



CHAPTER 4: THEOLOGICAL REFLECTIONS ON FIVEFOLD MINISTRY

4.1. INTRODUCTION

This chapter debates the emerging apostolic movement's understanding of the fivefold ministry, and its theological roots as demonstrated by the concept of restoration, the 'hand illustration', the broader understanding of Ephesians 4 passage, the allegorical interpretation of the Scriptures, and the influence of fundamentalism. The New Apostolic Reformation is used as a case study representing these views. The research continues to explore the understanding of *charisms* within the context of Traditional, Reformed, and Charismatic ecclesiologies. The New Testament Church leadership is scrutinised as a precursor that influences charismatic understanding of leadership especially in reference to the *ecclesiality* and the *contextuality* of the early church organisation. The chapter further explores the rationale behind the lack of cohesion within the charismatic ecclesiology – basing this on the ecclesiastical and theological background of charismatic leaders, the lack of *catechesis*, the lack of theological scholarship, the limitations of charismatic institutions curricular, the narrow charismatic dogma, the influence of phenomenology, and the role of *Realpolitik* and *vox populi* in influencing the emerging apostolic churches government and polity. The chapter concludes with the highlights of the misunderstandings of *charismata* within the current ecclesiastical practices.

4.2. NEW APOSTOLIC REFORMATION'S FIVEFOLD MINISTRY

Following the famous Azusa Street revival in Los Angeles in 1906, the restoration of the fivefold ministry and a mighty outpouring of the Holy Spirit just before the return of Christ picked up new steam. This spawned a new generation of apostles to appear, and the restoration of the fivefold ministry somehow faded until the late forties of the twentieth century. The doctrine of fivefold ministry dates as far back as the era of the Latter Rain Movement, which emerged in 1948. Moriarty (1992:44-64) gives an in-depth into this movement. The adherents of this doctrine believe that the church will better fulfil its mandate or mission here on earth by accepting the five offices of church



government as stipulated in Ephesians 4:11. These are the fivefold ascension gift ministers as revealed by this passage. They are not gifts of the Holy Spirit, but an extension of Christ's headship ministry to the Church – not *charismata*, but *doma*. Their primary ministry and function are to teach, train, activate, and mature the saints for the work of their ministries (Eph 4:12-13). There is also some *eschatological* perception that embracing this doctrine will also hasten the second coming of Jesus Christ – the notion promoted by Payne (2004:78)

The fivefold ministry is a demand for the church to be Lord's church in this age. Education is good, but we need more than education or ambition within Church's government. The Church needs a ministry equipped with supernatural power and gifts. We will understand five ministries in the governmental ministry of the church.

Generally, the fivefold ministry is a concept of church leadership based upon the ministry of men and women who have been supposedly divinely called and anointed with one of five ministry gifts listed in Eph 4:11. It is seen as a provision of divinely appointed leadership for the body of Christ. The fivefold ministry leaders are raised up as by God's express will, and are seen as Christ's gifts (*domata*) to the Church. The church is expected to heed them and follow them. 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, elders, and deacons.

4.3. THE THEOLOGICAL ROOTS OF FIVEFOLD MINISTRY

4.3.1. It is all about restoration

The New Apostolic Reformation insists that the Holy Spirit is activating a restoration movement within the corporate Church of Jesus Christ today. This is a new thing that God is doing: - to restore Christ's ascension gift ministry of the five offices. "This is the



beginning of the kingdom's order and structure given to the New Testament Church of this age. This is God's Government for Church's Leadership" (Payne 2004:34). In this context, to restore is to reactivate and re-establish something back to its original state and purpose. In the Charismatic context, restoration implies the sovereign act of the Holy Spirit within the Church to restore a biblical truth or ministry back to its proper order and function. It is a divine scheme in which God progressively restores truths to the Church. It is a belief that God is reviving His Church in this generation. The adherents view themselves as a Spirit-empowered church being restored to its New Testament glory. In the words of Moriarty (1992:95-96):

The new charismatics believe that in order for the church to experience New Testament results, it must recapture the New Testament pattern. This means the offices of apostle, prophet, evangelist, pastor, and teacher must be restored to equip the saints for the work of ministry. The church will not be as effective in the dominion process unless the fivefold ministry expounded in Eph 4:11 is restored and recognised by the church at large. For the body of Christ to come to full maturity, it needs to embrace all of the God-ordained ministries outlined in Eph 4:11; they are essential, not optional.

The New Apostolic Reformation movement's theological bulwark is that the restoration is God's act of consecration of everything to the Lord, the transformation of a new people by the Spirit, and the beneficent presence of Christ among His people by the operation of the fivefold ministers.

Since the era of the Reformation, God has been in a process of restoring His Church to its former glory and power. As Christ's return becomes more imminent, the process of restoration becomes realistic as the Church is expected to become complete and rise to take its centre stage in the *arena* of events in the *cosmos*. The fivefold ministry endeavours to address the charismatic emphasis on current church *apostasy* as *katharsis*



(cleansing) and the beginning of the new era. The Spirit's operation is not seen as restricted by a rebellious and unresponsive humanity. The Spirit removes obstacle, changes structures, and renews people as He ushers in the new era of restoration.

Hamon (1997:19) gives the *dispensational* panoramic view of the Holy Spirit's restorational work through church history *epochs*. This view sounds inimical to church history scrutiny, but is vital to highlight:

Here is a general overview of what accelerating restoration means: Restorational movements since AD 1500 have accelerated in their frequency of occurrence from three hundred years apart to one hundred to fifty to every ten years during the last half of the 20th century. Each prepared the way for the next over the past five hundred years. The Protestant Movement prepared the way for the Holiness Movement and so on, the Pentecostal for the Latter Rain Restoration for the Charismatic Renewal and Faith Movement for the present Prophetic Movement, which is now preparing the way for the Apostolic Movement, which will in turn prepare the way for the Saints Movement, which enables the saints of the Most High to fulfil Daniel 2:44; 7:18, 22, 27; and Revelation 11:15; 1:5-6; 5:9-10.

In examining this view closely, one comes to the conclusion that restoration is the certainty of the new age that lies in God's *monergistic* involvement with His church and the free fulfilment of His promises of the Holy Spirit. God promises to deal graciously with all who know Him by releasing these *doma* to His *oikodome*.

Typical of the Charismatic hermeneutics, one observes allegory and symbolism that reigns supreme in their biblical interpretation. The *epochs* mentioned above leave a great number of gaps in the *genesis* of events in regard to church history. There is no *eclectic* critique of history, which inevitably leads to *subjectivism* in interpreting historical events – the bias that is dangerous to historical truth. This type of historical interpretation needs



to bear in mind that one of the fundamental principles of *reality* interpretation is the ideal of *objectivity*. It demands some deliberate elimination of personal prejudices. Facts need to be qualified and quantified with collective facts in a broader spectrum.

The theological understanding of restoration is inimical to the Charismatic understanding. It is attached to *katartismos* as found in Ephesians 4:12. This *katartismos* was a medical term used to refer to “setting a limb or bone or a restoration of a shoulder” (Hoehner 2003:549). The term is only encountered here in the New Testament and in those days it meant furnishing a room, or mending of a garment. Its basic meaning is to adjust, put in order, restore, to reconcile political factions, to equip, to be instructed, or to be trained. It occurs seventeen times in the LXX (Barth 1974:44-45), where it translates nine different Hebrew words. For instance:

- i) To establish (Ps 74:16 – LXX 73:16)
- ii) To equip, to restore (Ps 69:9 – MT 68:10, LXX 67:10)
- iii) To complete, finish (Ezra 4:12,13,16; 5:3,9,11; 6:14)

The word appears in its verb form about 13 times in the New Testament (*katartizo*) with the following connotations:

- i) To restore or to mend fishing nets (Mt 4:21; Mrk 1:19)
- ii) To restore a fallen brother (Gal 6:1; 1 Pet 5:10)
- iii) To prepare (Rom 9:22; Heb 10:5)
- iv) To put into proper order, complete, furnish (1 Thes 3:10; 1 Cor 1:10; Hebr 13:21)
- v) To perfect (Mt 21:16)
- vi) To instruct (Luk 6:40)

In the context of *doma* of Ephesians 4, the term refers to the preparation that includes instructing and equipping believers for effective ministry in the church. The passage does not allude to restoration of order out of a chaos. Hoehner (2003:550) explains further that the “gifted persons were given to the church for the immediate purpose of training or

preparing believers. It is important to be endowed with the gift(s) of the Spirit but it is also



important to learn to use the gift(s) effectively in the church for its edification.”

4.3.2. The fivefold ministry “Hand Illustration”

The fivefold ministers within the New Apostolic Reformation claim their biblical references on Eph 2:20; 4:11-13; 1 Cor 12:28; 1 Kings 18:44; as foundational to their understanding of what ‘fivefold’ ministry is to be. Some of their prominent teachers especially Ulf Ekman (1995) and J L Payne (2004), and Bill Hamon (1997) give a hand illustration to explain fivefold ministry:



4.3.2.1. The *thumb* symbolises the **apostle**: He can touch every member of the hand easily. It is stronger than the other fingers and vital if the hand is to grip anything. The apostle can therefore become any of the other four ministries. His anointing flows easily to all other ministers. The apostle has the stability and flexibility necessary for church's growth, maturity, and strength in the Lord. As Payne (2004:122) points out: "The apostle serving as the thumb is most effective in touching every governmental ministry providing establishment, order, balance, leadership, direction, and guidance." The critical reflection of Hamon (1997:151-152) regarding the restoration of the apostolic authority expatiates the fact that

The hand of God of the fivefold ministry has been greatly restricted in its powerful purposes. The hand of God has had to function with only four fingers. The power and function is limited greatly by the lack of a thumb. Now the apostle-thumb of the hand of God is being restored to proper placement and power. Since all elements of the hand of God are being restored fully, the hand of God will be extended in full power and demonstration.

The movement of the thumb gives power to the hand. The thumb is designed to complete the hand for its full function and power.

4.3.2.2. The *index finger* symbolises the **prophet**: His task is to point out the direction. He points at the spiritual condition of the church, reveals sins, and shows which road to take. The index finger (prophet) is closely related to the thumb (apostle). Together they have the closest working relationship in the hand ministry to the body of Christ.

4.3.2.3. The *middle finger* symbolises the **evangelist**: It is the far-reaching of them all, therefore the external ministry of the church. An evangelist is set apart to do a work descriptive in soul winning and with great focus on reaching the lost. "It is in the middle of all activity of the hand. It is usually the largest of the fingers. The evangelist usually



has the largest meetings in evangelistic campaigns. The evangelist is a vital part of the ministry of the hand” (Hamon 1997:152).

4.3.2.4. The *ring finger* symbolises the **pastor**: The pastor has a marital relationship with a church he serves. The pastors are shepherds who love the flock, care for it, encourage it, and meet its spiritual needs. The pastor is in a position of authority and service. To use Payne (2004:129); “he is in rulership and servitude in the governmental ministry.” The pastor is therefore expected to be involved in gathering the scattered people, establishing a governmental order, and caring for the weak and the misguided. The pastors are bound to the local saints by the ring of their shepherding relationship.

4.3.2.5. The *little finger* symbolises the **teacher**: The teacher explains, expounds, and analyses the written word to the church. All the *didache, rhema, biblos* including *logos* are all centred on the teacher. It is his ministry to edify the church and to disciple believers to the full maturity in Christ.

