miller (1997:11) after researching Vineyard, Calvary Chapel, and Hope Chapel are

1. They were started after the mid-1960s.
2. The majority of congregation members were born after 1945.



3. Seminary training of clergy is optional.
4. Worship is contemporary.
5. Lay leadership is highly valued.
6. They have extensive small group ministries.
7. Clergy and congregants usually dress informally.
8. Tolerance of different personal styles is prized.
9. Pastors tend to be understated, humble and self-revealing.
10. Bodily, rather than mere cognitive, participation in worship is the norm.
11. The “gifts of the Holy Spirit” are affirmed.
12. Bible-centred teaching predominates over topical sermonizing

2.6.2.2. On the other hand, George G Hunter III of Asbury Theological Seminary in the *Leadership Network Forum* (1996) letter, identifies ten features of apostolic congregations as follows

1. Strong biblical content.
2. Earnest in prayer.
3. Compassion for the lost.
4. Obedience to the Great Commission.
5. Vision for what people can become.
6. Cultural adaptation to the target population.
7. Small groups.
8. Strong lay ministries.
9. Every member and every seeker receives regular pastoral care- from lay person.
10. Many ministries to the unchurched.

2.6.2.3. Elmer L Towns (1996:3) of Liberty University in Lynchburg, Virginia, considers the following eight characteristics as significant in the new apostolic churches

1. Large size.
2. Family feeling, but not exclusive.
3. Cross socioeconomic classes.
4. Led by “charismatic” pastor-leaders.



5. Congregation both independent and interdependent.
6. Reflect New Testament theological bias.
7. Passion for outpouring of God's Spirit.
8. Bonded by methodology, not theology.

2.6.2.4. Peter Wagner goes on in another book, *New Apostolic Churches* (1997:18-25), to identify his own marks of the apostolic churches, or New Apostolic Reformation, as he coins these churches.

1. New name.
2. New authority structure
3. New leadership training.
4. New ministry focus.
5. New worship style.
6. New prayer forms.
7. New financing.
8. New outreach.
9. New power priorities.

2.6.3. Historical and Theological Bases

Moriarty wrote a book in 1992; *The New Charismatics*, published by Zondervan. In that book, he identifies seven points as the Latter Rain movement's doctrinal contributions to neo-Pentecostalism. I take the liberty to summarise these seven points as pointers to the historical basis of the fivefold ministry:

1. Restorationism: This is the belief that God has progressively restored truths to the church since the Reformation. According to the neo-Pentecostal theology this restoration includes justification by faith, baptism by immersion, holiness, divine healing, the baptism of the Holy Spirit, and the fivefold ministry.

2. Fivefold ministry: This is the view that the church cannot function effectively without all five offices in the body of Christ.



3. *Spiritual disciplines:* In this, the disciplines of deliverance, fasting, and the laying on of hands are included.

4. *Prophecy:* Prophecy is no longer restricted to general words of exhortation, but would include personal detailed revelations for guidance and instruction.

5. *Recovery of true worship:* God's manifested presence is dependent upon a certain order of worship involving singing in tongues, clapping, shouting, singing prophecies, and a new order of praise dancing.

6. *Immortalization of the saints:* Only those believers moving in the truth of the Latter Rain restoration, not necessarily all in the church, will attain an immortal state before Christ returns.

7. *Unity of the faith:* The church will attain unity of the faith before Christ returns.

The New Apostolic Churches are the offspring of the Charismatic Movement that sprang out of the mainline denominations in the early sixties. The Charismatic Movement (Neo-Pentecostalism) appeared to be a continuation of Pentecostalism in the mainline Protestant churches. Hayford & Moore (2006:189) give a glimpse of its origin: "It was Palm Sunday, April 3, 1960, an Episcopal priest Dennis Bennett stood before his Van Nuys, California, congregation... That morning Bennett didn't preach; he just gave his testimony about his life-changing experience of being baptized in the Holy Spirit and speaking with tongues." Bennett became a true patriarch of neo-Pentecostalism – a movement that made some remarkable strides in the modern day Christendom. The movement *metamorphosised* since then and in its different shapes is influencing Christendom.

