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**The New Apostolic Reformation
An Analysis and Critique**

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Chapter 1 **Introduction**

Writing in 1999 the eminent Fuller Theological Seminary missiologist, Peter Wagner, claimed that the shape of Protestant Christianity was being changed by the emergence of a new movement that he called the New Apostolic Reformation (hereafter referred to as the NAR). The NAR is a movement that has developed among traditional Pentecostal/Charismatic churches in an attempt to break free from the pressure of denominational structures and influences (Wagner 1999:19-31). One of the key premises of the NAR Movement is that the church must return to the early church's pattern of a five fold ministry as presented in Ephesians 4:11 because we are living at the end of the current age (Munien, 1999:34). The movement calls for the renewal of apostles and prophets to go with the evangelists, pastors and teachers who already exist in many Pentecostal and Charismatic churches.¹ In view of the NAR advocates, this ideal of returning to patterns of New Testament Christianity can only be accomplished by the restoration of the offices of the prophets and the apostles. Proponents of the movement claim that the other three offices, namely, those of the pastor, teacher and evangelist have already been recognised by the church (Kelly, 1998:34).

In the last several years the NAR Movement has emerged in South Africa and has begun recruiting members from traditional Pentecostal and Charismatic churches. Little has been written about this movement in South Africa or its connection to a world widespread of the NAR Movement.

¹ This interpretation of Eph. 4:11 are based on the KJV and other translations that misinterpret the Greek text where pastors and teachers are viewed as one group not two distinct groups.

This central teaching of the NAR that the offices of prophets and apostles need to be restored, because we are living in an end-time or eschatological moment, is not a new one. In the 1830s a movement based on the teachings of Edward Irving emerged in England and on the European continent, particularly in Germany, that taught many of the central tenants of the contemporary NAR churches. This movement, originally known as the Catholic Apostolic Church in England, has survived as the New Apostolic Church with headquarters in Germany and daughter churches in a number of countries around the world including South Africa. The New Apostolic Church claim a world wide membership of over ten million (New Apostolic Church, 2001).²

There are some critics of the NAR Movement like Renee Rodriguez (2002), Tricia Tillin (2004) and Sandy Simpson (2004) who equate the teachings of the advocates of the movement with the teachings of the Latter Rain Movement. The Latter Rain movement is described as a Pentecostal movement of the mid twentieth century that became an important component of the post World War Two evangelical awakening (Riss, 1988:532). Rodriguez traces the Latter Rain origins to 1910 when David Mylands book; *The Latter Rain Covenant* advanced three levels of biblical interpretation: literal, typical and spiritual. The spiritual interpretation meant that one could look for a deeper meaning of a particular scripture. This deeper meaning became the source for an allegorical hermeneutic, which drives the engine of the Latter Rain movement. I will expound more on the Latter Rain movement in the following chapters in this thesis.

² The Apostolic Church were millenarian (believed that they were living in the last times) and they believed that the 5 fold ministry needed to be reconstituted for this period. The movement declined in the UK around 1900 after the death of the last of the 12 apostles appointed originally, at least in part, because the apostles were to survive to the end of the age and did not. The movement, however, continue in a number of countries including South Africa in the form of the New Apostolic Church whose headquarters are in Germany (Cross, 1958:251).

1.1 Aim of the thesis

The aim of this thesis is to do an analysis and critique of the New Apostolic Reformation Movement. The name of the movement stems from a study done by Professor C. Peter Wagner on the demise of denominationalism or as Wagner calls it, a study in Post-denominationalism and the rapid church growth movement of the 1990's. The proponents of the movement claim that it is the greatest phenomenon in church history since the protestant reformation. Wagner's concise definition of the NAR describes it as follows: "The New Apostolic Reformation is an extraordinary work of God at the close of the twentieth century, which is, to a significant extent, changing the shape of Protestant Christianity around the world" (Wagner, 1999:5).

Christian churches have for many years largely functioned within traditional denominational structures of one kind or another, although there were always groups and movements attempting to break from these structures. In the early 1990's the NAR Movement began to emerge as often unconnected groups began to change dramatically their forms and operations. These changes were evident in areas such as local church government, inter-church relationships, management of financial resources, evangelism, missions, prayer, worship and other important aspects of church life.

The advocates of the NAR Movement claims that it is based upon a new paradigm: the restoration of the ideals of the apostolic Church as found in the New Testament; renewal of spiritual gifts and manifestations; and the doctrine of Christianisation of the world before the return of Jesus Christ (Hamon, 1997:24-28). Thus the movement is trying to return to what it considers to be a divinely inspired model based on a

particular reading of the canonical New Testament. The NAR Movement proposes that church government should be lead by apostles and prophets who are now being created out of the charismatic leadership of the independent revival fellowships (Eckhardt, 1993:35-38). This is arguably a key concept and the one from which the name of the movement actually derives, namely, a church governance structure based on the apostles and prophets who are mentioned in the so-called five fold ministry of Ephesians. 4:11-12

Amongst the proponents of the movement however there are disparate views regarding the exact interpretation of what constitutes the NAR Movement. The NAR proponents from the Third World part of the globe, like Dr. Noel Woodroffe from Trinidad and Dr Jonathan David from Malaysia and Thamo Naidoo from Pietermaritzburg here in South Africa, do not necessarily agree with their First World counterparts on what the reformation is and how the true apostles will be identified. These men predict that the modern day apostles will arise from obscurity to lead the end-time church into total dominion of the earth. The Third World proponents make no reference to the rapid growing churches in their description of the NAR Movement, whereas Wagner sees the restoration of the offices of apostle and prophets as the catalyst for the growth of these independent charismatic churches. They agree in principle that apostles are being restored in these times but their views on who the true apostles are differ significantly from those in first-world churches like Peter Wagner, John Kelly and John Eckhardt, and might cause a serious blow to the unity of the movement. Throughout this paper I will refer to these different interpretations of the NAR Movement since they are likely to have long term consequences for the unity of the movement.

In the chapters that follow I will provide an historical overview of the New Apostolic Reformation Movement by attempting to trace its antecedents in the Pentecostal and Charismatic movements and its actual origins in the rapid expansion of independent churches in the 1980s and the emergence of teachings around the restoration of the offices of apostles and prophets. The third chapter of this thesis will explore in detail the teachings around the restoration of the office of Apostle since this is perhaps the key doctrinal innovation of the NAR Movement churches, though as I will show, this is not really as innovative as the proponents of the NAR Movement claim. What is innovative, as I will illustrate, is the way in which they understand the office of Apostle

The new terminology or “buzz” words that accompany the NAR also require special attention as they are a unique feature of the movement that seem to have the intention of creating a corporate identity within the movement. Next, I will consider the NAR’s eschatological teachings and their implications for the movement’s self-understanding before finally considering the movement’s self-proclaimed status as the greatest Protestant transformation in the Church’s long history. In the final chapter of the thesis I will offer my overall conclusions along with some observations about what the future of the NAR may hold.

1.2 Hypothesis

Many of the claims made for this movements by its advocates do not stand up to careful scrutiny and in addition inherent in its governance practices are serious problems around accountability that will need to be resolved if the movement is to

thrive. In spite of claims that the NAR is a reaction against the restrictions of denominationalism, their concept of networks represents the beginning of a form of “denominationalism” based largely on local autonomy but without accountability by the senior local leadership.

Can it be argued that this “New Reformation” is something that God has just recently dropped new from heaven? I suggest that there is not much new here at all. The only striking phenomenon is the rapid growth of the independent Pentecostal type churches which was a well known phenomenon of the 90’s (Wagner, 1999:7-11). However I make a clear distinction between these rapid growing churches and the sub movement growing between a few of these organizations. If we take a careful look into the history of church movements we will find the New Apostolic Reformation Movement is a mere cutting edge version of something at least 100 years old. G. Raymond Carlson, a former General Superintendent of the AOG, had this to say regarding the new apostles and prophets: “I saw it in the New Order of the Latter Rain in the late 40’s and early 50’s. Before that, it made its presence felt in the early days of the century among the early Pentecostals (Trillin, 1994).”

I argue that we are dealing with two issues here, although some supporters of the NAR Movement might disagree, but I choose to separate the growth of the mega churches from the restoration of the Apostles and Prophets movement. I want to show in this thesis that this movement like all the other similar movements of the past might also fall into the cycle of denominationalism as it grows into an organised unit. I also want to prove that though there are noble leaders and men who have true intentions and want to make a real change to the formal way of doing church, there are power

hungry manipulators who spring up everywhere. Human greed for power and authority is an old anthropological phenomenon which we see surfacing again in the NAR Movement. Men and women, who seek self interest or use the name of God for financial gain, are springing up in abundance in this movement. I also want to point out that this is a typical hierarchical movement with different levels of power even if it is professed to be the opposite.

I predict through this study that the movement will eventually dwindle because based on manipulative control, power and greed exercised by largely unaccounted leaders. History has proven that movements of this type move from a huge following to a faithful few once the novelty has worn off. Though unlike the faith movement in the 70's, I predict that this movement will disintegrate as quickly as the Toronto Blessing movement did in the mid 1990's.

1.3 Method and resources

My research method has been a qualitative research approach in which I have read the available literature on the NAR Movement, noting that it is almost exclusively written by people from within the movement itself. I have also made extensive use of internet resources. The historical research is based on the antecedents and origins of the movement. I have supplemented my knowledge of the NAR by attending NAR sponsored meetings and seminars, and conducting interviews with various figures inside and outside the movement. Lastly, I have tested some of my ideas/hypotheses about the movement by the oral information that I have received.

Although the movement is widely advertised and generally spoken about in Pentecostal/Charismatic circles, there are not many published materials on the subject, besides that which originates from the supporters of this move. Published books from within the movement are beginning to appear as interest in the movement is growing among Pentecostal and Charismatic Christians. Most of this literature however, is self-promoting. In my research I have found almost no meaningful analysis or critique of the NAR Movement either by non-NAR church figures or by academics. It seems as though evangelical Christians in particular are not paying close enough attention to the rapidly rising movement that is competing with traditional evangelical churches for recruits. My research resources have included the few books and articles locally available on the NAR Movement and NAR churches. I have also attended several conferences hosted in Cape Town and have listened to recorded material of speakers professing to announce the advent of the apostolic era. Personal interviews with both proponents of the NAR and those from the classical Pentecostal tradition have also contributed to my research.

C. Peter Wagner's works will be one of my main targets for critique as he claims to be a leader of the movement and has numerous materials in print. Other material comes from mainly those who consider themselves Third World proponents of the NAR like Dr Jonathan David from Malaysia and Dr Noel Woodroffe from World Breakthrough Network in the West Indies.

The use of the word "church" in this paper will mainly be a reference to the Pentecostal/Charismatic church as this is the religious group from which the NAR

Movement originates. I use the term Pentecostal and Charismatic³ simultaneously as these groups of churches are very similar in operation and doctrine. The definition of Charismatic in this paper refers to those churches with a Pentecostal doctrine and worship style but who do not necessarily wish to be called Pentecostals for the stigma attached to the term. I am not referring to the Christians in the Charismatic Renewal movement; those baptized or renewed in the Spirit within the mainline non-Pentecostal denominations and remain in their denominations (Burgess, 1988:820-829). Charismatic in this paper then more accurately refers to the independent Pentecostal churches.

There is also an overlapping of time frames in the description of the Church Growth Movement, the Charismatic Movement and the Third Wave Movement. This overlapping stems from the different interpretations from different writers on what these movements really are and when they started. Lastly the use of the word “apostolic churches” in this paper will be a reference to churches described as being part of the NAR Movement. This reference to apostolic churches excludes those churches in the New Apostolic Church denomination, which has its headquarters in Germany.

³ According to Burgess (1988:1) there are only two approaches to differentiating between “Pentecostal and “Charismatic.” One is theological, the other ecclesiastical. A theological difference might be along doctrinal lines, in particular Spirit Baptism. An ecclesiastical differentiation especially concerns denominational affiliation. “Charismatics” characterize persons outside the classical Pentecostal denominations, whether they are within mainline denominations or are part of an independent group. Neither differentiation is entirely adequate. The theological approach overlooks the natural denominational lines drawn by history, while the strictly ecclesiastical tack ignores the tremendous theological diversity among and within denominational groups.

Chapter 2 **Historical overview**

2.1 The origins of the movement

The origins of the New Apostolic Reformation movement are difficult to trace. This difficulty is precisely because it is a movement that carries many similarities with other restoration movements. A Pentecostal or Charismatic church member would not easily recognise the movement as distinct from their own familiar church expressions since much of what the NAR stands for and practices are similar to that of traditional Pentecostal and Charismatic Christian churches. In many traditional Pentecostal churches the movement is being slowly introduced. The doctrines and worship styles are very similar to what Pentecostals are used to and in many churches, who claim to be part of the NAR Movement, little has been said about the doctrines and other issues that would make the movement more identifiable. These doctrines and issues will be explained in more detail later in the paper.

I have found in my research through personal interviews that many pastors from Pentecostal, Charismatic or mainline Evangelical Churches have not as yet heard much about the movement. The difficulty in distinguishing unique traits of the movement stems mainly from the difference in interpretation between various proponents of the movement, of which there are many. Currently there are many different apostolic networks throughout the world and on closer inspection one would find differences in understanding the ideology of the movement. In analysing the NAR Movement a rough distinction needs to be made between proponents in the first-world, particularly North America and those in third-world countries because there

are significant disparities in their interpretation regarding the nature and goals of the movement. NAR advocates from Third World countries place more emphasis on doctrine and the correct interpretation of the biblical text than first-world NAR leaders (David, 1999:6-9). The International Coalition of Apostles (ICA) which is largely a first-world organisation headed by Wagner (ICA-FAQ, 2001) places much more emphasis on operations and procedures for church growth. Typical of the differences in approach can be found in Wagner's, *The New Apostolic Churches* (1998:18-25) who emphasises as a hallmark of the NAR churches, the outer structural changes of the churches in the movement. On the other hand, Noel Woodroffe from World Breakthrough Network in Trinidad, stresses the inner changes in church leaders and members, of mentality, understanding, behaviours, positions, attitudes and perceptions (Woodroffe, 2002:4).