So, each finger represents one of the fivefold office, which comprises of the total hand ministry. The rational questions are inevitable:

- ***If a hand is employed to figuratively portray the fivefold ministry, what is the significance – if any?***

The answer one gets is that the thumb and index finger of this dubious illustration of the fivefold ministry relate are fulfilled by the apostolic and prophetic offices. The fivefold teachers in this category go on to elaborate expansions upon the symbolism of the word picture. Others make no such distinctions and in fact downplay them.

- ***When were apostles and prophets restored to the church?*** This question receives the diversity of answers:

Moriarty (1992:190-253) gives the survey of how different Charismatic scholars give different answers to these questions. For instance the Neo-Charismatic teachers answer by saying that the restoration of these offices occurred at the beginning of the Pentecostal outpouring about 100 years ago. The Shepherding Movement leaders respond by saying



‘ascension gift ministries’ were restored under the auspices of the Latter Rain revival in Canada around 1948, while the New Apostolic Reformation says the prophets were restored in the 1980’s and apostles in the 1990’s. The latter view is prevalent within the emerging apostolic movement or New Apostolic Reformation that is under scrutiny in this research. Some are eschatological in thinking on this question. The New Apostolic Reformation claims that greater restorations and revivals will come as a result of their emergence into the church world. Their view is that the fivefold ministry is a divinely restored ministerial institution that God has raised up to lead the Christian Church in the last days.

4.3.3. The allegorical interpretation of Scriptures

The Pentecostal and Charismatic biblical preaching and exposition are characterised by allegorical interpretation of the Scriptures. This is the use of a figure of speech to communicate truth by expressing the hidden meaning of the utterance – spoken or written. All the literal expressions are given other meanings. Another sense is expressed than that which the words convey. A good example is in the early church when believers discovered Jesus Christ and the Christian message all over the Old Testament. The actual events such as the crossing of the Jordan River, is seen as a symbol of baptism or some other Christian truth. The morning star of allegorism was the influential teacher from Alexandria named Origen. He made Africa the bedrock of allegorical interpretation of the Bible, the legacy that is still observed today. Within the literature, teaching, and culture that developed within the emerging apostolic movement, novel spiritualising and interpretations of biblical passages, and the usage of symbolism and allegory are employed to make them fit their theological framework.

A good example is 1 Kings 18:44...

The seventh time the servant reported, “A cloud as small as a man’s hand is rising from the sea.” So Elijah said, “Go, and tell Ahab, ‘Hitch up your chariot and go down before the rain stops



you. This refers to a cloud seen by the prophet Elijah that was the size of a man's hand during the approach of a rainstorm. The rainstorm signified God's sovereignty to apostate nation of Israel. The fivefold ministry teachers, using this verse, employ allegorical interpretation that is theologically questionable. For instance, George Kirkpatrick, the pastor of a New Jerusalem Fellowship in Fort Fairfield, Maine, reports: *"When Elijah defeated the prophets of Baal, the glory of God appeared to Elijah's servant... Elijah was on Mount Carmel with Ahab and four hundred prophets of Baal. Seven times Elijah sent his servant to look for any signs of rain. The seventh time he went, (seven is God's perfect number) he saw a little cloud, as a hand, raising out of the sea. As we view what God is revealing spiritually, we discover the cloud shaped like a man's hand rising out of the sea represents something very special. The sea represents a multitude of peoples, nations, and tongues. The hand coming out of the sea of people represents the fivefold ministry God is raising up in the earth: apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers... Ephesians 4:11. The fact the hand is little reveals this is a small group or remnant that will rise out of the great multitude of people to do God's service. The cloud represents God's glory. God's glory will shine upon this remnant ministry to usher in the Kingdom of God upon the earth. Today there is a sea of over six billion people on the earth. There has never been this many people on the earth at one time in history. Out of that sea of people, God is raising the little hand ministry. It is coming with the cloud of glory, and it will minister with the power and glory of God (www.newfoundationspubl.org/mercy.htm - 04/06/2005)*

In a critical reflection, going through this website, and looking at George Kirkpatrick's writings, one is regularly confronted with numerous unsound Biblical interpretations such



as the one above. He is not alone in this circle. One comes across “prophetic statements” that are hermeneutically questionable such as: “**A new day has dawned for the Church that Jesus is building in the Year 2005.** The Biblical significance of the number five is **GRACE** and **GIFTS** (both five- letter words). **2005 will be a year of mega-grace and mega-gifts!** That will be the **Divine Emphasis** of 2005! **God is doing a New Thing in 2005!** (www.slm.org/slm/rtf - 22/11/2006)

Allegorical interpretation and symbolism reigns supreme in the New Apostolic Reformation. The Old Testament is seen and interpreted through the symbolic lenses. A good example is quoted here from one of the famous fivefold teachers, Hamon (1997:152-153)

There are many more applicable illustrations that can be made to the fingers and thumb representing the fivefold ministry of Christ. Some have tried to say that the pastor and teacher is one ministry and therefore there are only four ascension gifts. But there are several Biblical illustrations that portray the fivefold ministry: the hand, the five bars on the sides of the tabernacle, the five pillars at the entrance to the Holy Place, the five senses and the five being the number of grace and redemption. The fivefold ministry is God’s main group of ministers for ministering God’s grace and redemption.

The declarations like the three cited above, together with the numerous ones in literature and websites, show some concepts that are not Biblical, or theologically sound. There are some that are extremely *anthropocentric* instead of *Christocentric*, therefore nature instead of grace. As in the broader evangelical hermeneutic, the Charismatic Movement uses a wider application of *sensus plenior* – the fuller or deeper meaning intended by God but not clearly intended by the human author, which is seen to exist in the words of a Biblical text when they are studied in the light of further revelation or development in the understanding of revelation. These are some imbalances and abuses of the concept that



has adversely affected Christians worldwide. There is a real need for the charismatic hermeneutics to adopt some theologically authentic approaches that are more explicitly consistent with the historical theology and Biblical data. For Charismatics, especially the New Apostolic Reformation, seeking a theological method and hermeneutic which are consistent with their roots and *ethos*, the price may indeed be high. The apostle Paul in 2 Timothy 2:15 instructs Timothy that he is to handle rightly the word of truth (*orthotomeo*) i.e. to cut a straight line, or to guide the word of truth along a straight line. The right use of the Word of God is its proper interpretation.

4.3.4. The influence of fundamentalism

Though the Pentecostals and Charismatics subscribe to *biblical literalism*, the questions arise in regard to allegorical interpretation and symbolism that is very prevalent in their hermeneutical expressions. The historical reflection on classical Pentecostalism bears witness that their systematic theology and theological ethics gradually reflected the basic tenets of fundamentalism. They accepted the “Five Fundamentals of the Faith” (Stott 1999:13-34):

4.3.4.1 Biblical infallibility

This is based on a historical recapitulation of the steps that led to Martin Luther’s *sola scriptura dictum*. It means that the Bible is the only *infallible* authority in the church. This developed at the time when the Church asserted that Scripture could be considered on a *primus inter pares* (first among equals) basis with ecclesiastical authority, giving it a kind of primacy among the errant sources such as councils, popes, traditions etc. Fundamentalism embraced the Bible as carrying unique authority solely on the basis of its being the primary historical source of *Euangelion*. The principle of *sola scriptura* involves inspiration, inerrancy, and authority.



4.3.4.2. The virgin birth of Christ

Christ's birth was as a result of supernatural influence of the Holy Spirit in Mary's pregnancy. He was not born out of any sexual union between any two human beings. In fundamentalism, the virgin birth confirms salvation as supernatural, and as an act of grace that enhances the uniqueness of Jesus Christ as the Saviour. It is seen as the evidence of God's power and sovereignty over nature.

4.3.4.3. Christ's substitutionary atonement

It expresses the entire work of Christ on the cross. This is when Christ is presented as the Lamb of God that takes away the sin of the world. He died in our place so that our broken relationship with God may be restored.

4.3.4.4. Christ's physical resurrection

The resurrection was historical, literal, and significant for faith. It is the basis for the believers' hope.

4.3.4.5. Christ's imminent, visible, and personal second coming

The second coming of Christ is indispensable to eschatology. It is the basis of the Christian's hope. It will mark the beginning of the completion of God's plan. Its main character is that it will be personal, physical, visible, unexpected, glorious, and triumphant.

These beliefs, together with moral negativism were reinforced by dispensationalism within the Pentecostal movement. These influenced the hermeneutical principles applied in Biblical interpretation for both the Charismatics and the Pentecostals.



One of the well-known critics of Charismatic Movement in the twentieth century is John MacArthur. In his well-published book, **The Charismatics** (1978:199-200), he elaborates the incompatibilities of Charismatic Movement and Fundamentalism as follows:

1. *The issue of revelation:* Charismatics claim that God is giving them the new revelation as they prophesy under the inspiration of the Spirit.
2. *The issue of interpretation:* Growing out of their approach to “new revelation,” charismatics get strange meanings out of Scripture with an *ad lib* - “this-is-what-it-means-to-me” approach.
3. *The issue of authority:* The charismatic emphasis on experience relegates Scripture to a secondary status of authority.
4. *The issue of apostolic uniqueness:* Charismatics insist that the miraculous manifestations of the first century should be normative for today.
5. *The issue of historic transition:* Charismatic interpretation of Acts 2, 8, 10, and 19 uses specially selected historical events to build a theology of the Holy Spirit.
6. *The issue of spiritual gifts:* Today’s charismatics run a course perilously close to the church at Corinth, where spiritual gifts were counterfeited and practitioners of pagan ecstasies ran amok.
7. *The issue of Spirit baptism:* Charismatics insist that every believer needs a second work of grace called “the baptism of the Holy Spirit.”
8. *The issue of healing:* Charismatics confuse the biblical doctrine of healing by insisting that the gift of healing is still in use today.
9. *The issue of tongues:* Charismatics claim that the ecstatic prayer language practiced in private is the same kind of tongues described in Scripture.
10. *The issue of spirituality:* True spirituality, say the charismatics, can be ours through the baptism of the Spirit, but Scripture teaches us to “walk in the Spirit,” who already dwells in every Christian.

This perception received a lot of criticism, and in fact, this book turned McArthur into the enemy for the Charismatic believers. Even Catholic critical thinkers such as Quebedeaux (1983:206) commented:



Such a negative evaluation, however, has more to do with differences in biblical interpretation than it does with the fundamentalist versus charismatic view of scriptural authority per se. Christian churches still grounded in the principle of Scripture alone as the absolute rule of faith and conduct often declare that charismatic renewal is not in keeping with their tradition, but they cannot find a *convincing* scriptural argument for their opposition – only post-biblical interpretations now increasingly unacceptable among exegetical scholars.

It is of great importance to mention that Charismatic theology is coloured by an intense premillennial eschatology. In 2006, Allan Anderson, the former Pentecostal minister in South Africa, and currently a professor of Global Pentecostal Studies at the University of Birmingham, gave an inaugural lecture and highlighted (2007:8)

The first feature of global Pentecostalism is the role of premillennial eschatology. One of the convictions of early Pentecostals was that their experience of Spirit baptism was a ‘fire’ that would spread all over the world, a last-days universal revival to precede the return of Jesus Christ. The conviction was part and parcel of the prevalent Premillennialism that pervaded the radical fringes of Protestantism – a belief in the imminent return of Christ to set up a thousand years reign on earth.

