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## CHAPTER 5: EPHESIANS 4:1-16 EXEGESES: PRECURSOR TO UNDERSTANDING THE FIVEFOLD MINISTRY IN THE EMERGING APOSTOLIC CHURCHES

### 5.1. INTRODUCTION

This chapter surveys the analytical research on Ephesians 4:1-16, with a special emphasis on chapter 4:11-12. The chapter looks at the brief views on authorship, style and the setting of the book of Ephesians, the panoramic and the broader understanding of the book, principles, and the doctrinal perspectives. It expands on the ecclesiastical understanding of Ephesians 4:11 from both the Reformed and Pentecostal perspectives followed by some theological reflections. The purpose of this chapter is to scrutinize the understanding and analytical interpretations of Ephesians 4:1-16. The chapter plays an important role in this research because it explains the rationale behind different conclusions on the fivefold ministry as the structure for church leadership. In this case the Reformed and the Pentecostal understanding of the fivefold gifts of Ephesians 4:11.

### 5.2. THE AUTHORSHIP

The Pauline authorship of Ephesians was universally accepted by the early church and throughout the church history. However, there has been recent New Testament scholarship that detaches this letter from the Pauline *corpus*. This is based on internal arguments drawn from the style, vocabulary, impersonal character of the epistle, and the theology of the epistle, especially its lack of eschatological tone. Rudolf Schnackenburg (1991:24) brings this to attention; “Theodore of Mopsuestia and Jerome recognised at an early date the difficulty of its being addressed to Ephesus, and Erasmus saw its style as deviating from that of Paul; but it was not until E. Evanson (1792), L Usteri (1824), De Wette (1826), and especially F.C Baur and his school that Paul’s authorship was disputed.” The historical panorama gathered from R F Collins (1988), Peter T O’Brien (1999), and Schnackenburg (1999) demonstrates this:



- In 1790, William Paley indicated that the contents of Ephesians came from a “mind revolving a second time the same ideas.”
- In 1792, Edward Evanson, a Unitarian, boldly expressed in print doubts about the Pauline authorship of the epistle by appealing to its contents.
- In 1824, Leonhard Usteri expressed doubts about the origin of this letter on the grounds of its manifest similarity with Colossians.
- In 1826, W.M.L de Wette appealed to the style and address of Ephesians to question the Pauline authorship.
- From 1845 to 1876, F.C. Baur rejected the Pauline authorship in his two volumes on Paul, and situated it in the early part of the second century.
- In 1868, Sytze Hoekstra advanced this view that “Ephesians was a paulinizing corrective of Colossians, a pseudonymous work which the putative corrector thought to have strayed too far from the apostle’s thought” (R F Collins 1988:134).
- In 1870, Ferdinand Hitzig advanced the view that the letter was the work of an epigone who subsequently introduced some of his own ideas into the original text of Colossians.
- In 1872, Heinrich Julius Holtzmann was convinced that Ephesians was a revision of Colossians emanating from other Pauline texts by an editor who subsequently introduced some of the new composition into Colossians.
- In 1917, Johannes Weiss proposed that Ephesians had been composed by an unknown author who had been compiling a collection of the Pauline correspondence, the notion embraced by an American called Edgar J Goodspeed who proposed Onesimus as the possibility of this unknown author. John R W Stott (1989:20) highlights Goodspeed’s assumption: “He speculated that about the year AD 90 an ardent devotee of the apostle Paul, dismayed by the contemporary neglect of his hero’s letters, went the rounds of the churches he has visited in order to collect and later publish them. But before publication he saw the need for some kind of introduction. So he composed ‘Ephesians’ himself as a mosaic of materials drawn from all Paul’s letters, especially



Colossians (which he had memorized), and attributed it to Paul in order to commend him to a later generation.”

- In 1918, James Moffatt held the opinion that Ephesians was a ‘tract for the times’ written by a paulinist imbued with his master’s spirit.
- From around 1951, C Leslie Mitton of England, promoted the idea that Ephesians was written by someone who was quite familiar with the Pauline letters and acquainted with Colossians.
- The popular German theologian, Rudolf Bultmann and some of his disciples, such as Ernst Käsemann and Heinrich Schlier linked Ephesians with Gnostic background, therefore divorcing it from Pauline authenticity. This view popularised the non-Pauline authorship that is prevalent today.

However, the author of the letter to the Ephesians claims apostolic authority and describes himself as a suffering prisoner for Christ, the gospel, and the Gentiles (3:1, 13; 4:1; 6:19-20). The Pauline encounter with the Ephesian Christians authenticates the relationship that makes this letter personal as the Lukan narrative recalls:

1. At the end of his second missionary journey in the autumn of A.D. 52 (Acts 18:18-21)
2. A year later on his third missionary journey remained there for two and a half years. He left in spring of A.D.56 (19:1-20:1).
3. A year later on the way from Corinth, he visited the Ephesian elders in Miletus (Acts 20:16-38).

The internal evidence, together with the ancient tradition, concedes to the Pauline authorship which is beyond questions. The epistle contains some features in the history of interpretation that leaves an imprint upon Paul. The author fits someone who was not a lonely distorter of Scriptures but belonged in the company of *bona fide* interpreters and writers. The letter bears the name of Paul and there are personal references in line with the known facts of his life (Ephesians 1:1; 3:1; 4:1; 6:20). The letter’s resemblance to the wider Pauline *corpus* (Colossians, Philemon, and Philippians) may be accounted for by the fact that they were written by the same person and under the same circumstances.



These were written while Paul was under house arrest, probably in Rome between AD 60 and 62. In that imprisonment, he was surrounded by friends such as Luke, Timothy, Aristarchus, Epaphras, Onesimus, and Tychicus – all of whom are mentioned in his letters to the churches.

The two extreme views regarding the authorship of this letter – whether it is Pauline or not, leave one with a range of views concerning the letter. Collins' (1988:136-139) views are highlighted:

1. The minority of scholars who continue to maintain the Pauline authorship e.g. Donald Guthrie, Markus Barth, J B Polhill, F D Howard, Aart van Roon.
2. The *amanuensis* hypothesis. This notion embraces the fact of Pauline authenticity in the sense that it would have been composed by someone at Paul's direction, or that the text results from an unknown interpolator's additions to a letter originally written by Paul. This is prevalent in the twentieth century Catholic theologians such as Joseph Grassi, Jerome Murphy-O'Connor, Wilfrid Harrington, and Karl Hermann Schelkle etc.
3. The *non liquet* (It is not clear) scholarship e.g. Adolf Jülicher, Martin Dibelius, Benjamin Wisner Bacon etc.
4. Contemporary critical scholarship e.g. Raymond Brown, H Langkammer, Rudolf Schnackenburg, and some German Catholic scholars.

This research maintains the Pauline authorship which holds that the letter was written by Paul during his first Roman imprisonment (61-63 A.D.)

### **5.3. LANGUAGE AND STYLE**

It has been observed that the letter shows some significant differences of language and style from the generally accepted Pauline letters. O'Brien (1999:5) observes; "Forty-one words are used only in Ephesians, and a further 84 are not found elsewhere in Paul's writings but appear in the rest of the New Testament".



Ephesians also shows the significance of the combinations of unique words and phrases which reflect the author's distinctive mode of expression. Examples that can be cited are:

- Spiritual blessing (1:3)
- The creation of the world (1:4)
- The forgiveness of sins (1:7)
- The mystery of his will (1:9)
- The word of truth (1:13)
- The Father of glory (1:17)
- The desires of the flesh (2:3)
- To know Christ (4:20)

The other observable feature of the language of Ephesians is the recurrence of the words:

- “heavenlies” (1:3, 20; 2:6; 3:10; 6:12) rather than in the heavens
- “devil” (4:27; 6:11) rather than Satan.

The letter to the Ephesians is also characterised by “*pleonastic*”. This is the lengthy sentences that are extended by relative or causal clauses and participial constructions e.g. 1:3-14; 15-23; 2:1-7; 3:1-13; 4:11-16; 6:14-20.

Furthermore, Ephesians is characterised by Paul's expression “in Christ” (*en Christo*). This is sometimes called “in the Lord” or “in Him”. This occurs 160 times in the Pauline writings, and 36 times appear in the letter to the Ephesians. The term expresses the union of a Christian with Christ now living as a redeemed being in a new environment. The epistle expresses Christ as the dignity of the Church, the Body of Christ.

There is a liturgical character of prayer and *mystagogy* in Ephesians. It is a letter full of *exordium* i.e. songs that typify the crystallization and representation of hymnic language. These features dominate the first half of the letter, where Paul uses the lofty language of eulogy, praise, prayer, and doxology.



The purpose of the epistle is correctly summarised by Macquarrie (1990:140): “According to this epistle, God’s purpose for the creatures has been revealed in Christ. It is, to bring together in a unified community the many rival groups of human beings, whose differences are typified by the division between Jews and Gentiles.” The epistle makes Christ a glorious cosmic figure, and the church is invested with an aura of glory. This epistle is the embodiment of dogma in totality. It is a grandeur of the revelation of Christ, and contains majesty and dignity.

The authorship is important in any Biblical Studies because it enacts balanced hermeneutical processes. It authenticates the conclusions to the exegetical results so that doctrine is not distorted. For instance, accepting authorship of Ephesians different from Paul, can easily lead to wrong conclusions of the contents and the context of the text. In a nutshell, “the method whereby we reconstruct the authorship of the Bible involves, first, the differentiation of literary works and secondly, the identification of the writers responsible for the different works” (Van Dyk 1987:9-10). It is often of great importance exegetically to know the human author of any Bible book. The knowledge of a writer is indispensable to the most effective exposition of the original intentions of writing. Only as an interpreter becomes familiar with the author will he be in a position to deduce properly the language used style of writing, and the context as a whole. This leads to correct conclusions regarding the content and the context of the text.

#### **5.4. THE SETTING**

One of the characteristics of Ephesians among all of Pauline *corpus* is that this letter is the most general and least situational in context. The letter is not addressed to the nomadic or rural people. It is a dialogue with a community which lives in a pluralistic society. The letter does not carry or convey any particular problem or some sense of urgency or response to any crisis as observed in other Pauline letters. It is addressed to the church of those blessed with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ (1:3). They are the chosen ones who heard and responded to the gospel of salvation for



their lives. These recipients receive positive commendations from the apostolic pen and are affirmed to remain rooted in *catechesis* that had been handed down to them.

The city of Ephesus was the capital of Asia Minor since 133 B.C and was a government seat of the Roman proconsul. It was built by the genius Lysimachus who called it after his wife, Arisinoeia. The city was known for its beauty of nature. It was a commercial centre for Asia Minor due to its excellent geographical position. It was a port of outstanding industrial and commercial networks. Many commentators speak incessantly of its industrial activities such as silversmiths, textiles, carpets, handicrafts, and fisheries.

It was a religious city with a famous temple of Artemis the Greek goddess (Romans called her Diana) who was a symbol of unity. She was worshipped as a fertility goddess and a nursing mother who was also a virgin with many breasts. Paying homage to her involved offering sacrifices, dances, and illicit sex. Obviously, most of the Ephesian Christians of Paul's time were out of this cultic background.

## **5.5. THE PANORAMIC VIEW OF EPHESIANS 4:1-16**

Chapter 4 of Ephesians is the beginning of the ethical section of the book. It starts a lengthy *paraclesis* (admonition) on ethical living. It is a direct appeal based on the foundation of Christians being reconciled in Christ and made part of God's "*workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do*" (Eph 2:10). Furthermore, the chapter highlights the Christian behaviour (ethics) by starting to use the word "live" or as some translations say "walk"- a term that is used four times until the end of the letter (4:1, 17; 5:2, 8, 15). The letter shows that theology and ethics cannot be compartmentalised. Instead, theology and ethics are intertwined. The attitudinal and behavioural implications laid out are to flow from proper understanding of the apostolic teaching. The canonical style, especially the Pauline style, combines theological and ethical statements, with theology providing the bases for ethics. This is in agreement with Barth (1974:426) that



during the past decades it was often and vigorously stated that Paul's imperatives are dependent upon his indicatives, his *didache* (teaching) is determined by his *kerygma* (proclamation), and all things ethical are derived from dogmatic doctrine. However, the content of Eph 1-3 is doxological rather than dogmatic. The direct connection of the ethical chapters 4-6 with the praise of God rather than with a doctrine of God is a specific feature of Ephesians.

As a matter of emphasis, O'Brien (1999:67) reminds the reader; "Maintaining the unity of the church, which is on the road to maturity, through the diverse ministries which the ascended Christ has poured out upon his people is the key admonition of this first exhortatory section (4:1-16)". The panoramic view of this chapter looks like this:

- The unity and diversity of the maturing church through the gifts of Christ (4:1-16)
- The follower of Christ is called to walk differently from the outsiders (4:17-24)
- The direct exhortations of showing unity and love in a practical way (4:25-32)

## 5.6. BROADER UNDERSTANDING OF EPHESIANS 4 PASSAGE

It is an ecclesiastical confirmation to regard Ephesians 4:1-16 as a major passage on gifts (*domata*). This passage contributes less to the actual information on gifts than 1 Corinthians 12-14 and Romans 12:1-8 do. It is extremely important since it connects the teaching of gifts to the eternal purpose of God for the church and thus implying that gifts within the church are an essential part of the nature of the church. Ephesians is primarily an *ecclesiastical* epistle. It teaches that the revealed wonder of *ecclesia* demands a holy *orthopodeo* – walking in a straight path. The revealed wonder of the church relates to a cosmic purpose that God has for the church. This purpose is to show His *exousia* and *dunamis* to integrate into oneness the diverse elements in the universe. This wonder of the church came to the apostle Paul as an "*apokalupsis*". Because of its wonder and eternal significance there are demands made upon believers to live out their part of this revealed wonder. The very first demand made upon believers regards unity (*henotes*) in





Ephesians 4:3, 13. This passage is a practical application toward this unity based and directed by *domata*. Its primary purpose is to show that gifted leadership was given to the church for the purpose of progress toward a unified spiritual maturity. It also indicates how these *leadership gifts* are part of an interdependent exercise of gifts of all members of the church. The *locus* of this passage is that the proper interdependent exercise of leadership gifts and other gifts will bring about a maturity of oneness in believers and continued progress toward Christ-like living.

In Ephesians 4:1-16, especially 4:11-16, Paul indicates several gifts indirectly by *metonymy* - naming the leaders rather than by directly naming the gifts. He does this by emphasizing the importance of the role of leadership gifts in directing the church towards maturity. The gift of evangelism is added to the others to highlight the importance of it. The teaching gift is qualified by the idea of shepherding, or vice versa. Some text readers would list a gift – the pastoral gift, as a result of the inclusion of the pastor in this list of leadership gifts. In agreement with some New Testament scholars, Barth (1974:451-452) divides this passage into four parts, while it can also be divided into two parts. These are summarised as:

#### 5.6.1. Four parts

The emphasis and the dictating dictum is the famous Pauline statement; “live a life” or “walk” of Chapter 4:1

- ***Ephesians 4:2-3***. The chosen saints are admonished to live humbly, to bear one another, and to preserve unity. Here ecclesiology and ethics are completely identified that they can neither be separated nor distinguished.

- ***Ephesians 4:4-6***. The contents and the fact of the church’s confession are reminded to demonstrate the essential of oneness to the very being and life of the church. The church can only live as confessing church.



- **Ephesians 4:7-12.** The text of Psalm 68:18 is used to show that the exalted Christ gives the church diverse gifts. Each of her members benefits from the gift given from above. In order that the ‘one’ ministry entrusted to all the members be fulfilled, ‘several’ specific ministers are given by Christ to the church. They proclaim the Messianic peace, the salvation of those near and far

- **Ephesians 4:13-16.** Ecclesiology is confronted with eschatology. The church is promised that she will meet her Lord face to face. *Christology* rules over the other body of dogma. *Ecclesia* seeks no other perfection than that contained in, and brought by, Jesus Christ. On its *eschatological* journey, ecclesia must beware of heresy, to grow toward Christ and from Him – enjoying and manifesting the provision He is making for her life, her unity, and the needs of each one of her members.