Tracing the origins of the NAR is further complicated because the movement cannot be traced back to an historical event like the start of the Pentecostal movement in Azusa Street Mission in Los Angeles, California in April 1906 or the origins of the Charismatic movement in Van Nuys, California, on 3 April when Dennis Bennett, an Episcopalian (Anglican) priest, announced from his pulpit that he had received the baptism of the Spirit and that it had led him to speak in tongues (Hocken, 1988:30-131). The NAR, by contrast, is a movement whose origins were in the independent church growth movement of the 1980s but only found recognition and associates in the mid 1990's (Wagner, 1999:9-11). Instead of documenting past happenings to identify the movement, it is a movement that prophesies an imminent change in the Christian church.

Wagner (1999:33) dates the origins of the NAR to the mid 1990's in various parts of the world but he also argues that the movement has roots dating back to the post charismatic era¹. In his book "*The New Apostolic Churches*" (1998:14) he says that the NAR became his main focus in the third phase of his research career. His first period was devoted to studying growing churches during the 1970's and the 1980's. During the second period of his career he studied the relationship between supernatural signs and wonders and church growth spanning from the early 80's to the mid 1990's.

As general editor of the *New Apostolic Churches* (1998) Wagner included eighteen chapters by eighteen different pastor-authors. Each pastor-author gives a detailed description of his or her church, its history, its leadership structure, and its strategies for church growth. By including all these churches as NAR churches, Wagner confuses the chronological facts surrounding the birth of the NAR, because most, if not all, of the churches discussed started in the 1970's or 1980's. It is unclear whether he means the churches have made significant transitions in the 1990's into what many proponents of the NAR would call "the season of the apostolic," (Naidoo, 2004) because insufficient evidence is provided to support such a view. Many of the pastors and church leaders in Wagner's book do not even use the word apostolic or apostolic network in their descriptions of their churches and leadership, words that have come to be closely associated with most proponents of the NAR Movement. Neither have many of the pastors and leaders joined Wagner's International Coalition of Apostles in Colorado Springs, Colorado, even though their churches reside in the United States.

¹ Post Charismatic Era here refers to the period of the late 1970s and early 1980s also sometimes referred to as the Third Wave :Mainstream Church Renewal; also referred to as neo-charismatics (Burgess, 1988:827)

On the other hand we have what I call 'Third World' followers of the NAR. I use this term because most of them are all located in Third World countries and they believe that the true apostolic leaders will arise from the Third World. In an interview with Thamo Naidoo (2004), one of the leading figures in the NAR Movement in South Africa and senior elder of River of Life Christian Ministries in Pietermaritzburg, he explained how he believes that God will raise up people from obscurity to lead this movement. According to him, they will not be men who will draw attention to themselves; these apostles will not come from First World countries but from the Third World. Third World proponents like Thamo Naidoo, Noel Woodroffe and Jonathan Davids generally agree that the movement started in the early 1990's when God started giving certain individuals the revelation that a new season² in the divine dispensation was dawning (Woodroffe, 1996:15).

At a seminar on the New Apostolic Reformation held in Cape Town, on the 25 July 2003, Naidoo claimed that the movement started approximately ten years ago. His reference to the approximate date of origin does not include Wagner's interpretation of the growth of the mega independent Charismatic churches, but more to the time when men received new revelation about the restoration of apostles to the Pentecostal/charismatic church. He gave no clear evidence of an historical event that can be identified as the start of the movement but referred to a time when God started to reveal "apostolic truths" to certain individuals across the globe. Who and where

² When the NAR Movement advocates speak of "seasons" they refer to the duration of time that a revival or restoration movements last. This term gives a clear indication that they view all movements or prior movements in time frames.

these individuals are remains unclear as his language usage were very vague. With current global trends and modern communication mediums the time span is shortening for the interchange of ideas, and ideologies to be communicated around the world.

Linking evidence from Wagner and Naidoo, I think that it is safe to assume that what has come to be called the NAR Movement started in the early 1990's but that its origins were diffuse. In Wagner's all inclusive description of independent charismatic churches and fast growing denomination aligned churches, the movement precedes the origins of the designation of the movement as the NAR. The date of origin is important as however as it will give us a sense of the rate of development of the movement.

2.2 The influence and signs of preceding movements

The current shape, belief system and character of the so called "Apostolic" churches have been strongly influenced by preceding movements. Woodroffe (2001:3-8) explains that the NAR Movement must be understood as the maturing dimension of the Charismatic movement of the 1960's, and the Charismatic movement in turn must be understood as a further dimension of the Pentecostal movement of the early twentieth century. He argues that each movement had its identifiable features: the Pentecostals had the new understanding of the power of the baptism in the Holy Spirit; the Charismatic churches brought a new dimension of praise and worship, expressed through art forms like spiritual dancing. Although these movements had identifiable features they were not completely new in all aspects of their operations;

there were of course many similarities between them. The basic tenants of faith remained the same. In Woodroffe's view all movements carry traces of ones that precede them. The NAR Movement, however, is in its infancy stage and currently there is not a huge or significant distinction to be made in all areas of church life from that of some Pentecostal or Charismatic churches. As I have highlighted in the introduction we are dealing with two competing understandings of what constitutes or perhaps what should constitute the movement. In Wagner's description of "Apostolic" churches one will find dramatic change in the beliefs and practices of NAR churches from previous denominationally aligned churches. Advocates of the NAR Movement in the Third World do not emphasize the changes from traditional Pentecostal or Charismatic beliefs but their emphasis is focussed more on new revelation or understanding of the biblical text in their preaching and teaching. Yet many supporters of the NAR on either side of the two camps I described earlier agree that this movement is the culmination or completion of all previous movements. Woodroffe (1998:22) says "The effective functioning of the five ministries of Ephesians 4 will create a strong dynamic in the Body of Christ that will thrust it toward completion of the purposes of God." Dr Bill Hamon (1998:152) of Christian International Ministries Network and a member of ICA states "The New Apostolic Reformation movement will accelerate the final restorational [sic] work of the Holy Spirit, most likely causing it to be accomplished in one generation."

Most NAR churches have their roots either in the Pentecostal or Charismatic movements, an important factor in understanding the origins of the NAR. The notable changes from Pentecostal/Charismatic to NAR churches will be discussed in more detail when we analyse the beliefs and practices of the NAR in the following chapter.

At this stage of our analysis it is important to note, although I will elaborate in the third chapter, that the NAR proponents acknowledge the former revivals or “waves” to be important in the progression of the church towards its ultimate position that would enable it to be ready to “finish the work.”³ Naidoo (2004) believes that God has always been transforming the church. He says it is the work of historians to categorize the changes in church development into movements and Pentecostals use these terms to explain the difference in manifestations and seasons of God, but in reality it is all God’s work. According to this line of argument, he believes that the NAR is the newest development in God’s transformation of the church. Bill Hamon (1997:107) from Christian International Ministries in the United States describes the progression of waves as follows:

1500 - Protestant movement
1600 - Evangelical movement
1700 - Holiness movement
1800 - Faith Healing movement
1900 - Pentecostal movement
1940 - Latter rain movement
1950 - Deliverance movement – Began restoring the evangelist
1960 - Charismatic movement – began restoring the pastor
1970 - Faith movement – began restoring the teacher
1980 - Prophetic movement – Began restoring the prophet
1990 - Apostolic movement - Began restoring the Apostle

Hamon’s understanding on the progression of waves and the restoration of the church is commonly accepted throughout both schools of the NAR. Hamon’s claim is commonly interpreted by Pentecostals as the restoration of the fivefold ministry of Ephesians 4:11. This five fold view is not held widely in mainline church circles as the Greek text has only four ministry gifts, with the pastor – teacher being understood as one gift as a pastor with a teaching ministry. Nevertheless, for the sake of the

³ Finishing Mentality – the mode of thought and operation, which will bring a course, task, or undertaking to a conclusion. In the church context, it is to operate as Paul did and to press on towards the mark of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus, knowing as Christ himself did, that ‘to finish the work’ is of paramount importance. (Woodroffe, 2001:13)

interpretations of NAR proponents I will make reference to the five fold ministry of Ephesians 4:11.⁴

Before the name New Apostolic Reformation was coined by Wagner in the mid 1990s, there was a growing interest by Charismatics in a movement that developed in the early 1980s that was called the “Third Wave” or “Signs and Wonders Movement” (Wagner, 1988:184). This movement is mainly associated with John Wimber and the Vineyard Fellowship which he established. It is disputed as to whether this should be understood to have been the start of the NAR because some critics of the NAR do not discern a difference between the two movements, and therefore, when they critique the third wave movement, they assume they are also talking about the NAR (Simpson, 2002). There may be other reasons for this; Wagner was an associate of Wimber’s at Fuller Theological Seminary before Wimber left to establish the Vineyard Fellowship and the relationship between the two was highlighted when the course “Signs and wonders” was cancelled in 1985 due to some theological and academic questions raised by faculty members (Ramos 2002). The debate for the inclusion of the Third Wave as the start of the NAR is complicated precisely because not all the leaders involved in the Third Wave or Signs and Wonders Movement profess to be NAR supporters, most notably, Rodney Howard Browne, the South African Evangelist, who is mainly associated with the first emotional experiences in the United states and Canada in the early 1990’s. Howard Brownne is not included on ICA list of apostles, and gathering from his attack on the authority structures in the Pentecostal church one would assume that a charismatic figure with a huge following among Pentecostals is

⁴ The Five-fold ministry results from the problematic translation of the KJV which English speaking Pentecostals of earlier generation took to be the true “canonical” translation.

excluded because of his disapproval of the movements claims (Howard Brownne, 1997:35). The Third wave or Signs and Wonders movement was at its prime at the time the NAR claims to have developed, although the name New Apostolic Reformation had not yet achieved wide currency.

To appreciate more fully the composition of the NAR; a brief analysis of the Church Growth Movement (CGM) of the twentieth century as done by the late Donald McGavran and subsequently C. Peter Wagner at Fuller Theological Seminary is necessary to put the NAR Movement in its proper historical perspective. Some critics of the CGM, like Weller (2002) equate the NAR with the CGM, and they argue that it is only the latest development or discovery of the CGM. Wagner (1998:14) calls the NAR the focus of his third season of research as professor of Church Growth. An analysis of CGM will enable us to discover similarities and differences between it and the NAR Movement as we discover similar patterns of growth and decline in the church through the centuries. This will inevitably turn our attention to the reasons the CGM give for the demise of the traditional mainline denominations, a concept that is particularly important for advocates of the NAR Movement.

2.2.1. The Church Growth Movement

Thom Rainer (1993:35) defines the Church Growth Movement “as that discipline which seeks to understand, through biblical, sociological, historical, and behavioural study, why churches grow or decline.” On Kirk Willem’s website (2002) Rainer and others link the CGM to the early church in the book of Acts, to the spiritual awakenings of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and to the evangelistic

contributions of men like John Wesley, George Whitefield, and Charles Spurgeon, but Willem feels that Rainer comes closer to the truth when he traces it back to the methodological approach of Charles Finney and most certainly the work of Donald McGavran. For more than anything else it is McGavran that was the founding father of the modern Church Growth Movement. MaGravan's concept of evangelism, his pragmatism, his reliance on numbers to determine what is and what is not effective evangelism, his emphasis on a basic commitment to Christ that was manifested by active involvement in the local church, continue to influence the CGM to this day (Conway, 2003). In the eighties Peter Wagner emerged as the leader and chief spokesman of the movement in the USA. Wagner was a student of MaGavran in 1967 at Fuller when he studied church growth and later took over the title "professor of church growth" (Wagner, 1999:7-8).

The CGM was used as a tool by Wagner to "discover" what he termed the NAR. He believes that four key questions derived from the work of McGavran can be used for analysing church growth:

1. *Why does the blessing of God rest where it does*
2. *Because it is obvious that not all churches are equal, why is it that at certain times and in certain places some churches seems to be more blessed than others?*
3. *Can any pattern of divine blessing on churches be discerned?*
4. *If so, what are the salient characteristics of unusually blessed churches?*

(Wagner 1999:9)

The summary of the study in church growth numbers reveals that since the 1600's denominations have constituted the principal traditional model for Protestant Christianity although they were not always called denominations. Most of our protestant church traditions go back to the European Reformation, characterized by state churches such as Lutherans (Germany and Scandanavian countries) or Dutch

Reform (the Netherlands) or Anglicans (England) or Presbyterians (Scotland). So called free or independent churches did emerge, but they were politically inferior and did not receive state support. However when European state churches sent missionaries abroad, they sooner or later found themselves in one of many kinds of Protestant churches in the receiving nation, and they began to take on the characteristics of denominations.

Wagner (1999:11) claims that in 1965 American mainline denominations entered into phase crisis in their history. This statement is debatable as history teaches that the crisis did not happen in 1965. It was a part of a much longer process that had been going on since the Enlightenment in the 18th Century and accelerated by the Second World War. Nevertheless, Wagner argues that for the first time in their history the American mainline denominations found themselves in serious and sustained membership decline. Twenty five years later, even the newer denominations have begun to confront growth obstacles that they had not previously experienced. The best explanation the church leaders of the day could think of was that the declines must be attributed to contextual factors. By contextual factors I mean those sociological factors the church cannot control. Certain changes in the social, political, educational, economic, cultural, international and scientific environments occur that can either enhance or retard church growth. This means in a nutshell that the church leadership can do nothing about it. The reason for this could be that the church leaders did not want to take the blame for the decline in their numbers. The next generation of leaders however began suggesting that the crisis in church membership decline might more accurately be attributed to institutional factors because they wanted to place the blame on the poor decisions of the past generation of leaders.