Premillennialism, dispensationalism, and the belief in the imminent return of Christ enhanced the evangelistic fervour of the movement. The Charismatics, just like the classical Pentecostals, interpret the promises of Joel 2:28-32 as being for today. They take the promises of the former and the latter rain (Hosea 6:1-3; Joel 2:23-27; James 5:7-8) to be the last days’ spiritual outpouring just prior to Christ’s imminent return. This eschatological intensity serves as a motivation for Charismatic missions and church growth and expansion in general. The Great Commission in Mark 16:15 is fired up by the



eschatological texts of Matt 24:14. These texts are both the motivation and the justification for their evangelistic activities

4.3.5. The New Testament church leadership as a precursor

4.3.5.1. The charismatic leadership attitude

There are some particular ecclesiological attitudes embraced by a large number of Charismatic groups. For the great majority, the charismatic ecclesiology remains basically untouched by their insistence on the direct experience of the charismata. Van der Ven (1996:311-312) elaborates that for some, the supernatural *ekchuno* - the pouring out of the Holy Spirit, can be limited or hampered by the structures of the historical church. This can impede the progress of the kingdom of God and often deny the *pneumatic* expressions in the church. This explains why the charismatic dogma has eschatologically-oriented framework for ecclesiology. It is for this reason that Bradshaw (1992:172) stresses that “the traditional order of ministry, authorised forms of service and church regulations can often seem to hinder this *eschatological* work of the Spirit, in the eyes of many charismatics.”

4.3.5.2. Leadership in the early church

Church leadership implies the structure and the interactions of the members with the intentions of the transformation (*metamorphoo*) of the community. Development in this context implies a process, a movement, or gradual growth. Basically it means changing from one state or form to another. It is a process that brings about fundamental changes in the community thereby stimulating, promoting, and guiding growth and giving meaning or *raison d’etre*. The structured church’s central theme is a metaphor of growth. This is growth manifested in the organism, therefore expected to be directional and purposive in its governance. Paul definitely had this in mind when after listing the *doma* of Eph 4:11 that, *to prepare God’s people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and*



become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ (Eph 4:12-14). My personal view is that the church as the community is people who live in spatial relationship to one another and who share the same interests and values. The structure can be either spontaneous or functional.

- Spontaneous structure: This is when explanations, principles, or laws are reduced to the absolute minimum. This structure requires simplicity and growth that is characterised by fruits (*karpos*) or production of good character. The spontaneous church is marked by constantly improving capacity of organising itself to achieve a particular goal. The wisdom of Van der Ven (1996:303) adds some invaluable contribution here: “The spontaneous structure is primarily based on the experiences, feelings, and attitudes that originate in the extraordinary charismata.” The New Testament churches were the *pneumatic* communities that were full of *charisma* and exuberance about their new-found faith. They were settled in their *locales* and worshipped in expectation of fulfilment of Christ’s promise of His second advent. Van der Ven (1996:303) continues to describe these New Testament believers as those who

were characterised by a strong pneumatic emotiveness, prophetic inspiration, and charismatic community formation on the grounds of a realized eschatology. These were the foundation for a charismatic-egalitarian ecclesiology: those who were filled by the Spirit exercised authority in the community.

- The functional structure: This is when the rational decisions, vision or core values had to be devised and harnessed in order to achieve a certain goal. It is a functional-pastoral structure characterised by *oikos*, the Graeco-Roman family household that included not only the immediate family, but also the servants, slaves, and other people. The limitation of space compelled members who came for community meetings to sit closer to each other and saw each other face-to-face. A good example is the church that met in Acquilla and Pricilla’s house in Ephesus (1 Cor 16:19).



These initiatives are always pastoral aims and motives. The functional church is a structural church with problems of formalisation, centralisation, and legalisation.

4.3.5.3. Two principles in the early church structure

These principles are observed in the Social Sciences domain even today. They can serve as an orientation for the further development of the church.

a) The principle of ecclesiality: This is when the ecclesial structure is turned to the development of the church community. It is the question of what makes the church to be the church. This fact is supported by the understanding of the church as people who are called by God to do something, to examine their lives and mission here on earth. It is when the ordering of the church is made subordinate to its aims and tasks. The focus becomes the vision and the mission of the church. In using Volf (1998:128) terminology, it is the identity and identification of the church, the sacramental structure that is *sacrosanct*. It takes precedence over all other structures of church polity.

The heart and centre of ecclesial life is the event of worship in the congregation, and it is this that pumps the lifeblood of faith and work throughout all the derivative limbs of the body of Christ on earth. The principal organ or nerve centre is not the institution of the clergy, the annual convention, the denominational headquarters, the Vatican, or even some theological ideal of what the church should be. It is rather the concrete event which the assembled believers in Christ actually hear the gospel and share in the sacramental presence of the living Christ (Peters 2000:272).

The ecclesiality of the church is measured by its success based on loving and leading consistently and ending well. A long tradition does not guarantee the maturity of the church and rapid changes of church government or polity does not guarantee maturity either, but the church exists for a purpose for times such as these. This leads to the next principle.



The church must maintain its identity in a world full of flaws and chaos. It is expected to fulfil its purpose in the world, which is the proclamation of Christ-centred gospel and the celebration of the sacramental presence of Christ. The *ecclesia* has been called out from the rest of society, and must continue to remain distinguishable from it. In regard to its discipline and governance, *ecclesia* must maintain her unity, holiness, vocation, and *apostolicity*.

b) *The principle of contextuality*: It is when elements from the surrounding societal formation are taken up into the structure of the church; so long they serve the church's development. The early church took over elements from its environment e.g. synagogue, temple, oikos, the empire etc). Norman R Ericson, in his paper, *Implications From the New Testament for Contextualization*, part of the book edited by David Hesselgrave (1971:71) stresses that the New Testament literature arises out of context – the same can be applied to the New Testament Church.

The authors did not so much intend to be transhistorical as historical; they did not so much intend to be transcultural as culturally relevant, and they did not intend for their message to be antisocial or asocial, but directly instructive as to the proper expression of the Christian faith.

The church was born into an environment, a context. It cannot be fully understood or transmitted into another context or environment without a full comprehension of its original context. Failure of this comprehension breeds the tendency to think of the biblical literature as a programmed manual of operations. It is the approach that leads to mechanistic form of *ecclesiastic* hermeneutic that narrows the dynamic of the original context or the variables of the contemporary context. The New Testament church was never seen by Paul as static, therefore needing the designed manuals of operations in a form of epistles as we see them in our *canon*. The New Testament writers dealt in the dynamic of the situations, working under the spontaneous influence of *charismata*. That is the area where Charismatic leaders must learn that though the Bible is the firm



foundation, yet our hermeneutical methods must always be scrutinised for the elimination of the blind spots.

The contextuality of the church has nothing to do with syncretism, indigenization, or enculturation of the church. It says volumes regarding the historical era or context in which church polity, structure, or government was created. Without it, the church would never have broken out of the Hebrew community and into the larger world. The church would have remained locked up in Palestine – never universal, and never *inscriptured* for.

The *reformé* of church structures must respond to the present situation of the Church or of the world. This should not relegate *dogma* to less importance, or the biblical authority in matters of polity, sacraments, and *missio ecclesia* to less functioning. In the words of Alston Jr (2002:83); “The church as a human community requires form and order if it is to function effectively in the world... But the church is like other social groups in that it cannot exist as a viable human association without structure and organization.”

4.3.5.4. The ecclesiality and contextuality demonstrate organisation

The Protestant approach to ecclesiality and contextuality of the church stands firm as from the dawn of the Reformation: The Willowbank Report (1978) sponsored by Lausanne Committee for World Evangelisation highlighted:

The church is also a historical fellowship and has received from the past a rich inheritance of Christian theology, liturgy, and devotion. No group of believers can disregard this heritage without risking spiritual impoverishment. At the same time, this tradition must not be received uncritically, whether it comes in the form of a set of denominational distinctives or in any other way, but rather be tested by the Scripture it claims to expound. Nor must it be imposed on any church, but rather be made available to those who



can use it as a valuable resource material, as a counterbalance to the spirit of independence, and as a link with the universal church (Winter & Hawthorne 1981:514).

Organisation is wisdom's first step for a people associated together in a common cause. It is for a purpose and therefore not a means in itself. The infiltration of institutionalisation is highly cautioned by the New Apostolic Reformation leaders. They insist that *ecclesiastical* endeavours in the world should be marked by spontaneity and an unpredictable dynamism. The *ecclesiastical* structures and organisation are deemed as necessary, but never intended to drift toward the *institutionalisation* and *bureaucratization* which plague the Protestant denominations of today. Structure and institutionalisation are primary questions in the apostolic churches of today, hence the proposal of theologically imbalanced fivefold ministry of Ephesians 4:11.

There are some internal evidences that the New Testament church had some form of organisation. The organisation emerged as the emanating need prevailing at the time. It looks like even the apostle Paul was to a certain degree desirable of his injunction to the disordered Corinthians: "For God is not a God of disorder but of peace" (1 Cor 14:32).

1. *Acts 6:1-7*. The principle we learn from this Lucan passage is that the *pastoral work* (by apostles) and the *services work* (by deacons) existed for the benefit of the church. The leaders were appointed to administer the ministry activities of the church.
2. *Acts 2:46-47; 5:42; 20:7; 1 Cor 16:2*. All these passages demonstrate the regular meetings for worship for both the ministry of God's Word and administration of sacraments, and the *diaconal* activities, especially to the poor. This was accompanied by a Trinitarian experience of *koinonia* i.e. the common share in God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. They expressed what they shared out together, what they gave, and what they received. They had *koinonia* for generosity among themselves. This could



not happen without the proper organisation of people knowing what services to render to the *gathered* community.

3. ***Acts 1:23-26; 14:23; Titus 1:5***. The early church leaders were diligent in appointing leaders. In the first chapter of the book of Acts, God's will for the replacement of Judas Iscariot was realised. It was deemed as a *Scriptural principle* (vv 16-21), the *common sense* was applied in determining the qualifications of the incumbent (vv 22-23), *prayer* was engaged (vv 24-25), then they *cast lots* – the method that was common before the leading of the Holy Spirit who was not yet manifested (vv 26) to lead believers to conviction and judgement.
4. ***1 Tim 3:1-13; Tit 1:5-9; 1 Tim 5:1,17-22; 1 Pet 5:1-4; Act 20:28-35***. These passages lay out the qualifications and the tasks of the bishops (elders) and deacons. In his farewell speech to the Ephesians elders (Acts 20:28-35), the apostle Paul implored the church leaders to “watch over God's flock” and become shepherds (*poimaino*) who should tend, lead, and feed the flock.
5. ***Matt 18:17; 1 Cor 5:1-5; 2 Thes 3:6-16; 1 Tim 1:18-20***. Each church had the authority to discipline or exclude members whose life was not consistent with Christian behaviour and dogma. It has always been a Christian Matrix that

The purposes of discipline are to prevent dishonour to God, to protect the godly from contamination, and to bring sinners to repentance. Censure is to correct, it does not imply condemnation. Calvin clearly and repeatedly demands moderation in discipline; excessive zeal breaks the canon of love and may lead to the sacrilege of schism. Moreover, individuals should not reject the fellowship because the



council of elders might be more lax than could be wished; judgement on morals is given only to the legitimate tribunals established to act for the body as a whole (McKee 1988:31).

6. *1 Thes 5:12-13; Hebr 13:7, 17, 24*. The church members were admonished to respect and obey their leaders. It is observed that the New Testament churches had some form of government in place at the time of the writing of epistles.
7. *Acts 13:1-3*. The missionary journeys started out of the cosmopolitan church of Antioch, which had five resident ‘prophets and teachers’ already. The missionaries were sent forth by the church with official sanction.
8. *Acts 15:1-35*. The Council was convened in Jerusalem in order to clarify doctrine, end controversy, and promote peace. The *dogma* and *praxis* were at stake, and the organised church dealt amicably with this. The end was order and decency was restored in the church.