In retrospect, the Pentecostal and Charismatic movement of the seventies and the eighties received a scourge for lack of accountability. This led to the formation of the Shepherding Movement or Discipleship Movement in October 1970. The five respectable preachers: Don Basham, Bob Mumford, Derek Prince, Ern Baxter, and Charles Simpson banded together to form this



movement. Like their predecessors from the dawn of the century, they developed a magazine called *New Wine*. This became their powerful mouthpiece to promote their convictions pertaining to *ecclesiological* understandings, submission and spiritual authority, and accountability. This accountability was accomplished by the forging the relationship of each believer being connected to a personal pastor or shepherd. The Shepherding Movement is the springboard of the modern day apostolic churches, which are the focus of this research.

2.6.4. Views on Church Government and Polity

The movement's *logia* were not scholarly or theological constructs to be placed within *academia*. Doug Beacham (in Green 2005:13) agrees: "The Charismatic/Pentecostal community is facing a challenge – and it's not about theology, worship styles, or spiritual gifts. It all comes down on the (until recently) dry topic of church government." These teachers are convinced that:

2.6.4.1. God is restoring biblical church government, delegating His authority through the fivefold ministry offices. Apostles and prophets are the foundational government structure of the church. "These five ministries are the governmental ministries of the church. They carry with them the accountability, authority, and responsible government of the church...These are the central and main ministries of the church" (Payne 2004:89). The fivefold ministry is a demand for the church. They are designed for growth and health of the church.

2.6.4.2. Structures alone will not produce spirituality and God's mission on earth. Denominational governments are rooted in *democracy*. *Theocracy* and *democracy* are never in balance. Leadership must be appointed and anointed by God. *Ecclesiastical* leaders are not to be equated with employees. The Bible must reign supreme over church constitutions, bylaws, and conventions. The New Apostolic Reformation labels the present ecclesiastical structures



dysfunctional and irrelevant for God’s move in the world today. Wagner (1999:6) points out that “structures that were originally developed to facilitate evangelism, Christian nurture, worship, social service and ministry in general are now considered by some as causes of much inefficiency and ineffectiveness in the same areas. Dysfunctionalism has been setting in.” Church structures or government is regarded as tantamount to the progress of the church. It is seen as a way of limiting people’s creativity, and exercising their call from God to fulfil God’s mission on earth.

Table 2.1: Some of the well-known fivefold churches

<i>Name of the Church</i>	<i>Leader</i>	<i>Location</i>
<i>Antioch Churches & Ministries</i>	<i>John P Kelly</i>	<i>Southlake, Texas</i>
<i>Christian Int Ministries Network</i>	<i>Bill Hamon</i>	<i>Santa Rosa Beach, FL</i>
<i>Christian Life Church</i>	<i>Barry Hill</i>	<i>Spokane, WA</i>
<i>Crusaders Ministries</i>	<i>John Eckhard</i>	<i>Chicago, Illinois</i>
<i>Deeper Christian Life Ministry</i>	<i>William F Kumuyi</i>	<i>Lagos, Nigeria</i>
<i>Dove Christian Fellowship Int</i>	<i>Larry Kreider</i>	<i>Ephrata, Penn</i>
<i>Embassy Christian Centre</i>	<i>Roberts Liardon</i>	<i>Irvine, California</i>
<i>Faith Community Baptist Church</i>	<i>Lawrence Khong</i>	<i>Singapore</i>
<i>Grace Korean Church & Missions</i>	<i>David (Kwang Shin) Kim</i>	<i>Anaheim, California</i>
<i>Grace Presbytery</i>	<i>Michael P Fletcher</i>	<i>Fayetteville, NC</i>
<i>His People Christian Ministries</i>	<i>Paul Daniel</i>	<i>South Africa</i>
<i>Hope Chapel</i>	<i>Ralph Moore</i>	<i>Kaneohe, Hawaii</i>
<i>Hope of Bangkok Church</i>	<i>Joseph C Wongsak</i>	<i>Bangkok, Thailand</i>
<i>Jesus is Lord Church</i>	<i>Eddie C Villanueva</i>	<i>Manila, Philippines</i>
<i>Kings Community Church</i>	<i>John Knight</i>	<i>Spokane, WA</i>
<i>Marshall Community</i>	<i>Toby Tobin</i>	<i>Spokane, WA</i>
<i>Ministers Fellowship Int</i>	<i>Dick Iverson</i>	<i>Portland, Oregon</i>
<i>Morning Star International</i>	<i>Rice Broocks</i>	<i>Brentwood, TEN</i>
<i>Sandpoint Christian Centre</i>	<i>Miles Nelson</i>	<i>Idaho</i>
<i>Spokane Christian Centre</i>	<i>Rick Sharky</i>	<i>Spokane, WA</i>
<i>The Fellowship of Int Churches</i>	<i>Wellington Boone</i>	<i>Duluth, Georgia</i>
<i>Victory Christian Centre</i>	<i>Billy Joe Daugherty</i>	<i>Tulsa, Oklahoma</i>
<i>Victory Ministries</i>	<i>Dwayne Stone</i>	<i>Denton, Texas</i>
<i>Willow Creek Community Church</i>	<i>Bill Hybels</i>	<i>S Barrington, Ill</i>
<i>Word of Life Church</i>	<i>Ulf Ekman</i>	<i>Uppsala, Sweden</i>