“The latter part of the twentieth century saw a major decline in historical Protestant churches such as the Presbyterian Church and the Anglican Church in the First World. While a variety of factors, for example, secularisation and population movements, (Conn, 1988:181-189) played a major role in the decline, the growth of Pentecostal churches in the post Second World War period may well have played a significant role since the decline in a number of denominations occurred at a time of unprecedented growth in Pentecostal and Charismatic churches. Pentecostals led the way in worldwide church growth during the decades of the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s. Towards the end of the 1980s missiologists began to observe three interesting phenomena worldwide. The extraordinary growth of the African Independent Churches, the surprising emergence of the Chinese House Church movement and the mushrooming of what Mike Berg and Paul Pretiz call Latin American grassroots churches (Barret, 1988:180-183) Wagner’s church growth studies showed that these churches were the fastest growing churches worldwide. The African Independent churches began when prominent African church leaders began to react strongly to what they perceived to be the cultural irrelevance of many forms and activities of the traditional mission churches. They began a process of radical contextualization (Wagner, 1999:10). Wagner claims that in South Africa alone there are an estimated 16,000 independent churches and many new churches are initiated every day across the continent of Africa. In China a figure of 50 million active Christians is suggested (Barret, 1988:182). In South America the Latin American grassroots churches are the biggest churches (Hollenweger, 1972:75-108) and are pastored by individuals who have not been under the influence of a foreign missionaries and were not trained in mission schools in their own country or in seminaries or in bible schools abroad.

At the same time as these churches were on the rise, the traditional denominations in the First World were in the midst of a crises period. According to Wagner's research, Methodist Lutherans, Episcopalians, Presbyterians and other old mainline denominations in the USA began losing members. The other reasons for the decline in the mainline churches are the fact is that many people withdrew from the church in response to rising secularisation in the society. The growth rate in the Pentecostal church also started to slow down in the 1990's. There were new churches being birthed that was directly part of the cause of the decline of membership of these mainline protestant churches. These new churches are what Wagner later would term "New Apostolic Churches."

Wagner (1999:11) claims that he first became aware of the NAR type churches in the 1990's, when he undertook a project to study the growth of independent charismatic churches in the United States. His observations led him to estimate approximately 40 000 New Apostolic Churches. These were churches that were not aligned to any traditional denominations. They manifested new forms and operational procedures. These emerged in areas such as local church governance, inter-church relationship, income generation financing, evangelism, prayer and worship. If one should make a distinction between certain ecclesiastical traditions as described in the *Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic movements* (1988:820-829), it would be safe to say that what Wagner has identified as NAR churches are not the classical Pentecostals or the Charismatic renewal groups, but rather the independent charismatic churches and the indigenous Pentecostal/charismatic churches like the African independent churches and the Latin American grassroots churches.

Based on thirty years of research from the 1960's to the 1990's Wagner notes that the New Apostolic Churches were the fastest growing group of churches on six continents from the mid 1960's to the early 1990s. If this is the case then it means that the New Apostolic Reformation was seemingly going on for thirty years before it was given its current designation. The churches that Wagner identifies however are not included in the scope of what the Third World advocates define as the NAR Movement.

2.2.2 Three Waves prior to the NAR

The advocates of the NAR Movement describe the First Wave as the birth and initial expansion of the Pentecostal movement in the first half of the twentieth century. They designate the emergence and development of the Charismatic movement in the seventh and eighth decades of the twentieth century the second wave. They see the emergence of independent Pentecostal and Charismatic churches such as the Vineyard Fellowship in Anaheim, California, along with its network of churches as the third wave. The Third Wave is sometimes referred to as the Signs and Wonders movement as I have previously highlighted. John Wimber (1988:31) says, "The Third Wave began around 1980 with the opening of an increasing number of traditional evangelical churches and institutions to the supernatural working of the Holy Spirit, even though they were not, nor did they wish to become, either Pentecostal or Charismatic." It will be important for this study to include a brief history of the three waves, because the NAR Movement is intertwined in the development of these movements, and has a foundation in the Pentecostal and Charismatic traditions.

People within the NAR Movement claim, that there is progression in the activity of the Holy Spirit through the Pentecostal and Charismatic movements. The problem is that by placing their own movement in the progression of waves the NAR advocates are claiming that they are a fourth wave that supersedes the previous wave. This is what the NAR proponents want us to believe (Woodroffe, 1998:1-4) but the question is whether the NAR is actually something new and different or simply constitutes a repackaging of older movements. Wagner, himself, has confused matters by originally identifying the NAR churches with John Wimber, Vineyard Fellowship, and the Signs and Wonders movement. On the other hand, supporters of the NAR Movement from Third World countries do not mention the Third Wave or the Signs and Wonders movement in their understanding of the progression of waves towards the NAR Movement. They only make reference to the Pentecostal and Charismatic movements and view the NAR as the third great movement among the twentieth century renewal movements. It is unclear why they do not consider the Signs and Wonders Movement a third distinct wave, but perhaps it is because the movement made little impact in the Third World. In any case Third World proponents of the NAR Movement are convinced that it will be bigger than all preceding movements, so on the scale of their reasoning the third wave might not be significant enough to mention.

2.2.2.1 First Wave: Pentecostalism and the NAR

The Pentecostal movement is generally accepted to have begun under the leadership of Charles F. Parham, a Holiness evangelist and faith healer. There are those, however, who attribute the origins of the movement to William J. Seymour, an African American student of Parham. While serving as the superintendent of a Bible

school in Kansas, Parham led his students to read the Book of Acts and to search for the “Bible evidence” of the baptism of the Holy Spirit. One of Parham’s students, Agnes Ozman, became the catalyst to introduce the school to speaking in tongues. On New Years day in 1901, Ozman convinced Parham that the experience of speaking in tongues was the initial physical evidence of the baptism in the Holy Spirit. According to Hollenweger (1972:22), this belief later became the doctrinal signature of the Pentecostal Movement.

Parham began preaching this new understanding of baptism of the Holy Spirit eventually establishing what was known as the “Apostolic Faith Movement.” One of the key theological developments of early Pentecostalism, if not the most important, was “the restorationist longing for the vitality and miracles of New Testament Christianity” (Hollenweger, 1972:353-373). This theme of returning to or restoration of the original Christianity of the New Testament church is a common theme repeated again in the claims of the NAR Movement. There is a significant difference between wanting a return to the experience of early Christianity which has characterized Pentecostalism and the particular concern of the NAR with the restoration of the five-fold ministry. The NAR followers are not as emphatic about the restoration of the religious experience of early Christianity around the gifts of the Spirit. Central to the NAR is the restoration of the all the offices of Ephesians 4:11 and for the church to have a type of ruling authority (Tillin, 2004).

Whilst Parham travelled through Houston, Texas, a young African-American student of his, a Holiness minister by the name of William J. Seymour was touched as well with this new understanding of the baptism in the Holy Spirit. After working for a

short time with Parham in Texas, Seymour moved on to Los Angeles, California where he established the initial foundation of the Movement. Seymour was based in the Azusa Street Mission, an old Methodist church at 312 Azusa Street which became known as the centre of Pentecostalism and the point from which of the growth and expansion of the movement occurred. (Hollenweger, 1972:22)

The Holiness Movement had its roots in the Wesleyian revival movement of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The Holiness Movement adopted John Wesley's teachings of sanctification and made a clear distinction between the ordinary Christian and those baptized in the spirit. It was through the pre-existing network of holiness churches that Pentecostalism spread and developed its leaders. The implication of this is that the Pentecostal Movement itself was a progression from the Holiness Movement of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The most significant difference between the two was that the Pentecostal movement insisted on Glossolalia (speaking in an unknown tongue) as the necessary evidence of a person's Spirit baptism. Being baptised in the Holy Spirit or the ability to speak in new tongues was familiar to both groups, but it was the standard for Pentecostalism⁵ (Reid, 1990:880-886).

In popular thinking the use of tongues is often considered the main defining feature of the Pentecostal movement (Hollenweger, 1972:9), but this is not entirely accurate. Pentecostals argue that "tongues are viewed as a sign of the movement's main emphasis in God's plan" (Golder, 1973:17). Pentecostals believe they are called to achieve two principle tasks. The first is that they are the announcers of Christ's

⁵ The Holiness Movement stressed the second baptism in the Holy Spirit but did not link it to a physical manifestation as the Pentecostals do with their emphasis on speaking in unknown tongues. (Holleweger, 1988:21)

second coming. The second is that they are to be witnesses to the events of the last days. The proponents of the NAR do not necessarily claim that we are too be witnesses of the last days, but they talk about “finishing off the task” and “completing the work.” These phrases signify a prophetic claim that the church will function on earth in her full capacity, having all five ministries of Ephesians 4 restored (Woodroffe, 1996:8). I will elaborate more on the NAR Movements’ eschatological stance in the following chapter.

The doctrine base of the Pentecostal movement formed around a term known as the “Four Square Gospel.” This is a term alluding to the city in Revelation 21:16. The four cornerstone of this gospel were: personal salvation through faith in Jesus Christ, divine healing, the second coming of Christ which follows the rapture of the church and Spirit baptism with evidence of tongues. The first article, salvation through faith in Jesus Christ, is the theological centre of the movement (DCA 1990: 886) The NAR affirms these four pillars but has a completely different interpretation on the rapture of the church. More important for NAR followers is the establishment of the Kingdom of Christ on earth. Churches are preparing to be governing, territorial churches that will have spiritual authority over regions of the earth.⁶ I will focus on the NAR Movement’s eschatological stance in the next chapter.

From an outsider’s viewpoint, an early Pentecostal worship service would have been a very unusual experience (Hollenweger, 1972:321-347). The emotionalism that occurred during a service was not discouraged as it was in many other denominations of the time. It was understood that the Holy Spirit alone should direct the order and

⁶ Regions in this context refers to larger geographical areas than the local community of a particular area.

conduct of a service. It was thought that any type of formality or pre-worship service preparation hindered the Spirit from freely operating within the congregation. The ideal service was one that moved from start to finish with no visible sign of any human leadership. Pentecostals rejected any type of structure or formality believing that they were developing a fresh, unencumbered expression of apostolic Christianity that would restore the faith to its original unity. This notion of returning to the original unity was a feature in all Pentecostal/charismatic movements during twentieth century.

Conflict arose in the Pentecostal movement concerning doctrinal irregularity. Clashes over interpretation of Scripture caused groups to divide. The founder himself, Parham, of the Old Apostolic Faith, and William J Seymour of the New Apostolic Faith disagreed with regard to the emotionalism and freedom that should be allowed within a service (Du Pree, 1996:14). Parham considered Seymour's church undisciplined, whereas Seymour saw Parham as simply jealous. This trend of church splits carried right through the Pentecostal history and groups divided over a variety of issues. The emphasis in the movement concerning leaders was on the divine call of God and less on theological training. Establishing new Pentecostal groups was easier because of the absence of formal requirements for formal theological training for Pentecostal ministers in many denominations and independent churches. This trend of unaccountable leadership may become more visible in the NAR Movement as one of the primary features Apostolic churches that Wagner identified are mainly the independent groups or those who were formally part of denominations, but who have become independent of their denominational ties. This may have freed them from denominational constraints, but it has also left them open to large scale church splits

as there is often no accountability structure to consult in times of crises. I will elaborate more on the governance structure of the NAR Movement in the following chapter.

Two other areas that have caused division within the body of the Pentecostal movement are the doctrine of sanctification and the doctrine of the Trinity (Hollenweger, 1972:311). Sanctification was thought of as a second distinct work of grace subsequent to conversion. Conversion brought Justification but sanctification completed the salvation process by ridding a person of the old sinful nature. Pentecostals added the baptism in the Holy Spirit to sanctification. Later, William H. Durham argued that Christ's atoning work on the cross had done everything necessary for salvation. Sanctification was now a progressive work, in which the believer learned to express outwardly, what was already an inward reality.

2.2.2.2 The Second Wave: The Charismatic movement and the NAR

While early Pentecostalism was often associated with the lower socio-economic classes and relegated to the fringe of evangelical Christianity, the desire for spiritual renewal in the historic and affluent mainline churches unexpectedly resulted in an increased interest in spiritual gifts, including glossolalia and physical healing. Part of the groundwork for charismatic renewal, reflecting its deep roots in the Pentecostal movement, had been laid by the ministries of Oral Roberts, David J. du Plessis, and Demos Shakarian and the Full Gospel Business Men's Fellowship in 1951. The president of FGBMFI was Demos Shakaran, a California millionaire dairy farmer of Armenian background, who was the catalyst for integrating the Pentecostal

experience into both the mainline Protestant churches as well as the Catholic churches. He and Oral Roberts brought together mainline clergy and laity to interact in a non-threatening setting with white collar Pentecostals since in many non-Pentecostal circles Pentecostals were stereotyped as poor and uneducated (Hocken, 1988:130-131). The Pentecostal experience was integrated into the Protestant and Catholic denominations and thus Pentecostals helped facilitate the emergence of the charismatic movement.

As indicated previously, the beginning of the Charismatic Movement began with the baptism in the Spirit of Dennis Bennett, rector of St. Marks Episcopal Church in Van Nuys, California, in 1960. Under the influence of a local group of Charismatic lay people, Bennett led 100 others towards receiving baptism and speaking in tongues. Though he was forced to resign from his parish, his case brought national attention and led to the uncovering of other Protestant Charismatics, who had predated him in their experience (Jorstad, 1974:67).

Among Protestant Charismatics, the primary doctrinal views of the mainline churches of which they are members, are normally maintained (O'Conner, 1975:113-115). Change more often occurs among non-denominationally-aligned ministries. Arminianism, associated with the rejection of pre-destination in favour of free will, is strongly held in many groups, and the study of the return of Christ is a foundational principle. There is a classical belief in the Trinity, and worship services are focussed on praise and blessing. Since their doctrinal centrepiece is still baptism in the Spirit, contemporary Charismatics often encourage individuals to "move up higher," that is,

live a more holy life, and are often not satisfied until a person has spoken in tongues.(Hocken, 1988:155-156)

The participants in the Charismatic movement come from a wide range of denominational backgrounds. Nevertheless, they have found a common identity around a number of key characteristics that have overshadowed their denominational differences. Nowhere is this clearer than when Protestant and Roman Catholic Charismatics share together. Characteristics of the movement are everywhere the same. The common characteristics are summed up in these nine points: focus on Jesus, praise, love of the Bible; God speaks today, evangelism, awareness of evil, spiritual gifts, eschatological expectation and spiritual power (Hocken, 1988:155-156).