Gleanings from the Pauline ecclesiology show that the churches he planted during his missionary journeys had *pastoral leaders* to care for the spiritual needs of Christians in a given *locale*. There are two distinctions of these designated local leaders. There were *elders (presbyters)*, who were known as *bishops (overseers)*, or *pastors (shepherds)*. Their functions were to establish new converts in faith, lead in public worship, and to maintain discipline. Then there were *deacons*, who assisted the presbyters in every duty except presiding at the Lord’s Supper. The New Testament Church was therefore organised and had some form of structure. The *domata* listed in Ephesians 4:11 are understood not as transitory manifestations of the Spirit but as the provision of Christ the head for His body, the church. The church cannot function properly without leadership in areas of preaching, teaching, and pastoral care.



4.3.6. Lack of synergy and cohesion

The evangelical ecclesiology, including all its tributaries such as Charismatic one, had never come up with their distinctive and clearly defined ecclesiology. The struggle continues in identifying the Pentecostal/Charismatic ecclesiology. From the embryonic stage of the movement at the turn of the twentieth century, the Pentecostal Movement had inclined itself to non-theological discourses or researches. Kasper (2004:25) highlights this notion clearly:

The Pentecostals are not always easy dialogue partners... They are very firm in their Trinitarian and Christological beliefs and their ethical convictions. In a word, they are serious Christians, but they lack a developed ecclesiology, especially a universal ecclesiology which transcends their respective local communities...

The rationale behind this shortage can be cited as follows

4.3.6.1. The ecclesiastical and theological backgrounds of the founders and/or leaders

Many of the Charismatic leaders emerge from one particular church tradition. They receive *the baptism of the Holy Spirit* and later join or champion the Charismatic group. They do so with a baggage of their historical origin. William J Seymour, the founding father of the modern Pentecostal Movement came out of Holiness Movement; hence the Movement embraced some, if not all, the Holiness doctrine, such as separation from the world, ethical lifestyle based on some *ascetic* practices etc. Dennis Bennett, an Episcopal priest at the forefront of the Charismatic Renewal Movement left the legacy of Episcopalian polity (apostolic) that is so prevalent in the New Apostolic Reformation Movement. The *Latter Rain Movement* of the 1940s to 1950s enhanced the eschatological aspirations that were brought along by the *dispensationalists*. The Shepherding Movement, spearheaded by five teachers could not hold cohesion or synergy, for as Moore (2003:84-85) asserts:



The unusual confluence created by varied backgrounds and theological pedigrees of the five teachers also affected the growing movement's ecclesiological development and practice. Significantly, only Simpson was a true pastoral leader. Baxter pastored for a long period, but he did so as a pulpiteer more than a pastor. Mumford and Prince were primarily Bible Teachers, and Basham, while also a Bible teacher, was most comfortable as a journalist. The challenge was that their united ministries and distinctive teachings had thrust them into pastoral and governmental roles as leaders of a movement of churches.

The New Apostolic Reformation leaders, in general, are better trained than classical Pentecostals and at least equally as competent as the declared Protestant Charismatics. These men came from diverse ecclesiastical backgrounds that made their movement tantamount to cohesion. Basham was a Charismatic Disciple of Christ, hence emphasised the ministry of the Holy Spirit, especially the Spirit's baptism work. Baxter had a unique blending of Reformed and Pentecostal traditions, therefore emphatic on the *church order*. Mumford was a Pentecostal trained at an Episcopal seminary tended to support a pyramidal church structure. Prince was a classical Pentecostal who emphasised teaching of the fundamentals of Christian faith. Simpson, a Charismatic Southern Baptist could not let go his *sola scriptura* and *sola fide* tradition without a balance.



Table 4.1 The historical development of Pentecostal Systematic Theology

1900 – 1920s	Tracts, Handbills, Personal Testimonies. Theology was extracted from situational letters, reports and descriptions of exorcisms and physical healings.
1930s	Pentecostal Theology leaned towards Holiness writers e.g. Asa Mahan (1799-1889) especially Scriptural Doctrine of Perfection; Baptism of the Holy Spirit .
1938 – 1948	Myer Perlman’s (1898 - 1943) doctrinal summary, Knowing the Doctrines of the Bible : Assembly of God expression of Systematic Theology. No footnotes, Bibliography, consistency, or coherence Seeing the Bible (1930). Scoffed Reference Bible in King James Version
1929 – 1949	Ernest Williams' (1885 - 1981) Systematic Theology , edited by Frank Boyd. Lectures to students at The Bible Institute of Assembly of God. Lots of referenced works.
1945 – 1960s	Nelson's Bible Doctrine . Primitive Dogmatics designed for Assembly of God ministers without theological training
1983 – Present	Foundations of Pentecostal Theology (Guy P. Duffield and Nathaniel M. Van Cleave). Commissioned by Foursquare Megachurch under Jack Hayford though LIFE Bible College. Makes references to Systematic Theologians such as L.S. Chaffer, C. Hodge, A.H. Strong, H.C. Thiessen, and M. Perelman. Cites books and few articles. No bibliography given but 39-page index of biblical references shows the Pentecostal Theological tendency of biblical citation.
Present	Fundamentals of The Faith (1983 - 1984) by Raymond Pruitt, commissioned by Church of God of Prophecy.
Present	Stanley M. Horton - The House Theologian for Assembly of God. Obtained Th.M from Harvard Divinity School and Th.D from Central Baptist Theological Seminary. Respectable for writing " What The Bible Teaches About The Holy Spirit ".

4.3.6.2. The charismatic training schools curriculum limitation

It strikes the mind of any observer who looks into the Charismatic College curricular of limitations with regard to the depth of theological scholarship, and questionable coding of the courses offered. In visiting some websites of the fivefold ministries training syllabi, one is taken a-back by what is offered on line. Recently, some of these electronic institutions confer degrees with questionable names and titles, such as Bachelor of Apostle’s Ministry, and in fact all the fivefold ministries have degrees up to the Masters level. The question that arises is the accreditation and the recognition of these courses and qualifications. The study matter apportioned a degree is one of a Group Bible Study for the local church. It is observed that the colleges run by the Charismatic groups lack a content that can challenge their graduate to enter the professional higher learning of matters of faith. Wagner (1999:235) labels these scholarly endeavours as tombstone



markers and applause the New Apostolic Reformation curricular as the ones that bring forth a new breed of faculty that is surfacing:

- Historians are replaced by visionaries.
- Biblical exegetes are replaced by cultural exegetes.
- Theologians are replaced by entrepreneurs.
- Critics are replaced by cheerleaders.
- Distinguished scholars are replaced by dynamic pastors.

This notion is promoted further by an injunction that impartation, not information should be provided. The curriculum and the institution should impart life, vision, and anointing to students. Wagner (1999:236) continues to elevate the New Apostolic Reformation curriculum that it is broad and practical:

- History of dogma is now history of revivals.
- Greek is now Bible software including Strong's Concordance.
- Homiletics is now preaching.
- Exegesis of certain books is now English New Testament survey.
- Epistemology is now prophetic intercession.

The Biblical Studies, Systematic Theology, Ethics, and Science of Religion are not offered at a level of producing scholars that can be *workmen who do not need to be ashamed and who correctly handle the word of truth (2 Timothy 2:15)*. The kind of Systematic Theology one encounters in both Pentecostal and Charismatic literature is the one that is detached from the historical *genesis* and the social context out of which it develops. Woodbridge and McComiskey (1991:302) capture this sentiment accurately:

The pneumatological penchant of Pentecostals is well-known: their constant reliance on the Holy Spirit, who would teach them all things in Jesus' absence, who would facilitate "greater works" than Jesus himself performed, who would grant a "word of knowledge"



understood as divinely originated disclosures of hidden information, and whose empowerment would result in accompanying signs (Mark 16:17). The Johannine reminder (1 John 2:27) “you do not need anyone to teach you” is often cited among Pentecostals to obviate academic study.

The time has come for the New Apostolic Reformation to abhor isolation from real academic activities of theological field. The involvement of their theological institutions at all levels, and especially, at tertiary level, in research and productive work will establish a vital link to dialogue with the broader theological academy. The kind of education they need to engage in is the one that gains purpose and significance to the extent it is consistent with and contributes toward accomplishment of God’s highest purpose for humanity. It must be the one that John MacArthur (2003:245) refers to, one that embraces what is commonly known to be Bloom’s taxonomy: “The highest goal of education must then be to assist individuals in developing the knowledge, skills, and attitudes that will enable them to better glorify and enjoy God”. This education emphasises the knowledge, change of heart or attitudes, and equips one with skills to handle issues in life honourably. It is appreciated as Wagner (2004:139) implies that “at least 80 percent of apostolic curriculum has a direct, practical application to active ministry. Saying this, however, must never soften the need for providing excellent biblical and theological foundations for every minister. The 20 percent is also very important.”

However, it is to be acknowledged that these leaders are excited and enthusiastic about their faith and evangelism in the world. The passion for Christ and His message in all their endeavours is beyond question or doubt. This lack of theological insight and depth leads to proliferation and incoherency within the movement. It inevitably breeds the lack of clarity in ecclesiological undertakings such as structure, polity, and conduct. It also brings home the thesis that the fivefold ministry is not the legitimate church government for the twenty-first century church, since theological scrutiny of this structure was never undertaken or properly dialogued.



The fivefold ministers are called to realise that the curriculum is something to be learned and experienced. Experience should come through some deep engagement of the mind as a result of wide range of interaction, debates, and self-evaluation. Curriculum is the meaningful experiences and purposeful activities provided and directed by the institution to achieve its objectives. The objectives are not just for effectiveness in *ecclesiastical* activities or *missional* endeavours, but for systematic arguments that defend the faith and its cause (apologetics). It is now the high time for the fundamentalist theologians, especially the Charismatics to embrace the historical-critical methods and exegesis of the Bible. This should be embarked upon without jeopardising the dogmatic perspective of the canon, and the mechanical view of the inspiration of Scripture.

4.3.6.3. The lack of theological academia

Peter Wagner defends the Charismatics lack of theological ambition by stating that they move from theological education to equipping ministers. In his book, *Changing Church (2004)*, he critiques theological education in the spheres of academia, critical mind, monastery mind-set, intellectualism in leadership, and ordination. Wagner (2004:138-139) continues to expand the new model of leadership training the Apostolic Leaders and I summarise this below:

- No academic requirements: Instead of pursuing the traditional college degree requirement for theological seminaries, the apostolic institutions avail themselves to train all of God's saints for the work of the ministry.
- Impartation along with information: In his own school (Wagner Leadership Institute), Wagner instructs his own faculty to focus primarily on transferring a body of knowledge from their heads to the students' head as much as imparting to them tools and anointing for fruitful ministry. The information is secondary while the impartation is primary.
- No exams or grades: The focus on impartation makes exams or grades impractical. The powerful impartation for ministry validates the quality of education.



- No resident students or resident faculty: The focus is in-service rather than preservice. The students cannot be extracted from their families, jobs, and communities. Giving three years of study is impractical. The visiting faculty used utilises the best resources on the field.
- Variable delivery systems: All available and possible delivery systems are used, as long as they do not temper with the students or faculty's vocational callings.
- Curriculum: Courses are tailor-made to the needs of the students. Few courses are required. Those experienced in ministry know better about what they need to be more effective than would a remote school administrator or an impersonal accrediting association.