#### 5.6.2. Two parts

Barth (1974:452) cites that Schlier and others promote the approach of the contraction and expansion (*systole and diastole*) of the heart is an analogy to the movement from unity to diversity in this passage. In almost all of these sixteen verses unity and diversity are equally highlighted. No one group of verses ought to be understood as discussing only or primarily either oneness or multiformity. The two parts take the following pattern:

- **Ephesians 4:1-6.** The admonition for unity

- **Ephesians 4:7-16.** The diversity of gifts

### 5.7. THERE ARE TWO PRINCIPLES OF TRUTH DRAWN FROM THIS PASSAGE (4:11-16)

- People with leadership gifts are to train others so that every member can contribute to the overall growth of the whole body. The primary purpose of the passage is to demonstrate that gifted leadership was given to *ecclesia* in order that



it might progress toward a unified spiritual maturity. These leadership gifts are part of an interdependent exercise of gifts of all members of the church.

- The church as a whole will not reach a unified maturity unless each of its members is exercising his gift in concert with other members. The proper interdependent exercise of gifts brings about maturity of oneness in believers and strengthens the *ecclesia's eschatological* journey towards Christ-likeness.

## 5.8. POSSIBLE DIFFERENCES OF INTERPRETATION OF EPHESIANS 4:11

5.8.1. The list of ministers given in verse 11 does not represent (by figure of speech, metonymy) gifts *but leaders given to the church*. However, two of these roles are listed in parallel passages as gifts (prophecy, teaching). It seems logical to conclude that the other two (apostles, evangelists) also represent gifts exercised by the people called by those titles. As a matter of fact all gifts given to the church are in the form of people.

5.8.2. The leadership gifts listed here belong to the universal church (roving apostolic type ministry) and would thus say the saints they are equipping would have lesser gifts. However, other gifts passages describing local church situations mix these so called leadership gifts in with the lesser gifts and assume all of them present among the local saints.

5.8.3. The King James Version phraseology: “some pastors and teachers”, has been interpreted in various ways. There is a school of thought that says they represent two different people or gifts. If so then, to be consistent and interpret by *metonymy* one would have to have a gift of pastoring as a distinct gift apart from the teaching gift. The other school of thought (Clinton 1975:33) interprets the original Greek construction **not** as pastors and teachers **but** as pastors who also are teachers. Again to be consistent in interpreting by *metonymy* this is a gift of pastoring which includes with it the gift of teaching.



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## 5.9. THE BIBLICAL DOCTRINES IN EPHESIANS 4:1-16

The passage is full of wealth regarding *dogma*. Its diversity of doctrine and ethics appeals to some scholarly scrutiny:

### 5.9.1. Christian Ethics

The opening paragraph is a list of attitudes that fit the conduct of the members of *ecclesia*. It is an ethical appeal to life (virtues) that is in line with the calling Christians have received (*hes eklethete*). An appeal is connected to what Christ had done for the recipients already. This opening statement implies: *in view of the great and glorious truths which God has revealed; since God has done so much for you; since He has revealed to you such a glorious system; since He has bestowed on you the honour of calling you into His grand plan – show your sense of His goodness by devoting yourself to His service*. As a prisoner by God’s will the apostle pleads with the Ephesians to:

- *Be humble*: Humility (*tapeinophrosune*) speaks of the lowliness, with which one serves the Lord. It refers to an abject, servile, subservient attitude. It speaks of submissiveness of one to other Christians. This is what F F Bruce (1961:88) calls “the crouching submissiveness of a slave.” It is a model of Christ as demonstrated by His appeal in Matthew 11:29, where He reveals Himself as one who is gentle and humble in heart. The poetic language of Philippians 2:6-11 expresses this humility where Jesus humbled Himself to death on the cross, and God exalted Him by bestowing on Him the name that is above all names. Christ was giving a pattern to follow that His followers in humility must esteem others better than themselves and to be concerned about others’ welfare.
- *Gentleness* (*epiekeia*): It is a non-violent means (considerateness) of dealing with other people. It is to bear patiently with the faults and weaknesses of others.



- *Patient (makrothymia)*: Steadfastness and/or forbearance. Make an allowance for others shortcomings. It is a delay that allows or gives a time (*kairos*) for repentance or God's wrath. It is a *kairos* that makes God's purpose clear in its eschatological dimension to take its cause.
- *Love (agapao)*: This word is the characteristic word of Christianity. It describes the attitude of God towards His children and conveys God's will to His children concerning their attitude to each other. Love in this sense expresses the essential nature of God (1 John 4:8). When *agapao* becomes *phileo*, then it means tender affection. It is more of feelings than facts, though the two terms cannot be separated concretely
- *Unity (ten henoteta)*. The unity of the Spirit is to be maintained in the bond of peace (*en toi sundesmoi tes eirenes*). Peace has the bonding effect, so it is the means by which the recipients of this letter will maintain and display the unity of the Spirit. Peace is the bond in which their unity is kept. The strong motivation for apostolic appeal for unity is presented in seven acclamations, each using the word "one" to remind the recipients of the fundamental unities on which the Christian dogma and faith are based. The apostle here moves from exhortation to assertion:
- *One body (hen soma)*: This refers to one mystical body of Christ, the Church which is made up of both the Jews and the Gentiles. They are one body in the heavenlies, therefore one Body here on earth. In the words of Tucker (1983:117), "The unity determined in the heavenlies must be displayed on the earth." It is a complex organism, with many functions, each in its own place, working in harmony This Body of Christ is, by definition, *one*. This is the first mark of the Church (*nota ecclesiae*), as expressed in our confession: "We believe in One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church." This unity is not invented by any human endeavours. It is engineered by Christ Himself and it exists beyond any human capability. Moltmann (1977:139) echoes this notion from Tübingen:



The unity of the Church is not primarily the unity of her members, but the unity of Christ, who acts upon them all, in all places and at all the times. Christ gathers His Church. Consequently the unity of the Church lies in his uniting activity. The result of his gathering activity is the unity of believers in Christ (Gal 3.28) and their unity of mind in the Spirit (Eph 4.1ff).

The “one body of Christ” is a concrete, intensified, and *somatised* (actualised) dynamism of Christ. It is the community of Christ that exists for the glory of God and for the sake of the world. This expression is designed to make the invisible Church in the heavenlies visible here on earth.

- *One Spirit (hen pneuma)*: The membership into the one body of Christ is due to the indwelling and animating activity of the Holy Spirit. There is only one Holy Spirit, who is indivisible.
- *One hope (en mia elpidi)*: It is the same hope that results from the calling of all humanity to exercise faith in Christ
- *One Lord (heis Kurios)*: This expression means the Lord Jesus Christ and him alone. The unity is the work of Christ. This reveals the unity of the Church in view of the doctrine of the second Person in the blessed Holy Trinity, the Son of God, our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. The emphasis here is that “the Lord Jesus Christ in and of Himself leads to unity and always produces unity, so one of the best ways in which we can see and understand this biblical doctrine of unity of the Church, and preserve it, is to keep our eyes steadfastly on the doctrine of the Person of the Son of God” (Lloyd-Jones 1981:95).
- *One faith (mia pistis)*: This is one act of trust in Christ, the same for both the Jews and the Gentiles. It is one way of being saved. One faith is connected to one Lord and one baptism. This is objective faith that calls the recipients to trust in something



outside themselves which they can apply to themselves, and by which they can test themselves. This does not refer to a complete compendium of theology or the so-called *regula fidei* i.e. Confession of Faith, but to the *kerygma* concerning salvation, justification, and forgiveness of sins. Barth (1974:468) captures this that “faith is always a bond that unites not only God and the saints, but also the diverse members of the church and the congregations.” Christians have the same trust in Christ, as a living, practical principle – and they should, therefore, be one.

- *One baptism (hen baptisma)*: There is only one act of baptism for all who confess Christ by means of this sacrament. They are not made the disciples by this act, but they merely profess Him publicly as Lord (*Kurios*) of their lives. The Pauline connection of baptism with unity surfaces in his ecclesiology as demonstrated in Galatians 3:27-28; and 1 Corinthians 12:13. Baptism is in this sense a sacrament of unity.
- *One God and Father of all (heis theos kai patēr pantōn)*. God is not separate for each nation or religion. He is one God for all creation. This verse demonstrates the involvement of the Holy Trinity in creation and the human affairs: “who is over all (*ho epi panton*), and through all (*kai dia panton*), and in all (*kai en pasin*). The three prepositions (*epi, dia, en*) express the universal domain of power of God in human lives and affairs. God has the supreme transcendence and pervasive imminence.

The message of unity which Ephesians reveal must permeate human social, ecclesiastical, and environmental spheres. Unity as expressed in these seven acclamations invites the *pneumatic community* to demonstrate their faith as a reflection of union with Christ, the Lord above all creation (Erickson 1999:76-78).

#### 5.9.2. Theology Proper – the premise of apostolic argument

The echo of the indicative and declarative *Great Shema* of Deuteronomy 6:4; “Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one” is evident in Ephesians 4:6 (*heis theos kai*



*pater panton*). The rigorous *monotheistic* faith is exclaimed in this verse where God is perceived as *omnipotent, immanent, and transcendent*. In a sense, Ephesians 4:6 reveals the unity of God as

#### 5.9.2.1. The *unitas singularitatis*

It is the attribute of God that stresses both the oneness and the unity of God. This means God is numerically one and as a result is unique. L Berkhof (1943:61) explains this further that “it implies that there is but one Divine Being, that from the nature of the case there can be but one, and that all other beings exist of and through and unto Him.” The theological importance of the term ‘unity’ as applied to God is that God is one essence. The principal theme of the Bible is the fact of the unity of God. The unity of God is a predicable. It does not determine what God is in Himself. It has to do only with His mode of existence. “God, and only God, is God or divine” (König 1982:103).

The Old Testament is strict about the *echad* (unity) of God. The Decalogue opens with the declaration of the unity of God: *I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of Egypt, out of the land of slavery. You shall have no other gods before me* (Exodus 20:2-3). The second commandment also carries the weight regarding the unity of God by calling for worship only to Jehovah. The uniqueness of God can be discerned in King Solomon’s prayer: *so that all the peoples of the earth may know that the Lord is God and there is no other* (1 Kings 8:60).

The New Testament is explicit to the oneness of God. Paul does not mince words to declare: *We know that an idol is nothing at all in the world and that there is no God but one... yet for us there is but one God, the Father, from whom all things came and for whom we live, and there is but one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom all things came and through whom we live* (1 Corinthians 8:4, 6). Timothy was reminded: *For there is one God, one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus* (1 Timothy 2:5). The Pauline theology agrees with the Mosaic Law by excluding all polytheistic conceptions of God, including idolatry, on the grounds that there is only one God.





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#### 5.9.2.2. The *unitas simplicitatis*

This is the perfection of God that is expressive of the inner and qualitative unity of the Divine Being. It is the simplicity of God which implies that God is not composite and is not susceptible of division in any sense of the word. God's essence and perfections are not distinct. Chafer (1978:214) after giving a lengthy definition of the simplicity of God by Hodge concludes:

When attempting to define simplicity as manifest in God, conclusion sometimes arises. (1) Simplicity of being in God is not a contradiction of the Trinity of Person in which mode He subsists. The act of the Trinity does not predict three Essences; it rather predicates one Essence and the one Essence is simple in itself. The whole of the Essence is in each Person. (2) The attributes of God are not detached portions of His Being which when compounded compose God. His Essence is in every attribute and each attribute sets forth some fact related to his uncompounded Essence... And (3) God, being infinite simplicity, is not diffused as an efflux of particles might go out from a source to form new entities of existence. As creator, He is the author of all things. He breathed into man the breath of life and man was made so that he manifests the "image" and "likeness" of God; but human life is not a part of God as a contributing element in the being of God. Whatever is God retains its uncomplicated character as God, invisible and undiminishable. Nothing can be compounded without the possibility of its being divided. Added to this is the fact that a thing which is compounded is the workmanship of some other being and God is the First Cause of all things and Himself compounded or created by none. The simplicity of God is essential to the very mode of His being.



It is therefore theologically correct to conclude that Ephesians 4:6 reflects the doctrine of unity and simplicity of God. It expresses the truth that the Pauline theology, though *Christo-centric* is also *monotheistic* - there is one God (1 Corinthians 8:4-6; Romans 3:30; Galatians 3:20; 1 Timothy 2:5). This is the starting point of Christian theology – that there is one God who is a supreme Creator and is the loving source and destiny of the whole universe. The doctrinal explanation of Apostle Paul is based on the fact that God is one and is above all.

### 5.9.3. Revelation – the context of apostolic argument

The text in verse 1 exclaims: *As the prisoner for the Lord, then, I urge you to live a life worthy of the calling you have received.* The antecedent, *eklethete* refers to “calling”. This is an invitation of God to humanity to accept the benefits of salvation. The Pauline context of ethical lifestyle subsequent to this verse is that *as people who have received a special revelation of God’s salvation, you are expected to live a different kind of life.* Some English Bible versions start the statement with “Therefore”, implying the emphasis on the logical dependence of ethical advice upon the preceding doctrinal statements. The doctrine is revelation on its own. From Chapter 1 to Chapter 3, *dogma* is expounded and elaborated in full. It is on the basis of this *dogma*, that ethics is called for. Paul’s imperatives are dependent upon his indicatives. His *didache* is determined by his *kerygma*. All things ethical are subject to doctrinal expositions. Moral indoctrination is derived from *dogma*.

This is not the beginning of something new. It is a continuation. Turning from the doctrinal to the practical is not a break or a breach. There is no dichotomy between dogma and ethics – between faith and works. There is a relation between interpretation and application. A heavenly calling (revelation received) is followed by earthly conduct. This is an undeniable logic, an inevitable deduction. Truth has been revealed, therefore, truth must be applied. Revelation is a public and universal historical reality recognised and interpreted as an act of God. The doctrine of revelation is the context of apostolic



argument that since truth had been revealed, ethical lifestyle that pertains to this revelation is expected.

#### 5.9.4. Christology – the basis of apostolic argument

The expression, *en Christo* (in Christ) describes the dynamics of Christ's involvement in *ecclesiastical* processes. The Christian unity is based on the unity with Christ. Soteriology is applied Christology. All the salvific acts of God in the New Testament revolve around Christ. The locus of Ephesians 4:1-16 Christology is that Christ is the giver of gifts to His Church. Christology is the basis of *doma*. The Pauline declaration: *kata to metron tes doreas tou Christou* in Ephesians 4:7 means that each gets the gift that Christ has to bestow for his special case. The Messiah is Himself the gift, and God Himself is the Giver of all good things. Many gifts received by people are an outflow of the Great Gift of God. The Messiah, the Great Gift, is disclosed in the various gifts received by the church. On the other hand, the Paul's Christology also promotes the Messiah's activity as the donor (Ephesians 1:10; 2:14-17). Paul's theology reflects God as the giver, and his Christology reflects Christ as a generous distributor of gifts to His *ecclesia*, the Church (Ephesians 1:8). The epitome of the matter is that

Christ has given his gifts 'for building up the body of Christ, until we all attain to the unity of faith and of the knowledge (*epignosis*) of the Son of God, to mature (*teleios*) manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness (*pleroma*) of Christ' (4:12-13); the goal of the process is that 'we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by every joint with which it is supplied, when each part is working properly, makes bodily growth and upbuilds itself in love' (4:15-16); finally, we are told that Christ loves the church 'because we are members of his body' (5:30) (Macquarrie 1990:140).