As we have indicated before, NAR adherents are very concerned with the progression of movements leading to their own claims to be the heirs of the Pentecostal and Charismatic movements of the twentieth century. Noel Woodroffe (2001:3-4) identifies some important aspects of the Charismatic contribution to the “development” or “progression” of the church. He also lists these characteristics of the Charismatic church to possibly qualify why there is a need for a new movement, namely the NAR.

First he claims that a new dimension of praise and worship was developed in the Charismatic churches of the 1960's and 1970's. Secondly dancing and expression through the arts with emphasis on Jewish movements and dance steps, sign language, banners, use of flags and other visual aids became accepted ways to outwardly

express the worship of God as Charismatics believed it was the Spirit controlling the people. It could be that the bodily expressions were a greater opportunity for participation in the church services. Thirdly, a new emphasis on the ability and authority of the body to minister to one another was also part of the Charismatic experience. Strong teaching on the believer's access to the gifts of the Spirit and the person's ability to flow in these gifts in the corporate gathering was brought fourth. This new freedom was restricted in the more structured church setting of the Pentecostal churches.

A freer flow of ministry, worship and understanding caused new churches to spring forth which in their conception rejected the hierarchical and traditional structures and mindsets of the old Pentecostal orders. There was also the invasion of Charismatic operations, music, worship and artistic expression into the mainline Pentecostal churches which began to evolve into a sort of Neo-Pentecostal/Charismatic church. These independent Charismatic churches are the churches that Wagner identifies as part of the NAR Movement.

NAR followers like Naidoo (2004) and Woodroffe (2001) believe that Charismatic churches have allowed believers to spiritually manifest in the meetings but with this freedom they have also allowed many deviant, rebellious and downright manipulative attitudes to also prosper in the church. Democratic mentalities crept into many places of worship. People were resistant to strong, directive, prophetic governance⁷ and the arrival of the church prophets in the 1980's shocked many into open revolt and warfare in the churches.

⁷ Prophetic governance – a term used by Woodroffe (2001) to refer to the period of the 1980s when the Prophetic movement was in operation in the US and Europe and self acclaimed prophets like Bill Hamon and Cindy Jacobs were well known in Charismatic circles.

Woodroffe critiques the charismatic movement by alluding to the prosperity teaching coupled with strong revelations on personal faith had become the means by which many sought to materially prosper themselves and developed into a self-centered gospel in which God's blessing was measured by the extent of the acquisition of worldly goods. With a self-focused mentality and a spirit of acquisition demonstrated by many major leaders of the time, for example, Kenneth Copeland and Jerry Savelle, both of the United States who own private jets and multimillion dollar mansions that they are not shy to portray on their television networks; the attention of the church in the USA particularly shifted away from evangelism. What Woodroffe wants his readers to believe is that the Charismatics lost their way in the 1980s as they opted for prosperity religion instead of real evangelism.

2.2.2.3 The Third Wave: The Sign and Wonders Movement and the NAR

What was understood in the early and mid 1980's as the new movement of the Holy Spirit, often called the "Third Wave" or alternatively, the Signs and Wonders movement; describe this group of people as "Evangelicals and other Christians who, unrelated to Pentecostalism or the Charismatic movement, have recently become filled with the Spirit. They exercise gifts of the Spirit with much less emphasis on tongues as optional or even absent, and emphasize signs and wonders, supernatural miracles and power encounters, but who remain within their mainline non-Pentecostal denominations." Many evangelicals, who do not wish to be labelled as charismatic or Pentecostal, yet seek to claim the Holy Spirit's power within, gladly accept this name. Major institutions and figures identified with the expansion of the Third Wave

movement would be Peter Wagner who wrote extensively on the spiritual warfare and prayer in the movement and John Wimber, the founder of the Vineyard Church in Anaheim, California who wrote *Power Evangelism* (1985).

Wimber's (1986) book on power evangelism defines the concept of Kingdom power and its relationship to evangelism. Power evangelism is a presentation of the gospel that is rational but one that also transcends the rational. The gospel is related to a person accompanied by a demonstration of God's power through signs and wonders. Wimber teaches that power evangelism is a spontaneous, Spirit-inspired and empowered presentation of the gospel. Power evangelism is evangelism that is preceded and under-girded by supernatural demonstrations of God's presence (Wimber, 1986:35).

The Third Wave or Signs and Wonders movement caused a major stir of controversy among Pentecostals and Charismatics as evidence of tongues, holy laughter and animal noises was documented in a meeting held in Vineyard Christian Fellowship in Toronto. The critics of these manifestations argued that there was no biblical mandate for these types of occurrences. These outward manifestations spread worldwide and had some similarities to the Pentecostal revival in Los Angeles at the beginning of the century as documented in Frank Bartleman's account of events in his autobiography, *Another Wave of Revival* (1926).

As I have shown; within each of the three waves there has been a similar desire to draw on a deeper and more personal relationship with the Holy Spirit through the spiritual gifts or manifestations of the Spirit. One of the hallmarks of the Pentecostal

Movement is that each of the three waves of the movement has been associated with conflict and splits. For example, the original Pentecostal movement was divided over the understanding of salvation. Until about 1908 the whole Pentecostal movement in America maintained a three stage understanding of salvation. The three stages (Hollenweger, 1972:24-25) were conversion, sanctification and baptism of the Spirit. This view came with the early Pentecostals who came out of the Holiness Movement. The split occurred when W.H.Durham a respected Evangelist reduced this step to a two stage one. Under the influence of the Baptist he regarded conversion and sanctification as simultaneous, and sanctification as a self-abandonment to God's promise. Durham was expelled by Seymour from the Apostolic Faith Church. The Charismatics of the 1960s and 1970s never really formed a body as they preferred to remain in their traditional churches. The Vineyard Church, as part of the Third Wave also experienced this type of separation. Wimber and his board have disfellowshipped the Airport Vineyard in Toronto, Canada where the Toronto Blessing began. As I documented previously; they found the phenomenon of roaring, uncontrollable laughter and other animal noises in the church services unacceptable, rejecting that it was a sign of the Spirit in the early 1990's.

Each of the three waves, the Pentecostal Movement, the Charismatic Movement, and now the New Apostolic Reformation Movement have been characterized by people sincerely seeking for God's power and rapid growth,⁸ as well as doctrinal and ecclesiastical differences which have led to splintering of the movement. If patterns of growth, decline and splintering are evident in all three movements we justified in anticipating more of the same with the NAR Movement, as already there is evidence

⁸ According to statistics in the *Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic movements*, in 1985 the number of Pentecostal-Charismatics worldwide totalled 247 million.

of disparate views concerning what constitutes the real NAR Movement between First World and Third World advocates.

2.3 The development of the NAR Movement

During the period of the Third Wave movement, Wagner started his research into the independent Pentecostal-Charismatic type churches. As I have pointed out earlier, it was the church growth studies that were instrumental in Wagner discovering the growth of the mega-church syndrome. Wagner (1998:18) claims that he identified similar characteristics in these churches and categorized them. He started looking for a name to identify these churches and also to describe the phenomenon that was taking place. The following chapter will have more detail about the defining characteristics of an Apostolic church but the changes he witnessed were not so much doctrinal changes as most of these churches held on to their Pentecostal/Charismatic/Evangelical doctrine. The most notable changes were operational procedures or methodology. Leaders had more authority; worship was more up tempo and lively; lay people were involved in ministry; and churches were adopting creative names (Wagner 1999: 51).

Wagner says that it was easy for him to talk about the Pentecostals in the 1960's because everybody knew who he was talking about, but this new movement had brought along some challenges in defining it by a name. The shape of the movement had become clear to many observers but no one knew what to call the movement. Some of the subdivisions had names, such as the Chinese house churches, the African independent churches and the Latin American grassroots churches, but no name was

used to identify the global movement as a whole. Wagner claims that he chose the name New Apostolic Reformation to describe this movement to a class that he was teaching at Fuller Theological Seminary (Wagner, 1999:37).

The name 'apostolic' was already in use in some circles in America amongst Pentecostals and Charismatics. In September 1995 the magazine Netfax published by the Leadership Network of Tyler, Texas spoke of the new apostolic paradigm in describing a shift from traditional modes of denominationalism. In 1995 the name "apostolic churches" was used by Ed Delph who called the churches of his organization N.A.T.I.O.N.S (Networking Apostolic Thrust Inter-nationally or Nationally) by this name. George Hunter (1996:63) used the word "Apostolic Congregations" in his description of these new fast growing churches.

Naidoo (2004) feels that Wagner cannot rightfully claim to have coined the name. He believes that Noel Woodroffe should be credited with the name New Apostolic Reformation as Wagner picked up the name Apostolic Reformation from Fred Delph and Delph used the name shortly after he had returned from a conference in the West Indies hosted by Noel Woodroffe.

"Apostolic" is not a new trademark. Many churches have used the word apostolic in their identification through the years. The Nicene Creed of AD 381 actually defines the true church as "one, holy, catholic and apostolic." The official name of the Roman Catholic Church for example, is "The Holy Catholic Apostolic and Roman Church". As I have noted in my introduction, in the early nineteenth century, a movement called "The New Apostolic Church" started in England, led by Edward Irwin and

subsequently grew more in Germany than in the U.K. In Australia and New Zealand a denomination known as the Apostolic Church, started almost 100 years ago and as a product of the Welsh Revival and is still strong.

2.4 Conclusion

To summarize, we have discussed the history of the NAR in which I have tried to point out that the movement had no defining date of origin like the former Pentecostal and Charismatic movements. Wagner's description of the NAR might lead many to believe that it is merely an extension of the Third Wave, or a study in the mega charismatic churches as he started noticing the mushrooming of these mega churches while he was working with John Wimber from the Vineyard Church in Anaheim, California. The Third World proponents of the NAR define the movement as standing apart from the Third wave or Signs and Wonders movement. Proponents like Woodroffe, David and Naidoo believe the NAR is a movement concerned with restoring the Governance or Kingdom of God on the earth and will come from Third World resources with new revelation concerning God's word. According to their understanding of the movement, it has very little to do with the mega church movement that Wagner initially identified as the NAR.

The proponents of the NAR Movement are reluctant to discredit the former waves as being insignificant, but rather they see them as the progression of God's renewal work in the church. The NAR must be understood in the light of the preceding waves of the Holy Spirit, most notably the Pentecostal and Charismatic wave. They emphasize that the NAR will be the final piece of the puzzle in God's preparation of the church to be

the authoritative church God intended it to be. Thus the NAR was developed through a progression of waves and the church universal is the process of its final restoration.

Wagner claims to have coined the name New Apostolic Reformation after experimenting with many different names to identify the phenomenon of the growing Charismatic churches of the early 1990's. The Third World proponents however do not attribute the discovery of the name to Wagner, nor do they agree on the classification of the groups of churches Wagner includes as apostolic churches.

Wagner (1999: 64) names five compass point values of the NAR Movement. He acknowledges that there is great diversity among apostolic churches, but given their diversity they are still heading in the same direction. He calls these values; compass point values, and stresses that although churches in the movement may differ in many areas these five points are nonnegotiable. Three of these values relate to faith: namely theology, ecclesiology and eschatology, the other two relate to practice: namely organization and leadership. The Third World advocates of the movement emphasize more the values that relate to faith whereas Wagner and the ICA members are more concerned with the values that relate to practice. We will explore this in more detail in the following chapter.

Chapter 3 **Belief and Practice of the NAR**

3.1 Introduction

The New Apostolic Reformation Movement holds a number of beliefs derived from the Pentecostal and Charismatic traditions as well as engaging in a number of practices that have their origin in these traditions. At the same time, however, participants in the NAR have added some new beliefs and practices. In this chapter I will analyse the beliefs and practices of NAR groups to show both their similarities and differences with traditional Pentecostal and Charismatic groups. Various advocates have different perspectives on the essence of the movement, yet there is a similar tone in their language regarding the restoration of the office of the apostle. As I have shown in the previous chapter, a divide has developed between First World proponents and Third World proponents of the NAR Movement, because the advocates from the Third World do not perceive the movement to be as all inclusive as Wagner and the ICA body describes. I will show, in this chapter the single most distinctive and important belief and practice of the NAR, concerns the restoration of the offices of apostles and prophets.

In the forward to Jonathan David's book, *Apostolic Strategies Affecting Nations* (1997), many Pentecostal-Charismatic church leaders who see themselves as part of the NAR Movement or the views of the movement, offered commendations for his work and in the process provided valuable insights into their own understanding of the NAR.

Rev Colin Urquhart, senior pastor of Kingdom Faith Ministries, in the UK says;

“This is the time when the Holy Spirit is making the Body of Christ aware of its apostolic nature and calling”

This is specifically NAR ideas as we pick up this type of talk at NAR seminars and literature. Equally important, who does Urquhart think constitutes the “Body of Christ” since very few Christians outside the Pentecostal church have any inkling about the revival of apostleship.

Dr Bill Hamon from Christian International Ministries Network, USA claims;

“The church has been in the process of restoration for the last 500 years. The apostles and prophets were the two ministries that God used to lay the foundation of the New Testament Church and they will be the two who will bring completion to God’s building, the Church.”

Ulf Ekman, senior pastor of Word of Life, Uppsala, Sweden maintains;

“We are living in the end times. The church will rise up like never before. Its foundation must be strong, its purpose must be clear, and then its destiny will be successful. We are also living in the prophetic time of the fulfilment of everything God wanted to accomplish through Christ.”