The heart of the emerging apostolic movement's mission is 'power', which is the recapturing of the visibility of the miraculous in the Christian life. This power serves to sum up the whole impact of renewal Christian life. The Charismatic leaders insist that passions never show themselves more violently than in religious discussion. Christ, not some doctrine about Him, is the "issue". The gospel is not theological debate, but to know Christ. This notion is carried out into church government. The emerging apostolic movement argues that the church was in the beginning a community of brothers and sisters, guided by a few of the brethren. The church is demobilised by too much leadership spirit. This divides the body, it separates the saints. The wider spectrum of Charismatic ecclesiology embraces pneumatology that emphasises the experience of the presence and power of the Holy Spirit than the rational articulation of theology, especially systematic theology.

The New Apostolic Reformation is diverse in its government and polity. Looking to the list of prominent Apostolic Churches around the world, one is confronted by wide diversity as to how they govern themselves. They take the form of loosely structured apostolic networks and each church decides how to govern herself. The majority of these churches base their church government on the fivefold ministry. They are structured on team leadership, apostolic hierarchy, presbytery, fivefold translocal structures, and cell-



base. The marks of the apostolic churches are networking, partnerships, and fellowship. The reasons for the lack of emphasis on theological formulation are threefold:

- Both the Pentecostals and Charismatics are not convinced that their theology of the Holy Spirit is best defended on an academic level. Their convictions are expressed as “By their fruits, you shall know them”. Their theology affirms a belief in God’s mighty acts. Buoyant, life-changing, paradigm-shifting individual experience figures prominently. Such a belief can legitimately be defended by genuine display of these mighty acts. Their doctrinal distinctiveness is a sharply focused reflection on the experience. “Their clarion call is that Christianity should not be moribund but active, penetrating every aspect of the human life and society without losing the eternal dimension of the human soul” (E K Larbi 2004:80). This sounds very much like subjective apologetic, though the Charismatics’ mighty acts are too objective to be evaded with such neat terminology. The fact of the matter is a minister who does not have a theological education with an academic background cannot compete with the post humanistic philosophers of the post modern era found in ecclesiastical circles of this century. Any ecclesiastical leader whose biblical and theological background is not strong may not make much impact on the secular situations the church is today.
- The Charismatic leaders point out that the abundance of theological training in the modern church has little to be said for it if the life and growth of the church is the criterion of judgement upon such theology. References are made to Western European countries such as Germany and Britain where theology is constantly formulated, but the church there still dwindling into insignificance. Peter Wagner in one of his books, *Churchquake* (1999:235) reinforces this stance: “New apostolic churches do not allow degrees to become prerequisites for ordination.



In most apostolic networks, having a degree or desiring one is not a qualification for ministry. Degrees are clearly optional”. After all, the aim of Charismatic theologizing is edification and not criticism or controversy

- The movement is relatively recent in church history. Any successful analysis of classical Pentecostalism cannot be based solely on printed materials. It has the culture that is profoundly oral in its style. The classical Pentecostal churches have just turned hundred years old in the early twenty first century. The Charismatic Movement is just about to turn fifty years old. Church history indicates that in most cases experience precedes theology. The mighty acts of God in historical revival movements were not grasped at the beginning until later on. The Charismatic leaders insist that the early church went through the same experience. First came the experience of Christ’s incarnational presence (1 John 1:1-4), followed shortly by the outpouring of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2) and the spread of the gospel from Judea to Samaria and Antioch (Acts 1-13). Then came the great missionary movement (Acts 13), and only then did the earliest Christian writings emerge (Epistles). These were followed by the Gospels, and the most theological part of the Gospel material (John) is dated at the end of this process.

The Pentecostal and Charismatic leaders that emerged, quite naturally developed a deep suspicion of theology in academic arena. These leaders hypothetically emerge from mostly the lower strata of society and tended to be loyal to the movement which produced them through conversion. They have responded faithfully to apprentice-style training because they are not accustomed to the elite practice of seminary level education. In numerous occasions, they shun the opportunity for tertiary level study because of the applications of worldly respectability and irrelevance to the grassroots. The Charismatics



and the Pentecostals are reputable for effectively using imitation modelling training and other informal styles. Educational requirements should never substitute spiritual gifts as the basis for ordaining new ministers. As a result the movement has existed for decades with academic prejudiced sentiments, and it has only been in recent years that the Classical Pentecostal movement have begun to see that theological training can be of benefit to the church. These reasons answer the lack of theology in the Charismatic movement, and wherever it is developed, it always lacks in theological and ecclesiastical in-depth.

It is observed that the New Apostolic Reformation is critical to what it calls the “current maladies of theological seminaries” (Wagner 1999:234). The local church occupies the centre stage of ordaining the new pastors or church workers. The church staff members are home grown, trained in conferences and are local church DNA compliant. The teaching curriculum is radically innovative and different from the mainstream college or seminary ones.

In general terms, as observed by Anderson (2004:243-249), the emphasis on rationalism in western theology led to an indifferent attitude towards spiritual experience and power. To qualify for Charismatic leadership, the emphasis usually has been on the spirituality and call of the leader rather than on intellectual abilities or ministerial skills. There is a tenuous relationship with theological education and both the Pentecostals and the Charismatics have spoken of a dead intellectualism that sometimes stifles the Spirit-filled life. The academic scholarship is perceived as anti-spiritual. It is perceived as conflicting with Pentecostal and Charismatic fundamental doctrines such as the priesthood of all believers. It creates a division between the clergy and laity – abhorrence for the operation of the Holy Spirit in the pneumatic community in which charismata are expected to flow in order to build the community (church).



4.3.7. The charismatic dogma is undeveloped

The doctrinal debates had been a hallmark battle within the Charismatic ecclesiology. The classical Pentecostals make up an ecclesiastical distinctive, while the Charismatics embrace a pentecostalized spiritual lifestyle. It is easier to speak about the theological lifestyle of Pentecostals than to do the same for Charismatics. This justifies Woodbridge and McComiskey's (1991:293-294) generalisation that; "Global Pentecostalism presents a predictable set of theological beliefs, but charismatic theology results from the mix of Pentecostal supernaturalism with one or other of the mainstream Christian tradition." Dogma determines polity. A belief system leads to value system. There is no institution without dogma. The Classical Pentecostals approach to doctrine is that it is the skeleton of the structure. It is the framework of the body. The world and the church need flesh on the bones, the Spirit within, to give life. The church needs the living Christ, not dogmatic, doctrinal contention. If this is true, then the direction of charismatic theology within the context is *axioma media* – a generalisation from experience that may be subjective, and therefore needs *auxilium ab alto* - a help from above. All theological exegesis must be subjected to a systematic review. This must be done against the background of the history of dogma, theology, the church and the world context. The unhistorical dogma is insufficient and selective, therefore authoritarian and unscholarly.

4.3.8. Phenomenology in charismatic studies

Phenomenology is a school of thought which suggests a unique way of understanding a phenomenon. The Greek word '*phainomenon*' means 'that which appears' while '*phainestai*' means to 'reveal or show' (Bromiley 1985:1244). Phenomenology is the philosophical approach which attempts to bracket off a phenomenon. Reality is a matter of how the individual interprets his world or environment. The bottom line is the understanding of subjective personal experiences of reality as perceived from a non-objective viewpoint. It is on this basis that most of Charismatic theology is full of relativity whereby truth is judged by what an individual leader or individual perceives reality, irrespective of whether others see it the same way.



A group of South African educationists give a synoptic view of the historical development of phenomenology as follows:

The word phenomenology was first used by the rationalist J.H Lambert (1728-1777). I. Kant also used the term, while G. Hegel used it as a concept to describe a method whereby he departed from immediate information to penetrate to underlying knowledge. However, it is E. Husserl (1859-1938) who can be regarded as founder of phenomenology. Other contributors from different academic fields are M Heidegger (1890-1976), who was also existentialist in his thinking. F Brentano (1838-1917), D Katz (1884-1953), M J Langeveld (b.1905) and M. Merleau-Ponty (1908-1961). In the United States, A. Giorgi is well-known and still active. In South Africa, C.K. Oberholzer, B.F Nel and W.A Landman interpret phenomenology uniquely in the field of education (Duminy et al 1992:96).

Phenomenological school of thought maintains that in attempt for knowledge, the conscious is not involved in intentional data but is directed to things as they appear in reality. The British theologian, John Macquarrie's *Principles of Christian Theology*, uses this philosophy apologetically. He explains phenomenology as "a methodology, a technique of description designed to provide a new inroad into philosophical problems" (1971:20-31). He elaborates in justifying this philosophy by explaining it as a

careful analytic description; or, to express the same idea in another way, it is letting us see that which shows itself (the phenomenon) by removing, as far as possible, concealments, distortions, and whatever else might prevent us from seeing the phenomenon as it actually gives itself.



This is common in hermeneutical approach among the charismatic preachers. The biblical data must be accepted as it is. The core of interpretation is literal acceptance of what is written. Nothing must be explained from the metaphysical stance. This implies that all theoretical knowledge, assumptions, and beliefs should be put aside to allow the biblical data (phenomenon) to speak for itself and reveal its ultimate essence.

The data is collected and grouped together to make a unified fact. This is observed by the collection of different Bible verses to make a point, without a proper exposition or exegesis of the passages where these verses are derived, so that subjectivism could be eliminated, and the context verified. The Bible and the student are to be allowed to reveal their true nature and essence. In the phenomenological view, as practised by the charismatic teachers, the reader of the Scriptures lives intentionally within and in relation to the environment. The reader and the environment or contexts are interdependent. This implies that no fixed nature can be ascribed to a reader, hence the *progressive revelation* as embraced by the emerging apostolic churches. As the world of meanings changes, so God's revelation to *His chosen ones* changes. This opens a wide door of subjectivism in the way God communicates and reveals Himself.

The Charismatic theology agrees with phenomenology. Wagner (2004:77) tightens the screws in this regard:

I want to make it clear that my research methodology is not philosophical or theological (in the classical sense) nor exegetical or revelational, but rather phenomenological. I am not saying that any of these methodologies is right or wrong. Phenomenology clearly is not superior to exegesis... The phenomenological approach leads me to employ terms not found in the Bible, because I believe it is not necessary to only use the *Word* of God but to also combine the Word of God with accurate observations of the present-day *works* of God. I am not approaching this so much from the question of what God *ought* to do as much as what God is *actually doing*. What the Spirit



has said to the churches is one thing, but what the Spirit is *now saying* to the churches is another.

I have taken T S Mwamwenda's (1996:337) tenets of phenomenology and compared them with charismatic theology to validate their synonymy:

- An individual's conscious experience is a better guide than his unconscious experience. In normal circumstances, a leader (apostle or prophet) receives revelation and it becomes authentic that it cannot be open to external critical scrutiny.
- Reality is how an individual (mostly apostle or prophet, though an individual charismatic Christian can also comply) interprets events (biblical texts) in a subjective manner.
- Every person has an internal organising system (Holy Spirit) known as self. This is a part of the conscious and is responsible for regulating human behaviour (character) as it both guides and predicts. A person's behaviour is governed by subjective reality rather than external reality. The Charismatic leadership undermines theological criteria set by scholars other than themselves. The emerging apostolic churches leaders base their decisions and life directions upon the values of their leaders
- Phenomenology is concerned with the here and now and not with the past. This is demonstrated by the charismatic emphasis of restoration. The *motif* is happiness or prosperity now, and restored life when all things are being restored to God's original intentions. It is on this basis that *catechesis* has no role in charismatic theological framework. The past (tradition) has no place in charismatic theology.
- Phenomenology focuses on normal behaviour rather than abnormal behaviour (Christian ethics). The principal theme of this approach is a person's inherent capacity and potential to grow, develop, and fulfil his potential. It is held that a human being is unique and has a free will and as such is capable of making choices. This justifies the charismatic anthropocentric *exegesis* above



Christocentric one. It is all about “I, me, and myself”. The charismatic theology has very little to do with the sovereignty of God.