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The acclamation; *grace has been given as Christ apportioned it* shifts the focus of attention to the unity of the body in which each member has a distinctive service to render for the effective functioning of the body. Barth (1974:430) describes the meaning of this statement:

Three elements of this statement are equally important: (a) The saints experience God's good will, power, and presence by receiving grace; (b) the grace given is neither a pillow for sleeping nor a comfortable warm feeling, but a ministry, it is a privilege implying responsibility and action; (c) this gift is given to each one of the saints, not solely to an inner circle of office-holders inside the church.

The Ephesians 4:7 central message is that a sharp distinction between clergy and laity in the church is inappropriate. In Paul's Christology, Christ is the great theme of dogma and ethics. Christ is the centre of charismatic community where charismata are distributed liberally according to God's will.

Ephesians 4:8-10 reinforces the context with an Old Testament quotation and its exegesis. The apostle introduces citation from the known Bible of the day. The connective motif "it says" or "it is written" discards legalistic and polemical undertone from the text and context. Paul was equating the voice of the Scripture with the voice of God. The words of Ephesians 4:8 is the peculiar text of Psalm 68:18. The bestowal of gifts by the ascended Christ is confirmed by the application of an important Old Testament text. The words quoted are God's therefore comes with His glory.

Christ's ascendance alluded in Ephesians 4:8 refers historically to the Lord's triumphant ascent of Mount Zion. The statement "When you ascended on high" is understood of Christ's exaltation, an event of momentous theological significance referred to in Ephesians 1:20-22. Kasper (1985:149) helps to define the importance of this exaltation: "Exaltation means therefore heavenly enthronement and installation in divine dignity and



authority. When exalted, Jesus shares in divine power... and divine glory (*doma*)". The language used ('lower earthly regions', 'far above all the heavens') here "seem to suggest an all-encompassing cosmic journey, from the highest heaven or beyond it to the depth of the underworld, and back again. Such an interpretation would consort well with Ephesians' vision of the cosmic Christ who fills all in all (2:22) – his dominion reaches even into hell" (Macquarrie 1990:142). As the exalted Christ, He intercedes for Christians, and continues to protect them. He is not detached from the world, but is with His people in a new way. He is with God as our advocate, *semper interpellans pro nobis* (Hebrews 7:25).

The apostolic concern here is Christ's triumphant ascent and the gifts. The concern is not Christ's leading a host of prisoners captive. The notion of Ephesians 4:8-10 is the establishment of Christ's supremacy over the evil powers. These evil powers are the captives in mind in the application of Psalm 68:18. The text reflects the cosmic supremacy of Christ in a new way. The statement; "and gave gifts to men" points to the fact that it is Christ who gives these gifts to people. Paul has copied the textual tradition as per Targum, and appealed to a common technique of early Jewish hermeneutics, called *midrash peshet*. The method of exposition of the text is applied in the light of its fulfilment in Christ. In reflection, O'Brien (1999:291) asserts

the application of Psalm 68:18 to Christ's ascent and subsequent distribution of gifts stands in contradict to the rabbinic tradition as reflected in the Targum which associates Psalm 68:18 with Moses' ascent of Mount Sinai, an ascent that was understood as a going up to heaven to receive the Torah and other heavenly secrets (O'Brien 1999:291).

This clearly reflects Christology that has supremacy over any other power that can be perceived in either a visible or invisible world. It establishes Christ as superior to even Moses. Christ has ascended far above all the heavens in order to fill the whole universe (Ephesians 4:10). His gift is not the Torah, but grace (Ephesians 4:7). His special gifts of



ministry are for building up the whole body (Ephesians 4:11-16), not heavenly mysteries reserved for the privileged few. Christ received these *domata* in order to give them back to His people in the church. The fact is that Ephesians 4:1-16 exhilarates Christology above all other doctrines. McGrath (1994:200) in summarising Bonhoeffer's Christology captures it explicitly that "Christology is prior to soteriology, in that it is the identity of the person which determines the significance of his or her actions." All of the dogma revolves around Christology. Christ is supreme over all other powers and as a result qualifies to bestow gifts to the Church. He is depicted as the Head of the Body (Ephesians 4:15). It is Christ, the Head, alone from whom the body derives unity, nourishment, and growth. *Praxis* is essential to Christology, and the expression of this *praxis* is ecclesiastical processes. Christ's supremacy and sovereignty do not exclude but create the activity of a church engaged in its own growth and upbuilding.

#### 5.9.5. Pneumatology – the inspiration of apostolic argument

There are two references to the Spirit in Ephesians 4:1-16. In both cases the reference connects the idea of the unity of the Spirit: (1). *Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit (4:3)* (2). *There is one Spirit (4:4)*. These reinforce the pneumatological crux that the Holy Spirit and the Son, is of the same essence as the Father, and is therefore consubstantial with Him. Kärkkäinen (2002:32) judges it correctly that "Paul's Pneumatology is Christologically founded: The Spirit is the Spirit of Christ... To be 'in Christ' and 'in Spirit' are virtually synonymous, therefore, the Spirit cannot be experienced apart from Christ". Just like other members of the Holy Trinity, the Holy Spirit possesses the divine names, divine perfections, and divine works. The unity of the Spirit embraces all the children of God. Barth (1974:428) associate the unity of the Spirit with the unity of the church; "the unity of the church rests upon the oneness of God rather than upon some common enthusiasm in the community of the church". The unity of the Church is created by the unity of the Spirit. God has inaugurated this unity in Christ in order to reconcile all creation under Him. It is true as Peters (2000:243) asserts;



the Spirit integrates, unifies, and brings things into relationship. The Spirit does not simply demand conformity to an already existent or static state of oneness... Rather it engages in the dynamic process of integrating what is presently estranged. Unity in the Spirit is a reconciling unity, or better, a process of entering into unity, a holomovement. This unity is not simply a matter of turning plurality into oneness, of eliminating every distinction by collapsing all things into a single, universal mass of undifferentiated being. It is rather a matter of coordination, cooperation, integration, and harmony.

It is out of this inspiration that Paul argues that the unity of the Spirit is the bond that keeps the church together. The church without the unity of the Spirit is dysfunctional and does not deserve to be called church. The church derives her ethical lifestyle from the activity of the Holy Spirit. Ecclesiastical life intertwines with pneumatic activity in order to make Christology an experiential reality. Pneumatology gives the church its real ecclesiality.

#### 5.9.6. Ecclesiology – the focus of apostolic argument

The passage of Ephesians 4:1-16 contains some ecclesiastical images such as one body (4:4); God's people (4:12); and the body of Christ (4:12, 16). The church is the dramatic demonstration of God's marvellous wisdom and perfect plan of reconciliation. The church is the **body of Christ** – a common metaphor used only by Paul in the New Testament to refer to the church (Romans 12; 1 Corinthians 12; Ephesians 4:16). The church is the body of Christ by which He fulfils His earthly mission. This image emphasizes the church as the focal point of Christ's activity here on earth. It is the image that emphasizes the connection the church has as a community of believers with Christ. The "body" metaphor highlights the central idea of *UNITY* of many members of the church. The Ephesians church is radically one where everybody received a special gift from Christ. Therefore the body of Christ is not merely a collection of individuals who



subscribe to its philosophy. The members are the interrelated parts. This image is described by the apostle Paul in 1 Corinthians.12:18, 20, 21, and 26: *But in fact God has arranged the parts in the body, every one of them, just as he wanted them to be. As it is there are many parts but one body. The eye cannot say to the hand, "I don't need you!" And the head cannot say to the feet, "I don't need you". If one part suffers, every part suffers with it; if one part is honoured, every part rejoices with it.* Therefore this image reflects the church analogy of a human body equipped with various organs.

The image of the body is forceful because it portrays the union of the church with its Lord. Christology is closely related to ecclesiology. Christ relates to the church as a head to its body. Christians relate to one another as limbs that cooperate. *From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work* (Ephesians 4:16). It is true then, as Peters (2000:269) asserts:

Because he is the first – born of all creation” and “all things hold together” in him, “he is the head of the body, the church” (Col 1:15-18). From this head the body is “nourished and knit together through its joints and ligaments,” so that it “grows with a growth that is from God” (Col 2: 19). The sacraments indicate this corporal unity. “In the one Spirit we were all baptized into one body” (1 Cor 12: 13), united with Christ in his death and now raised to live the resurrected life (Rom 6:4-5). Of the Eucharist Saint Paul writes, “Because there is one bread, we who are many are one body, for we all partake of the one bread (1 Cor. 10:17).

The image of the church as the body of Christ in essence speaks of “the mutual union, mutual concern, and mutual dependence of the members of the local community upon one another” (Dulles 1987: 50). This image gives the impression of a democratic tendency with a special emphasis on the immediate relationship of all believers in a non-hierarchical structure. The attention is on the mutual service of the members towards one





another within the body. Pauline ecclesiology elaborates the great variety of services, functions and charisms in the Body of Christ (Romans 12:4; 1 Corinthians 12:12-27; Ephesians 1:22f; 3:6; 4:4, 12, 16; 5:23, 30; Colossians 1:18, 24; 2:19; 3:15). In a nutshell Paul emphasises the church “as an organism, as having a vital connection with Christ, as under the superintendence of Christ, as being a unit, although made up of Jews and Gentiles, as having a diversity of gifts among the members, and as ideally co-operating in the performance of one common task” (Thiessen 1979:307). This calls for a concept of ministry as the fostering of fellowship. The church as the Body of Christ is the gathering of God’s family together as a brotherhood of living unity. They are together under Christ to build one another up.

The church is seen as **people of God** (*laos tou theou*) that are built together into a spiritual building for God’s habitation. Lawler and Shanahan (1995:10-12) endorse the fact that the story of the church starts with Israel, the Old Testament people of God. One of the positive aspects about Vatican II is the challenge levelled to the comprehensiveness of the “body of Christ” metaphor and bringing back the “people of God” idiom: “It has pleased God to make men holy and save them not merely as individuals without any mutual bonds, but by making them into a single People” (1995:10). Some reputable Catholic theologians such as Hans Küng, Heribert Mühlen and Karl Rahner promoted this metaphor before and after Vatican II. God’s people are His own possession, His treasure. The church is defined by belonging to God. Lawler and Shanahan (1995:10) stress the fact that

Such was the Deuteronomist’s message to Israel: ‘The Lord your God has chosen you to be a People for his own possession, out of all the peoples that are on the face of the earth’ (Deut 7:6). Such also was Peter’s message to the new people of God, the Church: ‘You are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation; God’s own people (1 Pet 2:9).



The people of God is the Church, they are the new people of God, the messianic people whose head is Christ. As the people of God, they are the pilgrim people on the way to the heavenly city. They have the new law which is “the new commandment to love as Christ loved us” (John 13:34). Their goal is the kingdom of God. Again, in the words of Lawler and Shanahan (1995:12); “The Church is not a political democracy, which emphasizes equal *individuals*. Neither is it a political monarchy, which emphasizes unequal *individuals*. It is a *koinonia*, a communion of persons, individuals in relationship, sharing equally in the good things of the one people of God...” These people share life, love, and truth. They are constituted in a special way by God Himself. It is God’s choice to create this society, hence the expression, the people of God asserts the priority and the power of God’s action. The people of God is that people to whom God sent His Son as Saviour and King. Kūng (1986:125-132), the renowned Catholic theologian, calls upon the Church to understand that the new people of God must understand

(a) *All* the faithful belong to the people of God; there must be no *clericalization* of the Church. The real church is the faith community composed of sinful men and women and it exists for them.

(b) Everyone belongs to the people of God *through God’s call*: there must be no attempt to make the Church private and exclusive. There is no distinction between the invisible and the visible church. The real church is made up of the real people therefore cannot be invisible. The visible church is the true church. According to Kung, the church is simultaneously visible and invisible.

(c) We all belong to the people of God through our *human decision*: there must be no *hypostatization* of the Church. What makes the people of God distinctive is that every member belongs to it through God’s call. The church must never be made private or exclusive. It is not a free association of like-minded religious affiliates. “The Church is always and everywhere dependent on the free choice and call of God, who wills the salvation of all men (1986:126).

(d) The people of God is an *historical* people: there must be no *idealization* of the Church. The Church can never be a static and supra-historical phenomenon. The church is an eschatological community, *en route* through the midst of time.



The Pauline usage of these two metaphors (body of Christ, and people of God), comes with God's particular expectation of the church's unity, maturity, cooperation, and upbuilding of itself (Ephesians 4:12-16). These are the genuine marks of the ecclesiality of the pneumatic community under the headship of Christ. The apostolic focus is the ecclesiastical community that is eschatological, on the pilgrim towards maturity, characterised by unity.

Unity is not just a mark of Christ's church, but also a confessional mark, a sign of the church's creed in a divided and estranged world; *that the world may believe*. (John 17:21). The church as a unifying force is the messianic people of Christ. This is due to the fact that unity is not merely an attribute of the church; it is also the church's task in the world. The unity of Christ is the unity with His disciples and believers, as well as with the oppressed, the humiliated and the marginalised. Moltmann (1977:345) is correct that the church's unity "would no longer be a 'predicate of the time of salvation' if it were not to achieve liberation for the downtrodden, justice for those without rights, and peace in social conflicts. It is not 'one' for itself; it is one for the peace of divided mankind in the coming kingdom of God."

Regardless of differences in doctrine, organisation, polity, liturgy, history etc, the church remains one, since it is the gathering of believing citizens of the Kingdom. The church remains the one body and the one and only bride of Christ. It is the unity of fellowship with God and with one another. The church's unity is also the practical unity of service. This service is determined by Christ's service, hence the church is "the community of those who serve" (Heyns 1980:120). The church's unity must be discernible in the world. It should be discerned as the unity that can be seen, heard and experienced. It must be the unity of relationship, of action, of attitude as expounded by Jesus in John 17. Generally it must be the unity that finds concrete expression in word and action.

The unity of the church does not dismiss the dimensions of pluriformity, uniformity and diversity. All these are the inevitable phenomena of the church, yet the unity of the church is God's command to transcend the natural boundaries of language, culture and



customs. It is the sign that testifies against the sinful fragmentation of human relationships and a false human unity. It is a unity of those who are in Christ i.e. a unity in the truth.

#### 5.9.7. Gifts – the content of apostolic argument

Since Christology is the basis and the running theme that brings all the *dogmata* together in the Christian faith, *charismata* are a necessity for ecclesiastical maturity. The apostolic argument regarding *domata* is that Christ's followers should:

- Reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of Christ (*pros ton katartismon*)
- Attain to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ
- Stability in doctrine (4:14)
- Maturity

The goal of the apostolic argument is maturity that comes through perfecting (*katartizo*). This word carries the meaning of mending or repairing of the saints. "Building up" (*eis oikodomen*) is the focus of the apostle in this passage. The growth is the process "until we all reach" (*mechri, katantesomen hoi pantes*) maturity. It is the goal or the process all Christians must attain. This *katartismon* in 4:12 is employed in some New Testament passages to give some *symbiotic* meanings to the original. The summary of Gordon (1994:69-78) elaborates this fact by highlighting the five ways this word is employed:

- i) *Of fishing nets, "mending" (though some think "folding")*: Matt 4:21; Mark 1:19.
- ii) *Of a variety of different matters, "fashioning" or "preparing"*
  - "Have you never read, 'Out of the mouths of infants and nursing babies you have prepared (*kateriso*) praise for yourself?'" (Matt 21:16).
  - "A disciple is not above the teacher, but everyone who is fully qualified (*katertismenos*) will be like the teacher" (Luke 6:40).