Dr Noel Woodroffe, from World Breakthrough Network, Trinidad, West Indies, says;

“From the far corners of the earth and in the islands of the sea, God is raising up mighty apostles to break the seals off the mysteries of God’s Word and to lead the ultimate Church into the corridors of the Spirit that lead directly to the conclusion of all things. A great impartation of apostolic might is coming forth, not only to supply and activate the discernment in the Body of Christ that would enable it to clearly know what the will of the Lord is for this significant time; but also to provide it with the power to perform His will in the earth against all oppositions of resisting forces until it is all done.”

Robert Munien, from Grace Outreach International, Durban, South Africa, notes;

“For the first time since the Book of Acts of the Apostle, the general church is beginning to recognize and receive apostolic and prophetic ministry.”

Dr Tunde Bakare from the Latter Rain Assembly in Nigeria claims;

“God is moving. His kingdom is forcefully advancing and He is raising up a species of people that will blaze his new move on the surface of the earth today. People with finishing mentality, totally orientated and transformed in their mindset with every limitation broken and restrictions removed. Christ started his church the way He wanted it and now he wants His church the way he started it. The early church was built on the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets and must revert to the same dynamism, principles, patterns and strategies to fulfil her purpose.”

Derek Crumpton from Foundation Ministries in South Africa says:

“This is a strategic time for the church of Jesus Christ. It is a time of change and transition from old mindsets (that have hindered the Church from fulfilling the Great Commission) into an apostolic mindset that will cause us to finish what was started two thousand years ago (with the sending of the original twelve apostles). I believe the Lord has saved the best for last. We are on the verge of the greatest harvest of souls in the history of the church.”

Jonathan David (1997) writes in his introduction,

“This is the most powerful prophetic time in the destiny of nations. The years ahead of us are years of great significance and are being seasoned with abundant grace for the rising of governmental territorial churches. It will also be a time of the manifestation of the revivalist type of ministries. These apostolic ministries and teams will become the ‘stronger men’ of the cities, governing over the atmospheres and keeping a spiritual climate conducive and correct for the ongoing victory for an advancing church.”

Kelly Wailer (2002:1) said on the Global Harvest Website;

I will call it a new wave because I think what God sends us in an unexpected coming release of prophets and apostles will bring a whole restored paradigm that Jesus, Paul and John the Baptist especially lived and taught. I believe the Lord has been preparing for some time now a whole special generation of apostles and prophets. Though they first appear on the scene in somewhat atypical fashion, ultimately I think what is brought to the church will strongly change the appearance of what we currently call church.

Peter Wagner (2002:1) says on the Global Harvest Website that;

“It could be argued, quite convincingly, that the Church always had apostles but they have not been recognised as such. Nevertheless, true as this assertion might be, once they receive the recognition they deserve, the Church is prepared to move to a higher level. This is what is happening in our day.”

One can deduce from the above quotes that the restoration of the apostolic office seems to be arguably the main thrust of the NAR Movement. The quotations are taken from representatives of the movement. As we saw, the advocates of the NAR Movement may be divided into two schools of thought regarding their understanding of the movement. This division, as was previously noted, seems to have a geographical or socio-economical basis. Throughout the analysis of the movement in this chapter I will allude to the similarities and differences between the two. Most First World proponents focus on organization and leadership of the mega-churches of the twenty first century as perceived through the lens of the church growth movement. This can clearly be seen in Wagner's (1999) description of NAR type churches. The Third World advocates, on the other hand, distinguish apostolic churches not so much by methodology and membership totals as by the current release of new revelation on the biblical text, and the understanding and function of new apostolic operations in the church. The works of Jonathan David (1997) and Noel Woodroffe (1996) confirm this. It is more important to the latter group to trace the nature of the apostolic office in the preaching and teaching of their sermons rather than visible procedural changes, though they do not deny the need for change in certain areas of governance structure of the local church.

3.2 Characteristics of an NAR type church.

Wagner (1998:14-16) says that in the New Apostolic Churches, many of the characteristics of the traditional Christianity are not being changed. The bedrock of theology of the protestant Reformation is not up for revision. New Apostolic leaders

are not questioning justification by faith or the priesthood of all believers or the authority of Scripture. The Apostles Creed maintains its high profile as an acceptable summary of the doctrinal foundations of the Christian faith. New Apostolic Churches continue to celebrate Christmas and Easter. For the most part they worship on Sunday. They build church buildings and hold wedding ceremonies in their churches. The churches have pastors, children's programmes, youth departments, ushers, communion, women's ministries, church suppers and nurseries.

It is clear from the list above that Wagner is describing your normal Pentecostal, Evangelical or independent Charismatic church. In giving this list of similarities to Pentecostal and Evangelical churches, Wagner is trying to convince his readers that the NAR is not much different to what has become acceptable in Christian circles. This might be the case for your church goer who cannot discern the emphasis in the preaching of the word, as this is the part of the liturgy of an NAR type church where the first visible signs of change is taking place, change from the Pentecostal/charismatic interpretations of the scripture. Wagner is trying to play off the restoration of the apostle as something the Pentecostals and charismatics should not to be concerned about, it smells of a sly preparation for the NAR Movements doctrine to gain entrance into existing established churches.

Joseph Thompson (2000:2) claims that that the key to the success of the NAR type churches rests in their adherence to the fundamentals of the faith. They are held together by the glue of Biblical methods, not their particular doctrinal statements nor their traditions. He says that their new methods and new expressions of worship are not rigid structures that profess to be superior to those employed by denominations,

but rather, guidelines to effective forms of communicating the unchanging and timeless truths of the gospel in our continually evolving world.

Many other things are being changed though. Most advocates of the NAR Movement say that certain things have to change. Noel Woodroffe (2001:1) has observed that; in every move of God the structures and patterns of the Church change. He argues that a move of God inevitably involves profound changes taking place within the structure of the church. He uses the twentieth century renewal movements as evidence for his claim when he compares the positives and negatives brought about with the introduction of the Charismatic Movement into the traditional Evangelical church. Wagner (1999:34) believes that the NAR is in its early adoption phase when it can expect fairly strong objection from traditionalist in the Protestant churches who are threatened by these changes. He anticipates that the major opposition will come from Pentecostal-Charismatic denominational executives. This anticipation for opposition to the movement is rightfully expected as Wagner's experience in church growth should be enough evidence for him to realize how new movements receive stiff opposition from existing organizations. Woodroffe (2001:2) holds a similar view, noting that the older leadership have become comfortable in their positions and tend to resist the coming of the "new spiritual positions." The irony of Woodroffe's statement is that whilst he hits out at older leadership being comfortable in their positions, the NAR Movement is calling for church leadership of apostles and prophets that have the notion of glorified leaders who will more than likely feel comfortable in their positions.

The group from North America who have formed a coalition of apostles known as the International Coalition of Apostles (ICA) seem to be in agreement with Wagner who is the leader (presiding apostle) as he defines the NAR through the lens of the church growth movement. In their understanding of the NAR Movement they incorporate all the fast growing Pentecostal/charismatic churches of the 90's, that are distinguished as Independent Charismatic churches. This designation of mega independent charismatic churches as NAR churches become a problem to outsiders as Wagner is not clear with his description on NAR type churches. If the restoration of Apostles and prophets are the main thrust of the movement as Wagner insists (1999:102), adding the mega churches seems like a strategy to give the real NAR Movement some more credibility; because it shows that the movement has many followers. This is misleading and confusing as I think Third World advocates are clearer on what they perceive to be NAR type churches.

Third World countries do not necessarily define NAR through the lens of the church growth movement but rather understand these churches to be those whose leaders understand the release of "apostolic impartation"¹ and the ministering of an "apostolic spirit."² Their argument, although I find no clear base for it, is that they understand that God is blessing the church with new revelation and authority to fulfil its end time purpose on earth (David, 1997:23).

3.2.1 The rise of the mega churches

¹ Apostolic Impartation - a term used to describe the revelation brought to a group of people by an apostle.

² the authority with which this revelation is preached

Before the name NAR was commonly accepted by most advocates of the movement an interest in the growth of Pentecostal/Charismatic mega-churches in the 1990's led some people to coin names for this phenomenon. Many people recognized that something different was going on and tried to define and name it. If we accept Wagner's all inclusive description of churches that form part of the NAR then the names given to the growth of the Pentecostal/charismatic churches of the 1990s might reveal the character of the NAR.

In the early phases of the movement Wagner (1999:38) used the term "Post – Denominational Churches." Some followers of the NAR Movement still feel that this name more accurately describes the movement but Jack Hayford, senior pastor of Church on the Way, in Van Nuys California, a church affiliated to the denomination of the Foursquare Church, with a membership of 9 000, felt that the name did not include the new apostolic congregations within denominations, of which his church was a prime example. Strong opposition from pastors in the Assemblies of God and other organizations caused Wagner to stop using this term and he claims that he later wrote letters of apologies to these groups.

Many denominational executives would prefer to call these churches "independent" churches, but leaders of these so called apostolic churches strongly oppose such a term as they do not consider themselves "Lone Rangers," functionally disconnected from the body of Christ. They would prefer to be considered as 'interdependent.' Ed Delph (1995) one of the well known advocates of the NAR Movement said in a meeting of church leaders; "Churches must give up their declaration of independence and make a declaration of interdependence."

The name 'Charismatic churches' was also used at some point in Wagner's research in the early 1990's to describe the movement, because most traditional mainstream evangelicals would be comfortable with this term. The term "charismatic," however, has been used broadly to describe various movements and church characters for the past 30 years. It was an important term in the 1970's and 1980's when Charismatics had an inferiority complex and were struggling to find identity. In certain parts of the world the term Charismatic is problematic. In Latin America, for example, the adjective 'charismatic' has been applied mostly to Catholics, but rarely to Protestants (Wagner 1999:39). In Australia, "Charismatics" can refer to people who may speak in tongues, but who do not necessarily hold evangelical views of biblical authority. Therefore, many Australian Charismatic evangelicals prefer "Pentecostal" to "Charismatic" (Hocken, 1988:143).

Wagner (1999:41) notes that some new apostolic leaders, who have roots in Latter Rain Movement, which emerged after World War 2, like to refer to their churches as 'restoration' churches. The term "restoration" would imply that they believe this movement is restoring true biblical Christianity for the first time since New Testament days (Miller, 1997:11). However, current denominations such as the Disciples of Christ, Christian Churches and Churches of Christ in America trace their origins to an earlier Restoration Movement in the early nineteenth century, and so the use of this term can become confusing.

Mike Berg and Paul Pretiz (1993) called these churches "grassroots churches" as they were doing a study on the Latin American Churches. This term would be useful to

Third World churches that have sprung up in mission dominated countries, but for new apostolic churches in the traditional Western missionary sending nations, it may not be practical because many churches in the Western world have a long history in the Christian tradition. Protestant Christianity is not new in these parts of the world

The rapid growing churches were also called “Neo-denominational churches” by Dan Simpson (1996:5) of Fuller Seminary Office of Continuing Education. He argues that if we could define a denomination as a movement, fellowship, association, network, or family of like minded, like- faith churches, then we could understand this new movement not as a rejection of denominations, but as an endorsement of them.

Donald Miller (1995:1) in his book labelled the churches he studied over a three year time span, “New Paradigm Churches.” He says,

“A subtle revolution is transforming the face of Protestantism. While many mainline denominational churches are losing members, overall church attendance in North America is not declining. A new style of Christianity is drawing in on America and to some extent worldwide. These ‘new paradigm churches’, as I call them, are changing the way Christianity looks and is experienced.”

In using the term New Apostolic Reformation, Wagner includes all of the above definitions as churches of the movement.

3.2.2. Character traits of the movement

One of the hallmarks of NAR type churches is the creativity with which they are named. For example, in the greater Cape Town area there are churches with names like Living Waters Community Centre (Belhar), His People Christian Church (Goodwood), Good Hope Christian Centre (Ottery), Restoration Centre (Delft), New

Destiny Fellowship, Church of the Second Chance and Church of the Broken Hearted (all from Mitchells Plain). Most NAR churches in Wagner's books have creative names as well; examples from the USA would be Vineyard Christian Fellowship (Anaheim, California), Cathedral of Faith (San Jose, California), Springs Harvest Fellowship (Colorado Springs, Colorado), Brooklyn Tabernacle (Brooklyn, New York), and Community Church of Joy (Glendale, Arizona).

NAR leaders from both the First and Third World groups agree that leadership and leadership authority constitute the most radical of changes from traditional Christianity. Wagner (1999:20) uses the phrase "The amount of spiritual authority delegated by the Holy Spirit to individuals" to be the main difference from what we were used to in the denominational church. He says we are witnessing a:

"transition from bureaucratic authority to personal authority, from legal structure to relational structure, from control to coordination and from rational leadership to Charismatic leadership."

He expounds his argument by saying that this manifest itself out on two levels: The local and trans-local level: on the local level the new apostolic pastors are the leaders of the church. In traditional Christianity, the pastors were regarded as employees of the church. The leadership in the new apostolic churches is based on trust. Wagner argues that church members in new apostolic churches trust their pastor whereas traditional congregations trust boards and committees. On the trans-local level there is a growing affirmation of contemporary apostolic ministries, both of the gift and of the office of the apostle. We will dig deeper into the emergence of the apostolic office at a latter point but I want to highlight the apparent change in leadership from plurality to single leadership with a hierarchical structure. This is evident in some independent Charismatic churches that I have visited but certainly not all. There are churches and

networks in the NAR Movement like Declaring Our Victory Emanuel (DOVE) in California (Kreider, 2003:4-8) who teach and practice plurality of leadership and their churches are headed by an eldership team. Not much of what DOVE teaches will be highlighted by Wagner and the ICA because I suppose it goes against the notion of “the amount of authority the Holy Spirit invest in individuals.”