The good news about Charismatic phenomenology is that Christians in this world are “*not-yet*.” People, especially Christians are beings who are not yet restored, but are still in that process. They are not yet walking, talking, or independent. God is busy fashioning them towards His likeness (maturity). As a result, they are striving to become someone Christ intended them to be; hence the insistent call to life of prayer and faith.

4.3.9. *Realpolitik* and *Vox Populi* influence charismatic ecclesiology

The challenge facing both classical Pentecostalism and Charismatic theology is the difficulty in living by revelation of God alone based on *sola scriptura* and *sola fidei*. The Reformation tradition of *littera scripta manet* (what is written is permanent) in biblical hermeneutics makes Charismatics theological perspectives difficult.

The *littera scripta manet* is intertwined with *sola scriptura*, whereby it is agreed that the only source and norm of all Christian knowledge is the Holy Scripture. Boyce (1979:103) reinforces this idea that “this thematic statement introduces *De Scriptura Sacra* of Heinrich Heppé’s classic work in Reformed dogmatics and provides succinct expression of the Reformation slogan: *Sola Scriptura*. The two key words that are used to crystallize the *sola* character of Scripture are *source* and *norm*.”

The way out is the subtle embrace of *Realpolitik* and *vox populi* approach in ecclesiastical constructs of governance.

4.3.9.1. *Realpolitik* (power politics)

In the highlights of Van Gemeren (1990:26), *Realpolitik* “is a pragmatic application of any technique by which an individual or a group can maintain or enhance life. It is manipulative, works at the expense of others, and undermines the essential nature of



revelation.” In a real situation, *Realpolitik* gives coherence to all human structures such as power, society, economics, and religion. It is readily adaptable to new situations or crises. As exemplified in 2 Chron 28:16-23, it is a religion of manipulation whereby the end justifies the means. Anything is fair as long as it can achieve the goal.

4.3.9.2. *Vox Populi* (the voice of the people) is a form of *Realpolitik*

It is a system that rewards all who support the common ideals but punishes anyone who challenges them. It shuns the absolute demands of revelation by softening the radical nature of faith in favour of popular expectation. The masses devastated by abject poverty and ill-health, search for freedom, prosperity, and happiness by establishing a sacred alliance of relative values that form the basis of laws, social interactions, politics, economics, religious expressions and traditions with any cultic leader who claims to restore these things back into their lives. *Vox populi* can be an ideology that holds on to traditions shaped by a selective interpretation of revelation, and adapted by the masses as a way out of crises.

The *Realpolitik* and *vox populi* combine to form the post modern concept of consumerism. The post modernists go to any community event, including the church gatherings, not because they want to be confronted with the truth, but where they can be made to feel good. The ecclesiastical mandate of presenting the truth (*kerygma*) of salvation is challenged by antagonism aroused against it by human commitment to pragmatism (*Realpolitik*) and the popular views and traditions (*vox populi*). Popular expectations encourage optimistic and pragmatic way of life. The people selectively listen to the oracles of the popular preacher. The gradual shift from *sola scriptura* and *sola fidei* to *vox populi* explains the marginalisation of Christocentric preaching in the New Apostolic Reformation’s ecclesiastical praxis.

The New Charismatic leaders depend on the *vox populi* for credibility and vindication. The popular theology defines their apostolic or prophetic utterances. They foster illusions by advocating the capacity to solve people’s social, political, and economic problems.



The New Apostolic Reformation governs itself through *Realpolitik* system. The ecclesiastical structures based on the fivefold ministry are the revelation given to leaders; normally ‘apostles’ and these revelations are never questioned. Those who question the theological authenticity and validity of this revelation are regarded as less saintly, sometimes excommunicated, or cursed. The “Thou shalt not touch my anointed ones” maxim authenticates the leaders to impose their decisions. The *Realpolitik* and *vox populi* approach to *ecclesiastical* structure open the door for humanism, secularism, and relativism that compromises the validity of dogma. The slogan “The people shall govern” sounds democratically right, but cannot always be theologically correct. The church is governed by the theological principles as derived from the biblical data and the church tradition handed down by the Christological utterances and canonical assumptions.

4.3.10. The lack of *catechesis*

Since their inception in the dawn and the middle of the twentieth century, the Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements emphasised non-professional leadership training. There is a lack of *catechesis* (the task of handing on the core beliefs and practices of the faith tradition to the next generations and the new converts) in Charismatic theology. The Charismatic ecclesiology lacks the structured Pauline notion of *didomi*, meaning “to hand on” or “to pass on” as expressed in passages such as:

- *For what I have received **I passed on** to you, as of first importance that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures (1 Cor 15:3).*

- *I praise you for remembering me in everything and for holding to the teachings, just as I passed them on to you... For I received from the Lord what **I also passed on** to you... (1 Cor 11:2, 23).*

- *So then, brothers, stand firm and hold to the teachings **we passed on** to you, whether by word of mouth or by letter (2 Thes 2:15)*



The traditional *catechetical* schools within most of the mainline Protestant churches have been vehemently undermined by the Charismatic leaders. The rationale behind this negativism is due to dry formalism accompanied by the lack of inspiration, change of life, moral upliftment, and the conviction of the heart of the learners through the system. The ancient church instituted and maintained a *catechumenal* system in order to prepare converts for Christian baptism and to equip them with Christian fundamental beliefs so that they could defend the faith in the decadent cultures where pagan learning and influence abounded. It is a biblical mandate that Christian faith promotes itself and be apologetic in its beliefs. Pazmiño (1997:20) brings this to attention: “The educational mandate of Deuteronomy 6:4-9 requires passing on the commandments of God to the next generation. Its ultimate goal is to foster the love of God expressed in loyalty and obedience.”

The Christian faith is a tradition, and its vitality depends on its successful transmission from person to person. The Singaporean theologian Simon Chan, interviewed by Christianity Today Magazine of June 2007 issue regarding the Pentecostal view of missional theology had this to say

We need to rediscover this ancient word, catechism. In a way, it is very straightforward. Its purpose is to help people to become the body of Christ and be incorporated into the church. And I don't think that the modern church can improve very much on what has already been given: the creeds, the great commandments, the Lord's Prayer. Those are the basic things that help the church develop its identity as the church of Jesus Christ. We can certainly add other training programs, but I think the catechism should be central to any training of disciples.

No religion can survive unless it is passed on to succeeding generations, who have to learn it (*manthano*), to understand it (*ginosko*), and to *incarnate* it. Thorough *catechesis* is needed for the transmission of a religious tradition and for its further *metamorphosis*.



The *catechesis* of tradition means more than transmitting *dogma*, but passing on the truth of life, lest it becomes indoctrination.

The Eastern Orthodox churches *catechesis* focuses on making candidates familiar with the liturgy. Sauter (2003:151) reinforces this belief that “Training in the liturgy is a constant treading of the path of the church’s faith set forth liturgically.” Meanwhile the Catholic *catechesis* involves participation in the faith of the church and sharing in the church’s tradition. For the catholic ecclesiology, tradition is the deposit of the workings of the Holy Spirit, who has guided the church and kept it constantly in the faith. For the Reformed, *catechesis* is a theological task of the church in a new way and with new methods. It is God’s action through the Holy Spirit, and therefore as the church created by the Word, teaches faith that can make *dogmatics* real and experienced.

The reason for lack of *catechesis* and/or *didomi* is due to the Charismatic rejection of professional training of leaders. Most of the Charismatic leaders serve part-time in their leadership roles. They serve vocationally as pastors with no formal theological training. As a result, they cannot enter the debates of professional standards in apologetics, ethics, or Christian dogma in general. Some emerge out of learned world systems in natural and social sciences, but this cannot guarantee the theological soundness or correct ecclesiastical polity. When one peruses through Wagner’s, *The New Apostolic Churches (1998)*, the academic achievements, except the honorary doctorates, of some of the New Apostolic Reformation leaders have no theological bearing whatsoever. This leads to little or insufficient production of theology, since the Charismatic leaders lean towards experiential rather than the biblical basis of theology. For them there is too much dogmatic controversy. To analyse Christ is to destroy Him.

This does not mean that the Charismatic ecclesiology is not *missional* in its character and sense of calling. The contrary is true. The secret of the rapid growth of the modern Charismatic movement lies in its *missional* aggression and passion. The problem lies with *didomi* – what do they pass on? Their catechesis is neither definitive nor descriptive, hence the lack of cohesion and synergy within the movement.



4.4. THE BIBLICAL SURVEY ON CHARISMATA

There is no *canonical* definition of the spiritual gifts. Pneumatologists and theologians in general, rarely commit themselves to define the gifts of the Holy Spirit. The Pentecostal and Charismatic writers are not scholarly conversant regarding the subject. In spite of the numerous manifestations of the Spirit in the New Testament church, the majority of systematic theologians ignore the subject of spiritual gifts; else they devote a single paragraph or two to their discussion, much of which is negative, applying cessationist theology to it, or branding it as something demonic.

The Pauline application of *charisma* refers to the voluntary work of God's Spirit. It was the apostle Paul who gave the Greek word, *charisma*, a technical meaning that expresses the dynamics of the pneumatic community. The term describes the privileges or the gifts that the members of the community receive in order to live out the expected ethical life of that community. In the words of Banks (1980:95), "these charismata are the fundamental gifts of God and they undergird whatever other presents he may give to those who are in relationship with him." The gifts are derived not from the Spirit (*pneuma*), but from God's grace (*charis*). They are the concrete expression of God's *charis*.

The different terms used to describe charismata bring to the fore different facets of their character. The New Testament uses these words to denote the work of God the Holy Spirit gives among His people. The first reference to the spiritual gifts is found in the first letter to the Corinthians; which was written by Paul around 55 AD. The chapters that highlight the gifts are 12-14, and here we are confronted with six different words. The first is "*pneumatika*", which literally means "spirituals" or "things of the Spirit". This word appears in 1 Corinthians. 12:1 and 14:1. One has to make the observation that the root of the same word in 1 Corinthians 14:28 refers to spiritual persons. As Holdcraft (1979:143) says; "the term '*pneumatika*' is an adjectival form of the Greek word for spirit, and it connotes whatever is of or from the spirit."



The second word, which is very common, is “*charismata*” which basically refers to spiritual gifts. The root meaning of “*charisma*” is “*charis*”, which means, “*grace*”. The wisdom of Wagner (1979:87) is of valuable reference here that “the Greek word “*charisma*” appears nine times in 1 Corinthians 12-14. It means “spiritual gift”. In agreement with this notion, Graham (1978:132-133) the renowned evangelist of the twentieth century, also agrees that the word “*charismata*” is the plural of *charisma* and, except for one passage in 1 Peter, is found only in the writings of the apostle Paul. If we define it precisely, it means “manifestations” of grace, and is translated gifts. It is therefore theologically sound for one to conceive of the *charismata* as the gifts of God’s grace, a unique capacity given by the Holy Spirit to each believer regardless of their age, physical or geographical limitations.

The Corinthian passage brings forth the third word i.e. “*diakonia*.” This word is translated “*administration*”, but is better rendered “*ministries*.” It speaks of forms of service. Like *charismata*, these are given to people for the benefit of the body, the church. It is therefore theologically correct to believe that the ministries are the gifts in application.