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- “What if God, desiring to show his wrath and to make known his power, has endured with much patience the objects of wrath that are made (*katertismena*) for destruction?”(Rom 9:22).
  - “Consequently, when Christ came into the world he said, ‘Sacrifices and offerings you have not desired, but a body you have prepared (*katertiso*) for me’ (Heb 10:5).
  - “By faith we understand that the worlds were prepared (*katertisthai*) by the word of God” (Heb 11:3).
- iii) *Of Church unity, either confessional or governmental*
- “Now I appeal to you, brothers and sisters, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you be in agreement and there be no divisions among you, but that you be united (*katertismenoi*) in the same mind and the same purpose” (1 Cor 1:10).
  - “Finally, brothers and sisters, farewell. Put things in order (*katartizesthe*), listen to my appeal, agree with one another, live in peace; and the God of love and peace will be with you” (2 Cor 13:11).
- iv) *Of Christian sanctification or health*
- “For we rejoice when we are weak and you are strong. This is what we pray for, that you may become perfect (*ten hymon katartisin*) (2 Cor 13:9).
  - “Now may the God of peace, who brought back from the dead our Lord Jesus, the great shepherd of the sheep, by the blood of the eternal covenant, make you complete (*katartisai*) in everything good so that you may do his will” (Heb 13:20-21).
- v) *Of restoration of something/someone damaged, incomplete or injured.*
- “My friends, if anyone is detected in a transgression, you who have received the Spirit should restore (*katartizete*) such a one in a spirit of gentleness” (Gal 6:1).



- “Night and day we pray most earnestly that we may see you face to face and restore (*katartisai*) whatever is lacking in your faith” (1 Thes 3:10).
- “And after you have suffered for a little while, the God of grace, who has called you to his eternal glory in Christ, will himself restore (*kartisei*), support, strengthen and establish you” ( 1 Pet 5:10).

The deduction can be made out of these verbal and nominal form of *katarismo* that the expression was intended to mean ‘perfecting’ or ‘constituting’ or even ‘joining’. This justifies the implications that the word could mean ‘put in order’, ‘restore’, ‘put into proper condition’, ‘make complete’, ‘prepare’, ‘equipping something’, ‘training’, ‘discipline’ or ‘to create’. It is for this reason that Gordon (1994:73) concludes,

it is preferable to understand the expression to mean either “perfecting” or “constituting/joining” because the language and thought of the body, unified and growing to perfection will continue throughout the chapter. That is, Christ, the heavenly Head, is uniting and growing the body into perfection by means of these “gifts,” the officers.

The Pauline metaphor of the body consisting of many parts with Christ as the organising and governing Head is beyond questions. As the Head, He manages to join and knit together the whole body so that each part may work properly.

## **5.10. THE TWO ECCLESIASTICAL EXEGESIS OF EPH 4:11 – REFORMED AND PENTECOSTAL**

### **5.10.1. REFORMED EXPOSITION**

The foundational theme of this passage is the unity of the church. The apostle’s thesis is that there is “a unity in variety, a unity in diversity” (Lloyd-Jones 1984:168). The legitimacy of the *exegesis* of this passage should commence from verse 7: “But to each



one of us grace has been given as Christ apportioned it”. The root “was given” implies that the agent was Christ, who is the focus of the subsequent verses. Each believer receives *charisma* that Christ sovereignly bestows for special task of the ministry. Charisma is the favour of God. In the commentary work of Barnes (1979:75-76), “The *grace* referred to here, most probably means *the gracious influences of the Holy Spirit*, or his operation on the heart in connection with the use of the means which God has appointed.” These gifts operate under the Headship of Christ. He is the One who gives them.

The debatable and theological question is whether these *charisms* are the gifts or the offices. The Reformed tradition leans towards the perception that they are the gift, not ecclesiastical position. Hendriksen (1976:195) confirms this notion by quoting Harnack “that the apostles were not in any sense intended to be ecclesiastical officers but merely bearers of a message; that they were not vested with authority over life and doctrine but merely endowed with special spiritual gifts; or that, if they exercised any authority at all, it was not official but organic, spiritual, ethical.” One of the leading scholars of dispensational theology of the twentieth century, Ryrie (1980:83) captures the Reformed view that “A spiritual gift is not primarily a place of service. The gift is the ability, not where that ability is exercised”. The Reformed fundamental approach is that verse 11 begins with the third personal pronoun, “It was he who gave...” (*kai autos edoken*). The word “*edoken*” is the first aorist active indicative of “*didomi*” which signifies the character of the gift than its beneficent nature, hence “the emphasis in this passage (Ephesians 4:11) does not lie on the apostles, prophets, etc. as officers but as gifts of Christ to his church” (Roels in Hendriksen 1976:195). It is therefore theologically correct to think of these gifts as enablement for holiness in lifestyle, but also for the extension and the edification of the church. Many Reformed scholars are convinced that some of these gifts are dormant or are foundational that there is no need of them in today’s church. For instance, Best (1997:157-158) asserts:

In 2:20 and 3:5 it is implied that the ministry of apostles and prophets is in certain important respects over. In 2:20 they are termed the



foundation of the church, and a foundation can only be laid once; in 3.5 they are said to be the recipients of the revelation that the gospel is for the Gentiles as well as Jews; once this truth has been made known and accepted there is no need for it to be revealed again. In those senses then the ministry of apostles and prophets belongs to the past.

#### **5.10.1.1. He gave some to be apostles**

The word “apostle” is derived from the roots *apo* and *stello*, meaning one sent forth as a messenger or an ambassador. In the New Testament, the apostles were the leaders who laid the foundation of the church (Ephesians 2:20), and were accredited by special signs (2 Corinthians 12:12). An apostle is an official representative who is commissioned to carry a message or to perform an official duty. In the Old Testament, the related word is *shaliach*. In the words of Phillips (2004:98), a *shaliach* was someone in the Jewish community who acted as an official representative... had the authority to speak for someone else”. It is like the child speaking on behalf of the father. Though I have some reservations regarding Lloyd –Jones’ description of the apostle, I summarily highlight his view below:

An apostle was a witness of Christ. “An apostle was a man of whom the following things had to be true. First and foremost, he must have seen the risen Lord; he must have been a witness of the resurrected Christ” (Lloyd- Jones 1984:184). The same notion is reinforced by Hendriksen (1976:196) that the apostles “are the *charter-witnesses of Christ’s resurrection*, clothed with life-long and church-wide authority over life and doctrine...” The Reformed scholars are in agreement that an apostle was called and commissioned by the Lord. He was given the supernatural revelation of the Truth. The apostle had the power to speak not only with authority but also with infallibility. The apostle had the power to work miracles.





- Reflections on this View.

Lloyd-Jones is in agreement with the dispensationalists and cessationists that the apostles' role and some gifts were limited to the foundational stage of the church – the argument based on 1 Corinthians 13:8. This view is emphatic that there is no successor or replacement of the apostle, since “the apostolate was a temporary office and that its continuance was never intended by the Lord” (1984:187). Unlike other Reformed scholars, he ascribes the Eph 4 gifts as the offices in the church. He is emphatic that the apostle has always been men, not women. He divides these gifts into two categories of temporary (apostles, prophets, and evangelists); and permanent ones (pastors and teachers). Lloyd-Jones sees revelation as a past event given only to the apostles; hence Truth about God is complete and finalised in the canon. In reaction to this school of thought, I concur that Truth as the dynamic concept, *perceptio divinae veritatis tendens in ipsam*; (a perception of divine truth, tending towards this truth) must be the guideline. The preceding view is narrow hence leaves questions about the doctrine of God as He continues to reveal Himself without confines or restrictions of the *canon*. I have some problem with the fact that the apostolicity was a test of canonicity, since only the apostle could speak infallibly with divine authority. I rather see *apostolicity* as authenticity of the originality of the church. *Apostolicity* affirms *ecclesiality*. The apostle's role speaks “of going back to the beginning, back to the authentic Christianity of the early church” (Phillips 2004:94). They were Christ's delegates who went abroad as authorised heralds (*keryx*).

There is no dispute that the etymological meaning of the word *apostolos* is “one who is sent.” This is identified as unique to the verb *apostello* where emphasis is on the commission attached to the sending. With the noun *apostolos* (the primary use in the New Testament), again the stress is on the person who is sent in full authority. The sentiment accompanying the apostle encompasses the sense of authoritative sender, a mission or a goal, and the destination. In the New Testament literature, the Pauline dominance reigns supreme when referring to the concept of apostle. The apostle cannot be separated from the apostolic authority. The apostle is a father figure with fatherly



authority. He mobilises gifts and resources for the growth of the church. His primary focus is that the *communitas fidelium* becomes *discens* and at the same time to be *docens*. The community of faith must have a time to listen and a time to speak. There must be a time of learning of revelation and a time of witnessing to revelation. Boff (1985:139) enlightens us that

*Docens* and *discens* are two aspects of the one community; they are the two adjectives that describe two practices of the whole community. They are not two nouns that split the community. To be *docens* and *discens* springs from two functions of the same Church and are not two parts or divisions within the Church.

This encompasses the non-negotiable teaching ministry of the apostle, whereby he keeps church members founded on Christ. It is his passion to uphold a vision for God's purposes for the community. As an apostle, he is expected to impart callings and gifts and releases people into the ministries that God has called them to. His concern is to maintain unity in the body of Christ by setting things in order within the community. Above all, the apostles lay foundations for new congregations.

*Apostleship is associated with itinerancy.* The Pauline literature and ministry methodology is prevalent with the concept of itinerant ministry. Relevant examples are:

- Andronicus and Junia, fellow prisoners with Paul (Rom 16:7)
- Peter ministered itinerantly between Jerusalem, Antioch and Jerusalem (Gal 1:8; 2:11; 2:7-8; 1 Cor 1:12).
- Paul missed some apostles in Jerusalem because they were all out on mission (Gal 1:19)

*Apostles bear full authority by the commission of the one sending them.* Apostles listed first by the New Testament epistles. These epistles regard apostles as God's first appointment in the church (1 Cor 12:28; Eph 4:11). The apostle's commission comes through a resurrection appearance (Acts 1:21-26). This appearance does not create



apostleship, but is confirmatory. The basis of the apostolic mission of Paul stems from his citation of the kerygmatic formula in 1 Cor 15:3-8. Here the risen Jesus appears to James, to all apostles, to Peter, to over five hundred believers, and finally to Paul himself. The impetus for the apostles' mission and the basis of their witness are clearly the resurrection appearance of Jesus Christ.

*Apostles are the marturia to the kerygma.* Of twenty-four usages of the word *apostolos* by Paul, the tendency links it with persons engaged in preaching as itinerant missionaries. They proclaim the story of the death and the resurrection of Jesus. They do this not as objective reporters but as those who possess *gnosis* of Christ's death for them and bear witness of the *aletheia* that the resurrection of Jesus is not just an event but the *dunamis theou estin*- the power of God that makes those who listen to respond by faith. The goal is to lead people to faith, to discipleship. The apostolic mission is accomplished only when *ecclesia* is established and has governing structure in place. A living faith is a personal goal of apostolic witness. The role of apostles in the Lukan account is rightly summarised by Wehrli (1992:27):

The role is still clearly marked as a gift (Acts 1:2). The apostles are *preachers* of the kerygma (6:2) as well as guardians of the faith. They are the continuers of the mighty works performed by Jesus (2:42-43; 5:12). They are communal leaders, witnesses to the Resurrection (4:32-37), administrators of offerings (5:2). There is a clear danger that apostles will be diverted from their primary task, which is not charity but preaching the Word so that persons can come to faith (6:2-5).

*The apostle is a catechist of God's salvific activity.* *Kerygma* becomes alive when the apostle makes the authoritative testimony, which is not eyewitness recounting, but proclaiming the mighty acts of death and resurrection. This *catechesis* is declared by Paul as it has become the formula at the Last Supper:

- "For I received from the Lord what I also *passed on* to you: ..." (1 Cor 11:23)



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- “For what I received I *passed on* to you as of first importance: ... (1 Cor 15:3)

*Apostolic Ministry in the Contemporary Church.* From the cessationists within the dispensational theologians to hyper-Calvinists, the question of apostolic ministry in the contemporary church is a hot debate. I attach my own commentary in answering this question as laid out by Wehrli’s (1992:31-34):

- *The loss of the office of apostle has led to the loss of the awareness of the dynamic of the gospel as a power and reality that is life-shaping and in which service and the life of the servant preacher are given profound meaning regardless of the outcome.* To consider the role of apostle in the contemporary church as outmoded is to lose the foundational and fundamental ministry of the church and is to deny Christ’s power and His resurrection. The apostolic marginalisation reflects the loss of awareness of the gospel as a durable force and power in the contemporary church. The clarity about the apostolic function of *kerygma* could well keep the centrality of faith alive.
- *The recovery of the centrality of the resurrection in Christian faith is, in part, a recovery of apostolic identity.* This inevitably leads to the lack of awareness of the *dunamis* and *exousia* in the church governance and to those in the leadership role. That *exousia* is deeply rooted in knowing the risen Christ as Lord of life. The apostle is in *synergy* with other gifts to strengthen the *ecclesia* and its polity.
- *The fact that the church has neglected this foundational ministry is reflected in the establishment mentality of the modern church.* The modern church embraced the detrimental shift of consigning theological studies to the institutions of higher learning, instead of maintaining the local community (*ecclesia*) as a centre of learning. This resulted in making Paul a doctrinal theologian, instead of a missionary of the church. The Pauline theology became extremely rationalised, and Paul, in his self-identified role as an apostle, was bypassed. Theology ceased to be for *ecclesia*, but for rational debates. Instead of embracing the apostolic gift to the church, the modern church marginalised it, hence missed Paul’s primary concern of transforming



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life by structuring alternative community that is charismatic (energized) to incarnate the person of Christ, and is self-developing.

- *Rationalism that upholds universal or general truth devalues special times (kairos), places, commitments, and roles.* Rationalism has trouble with perceiving special persons such as apostles, set apart for unique functions of the gospel. The *modus operandi* whereby maximum participation in and by the community for self empowerment and development counters this tradition. The operation of *charismata* in *ecclesia* also counters imperialistic and paternalistic leadership in the community. The denominational hierarchy clips the wings of those in leadership because their creativity will be perceived as deviant of faith.
- *Recovering apostolic identity and ministry as a foundational part of the church's life focuses on nurturing and promoting the apostolic paradosis.* It is important to note Wehrli's (1992:32) comment that: "Apostolic ministry includes the will to guard and keep the centrality of the cross and the Resurrection in a world of competitive values, especially of superpower, superarms, and superegos." The apostolic identity brings the *ecclesia* back to the centrality of the cross instead of identifying itself with the marks of the human success – a practice that is very common among the New Apostolic Reformation churches. Apostolic ministry sensitises the community of the importance of formation of new congregations and calls them to establishment to radical renewal. The apostolic preacher stands as a bridge between the old and the new community and so participates in the suffering that always occurs when generations or cultures clash.
- *The recovery of apostolic identity is essential if faith is to become the centre of the ecclesia's reality and life.* Some denominations exist for the sake of companionship or a particular action. Companionship is not an end in the Bible. *Ecclesia* is created by faith response to *euangelion* and *kerygma*. Once the community is formed, fellowship of the community together with the members of the Holy Trinity is to be consummated. Christ's incarnation continually takes place to shape the new



community into *imago Dei* and into Christ's character. This is championed by the apostolic gift within the community – the role as *didache*.