When Woodroffe (2001) speaks of a change in leadership, he makes an assumption based on little or no evidence that, “When God transitions into a new era there is a general principle that the leadership of the church comes under adjustment.” He uses the transition in the Bible from Eli to Samuel, from Saul to David and from Moses to Joshua to prove his point. He refers to the positions as “spiritual positions” when he claims that individuals can adjust their mentality to transition from a position of Moses to a position of Joshua. This transitioning creates a tension in the ranks of leaders in the traditional Pentecostal/Charismatic churches as men who fail to transition are being branded as being against the move of God. This can be problematic as churches following the CGM strategies will naturally adjust because as I will show later, CGM strategies encourage churches to do things that work. Leaders will be pressurised to adapt or die and many take on the character of an NAR type church just to be part of the recent developments. This is a phenomenon that I have personally witnessed on the Cape Flats.

Wagner (1999:120) maintains that new apostolic leaders are dedicated to release the people of their churches into their God ordained gifts as documented in 1 Corinthians 12. This might be true for Charismatic churches but in a New Apostolic type Church, I am not sure how freely the gifts will be allowed to operate as the Apostle will have

almost an ultimate authority over the other gifts in the church. Another characteristic of New Apostolic type Churches, is the abundance of volunteers. Members are encouraged to discover their gifts and to minister to others through those gifts as well as through any natural talents they might also have. Members of the paid pastoral staff of a New Apostolic type Church are usually home-grown in that they begin as normal members and overtime move into the paid pastoral ministry of the church. As all members become active in ministry, those who rise to the top (excel) in serving the church are normally the ones that are recruited for the staff. The recruiting of full time staff normally involves a midlife career change, and the possibility for enrolling for a three year seminary course is extremely remote. Therefore academic requirements for ordination, so long the staple in traditional churches, are being scrapped. New apostolic ordination is primarily rooted in personal relationships, that verify character, and in proved ministry skills. Another potential danger in the movement is the absence of theological training for ministers which makes it easy for the NAR Movement to infiltrate their doctrine into independent Charismatic Churches.

In comparison to traditional churches Wagner (1998:21-22) notes that New Apostolic type Churches are vision driven whereas traditional churches are heritage driven. He seems to speak as though the two are incompatible. He says that traditional Christianity starts with the present situation and focuses on the past whereas new apostolic Christianity starts with the present situation and focuses on the future. It could be argued that the NAR churches are far more backward looking since they are trying to restore something that is inappropriate for the world in which we live. By heritage driven he means that the focus of many traditional congregations is to aspire to be what they used to be, they pray for revival, and renewal of the past. By vision

driven he means that New Apostolic type Churches set goals and work to achieve those goals. For example, the Lighthouse Christian Centre in Parow, Cape Town had a sign in their foyer several years ago which read: "Our vision is to have 2000 cells by the year 2000."

New Apostolic churches are noted for their contemporary worship styles. Wagner notes the most noticeable changes in worship when he says:

"Worship leaders have replaced music directors. Keyboards have replaced pipe organs and pianos. Casual worship teams have replaced robed choirs. Overhead projectors, multimedia technology have replaced hymnals. Ten to 12 minutes of congregational singing is now more than 30 minutes long. Standing during worship is the rule, although a great amount of freedom for body language prevails" (Wagner, 1998:22).

In the NAR Movement, worship leaders have as a goal helping every person in the congregation become an active participant in worship and at times worship looks like a real dramatic performance as they move across the platform inciting their audiences to participate emotionally. Charismatic leaders say that frequent applause is not congratulating those on the platform for their musical excellence, but it is seen as high tribute to God as people clap their hands in unison after every worship song. Woodroffe (2001:3) says that a new move of God usually causes a change of how the corporate community expresses itself in the corporate worship. New songs generally are composed to capture the new understandings of God that prevail in the midst of the move. While Wagner (First World NAR advocate) focuses on worship styles, Woodroffe (Third World Advocate) stresses the lyrics and the meaning of these lyrics for worship.

Wagner's research on prayer forms in churches has led him to conclude that prayer in the New Apostolic churches has taken forms rarely seen in traditional congregations. Some of this take place in the church and some take place outside the church. He says that the actual number of prayer times and the cumulative number of minutes spent in prayer during the worship service of a New Apostolic type Church far exceeds the prayer time of the average traditional church. (Wagner 1989:54) Worship leaders weave frequent times of prayer into singing worship songs. New apostolic leaders have been among the first to understand and put into practice some of the newer forms of prayer that takes place in the community itself, not in the church. For many, praise marches, prayer walking, prayer journeys and prayer expeditions have become part of congregational life and ministry. Woodroffe (2001:4) says the nature of prayer changes from constant request for survival to a powerful declaration of our intention to overcome and finish the work. He calls this type of prayer "governmental prayer" (Woodroffe, 1998:5)

According to Wagner (1998:23) new apostolic churches experience relatively few financial problems. Although no vision-driven church believes it has enough resources to fulfil the vision adequately, in comparison with traditional churches, finances are abundant. Wagner attributes the abundance in finance to three discernable reasons: Firstly he notes that "generous giving is expected." Tithing is taught without apology, and those who do not tithe their incomes are subtly encouraged to evaluate their Christian commitment standard. His second observation is that "giving is beneficial." This means that it is not only beneficial to the church and its ministry in the kingdom of God, but also beneficial to the giver. Tithes and offerings are regarded as seeds that will produce fruit of like kind for the individuals

and families. Luke 6:38, which says that if we give, it will be given to us in greater measure is taken literally. This of course is typically prosperity cult thinking and simply provides a motivation to extract more from people on the grounds that God will return the favour with increase. Crudely it sounds like “buy God’s favour” for cheap! His third observation is that “giving is cheerful” It is not yet a common practice but in some new apostolic churches, the congregation breaks out into a rousing, athletic event kind of shouting and clapping the moment the pastor announces he is collecting the offering. The members are cheerful givers and they want everyone to know that. The church members in new apostolic churches seldom complain that the pastor talks too much about money.

Wagner noticed that compassion for the poor, the outcast, the homeless, the disadvantaged and the handicapped is a strong characteristic of most new apostolic churches although I cannot see how this can be a hallmark of the NAR as churches has being doing this for centuries. He maintains that aggressively reaching out to the lost and hurting of the community is part of new apostolic churches’ core value system. . Planting new churches is usually assumed to be part of what a local congregation does. A large number of congregations are becoming involved in foreign missions. Some send missionary teams made up of local church members to rural areas to preach the gospel for a few weeks. By doing this they believe they are influencing their people to participate in a more direct and personal way in world outreach.

The majority of the New Apostolic type Churches not only believe in the work of the Holy Spirit, but they also regularly invite the Spirit to come into their midst to bring

supernatural power. It is commonplace, therefore, to observe active ministries of healing, demonic deliverance, spiritual warfare, prophecy, falling in the Spirit, spiritual mapping, prophetic arts, fervent intercession and travail, and so on in NACs.

3.3 Restoring the office of the apostle

The one area that is most identifiable to onlookers outside the NAR Movement is the re-emergence of apostles in our day. In Woodroffe's (2001:5) explanation of the NAR Movement he says that two very important and powerful things highlight this move of God. Firstly it is activated by the release, presence and acceptance of the powerful impartation and revelation ministries of the church apostles being raised up and sent by the Lord to the earth today. He says that secondly it is a globally defined move of God. Wagner (1999:103) agrees when he says "the most radical difference between what I am calling new apostolic Christianity and traditional Christianity revolves around the amount of authority the Holy Spirit is perceived to delegate to individuals as opposed to groups such as boards or committees, or presbyteries." This is expressed mainly in the local authority delegated to pastors and the trans-local authority delegated to apostles. John Eckhardt (1993:2) says we are seeing the restoration of the office of the apostles as we come into the 21st century. He agrees with Bill Hamon (1991) that the restoration of the office of the apostle is part of a progressive move over a period of time that will eventually bring us into the restoration of the original patterns as set out by the early church. His analysis goes back to the 1940s and 1950,s when he says we saw a restoration of healing and miracles with the evangelist. The restoration of the teacher came in the 1970's. This was followed by a strong move of the prophetic office in the 1980's. The 1990's is the season for the restoration of the apostolic office and with this final restoration the

church will be ready to finish the work or complete its task on earth. This work is generally defined as expanding God's kingdom to the uttermost parts of the earth. (Eckhardt 1993:4)

A common belief amongst NAR Movement followers, is that with the restoration of the apostle, there is coming a restoration of what Eckhardt (1993:3) calls "apostolic doctrine, apostolic binding and loosing, apostolic revelation, apostolic governments, and apostolic boldness." Woodroffe (1998:8) says, "At the very core of this present reformation move of God in the earth today is the current release of revelation, understanding and function of apostolic operations in the church and in the wider kingdom of God." He argues that the apostolic move of God brings not only a release of apostles to the body of Christ, but more importantly a powerful release of "apostolic impartation"³ and a ministry of "an apostolic spirit" and mentality.

3.4 Apostles in the NAR Movement

The International Coalition of Apostles (FAQ) defines an apostle as follows:

"An apostle is a Christian leader gifted, taught, commissioned and sent by God with the authority to establish the foundational government of the church within an assigned sphere of ministry by hearing what the Spirit is saying to the churches and by setting things in order accordingly for the growth and maturity of the church."

The word "apostle" comes from the Greek 'apostolos' meaning "one who is sent".

The word 'apostolos' in the New Testament means a delegate, an ambassador of the gospel, officially a commissioner of Christ with miraculous powers (Eckhardt,

³ Apostolic impartation – when the words of an apostle is decreed and proclaimed over the lives of the saints (Woodroffe, 2001)

1993:3). ‘Apostolos’ is a noun and the corresponding verb in the Greek is ‘apostello’ meaning to send. Apostello means to be sent with a particular purpose or with a specified commission from the one who does the sending. When this is done, the envoy has full powers and is the personal representative of the one sending him” (von Eiken, 1975:127). Ancient Greeks also used *apostello* from time to time to indicate being sent out with divine authorization. Naidoo (2004) introduces us to another Hebrew word “Shaliah” used in Rabbinic circles also meaning “one who is sent” to further explain the office of an apostle. This word, however, speaks more of an agent than a messenger. Naidoo uses the phrase, “a man’s agent is like unto himself” when he tries to convey the idea of equality of representation. He claims that Paul is an example of an apostle being in such an executive position of “grace”⁴ in his representation of Christ. Naidoo argues that Paul had so much power to perform the miraculous because he was a representative of God who had all power of God, but he chose not to parade all his God given powers because people would treat him like a god. Naidoo creates a platform for apostles to be men of superpowers, an idea that can not be backed by the Scriptures, as all humans are fallible (Rom 3:23) and in need to be accountable to structures and communities.

To clarify his understanding of the office of the Apostle, Naidoo says that most false positions in the earth come from accurate positions. He uses the Pope in the Catholic Church as an example of a false position and uses the word “pontificated” to imply the abuse of the office when he says; “the Catholic Church however pontificated the office of the pope”(Naidoo, 2004). The general belief in the Catholic Church is that the Pope is Christ’s representative on earth and that he is infallible. Naidoo disagrees

⁴ The word grace is often used by NAR Movement advocates to designate God given favour on certain individuals.

with the Catholic idea of infallibility but agrees that the return of the office of the apostle would be fully restored if there is an exact mouthpiece of God on earth. What Naidoo fails to recognise is that the very structure he criticises is the one he embraces as a close scrutiny of the NAR Movement will reveal their ultimate goal is to have one apostle over every city and all these apostles will be accountable to a leading apostle. This pattern is not much different from the Catholic Church pattern.

He teaches that the church has moved away from the accurate position of the apostle through the centuries and begun using terms like elder, bishop and presbyter more frequently than apostle. He notes that although the term pastor is only used twice in the New Testament, the term apostle is used much more frequently. We use the term pastor regularly today in Pentecostal-Charismatic circles when we refer to the leadership of the church. This stems mainly from the traditional Pentecostal use of the functional gifts of evangelist, pastor and teacher since the rise of Pentecostalism in the early 1900's. The larger Pentecostal churches like the Assemblies of God and the Full Gospel Church did not readily accept the titles of apostles and prophets in its circles because they were not readily in operation in the church as the other three ministry gifts were. There were Pentecostal groups in America and Europe, however, that institutionalised the offices of apostle and prophet since the early 1900's but they were in the minority in the Pentecostal movement (Hollenweger, 1972:72). Apostles and prophets were always present in the Pentecostal movement, more so in function than in title, because the church feared the abuse of power associated with those titles. This is the abuse we now face with the NAR Movement as a great aspiration is developing in the NAR Movement for pastors to transition to offices of apostles. (David, 1999:275-281)

If apostle means sent one then the legitimate question would be, sent by whom? According to Naidoo the sender is God himself sending his apostles to earth from heaven. He uses the terms heaven and earth figuratively as he refers to men being raised from obscurity in Third World countries to lead the apostolic season. Naidoo's explanation of God sending the apostles creates a loophole for accountability structures as any one can claim that God has sent them. This is becoming a serious problem in the NAR Movement but I will show later how the problem of accountability in the movement is a serious threat to its survival.

The reason for this sending would be to "kingdomise" the earth, where kingdomise implies bringing the dominion of the kingdom of God into all the earth. He stresses the dire need for an authority on earth when he says the church will become the "governmental"⁵ authority on earth. Naidoo says; "these apostles will be special men, who will not consider persecution a big issue but their obedience to Christ, prayer, study of the word and the resistance of temptation will be a hallmark of the Apostles of this day." The church in the bible is portrayed as having a servant heart and an organization willing to take the persecution that was prophesied in the Book of Revelation. The NAR thus proposes a contrast in the way we are to perceive the church, governing church or servant church?