There is the fourth word in 1 Corinthians 12:6, where Paul says; “*There are different kinds of working, but the same God works all of them in all men.*” The “*kinds of working*” here refers to “*energemata*”, which is commonly translated as “*operations*”. These are energies, activities or powers through which God inspires His people. It can be concluded that, “the *spirituals* are operating in the sense that they are gifts and ministries ‘operated’ by the Holy Spirit” (Duffield & van Cleave 1987:329). “*Energema*” gives the English word “*energy*” its root. There is an elementary meaning of effect when one considers the spiritual gifts as “*energema*”. Duffield and Van Cleave (1987:329) go further to expand and attach this meaning that “the spiritual gifts are activities of the spirit bringing spiritual effects, they are operations energized by the Spirit producing effects in the body. A gift that does not operate nor minister nor produce an effect is of little value.”



1 Corinthians 12:7 continues to exhort: *Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good.* The word “*manifestation*” is the Greek word “*phanerosis*”. Many of us believe that manifestation is interpreted as “*outward evidence*” or “*external sign.*” It is a tangible evidence that proves that something is happening in the inside. It is this concept that drives the leading Pentecostal figure of the twentieth century, du Plessis (1970:150) to embrace the gifts as the instantaneous, miraculous, and supernatural manifestation of the Spirit Himself. When the Holy Spirit is in action, it is believed that gifts are in operation. The effects of the Spirit’s action are observed in praise and worship. In a nutshell, “*phanerosis*” points out that the exercise of a gift is a manifestation of the Spirit in a believer’s life.

1 Corinthians 12:7 brings out the sixth word that relates to gifts as “*diairesis*”. This is the word associated with “*diversity.*” There are numerous varieties when coming to the manifestation of the Spirit of God. This word gives the connotation that not everyone can have all the gifts. Though the one Spirit may give variety of gifts, the distribution is to the believers only. The Spirit is the source of spiritual gifts, and He gives as He wills to God’s people since “it was he who gave some... (Ephesians 4:11).

The emphasis is Ephesians 4:11; *It was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers...* The opening sentence of the verse brings the seventh word: “It was he who gave” (*kai autos edoken*) leads the exegete to the etymological study of the word “*edoken*”. This word is a first aorist active indicative of *didomi*. This term is associated with love as a gift in the New Testament. This is common in the Johannine writings especially the Gospel (John 5:36; 6:37; 17:11; 3:35). The gospel writers, Matthew (7:11), Mark (10:45) and Luke (11:13; 22:19), together with Paul (Gal 1:4; Eph 4:8) used the term. In Ephesians 4:8, the word “*doreas*” is used to imply the divine gift and it is this term that is alluded in 4:11 that Christ divinely imparts *domata* to His church. Verses 7-8 show gifts given; while verse 11 shows that the gift given is distinct from an occasional token of God’s and Christ’s good will that may be received, consumed, and soon forgotten. The emphasis is on “the concrete character of the gift, than to its beneficent nature” (Vine 1939:477). They are the



specific and effective ways in which God communicates Himself so that the ecclesiastical community may be corporately strengthened.

4.5. THE CHARISMATA: TRADITIONAL, REFORMED AND CHARISMATIC UNDERSTANDING

4.5.1. The traditional understanding of charismata

This refers to the Catholic and Orthodox understanding of *charismata*. The word *charisma* was introduced into theological terminology by the Apostle Paul to mean free gift. For the Catholic faith, “Charism is bestowed, assigned, distributed not on one’s own behalf, but on behalf of others, it is not a natural talent, but a call of grace, a call to service” (Küng 1986:184). The Catholic reference to charismata leans towards Küng’s charismatic ecclesiology. He is one of the few Catholic scholars who think of the church as “more participatory, charismatically structured, open model in which the whole church of God, not only its hierarchy, is placed under the Word of God and given participation in God’s mission in the world” (Kärkkäinen 2002:104).

Charismata are potentialities created by the Spirit of God. They are given as a free will of God in His grace. *Charism* is a gift of the Holy Spirit that anoints a believer for the service of the people of God. Charism is not a reward for good behaviour or a result of church office. The *charismata* are assigned to community members in order to discharge variety of services which the community needs. They are given for the renewal and building of the church. The *charismata* are given in order that the Church may not become a one-man show.

The Holy Spirit showers gifts on each member of the body and moves each to communion and service. This view is expressed by Lawler & Shanahan (1995:15) that “the *charismata* of the Spirit fit the body of Christ for communion ministry in the fallen world. They also ensure that the body’s ministry is in continuity with the ministry of Christ, for there is no ministry in the body other than Christ’s ministry.” The *charismata*



are given to constitute the body of Christ and to bring it into existence. They are for internal enhancement and external expansion. It was this understanding that prompted the Dutch theologian, F van der Meer (1966:288) immediately after Vatican II, to write: “the *charismata* are free gifts and serve for the establishment of the Church, not for individual sanctification; moreover, they are subordinated to the preaching of the gospel, which is the real process of establishment, and are controlled through Church authority...”

In relation to the gifts of Ephesians 4:11, the Catholic tradition does not see a difference between them and the other *charismata* in other epistles. The *charismata* are generally not limited to those who hold office in the church, though there is order and rank in a hierarchy. It is on this basis that Küng expresses the fact that “God has appointed in the Church first *apostles*, second *prophets*, third *teachers*, then workers of miracles, then healers, helpers, administrators, speakers in various kinds of tongues... But earnestly desire the higher gifts” (1 Cor 12:28, 31). The charismatic ecclesiology of Küng finds itself trapped within the Pauline ordering that places the clergy near the end of his list, and also that the *charismata* cannot be possessed by one particular individual – the Spirit has gifted every individual.

It is worth quoting the original intentions of Küng (1986:186) concerning the order of *charismata* in the church:

In this charismatic order of preference the *apostles* come first, which for Paul include more than the original twelve (cf Rom 16:7; 1 Cor 9:5); they are the original witnesses of the risen Lord, sent out by him and authorised to preach in his name. Second the *prophets* who are mentioned elsewhere (Eph 2:20) together with the apostles as the foundation of the Church; they light up the road of the individual and the community, in present and in future, by the freedom of their Spirit-inspired proclamations; they too have been chosen and authorised by God. Third come the *teachers* who hand on and interpret the message of Christ, shedding light on the



tenets of faith and the commandments of that message, and interpreting the Old Testament according to the ideas of the young Church. Like the prophets, they derive their message from the original testimony of the apostles, and direct the present and the future of the community, but instead of intuitive proclamations their work is rather the systematic and theological development of ideas.

This view, regardless of prevailing notion of hierarchy, leads to ecclesiological constructs that view the church as a more participatory, settled and living a community lifestyle wherein individuals are empowered for the ministry tasks. Since the Church is founded upon the sovereignty of the Spirit, it is expected to be an open system where the Holy Spirit must take supreme rule, and has primacy over its structures. The livelihood, the order and the sustainability of the Church is all dependent on the Holy Spirit. The Spirit's sovereign freedom in dispensing the charismata to the church reigns supreme.

The Eastern Orthodox does not differ much from the Catholic view of charismata, except that for Eastern Orthodox, the Spirit constitutes the relation between Christ and the ministry. Kärkkäinen (2002:101), making a commentary on John Zizioulas, the Eastern Orthodox scholar and theologian that: "The life and the ministry of the body of Christ are conceived pneumatologically, in terms of the gifts of the Spirit... The charismatic life is constitutive of and not derivative from the church's being." In other words, Christology is pneumatologically constituted in order to put ecclesiology and eschatology into perspective.

4.5.2. The Reformed understanding of charismata

The *charismata* are the gifts of God's grace. They are the Spiritual gifts, certain capacities bestowed by God's grace and power, which fit people for specific and corresponding service. A *charisma* is neither a capacity by itself, nor a ministry or office by itself, but is a capacity which qualifies a person for a ministry. It is a manifestation of



grace given to individuals for the benefit of the Church. In Eph 4:11 the apostle uses two other words translated gifts: “*dorea and doma.*” These are the gifts of ascended Christ to the Church. Some scholars differentiate them from the other *charismata* of 1 Cor 12-14. The entry of Christians into communion with Jesus Christ enables them to receive through the Spirit, authority, and capacity for serving Him and the Church.

Volf (1998:226) drives the point home that “the *charismata* are empowerments for pluriform service in the church and in the world, empowerments which come from God’s grace and which can change and overlap.” The church is constituted by God’s Spirit, so it is a charismatic church that is christologically empowered. The *charismata* is distributed universally and sovereignly to enact common responsibility and mutual subordination. Jürgen Moltmann (1977:291-300) belabours the issue of the Charismatic rule of Christ in the church. These *charismata* are given for order and peace in the community. “The ecclesiastical orders of Christ’s church are historical portrayals of God’s eschatological *order of peace*” (1977:291). They are released so that the community can experience freedom in Christ, and the rule of Christ. *Charismata* are the energies of life for service.

However, the *charismata* and *domata* are seen as different since the former are related to the Spirit while the latter are related to Christ. *Charismata* are released to individual believers while *domata* are released for the church leaders. Many Reformed theologians lean towards cessationism in the exegesis of Ephesians 4:11. This is the belief that the first three *domata* (apostles, prophets, and evangelists) were temporary, while the last two (pastors and teachers) are permanent. The following two examples from antiquity confirm this assertion: “These three (apostles, prophets, evangelists) thus were temporary, so that no other apostles should be expected. But the Lord also gave the prophets and evangelists after those first times, when he pleased. There remain the two ordinary and perpetual offices, namely pastors and doctors” (Zanchius 1889:47). In the same vein, Diodati (1607:224) elaborated: “He does not name all the gifts, but only the principal ecclesiastical and public ones; see 1 Cor.12.28. Of these offices the first three were extraordinary, given for a certain time. The last two were perpetual and ordinary.” The scrutiny of these two above-stated works implies that there are two parts of



ecclesiastical ministry. The first one is the preaching of the Word and administering of the sacraments (pastors and teachers); the second part, caring for the discipline and correcting morals (apostles, prophets, and evangelists). The third part is added which is that of caring for the poor (deacons).

4.5.3. The Charismatic understanding of charismata

In relation to the fivefold ministry of Eph 4:11-16 passage, Peter Wagner (2006:10) has this to say:

The five foundational, governmental, equipping offices are apostle, prophet, evangelist, pastor and teacher. The “He” is Jesus, who gave these gifts to His people when He ascended into heaven after rising from the dead and spending 40 days with His disciples (see Eph 4:8). He subsequently gave gifted *people* to the Church on two levels: (1) the foundational or governmental level (see Eph 4:11), and (2) the ministry level through the saints (see Eph 4:12).

The purpose of *domata* is for the perfecting (*katartismos*) of the saints, which denotes fitting or preparing fully. This implies leading to consummation or completion. They are given for the work of ministry (*diakonia*) and for the edifying (*oikodome*) of the body of Christ. This speaks of service and strength, hence from the dawn of Pentecostal revival, charismata has always been associated with power and holiness. In other words it is for character and deeds.

4.6. THE PROBLEMS CITED IN RELATION TO CHARISMATA

The distribution of gifts is under the sovereign direction of the Holy Spirit. However, there is a wide band of thoughts when coming to the limitation of time in regard to these gifts.