- *The formation of the Pauline corpus and the development of the apostle as a basic part of the canon make clear how important preserving the apostolic voice was to the early church. The canon gives the ecclesia a clarion call to understanding of the contemporary world in it exists. It is within this context that the eschatological community needs to know and understand its own journey towards its intended destiny. The apostolic voice is needed for this clarity and understanding.*
- *There are a number of implications for apostolic ministry itself. Apostles remind community members of the gospel power that resides beyond self and the church's control. The power does not reside in the community's spirituality, but in Christ through the Holy Spirit. Apostles sustain the *paradosis* and are responsible for hermeneutical exegesis of *euangelion* as *dunamis theou estin* that transforms lives. The apostle Paul does this by combining the *paradosis* and contemporary relevance to make sense of the identity of this new community. The apostle lives under the *exousia* of *euangelion*. The ecclesia's integrity is due to the apostles' *kerygmatic* activities. The congregation and the apostle work as a *symbiosis* (grow together) and *loyal Syzygus* (Phil 4:3) for the cause of the gospel. Another implication is the continuing assessment of congregational relation and conformity to its alliance claims with Christ. This implies asserting authority against the congregation when it becomes acculturated or when it fails to align itself with the power that was originally made available to it.*

#### **5.10.1.2. He gave some to be prophets.**

A prophet – (*prophetes*) in a New Testament sense signifies a person who spoke for the god and interpreted this god's will, hence a forth-teller. In a biblical sense, a prophet uttered the actual words which God had given to them without altering them. This was built on the Mosaic injunction: "...I will put my words in his mouth, and he will tell them



everything I commanded him” (Deuteronomy 18:18b). God put His words in the mouth of the prophet and the prophet in turn speaks these words precisely as commanded (Isa 6). It is logical, then to conclude that prophets are *the occasional organs of inspiration* (Hendriksen 1976:196) - inspired preachers and teachers. He is an organ of special revelations from God, a spokesperson for God. Like the apostles, prophets ended when the canon of the New Testament was completed. “We no longer need direct revelations of truth; the truth is in the Bible. We must never separate the Spirit and the Word. The Spirit speaks to us through the Word, so we should always doubt and query any supposed revelation that is not entirely consistent with the Word of God” (Lloyd-Jones 1984:191).

- Reflections on this View.

The *logia* that the *canon* brought the prophets and their role to conclusion is highly debatable. The continuous revelation of God to humanity and the world as whole conflicts with this conclusion. All our *dogma* regarding God is *eschatological*. Ruthven (1993:125) is right that

Most relevant for our study is Paul’s point that the charismata are *eschatological*. Spiritual gifts express the contemporary presence of the future kingdom of God. But exciting and powerful as these experiences might be, the Corinthians have not yet arrived; there is much more to come. The abundance of the charismata serves usefully to promote maturity in believers throughout the present age, but these gifts will be overwhelmed and replaced by the consummation of the age, the end, the kingdom in its fullness, that is, the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ in the day of his glory.

God is busy making Himself known to humanity and the universe as a whole is still in the process of being created. The revealed Word needs to be interpreted and made known to God’s people. This is the role of the prophet: making God’s will known to His people for times such as these.



This is the service that is accompanied by revelation. It is the gift that thrusts the community towards their vision, and activates their spiritual gifts. The prophetic audible voice calls members of the community to holiness and righteousness. The *kerygmatic* voice has the creative power to change lives, to edify, to comfort, and to exhort. The Old Testament shows a prophet as an intercessor, empowerer, and the imparter of gifts for the ministry.

In retrospect, it is noted that the theological nuance of prophets departs slightly from the Charismatic teaching. In this research, the explanation of the New Testament prophecy, concurs with Wehrli (1992:35) that

the prophets were persons called to see through a revelation given to them by the power of the Spirit what God is doing in the present in order that people might discern the new times and authority in the presence of the old and so live by hope in the new age that God is inaugurating. Prophets make the reign of God, hidden in the present, manifest so that people might live in a new order

- *Prophecy is related to community.* It is a gift bestowed on individual members of *ecclesia*, and like all other gifts, is to be used for the common good (1 Cor 12:7). It is one of the prominent gifts listed in 1 Cor 14 and is characteristic of the local church and its life. It is desirable, not because it is more spiritual, because it builds up the church (1 Cor 14:3, 4, 12). “But everyone who prophesies speaks to men for their strengthening, encouragement and comfort.” The three key words here; *oikodome*, *paraklesis*, *paramuthia* (1 Cor 14:3): build up (strengthening), encourage, or exhort reveal the purpose of prophecy. The apostolic appeal to the Corinthians is the desire for the strengthening or building up of the local church through their prophetic gift (14:12, 26). Central to the prophetic activity in the Spirit is the creation or building up of a new community. Wehrli (1992:46) drives the point home that “Prophecy is understood as a mark of the Spirit and a sign of the new age in the church.”





- *Prophecy is more specific in function.* It does not build in general, but it builds up the local community, specifically by encouragement and consolation (1 Cor 14:3). It is the sign to the members that God is with and among them. For the outsiders, prophecy is a conviction, a call to new accountability, discerning the secrets of one's heart, and repentant worship, declaring, "God is really among you" (1 Cor 14:25).
- *Prophecy is primarily part of the public worship of the local church.* This is reiterated by Paul as evidenced in this chapter regarding prophecy:
  - "Follow the way of love and eagerly desire spiritual gifts, especially the gift of prophecy" (14:1)
  - "I would like every one of you to speak in tongues, but I would rather have you prophesy..." (14:5)
  - "Therefore, my brothers, be eager to prophesy, and do not forbid speaking in tongues" (14:39).

Paul does not expect all Christians to be prophets and to prophesy but exhorts all those with charisma of the Spirit for inspired speech to prophesy rather than speak in tongues. Prophecy is love in action in the local congregation. It is a gift from God, and not a claim upon God.

- *Prophecy gives revelation.* This is made clear in 1 Cor 14:6. Revelation comes from prophecy, knowledge from teaching. Prophecy is exercised for the purpose of *manthano* and *parakaleo* (learning and encouragement) as reflected on 14:29-31. The local church is the setting in which God gives authoritative revelation. Prophecy reveals the mystery. This is confirmed by other Pauline passages, as Wehrli (1992:39) further asserts:

according to the revelation of the mystery that was kept secret for long ages but is now disclosed, and through the prophetic writings is made known to all the Gentiles, according to the



command of the eternal God” (Rom. 16:25-26; cf. 1 Cor. 15:51; Rom. 11:25f; Eph. 3:3-5; Matt.10:26; Luk. 12:2). While the mystery that prophecy discloses is primarily in the present, Paul also uses revelation in an eschatological context (Rom.6:18)

The authority of revelation rests on the Spirit of God. The prophets’ words are not to be despised (1 Thes 5:19-20). In public worship, any Christian may become an agent of the Spirit and prophesy (1 Cor 14:24-25, 30-32). The prophetic leaders’ speech is authenticated by the recognition of the inspiration by God and the expression of His will. The Spirit is the builder of the community, and He does so by the prophetic utterances within the community. The prophet speaks with authority within the congregation. Prophecy is a communal function and a sign of the new age (Acts 13:1-3). The prophet reveals the hidden will of God. Theirs is to interpret the current events including the difficult understanding of the cross (Luk 24:25-27). They reveal the reality of God’s new age and fundamentally are called to clarify and discern (*diakrinos*) the gift to which another is called. They discern the gifts of the Spirit and call community members to respond to them. It is therefore theologically legitimate to conclude in the words of Wehrli (1992:47):

Prophecy is God’s gift to the church, and this gift is the indication that the new age of the Spirit with its own gifts has already begun. As apostles deal primarily with the faith in the remembered acts of God in the Christ event, prophets *look to the new age* and are *agents of hope*

Apostles create the new community; prophets maintain the vision by which it can live.

### **5.10.1.3. He gave some to be evangelists**

The word *euangelistes* appears thrice in the New Testament (Ephesians 4:11; Acts 21:8; 2 Timothy 4:5). It is derived from the term, “*euangelizo*”, to evangelise, which means to



proclaim good news. The evangelist was the preacher of the gospel. Albert Barnes (1979:79) explains the evangelist as someone “whose main business was *preaching*, and who was not particularly engaged in the *government* of the church”. Hendriksen (1976:196) sees evangelists as *travelling missionaries*. The evangelists were of lower rank than the apostles and the prophets. They were the messengers of the good news. An evangelist was the minister of the gospel who was not bound by geographical restriction, but travelled as a missionary to preach the gospel, and to establish churches.

- Reflections on this View.

It is unpalatable to consider some leaders as those lower in a rank than others. It is esteemed that the evangelists are of less importance in a functioning of the church. To consider them as outside the church government debases their role and according to the text (Ephesians 4:11), they are given the same accord as of all other offices. The panoramic view of 1 and 2 Timothy, makes one to realise that Timothy, the evangelist’s (2 Timothy 4:5) mandate was to remain (*hupomeno*) at Ephesus (1 Timothy 1:3). It is within the church that he does the work of an evangelist. That means he did not have to travel, but to hang in there in order to bring order in the church. The word “evangelist” has no bearing on “travelling missionary”. It shows a leader in a local church proclaiming good news to unbelievers, and bringing reproof within a believing community (Romans 1:15; 1 Corinthians 9:14; 2 Corinthians 11:7; Galatians 2:14; Philippians 1:27). An evangelist is a *kerygmatic* preacher, though in the church, but a *verbum externum*, the external word that moulds and shapes the life of the church for impacting the world.

Evangelists are the preachers of the gospel with full authority and power (Acts 8:4, 12-14). To evangelise is associated with the description of the function of the apostles as preachers of the gospel. Luke, who limited the title apostle by applying it mainly to the Twelve, calls Philip an evangelist (Acts 21:8). Earlier the same Philip had been preaching the good news of Jesus Christ (8:26-40), reaching out as an itinerant to the Ethiopian eunuch. In the pastoral epistle, Timothy is enjoined: “Do the work of an evangelist” (2 Tim 4:5). They are regarded not only as missionaries but also as leaders of already



established churches. The manifestations of God's *dunamis* and presence come by *kerygmatic* endeavours that help people to understand and to respond to the *soteriological* appeals that will finally incorporate them into the *ecclesiastical* membership, the *communitas fidelium* where *discens* and *docens* will be experienced and exercised. These are the forgiveness of sins, baptism, evangelism, and the desire for worship. This was significant in the early church, as confirmed by Ridderbos (1975:454):

Certainly the evangelists will not have confined themselves to the proclamation of the gospel, but also have baptized and given directions for the establishment of the organization of the church (cf. 1 Tim. 2:2; Tit. 1:5; Acts 8:12). Yet their proper work, so far as we are able to conclude from the few examples, apparently lay not so much in the government of the church as in the continuing proclamation of the gospel. In the first period they frequently formed the link between the apostles and the leading figures in the church. With the dying out of the apostles the evangelists disappear as well.

The evangelistic proclamation leads to some form of response. The hearers of the word responded by asking the obvious questions:

- *What does this mean? (Acts 2:12).*
- *Brothers, what shall we do? (Acts 2:37).*
- *How can I... unless someone explain it to me? (Acts 8:31).*
- *Who are you Lord? (Acts 9:5)*
- *Sirs, what must I do to be saved? (Acts 16:30)*

When the evangelistic message is proclaimed, there was evidence that the proclaimer had been given certain abilities. He knew the facts, the truth of the gospel, and could present them in a clear manner and with unction and authority and power from the Holy Spirit.



#### 5.10.1.4. He gave some to be pastors

The Greek word, *poimenas* is rendered “shepherd” with the fundamental meaning of protection.

It is applied to the Lord Jesus as the great *shepherd* of the flock – the church. It is rendered *pastors* only in the place before us. The word is given to ministers of the gospel with obvious propriety, and with great beauty. They are to exercise the same watchfulness and care over the people of their charge which a shepherd does over his flock (Barnes 1979: 79).

The primary emphasis suggests guiding, feeding, protecting, and caring for the sheep. They are designated “*ministers of local congregation, teaching elders (or overseers)*” (Hendriksen 1976:197). The pastors are concerned about the government, the instruction, and the rule of the church. They are the officers in the settled church. To highlight the notion of Lloyd-Jones (1984:193): “He is the guardian, the custodian, the protector, the organizer, the director, the ruler of the flock.”

- Reflections on this View.

The original Greek rendering of *poimenas kai didaskalous*, many Reformed scholars are convinced that the pastors and teachers are to be one office. The pastor is expected to be able to teach, and the teacher cares and feeds God’s flock with God’s Word.

This is the leadership image that stems from the Old Testament. An example is that of the shepherd boy, David who was chosen by God to rule (1 Sam 16:11-13). David the shepherd, not the warrior, delivered Israel from the taunting and militantly powerful Goliath. This is the Old Testament precedence or analogy of the ruler and the shepherd. It is the analogy deeply rooted in the image of God as the one who shepherds. This means as a shepherd, He feeds, leads, protects, and cares for God’s flock (*ecclesia*).



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The Old Testament prophets likened the rulers as shepherds:

- Jeremiah addressed the negligence of the shepherds (23:1-4)
- Ezekiel addressed the greediness, carelessness and brutality of the shepherds in leading the flock. (34)
- Zechariah revealed the judgement awaiting the uncaring shepherds and how to be without a shepherd equals death (10:3; 13:7; 11:4).

Since the human shepherds fail the flock, God takes upon Himself to take care of the flock. This is illustrated by some Old Testament references that:-

- God will gather and feed the sheep (Ezek 34:7-16)
- God will be the true Davidic shepherd (Isa 40:11; Jer 50:19; Mic 7:14)
- God will appoint better shepherds (Jer 3:15)

The shepherd's role in this sense is to gather the scattered sheep into a community and to feed them. The shepherds are the care givers and the leaders who build the community.

The New Testament concept of shepherd is explicit as in the Old Testament. The Lukan writings lack direct reference to shepherds in the context of charismata in the settled pneumatic community.

*The Synoptics:* The direct reference to *poimen* in the Synoptics is basically in Matthew and Mark where crowds (*ochlos*) are seen as sheep without a shepherd (Mark 6:34; Matt 9:36). The crowds are shepherdless sheep, harassed, helpless, and fainting with hunger. In both biblical instances, Jesus pre-incarnates the shepherd who responds to people's needs with compassion, first by exercising pastoral leadership by teaching. He gathers and feeds the shapeless, scattered people who are without identity. He allowed the disciples to learn by doing when they became agents of the divine action by distributing bread to people. These disciples were taught that they were to be feeders. By ordering the



crowd to sit on the grass, Jesus the shepherd brought order in the midst of the chaotic crowd.

*The Johannine references.* The well-known passage on *poimen* is John 10:1-18 where the noun “shepherd” is used five times and “flock” once. This makes this passage unique since it reflects a general lifestyle of *ecclesia* under *poimen*. The recurrent *ginosko* in Johannine writing speaks of the intimacy between the sheep and the shepherd. There is a relationship between the sheep and the shepherd. Bromiley (1985:122) calls for wisdom that:

*ginoskein* plays a bigger role in John and 1 John. It denotes personal fellowship with God or Christ. The relation between Father and Son is a knowing, and so is that between Jesus and his disciples (Jhn. 10:14-15, 27). Knowing God also means being determined by love (1 Jhn. 4:7-8). Love governs the relation between both Father and Son (Jhn. 3:35 etc) and Jesus and his disciples (13:1 etc).

In the Johannine apocalypse, he describes the Lamb as a shepherd who nourishes people to life (Rev 7:17). Christ is the true shepherd ruler – the good model shepherd. He is the good Shepherd who rules with authority. Those who reject His shepherding, He will shepherd with a rod of iron (Rev 2:27; 12:5; 19:15). The *poimen* of *ecclesia* is a figure of *exousia* with definite functions. The caring function of the *poimen* limits and clarifies the nature of *exousia*.

*The Pauline corpus.* Pastors in Ephesians 4:11 are mentioned together with the teachers with the same definite article, which implies a close relationship between the two. The apostle associates *poimen* with *presbuteros* and *episkopos* (Phil 1:1; 1 Tim 3:4; 1 Tim 5:17). The Pauline references to *poimen* are widely associated with leadership responsibility in the local community of believers.