2.6.5. Reasons for Fivefold Ministry

The adherents of fivefold ministry are emphatic that the church will better fulfil its mission and hasten the second coming of Christ if it will accept the five offices of church



government. This assertion has brewed a critical reflection from some evangelical camps. The broad evangelical spectrum does not question the continuing importance of evangelists, pastors, and teachers. The bone of contention had been on the offices of the prophets and apostles beyond the early church, though the Catholic and the Anglican bishops had believed in apostolic succession. By this, the bishops assert that their ordination lineage can be traced back to Jesus’ apostles. On the contrary, Rev Rafael D Martinez, the Co-Director of Spiritwatch Ministries is of the persuasion that

the raising up of the five fold ministry in the local church is seen as a provision of divinely appointed leadership for the body of Christ. Since they have been raised up by God’s express will, the person of the five fold minister is seen as a Spirit-led ‘gift’ to the church which it must heed and follow. They are leaders with special ‘offices’ and ministries to guide and govern the Christian Church that drew upon the leadership gifts present in believers other than the traditional Pentecostal leadership roles of pastors (www.spiritwatch.org/fivespab1.htm).

Table 2.2: The well-known preachers of the fivefold ministry doctrine

Name	Ministry	Location
<i>Cannistraci David</i>	<i>Evangel Christian Fellowship</i>	<i>San Jose, CA</i>
<i>Hayford Jack</i>	<i>The King’s College & Sem</i>	<i>Los Angeles, CA</i>
<i>Haggard Ted</i>	<i>The New Life Centre</i>	<i>Colorado Springs</i>
<i>Payne J L</i>	<i>Christ Churches of God in Christ</i>	<i>Jackson, MS</i>
<i>Wagner C Peter</i>	<i>World Prayer Centre</i>	<i>Colorado Spring</i>

The bone of contention in this debate is how does the fivefold ministry operate as a church government? Does it repeal the traditional polities that have been a *locus* of Christendom for ages? This question is not a *sancta simplicitas*. It is very difficult. Most of the apostolic church leaders, if not all, remain convinced that the traditional structures remain the same, but the ministry is to change. The fivefold ministry though has an enormous impact on church government and polity, does not replace the traditional structures, but enhance them. Bishop Dwayne Stone (1999: xvi) is emphatic that “in this day God is bringing about reformation in the realm of true apostolic and prophetic ministry. The fivefold ministry... is being restored. The ministry of these gifts is being



formed and released into new understanding. God’s chosen ones are being set in office by the Holy Spirit. The church is being equipped (informed) and perfected (transformed).”

2.6.6. Summary

The focus of this research is to establish the fact that there is a balance in the *spontaneous structure* and the *functional structure* of church polity. The *spontaneous structure* is primarily based on the experience, feelings, and attitudes that originate in the extraordinary charismata. It is where the church “is characterized by a strong pneumatic emotiveness, prophetic inspiration, and charismatic community formation on the grounds of a realized eschatology” (Van der Ven 1996:303). This is where the fivefold ministry finds its expression. On the other hand, in the *functional structure*, certain rational considerations play a role. It stems from pastoral aims and motives. It is founded on the ordinary charismata.