4.6.1. The *disagreement* within the theological scholarship is very wide. The text that is used for the rationale of the cessation of spiritual gifts is 1 Corinthians 13:8-10. This has led the dispensationalists and cessationists such as Lloyd-Jones, Ryrie, Chafer etc to believe that some of the spiritual manifestations have ceased from operating. They go to an extent of claiming that some gifts are the manifestations of the demonic activities. The wider evangelical ecclesiology holds the fact that the charismatic gifts are all still in operation, just as they were in the early church. I align myself with Grudem (1988:233-234), that the statement “when perfection comes...” refers to when Christ returns. This would imply that they (gifts) will continue to exist and be useful through the church age, including today, and right up to the day when Christ returns”. Paul’s suggestion here is that gifts are a temporary provision to equip believers for ministry until the Lord returns. In another place (1 Corinthians 1:7), Paul seems to be suggesting that the possession of spiritual gifts is tied to the activity of waiting for the Lord’s return.

This disagreement is not only based on whether some gifts are in existence or not, but also on the definitions. Some scholars who promote the cessation of charismata go to an extent of replacing gifts with the modern scientific inventions. This is a kind of extreme one encounter in the work such as Warfield’s *Counterfeit Miracles* (1918). Nowhere in the New Testament are the spiritual gifts defined explicitly. Qualifying phrases help describe them. Some are illustrated. Some of the functions that they seemingly involve are commanded in the Scripture for believers e.g. the reciprocal commands. Thus any definitions of spiritual gifts require interpretation. On some of the named gifts very little etymological studies can be used to try to identify them. There are no exegetical arguments which exclude the existence of any of the gifts today. One’s system of interpretation or philosophy of closure with regard to unresolved topics may require such a position. Since the gifts are an essential part of the interdependent nature of the church, their functions will be accomplished as God sees them necessary to the ongoing of the church whether by the gifts named in Scripture or through other abilities, talents etc.

4.6.2. The *problem related to the spiritual gifts is that of neglect*. This can currently be observed in many churches. Many in Christian community know something about the



Holy Spirit but very little if nothing at all about His gifts. The controversy surrounding *charismata* is due to the historical development, not due to biblical blurriness on it or peripheral treatment of it. The neglect of spiritual gifts goes in line with ignorance. De Haan (1974:139) drives the point home that “the errors and the extremes in Corinth were the result of ignorance, and the remedy was good, solid, Biblical teaching, the meat of the Word, rather than emotional preaching of the milk of the Word.” The neglect and ignorance regarding the spiritual gifts make it almost impossible for the community to enjoy the body life and ministry that should be.

4.6.3. *The problem of confusion.* The confusion concerns the relationship between the spiritual gifts and the natural abilities. There is also confusion about the relationship between the spiritual gifts and the fruit of the Spirit. Two extremes must be cautiously avoided here: (1) there is no difference between them, (2) there is no link whatever between the two. Biblically we learn (Stott 1979:91) that God prepares “people in terms of their temperament, upbringing, and experience, and then inspired by the Holy Spirit to communicate a message which was entirely appropriate to the kind of person they were.” John Stott continues to speak of the link between pre-conversion natural talent and post-conversion spiritual gift. He authenticates his agreement on the basis of God as the God of re-creation, and of nature and grace. He links the temperament with spiritual gifts. He drives the nail into the coffin with the rhetorical question: “But would it not be more harmony with the God of the Bible, whose plans are external, to suppose that his spiritual gifts dovetail with his natural endowments?” (Stott 1979:93). Stott reminds us that biblically we are warned not to draw too hard and fast line demarcation between the natural and spiritual gifts. The Jesuit, F. A. Sullivan (1982:13) stresses that the Spirit’s contribution is to add something over and above the natural talent. The natural talents can be changed by the Holy Spirit to glorify Christ. The notion is driven home by Gaybba (1987:219); “Certainly it is clear that for any contribution to be regarded as a *charism* or gift of the Spirit there must be a contribution of the Spirit that goes beyond the purely natural.”



There are no conflicts in the Scripture on truth for all truth originates from God and will be consistent. This does not mean that there are not inconsistencies and contradictions. Sometimes the confusion lies with human subjectivism. Such is the case with the gifts of the Spirit and the fruit of the Spirit. The key text on the fruit of the Spirit is Galatians 5:22-26. The fruit referred to here is never plural, but singular. The fruit of the Spirit refers to the corporate character of the Christian life.

Table 4.2. Distinctions of Gifts and Fruit

GIFTS OF SPIRIT	FRUIT OF SPIRIT (GAL 5:22-23)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Related primarily to the collective body of believers</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Related primarily to individual believers in body</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Related to ministry</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Related to character</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>May be classified as to order of Importance</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>All are essential</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>May be exercised in such a manner as to offend others, and cause discord and division in the body</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Can never be misused</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Normally no single believer receives all the gifts</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Every believer must bear all the fruit all the time</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>No gift can be demanded of all believers</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>All of us can be commanded to manifest the fruit of the Spirit</i>

Many authors classify the gifts in different ways. For instance, Hans Küng (1986:184) agrees with Käsemann that there are three groups of gifts i.e. *charisms* of preaching, *charisms* of service and *charisms* of leadership. The other authors think of gifts that have the primary focus towards maturity, numerical or organic church growth. This is found within the mainstream of evangelical scholarship. Within the Neo-charismatic movement, people like Green (1989:195-248) divide gifts between those of utterance, those of action, those of knowledge, and those of charismatic nature. On the other hand, when one looks into the fruit of the Spirit, all of it is essential. It cannot be classified or categorized.

4.6.4. The fourth and the final problem regarding the gifts of the Spirit is that of an abuse. Some theologians are of the opinion that certain *charismata* are signs of a



necessary work of the Holy Spirit. This emphasis causes spiritual pride and can cause rifts and splits. This is the improper balance of some gifts to the exclusion of other gifts. The gifts are basically for the glorification of Christ and the edification of the church, never a sign of spirituality. The gifts that suffer an enormous abuse are those that are expressive and conspicuous in nature e.g. teaching, healing, speaking in tongues, prophecy, etc. Some of these gifts, if not all of them are the *corollary gifts*. That means they do not function independently. They are accompanied by other gifts or some instructions. For instance, speaking in tongues in the church must be accompanied by the gift of interpretation and that of discernment. There is an instruction as to how many, and how it can be exercised in the congregation. The same will be for teaching. It must be tested. The spiritual gifts are the endowments conferred by the Holy Spirit, and are for the use of the church, and “no one should value himself above his brother, and no one should feel himself dishonoured because he had not been thus favoured” (Barnes 1979:224).

The full understanding of the *charismata* is better understood in the exegesis of 1 Corinthians 12-14 together, not in isolation. 1 Corinthians 13 cannot be separated from this theological motif and construct. In fact it is a crux that underlines the attitude that should accompany the exercise of the gifts. It is an ethical demand that is reinforced in Ephesians 4:2. Here in 1 Corinthians 13, the apostle “recommends *love* – as of more value than all other spiritual gifts put together, and recommends that *that* should be especially the object of their desire”. (Barnes 1979:224): All these manifestations of the Spirit, Paul says, “must be motivated by the greatest grace of love or they are useless” (Anderson 1994:111). In another place, in reference to Ephesians 4, Barnes (1979:76) mentions it that “one should not complain that another has more distinguished endowments than he has...” Love as part of the fruit of the Spirit should characterize the manifestations of God’s Spirit in Christian community life. “Although Christians are bound to acknowledge the supremacy of love, they must not allow their profession of it to run ahead of their real feelings for others, for those who do are guilty of hypocrisy” (Wilson 1976:202).



Paul's thoughts of the Christian church as a body in Ephesians 4:1-16 is that members under the headship of Christ must use Christ's gifts, not for personal prestige, but for the privilege of contribution to the common good. This is in line with Barclay (1962:173) who once highlighted that

each part of the body carries out its own function, however, prominent or however humbly unseen that function may be. It was Paul's conviction that the Christian church should be like that. Each member of the Christian church has a task to do; and it is only when each member contributes the help of his or her own task that the body of the church functions as it ought to function.

The *didactic* teaching on *charismata* lies at the very heart of the essential nature of the church as an interdependent body therefore must not be ignored regardless of problems associated with it. Gillquist (1976:94) nails it down; "the gifts of the Spirit are absolutely vital to the proper functioning of the government of God. They help provide the real life of the eternally true doctrines or our divine Magna Charta."

In retrospect, it can be summarised that ***the spiritual gift is a unique capacity, given by the Holy Spirit, to each believer, for service in connection with the church in order that the church may grow as God intended it to.*** This notion is affirmed by Chafer (1978:216)

It may be said that a gift in the spiritual sense means the Holy Spirit doing a particular service through the believer and using the believer to do it. It is not something the believer is doing by the aid of the Holy Spirit, nor is it a mere augmentation of what is termed a native or natural gift. According to 1 Cor. 12:7, a gift is a manifestation of the Spirit.



The Spirit is the one who plays a major role in the exercising of the *charismata*. The manifestation of the Spirit is expressed in the gift as it operates in the believer. The *charismata* are the supernatural signs to assure the believers of God the Holy Spirit's operation in their lives. They are the divine provision to assist in the growth of the church and its missional task here on earth. They are God's gracious enablement or endowment bestowed as a free blessing on His people for a special purpose in life. The *charismata*; in other words, involve grace on the part of God as the Donor. It is God's endowments upon the believers by the operation of the Holy Spirit in the churches and in individual believers (Romans 12:6; 1 Corinthians 1:7; 12:4, 9, 28-31; 1 Timothy 4:14; 2 Timothy 1:6; 1 Peter 4:10). To reiterate, ***a spiritual gift is a revelation or manifestation of the demonstration of the operation of the Holy Spirit for the building of the saints.*** Graham (1980:134) explains,

a gift might also be called a “*tool*” or an instrument that is to be used, rather than a piece of jewellery for decoration, or a box of candy for personal enjoyment. We could think of the different types of tools a carpenter uses, or the different types of tools a surgeon needs. These “tools” have been given to people for use in the functioning of the Body of Christ.

This is in agreement with Barnes (1979:76) that:

the gift is bestowed upon all the believers, and all have enough to enable them to live a life of holiness. It is in Romans 12 that we are taught that this is a gift. It is bestowed on us. It is not what is originated by ourselves. It is by a certain measure. It is not unlimited and without rule. There is a wise adaptation, an imparting it by certain rule. It is the gift of Christ, given in Christ. It comes through him. All have enough for the purposes for which has called them into his Kingdom, but there are not the same endowments conferred on all.



In reference to 1 Peter 4:10, the gift means endowment of any kind conferred by the Holy Spirit. It refers to any kind of endowment by which we can fulfil our religious calling to serve others. The gifts and graces enable us to contribute to the welfare of others. The spiritual gifts are not just for our benefits, but for the other members of the body.

4.7. CONCLUSION

The emerging apostolic churches tend to go the route of the post-apostolic Roman and Jewish concepts of status, power, and centralised priesthood. This was when the church government was clericalised and sacrilised. The Christian faith started in Jerusalem as a relationship with Christ. When it hit the Roman contours, it became institutionalised. Later, when it hit Europe, it became a culture. These days in almost the utter parts of the world, it has become an enterprise. The elaborately structured institution emerged to corrupt the simple, family structure of the apostolic churches. It robbed people of their lofty position and ministry in Christ. It has exchanged Christ's supremacy over His Church for the supremacy of the institutional church. The New Apostolic Reformation is not different from this. Their organisational structure is determined by their theological perceptions and their actions. Their theology and beliefs determine their ecclesiology. They have been audacious in challenging hierarchical models of the church, though paradoxically, in many circles, has buttressed male, authoritative patterns of leadership.