*The other epistles.* Peter brings forth the function of Christ as that of a shepherd:



- He is the shepherd and guardian (*episkopos*) of your souls (1 Pet 2:25)
- He is the chief shepherd (*archipoimen*) who is to appear (1 Pet 5:4)

This epistle (2:22-24) reflects Jesus the Shepherd's ministry as that of suffering servant of Isa 53. Shepherding is suffering servanthood (Wehrli 1992:88).

*Poimena* are leaders in the local church: The image of pastoral leadership is reflected throughout the later New Testament and this justifies its appearance in the fivefold ministry of Ephesians 4:11 – the time when the church was settled as a *pneumatic* community under the leadership of pastors (*poimena*) and elders (*presbuteroi*). Earlier, long before the writing of this epistle, Paul admonished *tous presbuterous tes ekklesias* (the elders of the church) that they keep their integrity and supervise the flock of God. They are the overseers (*episkopoi*) – supervisors of the church. “True pastoral rule involves nurturing and feeding those who have lost their way. It is giving meaning to the disoriented crowd. Its goal is to gather persons together into community... The pastor is the gatherer” (Wehrli 1992:90). The shepherd gathers the chaotic fragments of society into *ecclesia*, supervises it, discerns its character, and applies discipline to disruptive members who threaten *ecclesia*. This means discerning and opposing false teachers.

The pastor assures the community the safety, security, and acceptance. He is a leader with the ability to draw people together for a common cause. He deepens their faith and establishes them into the oracles of God. The pastoral task is emotional since it involves some emotional participation into the affairs of the people. He feeds and leads people towards God's purposes and growth. The pastor engages in shepherding (*poimano*), overseeing (*episkopeo*), and protecting (*proistemi*) by nurturing faith by teaching.





### 5.10.1.5. He gave some to be teachers

*Didaskalous* is rendered “teacher” like in a case of Nicodemus in John 3. The main function of this office is to teach or give instruction in the religious doctrine. This is the “teaching elder” who expound the Word for the church’s establishment in faith.

Shepherding and teaching are different functions yet the same people could exercise both from time to time. Leadership involves truth, i.e. correct teaching, for the leader has to say in what direction he wishes to lead, and teaching involves leadership for the teacher must be seen to be leading others in the way he or she advocates, teachers are more than academics providing information (Best 1997:168).

- Reflections on this View.

It is worthy of notice that the pastor must be able to teach. The teacher can be itinerant to strengthen the churches in different *locales*. The pastor is the shepherd, specifically responsible for the flock under his care.

The role of the teacher and what is to be taught (*didache*) dominates the Pastoral Epistles. Bromiley (1985: 165) enlightens us that:

In 1 Cor. 12:28-29, Eph. 4:11, and Acts. 13:1 *didaskaloi* are mentioned after or with (apostles and) prophets. Again they are expositors who edify by their clearer understanding. The order is material, not hierarchical. The apostles are giving way to pastors and the evangelists to teachers. Similarly in 1 Tim. 2:7; 2 Tim 1:11 the work of teaching constitutes a part of Paul’s apostleship which the teachers will continue.



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Teaching in Pauline *corpus* occurs as a *charisma* that manifests itself freely in the church. Like apostles and prophets, teachers are a delimited group of people with the definite quality (1 Cor 12:28; Eph 4:11). Ridderbos (1975:452-3) reminds us:

We do not read of a distinct office of teacher, that is to say, appointment as teacher in and by the church. It is required of the leading figures in the church, for example, of the overseers, that they be *didaktikos*, apt to teach (1 Tim. 3:2; cf. 2 Tim. 2:24; Tit. 1:9) and of the elders those are to be held in highest honor who are charged especially with preaching and instruction (1 Tim.5:17; cf 1 Thes. 5:12; 2 Tim. 2:2)

The *didaskalos*' primary function is impartation of instruction and the transmission of apostolic *paradosis* - with special highlight on its redemptive-historical content and the *paraenesis* arising out of it. This calls for competence to instruct others in the Christian tradition and precepts (1 Cor 4:17; 2 Tim 2:2) This function is not only restricted to the *paraenesis*, but it extends to the whole content of *kerygma*.

The uniqueness of the *didaskaloi* lies in the fact that during the time when oral tradition was the only source for knowledge of the Christian faith, they provided an important ministry for the propagation of that tradition. Ridderbos (1975:453) notes it correctly;

The labour of these teachers will have been of particular significance for the *catechumenate* and the instruction of those who wished to be baptized. On the other hand, as appears from the close conjunction of 'pastors and teachers' in Eph 4:11, their teaching activity had a broader scope as well. While the modality of prophets and teachers was different, therefore, the former representing more the current, the latter the traditional aspect of the preaching of the gospel, the function of both lay in upbuilding, comforting, and giving spiritual direction to the church.



From this, it can be deduced that *didaskalos* maintains accuracy in handling God's Word, and enables the community to understand God's truth. Through God's revelation, the teacher sets people free from deception and heresy. He engrosses the community into practical lifestyle that fits with sound doctrine. The teacher's pivotal role is to help the church realise that the Christian life is based on facts, not feelings.

### 5.10.2. PENTECOSTAL/CHARISMATIC APPROACH

The classical Pentecostal exposition of this passage is intertwined with that of other passages that relate to the subject of *charismata* (1 Corinthians 12-14; Romans 12:3-8; 1 Peter 4:10-11). The bottom-line of this passage is that spiritual offices in the Church were to be accepted as gifts from Christ to His body, the Church leaders are the gift of God to the Church; they are called into the office by God, and equipped with the corresponding gifts in order to function in that office. The latest Pentecostal and Charismatic research (Wagner, Hamon, and Cannistraci) agrees that there is a sharp distinction between the ministry gifts (*charismata*) and the gifts of the Spirit (*pneumatika*). The New Apostolic Reformation promotes the fivefold ministry as the authentic structure that will restore God's kingdom and bring order out of chaos.

- The Problem of Cessationists Theology

The Pentecostal/ Charismatic theology is critical to the *cessationist theology* embraced by some Protestant teachers, especially those from the dispensational and fundamentalist background. This school of thought is convinced that some *charismata* were designed for foundational establishment of the church, hence are no necessary since foundations are laid and the *canon* is complete. Cessationists are inclined to use 1 Corinthians 1:4-8; 13:8-10; Ephesians 4:7-13; and John 16:13 to authenticate the view that the *charismatic* gifts described in the Epistles and Acts ceased to function in the first century and were replaced by the completion of the *canon* of the New Testament Scripture. This view is repugnant with Biblical Theology of the Holy Spirit and the Kingdom of God. It is inimical with the revelation of God and Jesus Christ as the *eschaton*. The notion that



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*charismata* belonged only to the apostolic, or pre-canonical age is a foreign concept to Paul. The *charismata* are all temporary enough in Paul's view.

The Charismatic ecclesiology is insistent that all the gifts are operational and are genuine for the restoration of the church's vitality and *missional* mandate in the world. There can be no apostle's doctrine without the apostles. "They were theologians bringing the foundational **Christian Doctrine** that was to serve the church to this present time. **We are in the Apostles' age**. Their gospel was Christ's gospel to be heralded until His second return to the earth" (Payne 2004:92). An apostle is closely related to the one who sent him i.e. Christ. As Christ was sent by the Father from heaven to accomplish His divine plan, the Pentecostal and Charismatic leaders, like the Reformed theologians, believe that Jesus sends His apostles to complete mission Dei in His world. However, for the emerging apostolic churches, the apostles in the present church government represent the head leadership of the corporate church. It is however, theologically correct, to assume that the one and only chief apostle above all apostles is the Lord Jesus Christ. Payne (2004:96) continues to elaborate that, "The five governmental ministries must recognize the apostle in relationship to them as the father of ministry. The apostle is a father. He admonishes, nurture, cherish, develop, and train. He has a heart of a father." The apostle is a foundation-laying ministry (Ephesians 2:20) with the purpose of establishing new churches and to correct errors by establishing proper order and structure. Furthermore, the apostle act as oversight ministry that fathers other ministries (1 Corinthians 4:15; 2 Cor 11:28)

#### 5.10.2.1. The Apostles

- The Meaning

The root word *apostolos* from which the words *apostle* and *apostolic* are derived, means *messenger* or *one who is sent*. The prominent pentecostal systematic theologians, Duffield and van Cleave (1987:348) assert:



The basic idea expressed by the word ‘apostle’ is that of one sent as a representative of another and who derives his authority from the sender. In the classical Greek, *apostolos* also meant ‘a fleet of ships, an expedition’. From the latter, the meaning is extended to “one commissioned and sent to another country,” thus “a missionary.

The verb *apostello* means to “send from or away” In the footsteps of traditional and contemporary understanding of the apostle, the Charismatic ecclesialogists agree with the classical Protestant contextualisation of this office:

The Latin equivalent, *missio*, provides the etymological root from which we get the English words *mission* and missionary. So at a basic, semantic level, to be apostolic means to simply function as a missionary in planting churches. And we know from both the Bible and Church history, this is precisely what the first apostles did. From John in Asia Minor to Peter in Samaria to Paul (and later Peter) in Rome, the early Church saw a flurry of apostolic activity once the fire of Pentecost – and later persecution – kicked the Church into gear (Broocks 2002:176).

- The Etymological Analysis

The etymological analysis of *apostolos* creates problem due to the historical usage of the word. The historical definition is too general. The entire ministry should in a sense be sent forth. In the analysis of a prominent member of the Apostolic Leadership Team for Ministers Fellowship International, Bill Scheidler (1980:88):

It was used to refer to an emissary or ambassador, to a fleet of ships or an expedition sent with a specific objective, to the admiral who commanded the fleet or to the colony which was founded by



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the admiral. If a fleet of ships left Rome with the purpose of establishing a new colony somewhere, all of these were called apostles – the fleet, the admiral, the new found colony.

It is clear then, that these emissaries, the fleet, the admiral, the new colony, were expected to be faithful in transmitting the intentions of the sender.

- The Apostle's Role

Wagner (1999:105) summarises the charismatic understanding of the apostle: “The gift of apostle is the special ability that God gives to certain members of the Body of Christ to assume and exercise general leadership over a number of churches with an extraordinary authority in spiritual matters that is spontaneously recognized and appreciated by those churches”. This is the same definition that he also iterated in another book, *Your Spiritual Gifts Can Help Your Church Grow* (1979), revised in 1994, p.127. It can be deduced from this definition that apostles are called by Christ and have a great authority over their spheres of influence. They are the local church's primary leaders who cast the vision of the church. Their mandate is to plant new churches and establish the foundational government structure of the church. In some critical studies of Charismatic leaders and authors in the New Apostolic Reformation, such as Payne, Wagner, Cannistraci, and Scheidler, one concludes that the Apostolic Movement understands a present day apostle as a man who has the leadership capacity to raise up some new works in territorial ministries. He establishes “sound doctrines” or doctrinal exactness in the church. He brings church polity in line by applying discipline to the detractors from the fundamental truth. As the administrative and ecclesiastical head of the church, the apostle is expected to be a great teacher with a pastoral heart.



### 5.10.2.2. The Prophets

- Their Background

The prophet is not only expected to exercise the gift of prophecy, but occupies a place of leadership ministry along with the apostles and teachers. Prophets and prophecy are not alien to the New Testament.

In the Early Church, there were two classifications of prophets. Any member of the general body of believers who ministered edification, exhortation and comfort through the gift of prophecy was called a prophet (1 Cor 14:24, 31). Another group, consisting of such men as Barnabas, Silas, Judas, Agabus and others mentioned in Acts 13:1, were spiritual leaders of the church (Acts 21:22), they are referred to by Paul in Ephesians 4:11 as among the ministry gifts to the Church. Those of the latter group, although they exercised the same gift of prophecy, possessed an additional *charisma* of leadership (Duffield & van Cleave 1987:350).

- The Meaning

The root meaning of *propheteuo* is to “say or speak forth or fore.” The apostolic movement regards prophecy as forth *telling*, which means speaking forth a message from God (Hebrews 1:1). Their prophecy also has the aspect of *foretelling* aspect to imply declaring beforehand something that will surely happen (Jeremiah 28:9; Ezekiel 33:32-33). There is a higher element of prediction in prophecy, hence is sometimes called *predictive prophecy*. However, caution must be exercised as Scheidler (1980:93) remarks: “All prediction is prophecy but not all prophecy is prediction.” The prophets are the spokespersons for God. They are God’s mouthpiece to humanity. The prophet’s ministry involves revelation, exhortation, warning, impartation of vision, and inspiration. Cindy Jacobs concludes her chapter in Green’s book (2005:47) that “Prophets are God’s



voice used to expose, shift, and bring transition to nations.” The prophet has the gifted ability to perceive and speak the specific mind of Christ to individuals, churches, businesses, or nations.

- Their Role

The prophets speak to nations in order to encourage God’s people to respond to His Word. The prophet’s word normally stirs God’s people to rise up in faith and believe God for mighty things to transpire. Jacobs (2005:47) regarding the fivefold ministry exhorts: “The prophetic word is transformational when God’s people believe it”. From the Latter Rain Movement to the present, the Pentecostals and Charismatics have viewed prophecy as personal and that it should be restored to the church. It is no longer restricted to general words of exhortation, but would include personal detailed revelations for guidance and instruction (Moriarty 1992:46/61). There is a tremendous personalisation of prophecy in the emerging apostolic movement of the day. However, one has to bear in mind that prophecy is a separate entity from the church life. As Quebedeaux (1983:134) critiques

The use of prophecy in pentecostal worship is natural, non-systematic, and usually in the form of an assurance of God’s presence with the group, or a summons by God for the group to prepare itself for worship or for the reception of some manifestation of the miraculous. In other words, the prophecies are part of worship, not additional revelation in the form of doctrine or new theological knowledge.

Prophecy or prophets are the essential part of the ecclesiastical structure, and they function alongside the apostles for the building up and the blessing of the church. The emerging apostolic movement sees prophets as a pointer finger on the hand of God. They point the direction the church should take by sharing the heart of God with the church. The church is guided and protected through the prophet.





### 5.10.2.3. The Evangelists

- The Meaning

The Greek word “*euangelistes*” carries the meaning of a career, a messenger, or in this context, a preacher of good news. Apart from Ephesians 4:11, the word is not mentioned elsewhere in the Pauline corpus except in 2 Timothy 4:5 where Timothy is instructed to do the work of an evangelist. The only other New Testament occurrence of the noun is in Acts 21:8, where Philip is called the evangelist. The evangelist is the bearer of the gospel, which is the message of salvation.

- The Biblical Example

The *gift is* clearly demonstrated in the story of Philip and the Ethiopian eunuch in Acts 8. The Pentecostal/ Charismatics take the *locus* of evangelist from this story. Duffield and van Cleave (1983:353) survey the characteristics of Philip’s ministry that forms a pattern of New Testament evangelist as follows:

- a) Philip preached the Word of God, especially declaring the heart of the gospel, which is Christ the Saviour. “He preached Christ unto them” (8:4,5,35)
- b) There were many who believed and were baptized (8:6,12)
- c) Mighty miracles of healing followed his preaching and many were delivered from spirits (8:6, 7). The healing miracles gave greater effectiveness to Philip’s ministry (8:6, 8).
- d) Philip was ready to witness about Christ as the Saviour to whole cities, or to one individual. Leaving Samaria, he was directed to the chariot of the treasurer of Ethiopia (8:26), whom he led to Christ (8:35-38). The true soul winner has a passion for souls that makes him adaptable to mass evangelism or personal evangelism.
- e) Philip’s evangelistic ministry took him from city to city (8:40).



- The Role:

Drawing conclusion out of these patterns, the Charismatic ecclesiology sees the evangelist of the New Testament and post-apostolic period as the one who preaches the gospel message of salvation in different geographical locations – either in different churches or different cities. This is confirmed by Duffield and van Cleave’s (1983:353) direct quotation of Eusebius that:

And they scattered the saving seeds of the kingdom of heaven far and near throughout the whole world... The starting out on long journeys they performed the office of evangelists, being filled with the desire to preach Christ to those who had not yet heard the word of faith.