Wagner (1999:107) says that planting and overseeing new churches is an important dimension of most apostolic ministries. He believes that virtually every individual

⁵ This term government and governmental was first used by Woodroffe and it is becoming a trademark word for advocates of the NAR Movement. Government in the NAR Movement means, "the process of governing the church, imbued with power to bring divine regulation and divine impact upon human and demonic systems in the earth." (Woodroffe 2001:14)

who does this over a period of time would be correctly seen as an apostle, although he argues that there might be some *bona fide* apostles who are not directly involved in church planting *per se*. Apostles could be thought of as ambassadors, yet Wagner stresses the importance not to view them as superhuman, since they can have their good and bad days. They do not have divine natures, so they make their fair share of mistakes. Wagner's apostles are somewhat different to Naidoo's in that they are prone to error, but they agree on the ambassadorial role of apostles. The notion of apostles being those recognised as sent to establish churches might have biblical foundations as the Book of Acts documents, but Wagner creates an entry point for those who do not have the ability or gift to plant churches when he says "*bona fide apostles who are not directly involved in church planting.*"

NAR advocates document the difference between the gift and the title when they point out that many people today recognise the office of the apostle but are not comfortable with someone being titled as such. (Wagner, 1999:108) On answering the question if there are apostles in the church today, Bishop Carlise Moody (1996:18) of the Church of God in Christ in United States says; "Yes, there are Apostles today! They manifest extraordinary spiritual leadership, and are anointed with the power of the Holy Spirit to confront the powers of Satan, by confirming the gospel by signs and miracles and establishing churches according to the New Testament pattern and doctrine of the apostles."

John Eckhardt (1993:40) a member of ICA says apostles are unique when he expounds Ephesians 4:11; "There is no substitute for the apostle. The prophet, evangelist, pastor or teacher cannot do what the apostle can do. Neither can the

apostle do what the other gifts can do. Each gift is needed and has a unique purpose.” This view is widely held by most Pentecostal/charismatic churches but it also highlights the point of the need for the numerical quantity of the five fold gifts. For example there would be a need for more Pastors, teachers and evangelist than prophets and apostles, if the function of these ministry gifts, are rightfully articulated. In the NAR Movement however there is an alarming emphasis on apostles and prophets, no wonder all the followers aspire to be apostles and prophets.

Naidoo (2004) believes that the chief work of an apostle is the proclamation of a message. Like Wagner he creates an entry point for those who are not missionary minded and lack the gifts and abilities to plant churches, to become apostles through their fine proclamation of the word. One fundamental difference between Naidoo and Wagner is that the apostles associated with Wagner in the ICA are mostly well known names but the apostles as described by Naidoo in the NAR are low profile people who are not encouraged to advertise themselves or their ministries. Naidoo believes that we must build on apostolic foundation and not on personalities. He motivates this statement by alluding to the few references written about the personal life of the 12 apostles in the Bible. He attributes the reason for the apparent silence on the apostles in the bible to his understanding that it was not important for its readers to study personalities but rather learn the principles the Bible seeks to convey.

3.5 Networks

Another new phenomenon that has emerged in the NAR Movement is new church networking paradigms that fulfil many of the functions that the Pentecostal-

Charismatic churches, as well as most other churches, have usually attributed to denominational organizations. A standard NAR definition of a network would be similar to Woodroffe's explanation;

“An apostolic network is a grouping of ministers, ministries, Kingdom organisations and churches interrelated together to link their vision, resources, ministries and people in one unified purpose while still actively developing and not losing hold of their unique, individual , specific visions and purposes in the Lord. These groups are unified in their access to the grace of an apostolic ministry which they recognise as their primary, but not singular, source of impartation and revelation. They move in voluntary accountability to mutually agreed apostolic oversight and counsel based on relationship, while still maintaining the essential autonomy of their individual ministries.”(Woodroffe, 2002:3)

My research amongst churches on the Cape Flats, have shown that there are several reasons why these networks develop. Firstly the small independent Charismatic churches feel that they need to relate with churches of similar visions and operations. This need might be because of fear of being isolated because of financial constraints. They feel that if they join a network, like Pentecostal churches belong to denominations, there is a real sense of belonging and possible financial support. Secondly there is the desire by the mother church to expand its influence to other the churches, some do it for honest reasons of empowering the smaller church whilst others do it to enhance their image as a flourishing, vibrant, big movement. This networking can take place between churches within the same geographical area or it can be an international network. NAR advocates argue that churches belonging to the network are autonomous and there is not a controlling element as in many denominations. This is a contentious area of course as manipulative control is a phenomenon that finds its way through any structure. I maintain that this is a real problem for the NAR Movement as churches try to project a huge image and canvass

for other perhaps smaller churches to join their network. Time will tell if there is a genuine commitment from both sides to have a mutual relationship or if exploitation is the hidden agenda.

Bill Hamon (1998:147-149) heads the Christian International Ministries Network (CIMN) and he defines a network as a group of ministers, churches and other special ministries who are interrelated together to link their vision, resources, products and people in one unified purpose. He claims that we are seeing a new emphasis on prophetic and apostolic heads of ministerial fellowships and denominations networking together. Networking does not infer that all groups should come under the headship of one great apostolic leader. Hamon uses the symbolism of a fishnet to explain his definition of networking:

“A network is a set of interconnecting persons or organization that co-operate together towards shared goals, similar to a good fishnet. Each network, ministerial group or large church is like one of the knots that ties the lines together. Those who have vision, grace and wisdom to network with other networks will then become the great fishing net God will use to draw multitudes of souls. A name and organizational structure are established to provide levels of leadership responsibility to fulfil the vision, purpose and ministry of the network as a whole. Networking ministries and churches retain their autonomy, but are also required to be accountable within the network structure.”

Wagner (1999:126) says that; “apostolic churches are composed of local churches that, for one reason or another, voluntarily [sic] decide to affiliate with the network.” He maintains that their heartfelt desire is to relate to one another in a satisfying way, whatever satisfying might imply. David Cannistraci (1996:190) defines networks as an apostolic network can take many forms. Essentially, it is a band of autonomous

churches and individual ministries that are voluntarily united in an organized structure.

What has become evident in some churches on the Cape Flats (2004) is a patronage network in which some Charismatic leaders actually took over previously independent churches and because they are more eloquent, better educated, and had a “bigger reputation” as senior pastors, the other church leaders initially subjected themselves to their leadership. These network leaders used their position of power to create clients in the ministry. Eventually many of them realized that they had been conned and withdrew from the network. This is not unusual it is rather symptomatic of the potential abuse of networks

Although Wagner (1999:127) identifies the words; autonomous, volunteer, relationships, interdependency, and apostolic oversight as the important operative words in defining networks, he omits the words like manipulation, dominance, subordination, practices that may actually happen if leaders within a network are not equally in authority and status.

Wagner (1999:144) explains networking between churches from different denominations (Extra-denominational networks) that are forming on a territorial⁶ basis, particularly in cities. Some are identifying the “anchor churches” of a city and developing ways and means for the pastors of those churches to network together for the benefit of the whole city. He firmly believes that in many cases the personal relationships, the mutual accountability and the camaraderie among pastors of a city

⁶ Territorial is often used in NAR language to refer to the word geographical to give the reader the sense of dominion over a specific area.

across denominational lines far surpasses their sense of loyalty to fellow pastors of their own denominations who live in different locations. Denominational tied churches are forming network relations across denominational boundaries.

Kent Hunter (1997) of the Church Growth Centre in Coruna, Indiana, has identified a cohort of pastors whom he calls “post denominational wanna-bees”. Some of them remain in their denominations, but they have divorced their own churches and ministries from any significant participation in officially sanctioned denominational programs, unless a certain program happens to appeal to them. Others are proactively looking for a way out of their denominations and seeking new ways of affiliating their churches with other churches of like mind. This is evident of the negative strain put on local churches within the denomination and something the Networking paradigm of the NAR Movement want to avoid. These churches who are unhappy within their own denomination are the most likely candidates for either creating new networks and associations or joining existing ones.

3.6 Apostolic Coalition

An important development in the NAR Movement is the establishment of the International Coalition of Apostles. Global Harvest Ministries (2003) maintains that there is a strong desire for peer level apostles to relate in some structured way to each other, in their own nations and internationally. The International coalition of Apostles (ICA) was conceived by a group of apostles who gathered informally in Singapore in 1999. John Kelly of Antioch Churches in Southlake Texas agreed to establish an office in Dallas, Texas, to organize a council and to begin inviting apostles to join

ICA. He asked C. Peter Wagner to assume overall leadership of ICA as Presiding Apostle. In early 2001 the office was moved to Colorado Springs, Colorado by coincidence also the home of World Prayer Centre where Wagner is a church member. Under Wagner's supervision, John Kelly continues to serve the ICA as Ambassadorial Apostle,⁷ working out of his Dallas office.

Membership to ICA is restricted to individuals who have been recognized by a significant segment of the church, including peer level apostles, to have the gift and office of an apostle and who have been ministering through this gift for a period of time. It is not intended to be a training ground for would be apostles, but rather it should be seen as a professional society in which confirmed apostles are able to relate to each other. The problem with this structure would be a kind of exclusive club developing amongst fellow ministers of First World countries because they have more recognition by their audiences who watch them on television or read their literature. What about the poor Third World leader who has all the requirements to fit ICA's definition of an apostle but who has not been exposed to a broader audience through lack of finances?

Since Apostles minister in several different ways, the ICA is open to what the organization defines as "vertical apostles", "horizontal apostles" and to "market place" apostles. Membership is attained only by official invitation from the ICA leadership. This is especially problematic when the only kind of apostles that they come remotely close to being in New Testament terms, are the missionary delegates of various churches that we meet in the writing of Paul. Nominations may be received

⁷ Ambassadorial apostles are apostles who have itinerant, frequently international ministries of catalyzing and nurturing apostolic movements on a broad scale. (Rodriguez, 2003)

by any ICA member. They are then processed through the Colorado Springs ICA office and decisions are made on a case by case basis as to whether official invitations will be extended. It is not clear who makes the decision but I assume that would not be strange for the head apostle to decide as the amount of authority given to individuals is a striking feature of the NAR Movement. An application process is required if the invitation is accepted by the individual apostle. This involves submitting a written application form as well as the payment of membership fees. Members from the First World countries are expected to contribute US\$600 per year, and those from Third World countries contribute US\$300 per year. If there is any doubt the individual apostle decides whether he or she is “First World” or Third World.” (ICA-FAQ, 2001:2)

ICA is administered by Global Harvest Ministries of Colorado Springs, Colorado. C. Peter Wagner is President of Global Harvest and Doris Wagner and Chuck Pierce serve as Vice-Presidents. Financial records may be accessed by ICA members at any time. An annual audit is performed and ICA holds membership in the Evangelical Council for Financial Accountability through Global Harvest Ministries. No compensation is paid to officers of ICA, all of whom serve in an honorary capacity. The Presiding Apostle appoints an ICA apostolic Council which provides advice and accountability. ICA members are free to bring any concern which may arise, to any or all council members. A serious concern is the wonder if Wagner appoints genuine critics to the council, since when can appointees exercise accountability over the person appointing them in a vertical hierarchy?

3.7 Apostolic Schools

Most Apostolic networks also have Apostolic Schools. In the First World countries most of the mega churches have their own Bible schools where they teach amongst other things the restoration of the office of the apostle. The Third World countries have developed schools for the exclusive training in the New Apostolic Reformation movement. These schools are not accredited by the educational authorities in their countries as they offer only short term courses. The schools originated with the idea of teaching more church leaders about the New Apostolic Reformation and how to integrate their churches into the movement. Training is administered in the concepts of the Apostolic and Prophetic Ministry. The scriptural basis they use for these schools comes from 1 Samuel where it speaks of Samuel heading a school of the prophets. Jonathan David heads the School of Prophets in Muar, Johor, in Malaysia. Thamo Naidoo of River of Life Christian Ministries heads a school called Grapevine a Post Transformation Enterprise (GATE) under the larger umbrella of ASOM (Apostolic School of Ministry) in Pietermaritzberg where he offers 7 days course on the New Apostolic Reformation. The primary object of GATE is to train and equip church leaders to “transition into the apostolic reformation season.”⁸ The aims and objectives of Apostolic school of Ministry (ASOM) are:

To define the apostolic season.

To give church leaders the opportunity to come apart and reflect on their respective ministries in the light of the unfolding global purposes of God in the earth.

To teach leaders how to discern and identify the changing seasons within the kingdom of God.

To provide the resources and training skill for leaders to make the transition from an old season into a new one.

To develop strategies and patterns for the structuring of apostolic churches.

To impart apostolic grace that activates leaders into the fullness of their ministries. (Naidoo, 2004).

⁸ This phrase means to change mindsets and make paradigm shifts

In the United States the Apostolic Council for Educational Accountability (ACEA) was formed during the New Apostolic Reformation Educator's Summit, convened in Colorado Springs in June 2-3 1998. At the ACEA meeting, 100 educators, representing 65 base institutions and several hundred satellite schools from various apostolic networks, were able to meet together on a peer level and to begin to build relationships. Participants from different apostolic streams had to highlight their concerns regarding their schools. The degree of diversity was extremely broad. One school needed its staff to aim for college degrees as their primary target was college campuses, while another school that had to undertake primary literacy work in order to begin teaching its students the Bible. The essential challenge facing the group, representing training programs of the New Apostolic Reformation was how to maintain positive personal relationships, mutual support, camaraderie, peer level interaction, interdependence, broad accountability, institutional integrity and autonomy in the face of such academic diversity. The ACEA professes that it is not a new form of accreditation but offers an alternative to accreditation. It presents itself as a creative alternative for academic accreditation where apostolic training institutions can receive the desired ongoing peer-level evaluation and mutual accountability while maintaining the integrity of their individual callings from God.

3.8 Conclusion

Space does not allow me to expand more on the belief and practices within the NAR Movement. However, I have highlighted some of the most distinctive characteristics of the NAR Movement, without going into deep criticism of the points I think are

problematic. It has become apparent from the analysis that the very systems the advocates of the NAR are opposing is what they are bound to re-create. For example, the NAR Movement calls for a change in old way of doing church, they use the metaphor of the new wine and the old wine skins, but in reality they are giving old strategies new names. They move from denominations to networks, from pastors to apostles, from bible schools to apostolic schools. Are they not throwing old wine into a new wine skin? The outside looks attractive but when you taste the wine it is not what you expect. We now turn our attention to a critique of the NAR Movement.