The research on the evangelist concludes that of the fivefold ministries in the New Testament, the evangelist has the least recorded about him and apart from Christ we only have one good Bible example of an evangelist i.e. Philip. There are three Greek root words from which we get our English word ‘evangelist’:

- a) *Euangelizo*: It literally means “to announce good news”. The word is descriptive of the *ministry* of an evangelist (Scheidler 1980:97). The word is extensively used to refer to the ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ (Matthew 11:5; Acts 13:32; Romans 10:15; 2 Corinthians 10:16; Galatians 1:18; Ephesians 3:8; Hebrews 4:2)
- b) *Euangelion*: This means “the gospel of a good message”. The emphasis of this word is the message rather than a person. It is the gospel message of God’s grace made possible in the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ (Matthew 24:14; Acts 20:24; Romans 1:16; 1 Corinthians 4:15; Ephesians 1:13).
- c) *Euangelistes*: It means “a preacher or messenger of good news.” This is an evangelist.



The ministry of the evangelist is the *doma* to the Body of Christ, the *ecclesiastical* community. In the context of Ephesians 4:11 passage, the evangelist is also a governmental ministry. Scheidler (1980:100) agrees that,

The public ministry of the evangelist, then, involves mainly two areas. He is first of all given as a travelling ministry to the unevangelized, working as a kind of ground-breaker to prepare the way for other following ministries. Beyond this, the evangelist is given to the local expression of the body of Christ for the perfection of the saints (*Eph 4:12*).

In a nutshell, the evangelist reaches the lost outside the church; he is the carrier of the good news, he plants new churches, and as part of the local church forms part of the local church government. Wagner, a contemporary scholar in the Apostolic Movement, in his commentary on the Book of Acts accentuate that “The gift of evangelist is the special ability that God gives to certain members of the Body of Christ to share the gospel with unbelievers in such a way that men and women become Jesus’ disciples and responsible members of the body of Christ” (1994:210).

The modern day apostolic movement is longing for the restoration of the evangelistic ministry patterned after that one of Philip in Acts 8 where the gospel is preached to the lost (8:5), miracles performed to confirm God’s Word (8:6), people delivered from demonic powers (8:7), angelic visitations (8:26), revelation knowledge (8:29), supernatural translation from one geographical area to the other (8:26, 40).

#### **5.10.2.4. The Pastor**

- The Meaning

The King James Version uses the word “pastor” only once in Eph 4:11, though the word *poimen* meaning “shepherd” occurs eighteen times in the New Testament. The



grammatical structure of Ephesians 4:11 have the word “teacher” without a definite article. This suggests that “teacher” is to be taken together with “pastor”, though this does not legitimate the interchangeable usage of the terms. Duffield and van Cleave (1983:354), who seem to be of this school of thought impress:

There may be teachers who are not pastors, but there cannot be pastors who are not teachers (Acts 20:28-30). In churches where there were several elders, some might have had a ministry of leadership who were not teachers (1 Timothy 5:17), but the real pastor was a teacher, Especially those whose work is preaching and teaching” (1 Timothy 5:17b, NIV). One of the necessary qualifications for a bishop (pastor, elder) was that he be “apt to teach” (1 Timothy 3:2, 2 Timothy 2:24). A true pastor, then, will have the charisma of teaching (Romans 12:7; 1 Corinthians 12:28).

The pastor is the spiritual leader, the under-shepherd, serving under the Chief Shepherd (Hebrews 13:20).

- The Role

The shepherd is expected to feed, tend, and protect the flock. The position of the shepherd was that of *authority* and *service*. The position of authority implies rulership and government, while the position of service implies accountability.

The verb form of this word (*poimaino*) also supports this two-fold usage. At times it seems to be referring to the governmental aspect of the function of a shepherd (Matthew 2:6). In this connection those who shepherd are given power and authority to rule (Rev 2:26-27; 12:5; 19:15). At other times it seems to emphasize the caring and feeding aspect of this ministry (Scheidler 1980:102).



The pastor is therefore, in the position of authority and service. In the position of service, he practises accountability. He supplies the necessary resources for the well being of the souls of his people. He is in rulership and servitude in the governmental ministry of the church. His ministry is to gather the scattered people, to establish a governmental order, and to care for the flock (church).

#### 5.10.2.5. The Teacher

- The Meaning

The root word “*didasko*” sometime translated “*doctor*” or “*master*” is commonly used for a teacher. It simply means “*to instruct*”. It has a connotation of holding a discourse with others for the purpose of instruction. It refers to the process of explaining, expounding, and applying the Scripture. It involves the instilling and the reiteration of apostolic injunctions into others. The teacher’s ministry is vital to foundational laying, growth, and development for the maturity of the church. He is concerned with the church doctrine and the faith of the people.

- The Role

O’Brien (1999:300-301) reinforces this Charismatic stance that

In the Pastoral Epistles, teaching appears to be an authoritative function concerned with the faithful transmission of apostolic doctrine or tradition and committed to men specially chosen (e.g. 2 Tim 1:13-14; 2:1-2; 1 Tim 3:2; 5:17; Titus 1:9). Timothy is urged not only to pursue a teaching ministry himself but also to entrust what he has learned to faithful men who will be able to teach others also (1 Tim 4:13,16; 2 Tim 2:2). Teachers did not simply impart information or open up new ways of thought. They also urged their hearers to live by what they taught (Eph 4:20-21). So



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important is this ministry for building the body of Christ that provision is made for its continuity for succeeding generations.

The Apostolic teacher is not only expected to teach the word, but also to minister with divine life and Holy Spirit anointing (2 Corinthians 3:6). He exhibits keen spiritual discernment and divine insight into the Word of God and its personal application to believers.

### **5.11. THEOLOGICAL REFLECTIONS: THE NEW APOSTOLIC REFORMATION**

Authority does not exist in a vacuum. All forms of authority find their *raison d'être* in the context of a particular community and in relation to the specific goals of that community. The historical overview of the fivefold ministry shows that the New Apostolic Movement holds to the fact that the structure of the church is controlled through *potestas sacra*, holy power, balanced with authority by the apostolic figures. There are two *sympiotic* terms related to Charismatic leadership of the church. These are **power** (*dunamis*) and **authority** (*exousia*). There is also another term, *influence*. *Dunamis* occurs about 118 times in the New Testament (Kraft 2000:67). The apostle Paul uses the word frequently, as do the Gospels writers. It is the normal word for power, might, strength or force, and is often used in the plural to refer to miracles (wonders) in the phrase “*miracles and wonders*” (Acts 2:22; 2 Corinthians 12:12; Hebrews 2:4). It is also encountered in reference to supernatural beings (Romans 8:38; 1 Corinthians 15:24; Ephesians 1:21; 1 Peter 3:22). The power of God is ordinarily referred to as *dunamis*, as is the power Jesus gives to disciples (Luke 9:1). The earthly power attached to rulers, armies or weather, was also labelled *dunamis*.

*Exousia* is the classical New Testament Greek term referring to the ability to perform an action to the extent that there are no obstacles in the way. It focuses on the right to use power rather than on the power itself. It is the right to do something granted by a higher authority. The word is found 108 times in the New Testament (Kraft 2000:67), and



always used in relation to people. “It is a personal right, either because of status or by delegation, to assert power, whether in legal, political, social, or moral ways in the human world or in the spiritual realm” (Kraft 2000:67). In the Greek Old Testament (LXX), *exousia* means right, authority, or permission, the legal or political freedom to act. Paul Avis (1992:19) expresses New Testament usage of *exousia*: “When applied to Jesus Christ it denotes his divinely given dominion and status (Matt 28:18: ‘All *exousia* in heaven and on earth has been given to me’). *Exousia* is ultimately divine authority (Mark 2:10: ‘the Son of man has *exousia* on earth to forgive sins’). *Exousia* is the right that lies behind the exercise of power (*dynamis*), though the two terms are sometimes used almost synonymously”. *Exousia* legitimates *dunamis*.

It is on this basis that the emerging Apostolic Movement leaders claim the authority that they should exercise on their subjects. Though the “authority” concept seems to be theologically sound, it can be abused and displaced from its biblical intentions. Kraft (2000:67) warns sternly:

In the New Testament, both power (*dunamis*) and authority (*exousia*) flow from the work of Christ, first as He employed them and then as He empowers His followers to do His works... Thus, the authority we participate in is that modelled by Jesus Himself and grounded, as it was with Jesus, in the same power of the Holy Spirit. It is the God-given right to receive and use God’s power that flows from the indwelling Holy Spirit.

In researching the New Apostolic Reformation, one realises that power is the influence which involves people’s emotions, cognitions, motivations, and behaviours. This power divides people into rulers and subjects. It creates *social stratification* that gives some people authority over others. This authority is the influence that is acceptable by the people in question. Van der Ven (1996: 297) has it right that “In *Charismatic authority* leadership is acknowledged on the basis of exceptional or even extranatural or



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supernatural gifts attributed to it.” It is legitimately acceptable to conclude that the Charismatic authority is personal authority.

The theological understanding of *authority* that the apostolic movement must comprehend is that the government of Christ’s church must commence with the Lord Himself and His kingdom *authority*. He is the Head of the church; His rule is unique and incomparable. The church reflects the *organic life* of Christ’s body made up of members who are dependent on one another in the exercise of the life they receive from Christ. It lives as an organism, not just as an organisation. The church is organised for service, not dominion. All government in the church is stewardship. Its leaders are servant-managers, who employ their authority for the purpose of advancing the interests of those they represent and serve. This is captured by the Reformed theologian, Clowney (1995:202):

Christ exercises his absolute authority on behalf of his body, the church. His rule over the church differs from his rule over the universe, for it his saving rule: he frees his people from the power of the devil (Col.1:13-14). All authority in the church belongs to Christ. From his place of authority at God’s right hand, Christ gives the keys to his kingdom; he validates in heaven what is done in his name on earth. Church government cannot modify his Word by deletion or addition (Rev. 22:18-20; Gal.1:8, 12). Because its power is declarative, not legislative, it may not invent new doctrines or require practices that have no scriptural foundation.

The New Apostolic Reformation, intentionally or out of theological apathy has the tendency to perpetrate the modern abuse of ecclesiastical powers. Spiritual power can be more effective like physical abuse. The bottom line is that the church government should represent the authority (*exousia*) of Christ, the *Kurios* of the *kosmos*. There is organic mutuality that requires the joint exercise of church authority.





Although the New Apostolic Reformation ecclesiological governments claim to be decentralised, the historical evidence is abundant that hierarchy and figurative persons had always accompanied its historical *consortia*. The Shepherding Movement of the seventies and Bishop J L Payne's Christ Churches of God in Christ, USA International are good examples of this assertion. However, this is not always accompanied by *successio apostolica* as in the Roman Catholic or Eastern Orthodox traditions. Most of the modern day apostles and prophets claim to be the *pneumatikoi*, the special bearers of the Spirit. This is evident among those who practise *glossolalia* and *prophecy*, hence resorting to *routinisation of charismata*. The fivefold ministers are warned that the authority should not be subjectively possessed, should not breed pride, but instead create a sense of accountability and humility. The biblically sound authority is a delegated authority, where leaders see themselves as ambassadors of Christ.

The church does not create its own leaders. Christ does. The gifts are not gifts made to people but gifts of people who have a particular role to play in the ecclesiastical life. The *domata* activities of Ephesians 4:11 are service to the body of Christ. They are the diverse manifestations of the Spirit in the community. These *domata* do not monopolise the Church's ministry. Their purpose is *pros ton katartismos* (adjustment or equipment) and *eis oikodomein* - the perfecting and the building up of the body. This means house furnishing, mending or repairing of the saints. The *doma*'s function is to help and direct the community so that members can perform their several ministries for the good of the whole. Although the particular *domata* refer to those who are in charge of guiding Christian community after the apostle's death, the passage assumes that all Christians are part of the building process. The focus of *domata* in this passage is the creation of new humanity created in Christ, guided towards maturity under Christ-appointed leadership.

The appreciation one can attach to the new emerging apostolic movement is the worldview of the church's polity as that of simplicity and spontaneity. It is noteworthy to realise that the various types of Apostolic Churches have different types of authority occurring exclusively within their various church communities. This is the *collegium*, a free society, an association of equals who meet regularly in the *oikos* of one of its



members. This was well demonstrated by the Shepherding Movement. On the other hand, “the spontaneous structure is primarily based on the experiences, feelings, and attitudes that originate in the extraordinary charismata” (Van der Ven 1996:303). In this structure, embraced by the emerging apostolic church there is no what Weber (in Van der Ven) calls *routinisation of charisma* where *charisma* is institutionalised. The communion of the saints is a *collegium* where the priesthood of all believers is realised. The *ecclesia vera* is a *Lebensform* where there is *hierarchia veritatum* – the true church is living together in a hierarchy of truth.

The fivefold ministry as *capsulated* in Ephesians 4 passage is open to debate. Is it a precursor for church structure and government, or is it a reflection of the pneumatic community in action? The next chapter answers these questions. However, the wisdom of Kreitzer (1997:129) is called upon for the hypotheses that the fivefold ministry is not a theologically legitimate church government to be applied to the twenty-first century church:

It is unwise to view the five categories of people here listed as evidence of the prevailing ecclesiastical structures of the time, or to take them as an indication of the situation of the church to which the Writer directs his letter. Likewise, it is not at all clear that what is intended here is a hard and fast distinction between the clergy and laity, as the insertion of a comma between the phrases ‘to equip the saints’ and ‘for work in his service’ in some translations of verse 12 suggests. One must look elsewhere, such as the Pastoral Epistles, to substantiate a theology of the two-fold office of Christian ministers, since ecclesiastical legitimization of the forms of an ordained ministry is not the writer’s focus here.

The Lord shows how His love and grace must be administered in His Church. The missional church that He leaves behind is endowed with gifts in order to strengthen and



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expand itself. The passage points to the existence in the church of those whose task is to specifically move the church towards the goal of maturity in Christ.

These are the gifts that are sovereignly distributed to the members of the body, which is the church – an instrument for carrying out God’s purposes in the *cosmos*. In Ephesians 4:11, these are the gifts of ascended Christ to the church. These gifts are the persons themselves not the abilities or the energies as is found in the *charismata* of 1 Corinthians 12:4-11. These gifts are released for the church to function as it should. The gifts are deliberately released for the edification of the body (4:12), for the avoidance of false teaching (4:14). They are Christ’s ministries that reflect His victory by which He endows the church.

## **5.12. ARGUMENTS AGAINST FIVEFOLD MINISTRY FOR CHURCH GOVERNMENT**

### 5.12.1. The timing of the letter of Ephesians

The time of Paul’s ministry in Ephesus ranges within 52-56 AD. The apostle Paul spent almost three years in Ephesus where he was heavily involved with interactions and confrontations:

- He encountered twelve disciples of John the Baptist (Acts 19:1-7)
- He engaged the Jews into debates in the synagogue for three months, demonstrating that Jesus is indeed the Messiah (Acts 19:8-10)
- Withdrawing from the synagogue he entered the lecture hall belonging to a man called Tyrannus where many Ephesians got converted (Acts 19:8-10)
- He performed many miracles as a means of persuading people about the gospel (Acts 19:11-17)
- There arose some commotion about him, instigated by a certain Demetrius (Acts 19:23-41)



All these events happened before the confirmation of elders in the Ephesians Church, long before the writing of the epistle, which were around 62 AD. At the time of the writing of the epistle to the Ephesians, church structure was already in place – the elders were already in charge of the church. The logic is evident that the church government under the elders were already functional by the time Paul mentioned the fivefold ministry in his epistle. The epistle was written to the pneumatic community that was already settled with full governance under the elders.

#### 5.12.2. The wording of the Ephesians 4:11-13 passage

The intention of *domata* in this passage is not for government, but for empowerment of the community. The apostolic intention is the preparation of God's people for works of service that will lead the community towards unity and maturity. Barth (1974:478) captures this fact:

Eph 4:11-13 is a *locus classicus* pointing out the coherence of the church's origin, order, and destiny. Certain ministries are given by Christ (vs. 11) in order that the church fulfils her present task (vs. 12), and, at the end, reach the goal set for her (vs. 13)... In following the teleological accent set by vs.13, the treatment of the purpose described in vs.12 will precede the description of the means mentioned in vs.11.

The statement: "to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up..." (v. 12) have three elements. These three elements usher in the triple definition of the one purpose that determines the gift of the ministries mentioned in v.7, 8, and 11:

*5.12.2.1. The equipment of the saints:* The ministry here is *katartismos*, which according to Bromiley (1985:80); "denotes equipment for the work of the ministry, while *katartisis* is the inner strength of the organic relationship of the community, or of the character of the members (2 Cor 13:9)." The fundamental meaning here is that the *domata* of this



passage is intended to restore to the original shape or position, to put in order, to realign, or to complete. The fivefold ministers are tasked to arrange or put into order everything in the church. They minister in order to reform or repair the weaknesses of the church. The wisdom of Lloyd-Jones (1984:199) reinforces this point:

Essentially this word means that we have to be made fit to serve the end and object aimed at. The picture is that something which we desire to use is not yet perfect, so we have to do certain things to it in order to fit it for that end and object for which we desire to use it. This means the supplying of certain deficiencies or the mending or adjusting of certain parts that are wrong.

It is all about community empowerment. It is the community development that involves the community itself in its own development – a notion that is reinforced further by Lloyd-Jones (1984:198) that

the ultimate purpose of all these offices and divisions of labour in the church is the perfecting of the saints; and the way in which the saints are to be perfected is through the gift of the ministry, the function of which is to edify the body of Christ. There is an ultimate objective, and there are more immediate objectives.

*5.12.2.2. The servant work:* The “grace gifts” given to community members are the same ministerial gifts given to Paul: *But to each one of us, grace has been given as Christ apportioned it.* This fact is reiterated by the apostolic juncture that; *Surely you have heard about the administration of God’s grace that was given to me for you... I became a servant of this gospel by the gift of God’s grace given me through the working of his power (Ephesians 3:2, 7).* This grace, given to each community member, makes him an active servant. It does not come in vain, but makes a member of Christ’s body work (1 Cor 15:10). It is clear that Ephesians 4:7 and 12 connect “charismata” with servant work. The hermeneutical insight concludes that Ephesians 4:7’s “each” refers to all the



members of the body of Christ as the recipients of “charismata”, not only apostles, prophets, evangelists pastors, or teachers. The same notion is carried on in 4:13 by “we all”, and is emphasised further by 4:16’s “each part”. This demonstrates the apostolic intention of the mutual contact of all members, not a specific group – in this case, the fivefold ministers.

The comparison of 1 Cor 12 and Eph 4 passages regarding “grace gifts” shows that the Corinthians letter focuses on the unity of the community and the diversity of the functions within the community. On the other hand, the Ephesians letter stresses the building up of the body. The balance between the two passages indicates that the gifts are liberally distributed to each community member for service, not for governance as the fivefold ministry promoters claim. Service and leadership are intertwined, though sometimes distinguished by those who garner for power to control instead of serving. Barth (1974:480) is correct:

Neither in 1 Corinthians nor in Ephesians are higher and lower, official and non-official, active and primarily receptive (or passive) church members distinguished as different ranks. On the contrary, in 1 Cor 12:22-23 the weakest members of the church are declared the most important.

*5.12.2.3. The construction of the body of Christ:* This function dismisses the parochial intentions in the community. All is done by Christ and for Him only. Bromiley (1985:39) alludes to the fact that the fivefold ministry’s primary function is *aletheia* – the true teaching or the revelation of authentic divine reality. They have something to say. They are engaged in the construction, the building of the body of Christ by speaking. They are men and women with diverse services to the internal edification of the community and the external expansion of the community. Their focus is the local and universal expansion of the ideals of the body of Christ. The construction of the body of Christ is not the job of the chosen few officers, it is the *kaleo* – divine calling of the entire community to strengthen and stretch itself.



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### 5.12.3. The nature of the church at Ephesus

Ephesians is closer to Romans, which is the crown and climax of Paul's Christology. It is the distilled essence, the obvious authoritative and the most consummate compendium of the Christian faith. This letter was written in 62 AD after the establishment of many New Testament churches. This was the time when Paul had an opportunity to contemplate the meaning of the new phenomenon that had come into being. The reference to "*ecclesia*" in its diverse forms connotes the church universal rather than the local community. In its universal form, the *ecclesia* includes all who have believed in Christ since the inception of the community, and includes all who will yet believe before the realisation of the *eschaton*.

5.12.3.1. *The **ecclesia** is a **mysterion**. - the mystery that has its meaning and essence hidden in Christ, though it is present where its members are found.* The church as a mystery is prevalent in post - Vatican II ecclesiological commentaries. For instance, in the introductory statement, Avery Dulles (1987:9), in one of his famous books, *Models of the Church* states;

I wish to indicate my conviction that the Church, like other theological realities, is a mystery. Mysteries are realities of which we cannot speak directly. If we wish to talk about them at all we must draw on analogies afforded by our experience of the world. These analogies provide models. By attending to the analogies and utilizing them as models, we can indirectly grow in our understanding of the Church.

The Church is a mystery that cannot be articulated in categorical terminology. It is mysterious because of the Christological and ecclesiological language employed in referring to it (Ephesians 5:32). This is confirmed by the exemplification given by Clowney (1995:108) that;



The Bible certainly speaks of the church in heavenly terms. Chosen to holiness in Christ before the foundation of the world (Eph. 1:4-5), it is not to be likened to the kingdoms of this world (Eph. 1:23; 5:23, 32; Col. 1:18; Jn. 18:36). It is the dwelling of God, built of living stones on Christ as the chief cornerstone (Eph. 2:20; 1 Pet. 2:5). Only the Lord knows infallibly those who are his, and they are joined to him by the secret working of his Holy Spirit (2 Tim. 2:19; Jn.3:8).

Since the church is the mystery, it needs *domata* such as the fivefold ministry in order to be energised towards the maturity.

5.12.3.2. *The ecclesia is an **organism and organisation***, with Christ as the Head. That it is an organism is confirmed by the twentieth century New Testament scholar, Robertson (1931:515); “Ephesians chief stress is placed upon the Dignity of the Church as the Body of Christ the Head.” The church is permeated throughout all its parts with one common life. It has the same life for each member. Each member has not only been baptised into one Body, but has been made to drink into one Spirit (1 Cor 12:13). This implies that the church is something that is alive in the world and is organisationally constituted of all those in Christ universally. The Ephesians Church that received the epistle was organisationally rationalised, but still in its journey to be an organism. As an organisation, it was already under the leadership of elders, but as an organism, it still needed the fivefold ministry, not to govern but to strengthen towards unity and maturity. Kuiper (1998:115) echoes this sentiment that

It was the practice of the apostles to form an ecclesiastical organization wherever there was a group of believers. For instance, when Paul and Barnabas, on their way homeward from their first missionary journey, visited the various places where they had recently preached the gospel, they ‘ordained them elders in every church’ (Acts 14:23).





The Ephesians received an epistle at the time when they were an organisation already, and organism in process. This made it imperative for them to learn about who they are in Christ, life of purity and unity, importance of striving towards the ideal of organisational unity on congregational and universal levels.

5.12.3.3. *The Ephesians church received the **apostolic paradosis** – the tradition that had to be transmitted as **catechesis** for ages and generations to come.* The canonical function of the letter is to affirm the community members in their faith regardless of their ethnical or cultural background. The *ecclesia* is gifted to operate in diversity and the Ephesians are settled to operate in the like manner. They are the *pneumatic* community that is settled and is *eschatological* by nature. On its way towards maturity, they need to be strengthened for the journey and the task. The fivefold ministry is provided by Christ for this purpose of equipping the saints for this *eschatological* journey. It is the community living under the *ecclesiastical* governance of elders (Acts 20:13-38). They have passed the pioneering stage and are now settled, hence the need to maintain unity and grow towards maturity. Their *missional* task is dependent on their internal strength. Their apostolic and evangelistic endeavours depend on their prophetic, pastoral and didactic tasks.

5.12.3.4. *The Ephesians Church needed to be a charismatic fellowship.* The internal dialogue of the epistle lacks the eschatological expectations. The eschatological terminology such as *parousia*, second advent, resurrection etc is scantily evident in the letter. This indicates that the Ephesians community was settled and was over the turbulence of the last days expectations. They were a fellowship that needed some energy to incarnate their faith in idolatrous environment in which they lived. They were expected to be the real *communio sanctorum* or *congregatio sanctorum* – the Christian people who live in mutual concern for one another and mutual self-giving in the spirit of love. This notion was attested by the third article of the Barmen Theological Declaration and commented on by Moltmann (1989:315-316) that:



A community of brethren lives in the spirit of brotherliness, showing its fellowship with God's Son, 'the first-born among many brethren' (Rom. 8.29), through a brotherly common life. ...The 'community of brethren' means the new, visible way of life... In the community of the brethren the greed for possessions and the claim to personal property come to an end... In the community of brethren social, cultural, racial and sexual privileges lose their validity...The community of brethren proclaims the kingdom of God through its way of life, which provides an alternative to the life of the world surrounding it.

This commentary carries weight that it speaks of the rebirth of fellowship of Christians that is intertwined with friendship with Christ. Ephesians are exhorted to maintain the apostolic *paradosis* of the early years of the apostolic church, where Christians lived for each other and were sacrificing their possessions for each other. The communal lifestyle where *charismata* played a role in building up of the church was called into action. The essence of fellowship was and is expected to revolve around the grace gifts given to the community for the purpose of becoming more like Christ, the Head of the Church. The missional task is effective through charismatic lifestyle.

*5.12.3.5. The Ephesians Church was expected to be a self-developing community.* The *ecclesia* is made up of the human beings who are in communion with the Trinitarian God. This composition rules out the idea of *homo sans tete* (human without mind). These members are creative individuals who attribute significance and survival in a temporal context. Their behaviour is not determined solely by external factors, but also by individuals' values, opinions, intentions and expectations. Ephesians 4:11-16 elaborates that the fivefold gifts are for the *katartismos* (equipping) of the saints for the work of the ministry. Each member is expected to be a *martyrios* – an active witness of the salvific acts of Christ here on earth. However each member needs to be trained for the witnessing service (Ephesians 4:11-12) by the gifted members in the community. In a nutshell, the expected outcome is that training for witnessing service is to be decentralised to the



community rather than to the professors at the institutions of higher learning. This kind of training has its place and respect, but the maturity of the church should be from within by the members who share their gifts among themselves for the purpose of growth in all aspects.

The gift of apostleship along with other ministries thus serve to plant and water the seed of the Word so that it can bear fruit among the gifted congregation as all grow up to speak the Word to one another... The apostles belonged to the church as gifts to inspire and guide them as they grew to take their place as mature bearers of the Spirit and the Word themselves” (Macchia 2006:236).

When ‘grace gifts’ operate in *ecclesia*, the energy is released and this becomes a resource for the local community to assert and strengthen itself. This confirms the sociological thesis that resources are all those elements in people’s mental framework and total environment on which they depend for their existence and survival (Miller 1992:9). The resources are found to be within the people themselves. *Charismata* creatively unlock the vital energy, strength, talent, skills, knowledge and insight of a group or an individual. The revival fires would be set burning and spiritual energies released with spiritual vitality and soul-winning passion when the gifted members mould the character of those in their fellowship. This does not discredit the worthy scholarship as the emerging apostolic movement always retorts. Scholarship and spiritual passion can exist together within one person.

The purpose of *domata* in Ephesians 4 passage is to accomplish a specific task in a prescribed time: “... 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” (Ephesians 4:13). This refers to the completion of the Body of Christ by adding to it all who are His elect people in this age. When the *ecclesia* is not self-developing, it stands vulnerable to the danger that is cautioned in the next verse: “Then we will no longer be infants, tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of



teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of men in their deceitful scheming” (Eph 4:14). The *ecclesia*, like the human body, is self-developing. Each member is expected to exercise gifts of grace spontaneously for the mutual building of the Body. In discussing the gift of prophecy which is part of the fivefold ministry, Wehrli (1992:51-52) emphasising the self-developing concept of the church that is already settled, speaks of prophecy as

God’s gift to the church for its own life and leadership, and the gift of prophecy is one indication that the new age of the Spirit with its gifts (*charismata*) has already begun. These prophetic utterances in the community, which pointed to him for this special task, sustain Timothy in the face of hostility and persecution – that by them he might ‘fight the good fight’ (1 Tim. 6:12).

### 5.13. CONCLUSION

Ephesians 4:1-16 is an ecclesiastical exhortation. The first part of the passage is the description of the church’s existence and order. The passage does not expound any self-contained and boisterous church or doctrine of the church. There is an urgent advice in Ephesians 4:1-3 for the members of *ecclesia* to be humble, united, and strong in mutual love. **The** members are reminded of the creed of the church (Ephesians 4:4-6) that confesses the oneness which exerts a unifying force beyond the community of the saints. The confession is still called out and the one body (church) is still on the *eschatological* journey towards maturity. The one baptism is still a declaration that distinguishes the members from their former life. Ephesians 4:7-10 introduces the reader to the distribution of various gifts by the exalted Christ as a proof that Christ reigns supreme above all. The ministers given to the church in Ephesians 4:11 are charged to train fellow members for the ministry, and to prepare them for meeting the Lord, and protect them from immature and naïve behaviour (Ephesians 4:12-14). As ministers of Christ, they are mandated to ensure the growth of the church as attested by Forestell (1991:89), “the continued



existence and effectiveness of the church, like that of any other social group, requires the presence and activity of leaders, regardless of how these leaders may emerge from the group or of how they are installed and called to account by the group.” The accent is set upon the growth of the church towards the head, Christ Himself (Ephesians 4:15-16).

Since the epistle was destined for the settled pneumatic community, the ministers of Ephesians 4:11 were not intended for church governance, but for the empowerment of the community. The fivefold ministers are called to serve in a flat structured community where the priesthood of believers is displayed, not to create the hierarchy of leadership. Boff (1985:155) highlights the tone of the Ephesians church to be portraying the church as

the encounter of the community of the faithful, an encounter prompted by Christ and the Spirit to celebrate, deepen faith, and to discuss the questions of the community in the light of the Gospel. Church... is more an event that may take place beneath an oak tree, in the house of some coordinator, or within a church building, rather than an institution with all of its goods, services, laws, doctrines, ministries, and historical continuity.

The *ecclesia* as the people of God maintains its cohesiveness and organised continuity of the faithful by allowing everyone to have a sense of belonging, and equality as a citizen of the kingdom. The mission of the church is not seen as a task entrusted to the selected few, but given to all though few are variably enabled to perform some extraordinary tasks. The Ephesians *ecclesia* is the organised people. Their organisation is only authentic if it has or allows some maximum benefit for all the members. As a community, the *ecclesia* displays equality whereby all members are baptised in the *pneumatic* Christ and anointed by the Holy Spirit. It is a democratic principle wherein the *ecclesial* power is derived from the sharing in the power of the Spirit and the ascended Christ active in the community. The Pauline notion is that there must not be a hierarchy in the settled community that will prevent the operation of *charismata* for its advancement. Christ



released His *domata* to the church in order that she may strengthen herself towards her Head, Christ Himself. These gifts (*domata*) enhance the unity of the church and engross the sense of belonging since there is a maximum participation in the livelihood of the church.