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Chapter 4 **Critique**

4.1 Introduction

There are numerous issues related to the emergence and development of the NAR Movement that warrant careful evaluation, but in this chapter the focus will be on areas that are likely to prove important for encouraging the growth of the movement or hindering its development. In what follows specific issues are identified and explored for their impact on the NAR Movement. The first area of critique that will be addressed involves the similarities former revival or restoration movements in the Pentecostal-Charismatic church tradition and the NAR Movement. It will be shown that the NAR is not quite as new and innovative as the movement itself claims. The movements I refer to are the Church Growth Movement (CGM) of the 1960's and the Latter Rain Movement of the 1940's and the 1970's. The CGM can be closely associated with First World advocates of the NAR Movement in the previous chapters. The Latter Rain movement on the other hand can be closely linked to what I termed Third World advocates of the NAR Movement.

Secondly, I will explore the area of governance in the NAR Movement. This critique will consider both the First World and Third World advocates of the NAR Movement. Related to the question of governance and leadership in NAR churches, is the question of accountability. I will look at the proposals set out by proponents of the NAR Movement with regard to how the new leaders will be accountable to the body of Christ. I also will compare the hierarchical structure of churches with an Episcopal form of governance to the leadership in NAR churches and networks. In this section I

will also briefly examine the possibility of the movement forming a new denomination.

My fourth area of critique will focus on the new buzz words or new terminology that comes with this movement. The last area of critique will be the focus on the movements' eschatological stance. I would like to highlight the eschatological viewpoint in the NAR Movement.

4.2 Signs of former movements

4.2.1 The Church Growth Movement (CGM)

The NAR Movement is a complex movement, as we have seen, with tensions emerging between First World and Third World advocates of the NAR. In this section my concern is with C. Peter Wagner and the ICA. Wagner and the ICA based their discovery and identification of NAR churches on the CGM methods (Wagner, 1999:8-9). I have shown in the previous chapter that not all advocates of the international NAR Movement hold the view of Wagner; that the mega Charismatic churches of the 1990's can be labelled as NAR churches. David (1999:70) argues that, "apostolic churches are not measured by numerical figures but by their spiritual position."

Peter C. Wagner, the leader of the ICA has for many years been a leader in the Church Growth Movement. According to Susan Conway (2003), the Church Growth Movement started in the 1950s with the work of Donald McGavran when he established the Institute of Church Growth in Eugene, Oregon. The CGM was a movement that developed when churches started implementing the theories of

MaGavran to make their churches grow in membership. MaGavran advocated a return to classical missions with its stress on evangelism and church planting. He believed that a chief and irreplaceable purpose of mission is church growth. He also underscored using the social and behavioural sciences to identify the factors that facilitate and those that impede church growth. Charles Crow (2001) states that the CGM was a missionary initiative and American churches started applying the methods of MaGavran from his famous book, *How Churches Grow* (1964) in the year the book was published. In 1965 MaGavran was asked by Fuller Theological Seminary to establish the School of World Missions. It was at Fuller that MaGavran taught Wagner in the principles of church growth. Crow maintains that at the same time as Church Growth methods impacted the American churches when churches started applying the missionary methods in their own neighbourhood, the American culture strongly influenced the Church Growth Movement. He claims that CGM began to adopt American marketing strategy that held that when good products are effectively marketed they will succeed.

In describing the development of the NAR Movement Wagner (1998:17) equates the growth of the mega Charismatic churches in the 1970s, 1980s and 1990s as a major characteristic of what he calls New Apostolic Churches. He claims, "*What happened in 1993 then was the realization in my mind that, indeed, a pattern of divine blessing today on certain identifiable groups of churches is discernable.*" This "divine blessing" was the rapid growth of these churches that Wagner identified. Precisely because Wagner relies heavily on his research into church growth to identify what he calls New Apostolic Churches, it requires us to look at the Church Growth Movement itself.

In his critique of the CGM, Kirk Wellum (2003) mentioned some leading principles. The CGM has adopted a phenomenological hermeneutic or a pragmatic principle of interpretation. For example the doctrines that receive the greatest attention are those which actually work to make the church grow. Secondly the CGM stresses the need for prayer. Thirdly the CGM puts a high premium on the right kind of pastoral leadership, because the basic believe in CGM is that the primary catalytic factor for growth is the pastor. Fourth on the list is the involvement of all church members in ministry. In the fifth place the CGM sees effective evangelism as a crucial priority and this includes the need to plant new churches. Sixthly, the worship service is to be used as a critical evangelistic tool. Seventh the CGM believes that we must have aggressive church growth strategy. When planning for church growth, the church leaders must look for ways how they can make contact with the community. The eighth principle is that you must find ways and means to keep new members involved in the life of the church. The ninth principle that the CGM stresses is the ministry to youth. Lastly, the CGM teaches that you must make a positive impression with your physical surroundings, e.g. plenty of parking, welcome auditorium, good sound and lightning to attract new members. The key word is user friendly.

The CGM is based on the so-called Great Commission of Matthew 28:18-20 in which Jesus charged his followers with making disciples of all nations and on the recognition that this task is far from completed. It understands the Church to be the centre of God's plan to reach the world and challenges the church with the possibility of growth and the need to work hard to plant new churches and strengthen existing ones. Most importantly CGM has intentionally adopted managerial and marketing

practices from the commercial world to facilitate the growth of local churches. It encourages the Church to plan and dares it to re-evaluate what it is doing and why it is doing it (Crow, 2001). Rainer (1993:54) makes an important and interesting distinction between biblical principles and church growth principles. Biblical principles like prayer come directly from the bible. Church growth principles may be derived from the bible or they be derived from all kinds of extra biblical sources.

The valuable lessons the Pentecostal-Charismatic church can learn from those within the CGM movement are many, including the discipline of prayer and meditation. The CGM teaches that it is healthy for a church and its individual members to exercise their gifts and this will bridge the gap between the Laity and the Clergy as common to the traditional protestant church. Vibrant Christianity is a team effort and everyone must pull together. CGM is to be commended for its emphasis on excellence in ministry. This is seen in the church buildings as well as analytical preaching and exuberant worship. All these positive points mentioned in favour of the CGM, are evident in churches that Wagner labels as NAR churches.

As I have noted earlier, at the heart of CGM however, is the packaging and marketing of the church in a consumer oriented society. The emphasis on packaging and marketing is so overwhelming that the true Gospel is lost. Put differently, using CGM you get growth for any religious group because the principles and practices are not actually specifically Christian. CGM is about consumer Christianity, the mega churches that Wagner describes as part of the NAR Movement churches are marketing the gospel using the best techniques of consumer capitalism, from slick websites, to “best worship practices.”

The main concern about the CGM and how it relates to the NAR Movement with the fast growing churches of our day is the pragmatic principle of interpretation which is used to determine which biblical passages and doctrines receive the greatest attention. This hermeneutic creates a situation in which the values and strategies of consumerism are imported into the Church and sets the agenda for the Church. No matter what Christian leaders profess to believe, if they are guided in their use of marketing strategies that are drawn from a consumer model, by what appears to “work,” they will fail to declare the full counsel of God’s word. Our concern with the pragmatic principle is that a church based on principles and practices of the secular marketplace will reduce the gospel to another consumer product in which the gospel’s demand for the way of the cross, which refers to a real choice for suffering and sacrifice over self-gratification is being undermined.

Closely related to this pragmatic principle of interpretation is the question of relevance. The CGM places major emphasis on churches being relevant. It is important to be relevant but relevance has its limits. In fact, it is possible to be so relevant that one becomes irrelevant because you are merely telling people what they already know, and not what they need to hear. In his book *Marketing the Church* Barna (1991:36-39) gives us what he considers to be a fundamental principal of Christian Communication: “the audience not the message is sovereign.” The problem is that when one makes the audience sovereign, when they determine what is said and not said, and how it is said, it leads to a distortion in a message that requires serious commitment, sacrifice, and self-denial among other things. And if the speaker is the church she is thereby robbed of her prophetic function in society. Success, or what

appear to produce results, is not a reliable principle of interpretation. The CGM's pragmatic principle of interpretation will keep the church from confronting some of the major social issues of our day. David Wells (1993:84) has said that "evangelicalism has found that the cost of modern relevance has been its own theological evisceration." How does a "user friendly" church address issues like abortion, feminism, homosexuality and the hedonism of our day without offending the community it is trying to reach.

Bill Hull (1997) the director of church ministries for the Evangelical Free Churches of America says that the CGM has promised more than it has delivered. Contrary to all that has been said and done, statistics show that the numbers of evangelicals have been declining for the past twenty five years. He claims that the average evangelical church in the USA only introduces 1.7 people to Christ per year for every 100 people who attend. At this rate Hull says we are "only replacing the dead." But what about all those mega churches who have mastered the principles of church growth? Twenty years ago there were 100 mega churches in the United States which drew at least 1000 people, in 1992 there were 4000, and presumably that number has been increasing. While the number of Mega churches continues to climb, 90% of all American Churches have an attendance of 200 or less. In fact, 50% of all Christians attend 7% of the churches. When you put all these figures together it is obvious what is happening in the US and elsewhere. The so called Mega churches are simply drawing from existing smaller churches, and that may be why Barna (1991) predicted that during the 1990's 100 000 American Churches would close their doors. Church growth is about redistributing people into fewer and larger churches and this is often done in a competitive way. Instead of helping us fulfil the Great Commission, it now

appears that in many instances the CGM is really a vehicle whereby some big churches can maintain, or increase, their share of the dwindling evangelical Christian market at the expense of a lot of smaller churches.

It becomes obvious in Christianised nations that when movements grow we find a direct correlation with decline in numbers in other church groupings as was the case with the rise of the Pentecostal movement in the early to mid 1900's (Burgess, 1988:180-192). It is also the case with the mega churches of the mid 1990's in the United States and also in South Africa, when the growth of the Classical Pentecostal churches started slowing down. Could there be a clear indication that many of the people actually just gravitated towards the latest hype in church development? Charles Wanamaker (2004) calls it the re-arranging of the furniture. He highlights a direct correlation with the marketing of brand names to the marketing strategies of these mega-churches as they appeal to church members from traditional mainline and Pentecostal churches. The marketing strategy of these churches thrives on the inbred desire to identify with success even in their church experience. But they also want a package of "products" that meet their tastes and needs, not only spiritually, but socially, ideologically, etc. With the rise of the Independent Charismatic Churches (NAR) churches Wagner's research (1999:7-11) show a decline in the traditional Pentecostal churches.

Wanamaker (2004) argues that the churches which use the CGM models are hell bent on acquiring wealth. Usually it is the leaders of the Independent Charismatic churches and those around who use religion to become wealthy. Tele-evangelist parade their wealth on the television and they run their operations like entertainment centres.

People tune in or go to church to see the show, with the pastor putting up a performance every Sunday backed by a 20 member choir and five piece bands. Wanamaker maintains that consumer Christianity is a betrayal of the gospel. In comparing the church to a business organization he claims that growth in these charismatic churches is attracting consumers and they are not reaching the unchurched and the unsaved. When these churches get big enough they start franchising or developing networks as smaller church groups are sucked into the consumer market for financial gain.

4.2.2 Latter Rain Movement

Some critics of the NAR Movement like Teri Earl (2000) argue that there is nothing new about the teachings at all. He argues that they reflect the restoration theory, which has been repackaged since the days of the Latter Rain Movement, at least, and has been accepted and preached in various forms by some Pentecostals. Earl says “It might be more accurate to call this a ‘restoration’ instead of a ‘reformation’ since this is a repackaged restoration theory. It definitely cannot be called or portrayed as new”

Tricia Tillin (2004) agrees with Earl that this much publicized new paradigm can be traced to the Latter Rain movement of the 1940’s and 1950’s. In North Battleford, Saskatchewan in 1946-48, there was an eruption of charismatic manifestations which proved to be the start of a remarkable in the history of the Pentecostal type of churches around the world. Many came to think that the new wave in the spirit was in fact the “latter rain” referred to in such passages as Jeremiah 3:3 and 5:2, Joel 2:23 and Hosea 6:3. The “early rain” was said to be Pentecost itself or perhaps the Azusa Street Revival and the current move of the Spirit was the “latter rain.” Many

movements and seminal doctrines already existing on the fringes of Pentecostalism came together in a key group of healers; evangelist and teachers in the years 1948-52, and the combination came to be called the Latter Rain Revival (Wright, 1998).

The peculiar doctrines of the Latter Rain prophets can be listed as:

1. *The Latter Rain theory itself*
 2. *Restoration of the Five fold ministry*
 3. *Manifest Sons of God*
 4. *Kingdom now eschatology*
 5. *Shepherding discipleship methods*
 6. *Positive confession, the creative spoken word*
 7. *Impartation of gifts by laying on of hands*
 8. *Use of travelling Presbytery teams to get other churches involved*
 9. *Seed Faith techniques*
 10. *Directive prophecy to control and influence both individuals and churches*
- (Wright, 1998)

Even though the Latter Rain of the 1950's faltered and fell into disrepute with the tragic death of William Branham and its repudiation by the Assemblies of God it was kept alive by certain survivors like Bill Hamon of Christian International Ministries Network in Santa Rosa Beach, Florida. Bill Hamon, a member of ICA was instrumental in re-introducing Latter Rain doctrine into Charismatic Renewal of 1960's and 1970's. (Rodriguez, 2002)

4.3 Governance

An objection to the type of leadership that Wagner (1998) describes in his book *The Apostolic Churches* is sure to come from some in the evangelical tradition if Pentecostals and Charismatics fail to criticise it. This leadership is said to be a leadership based on trust unlike in the traditional church where leaders were fully accountable to the church board or the congregation and they proclaim that theirs is a

more Biblical model (Kelly, 1998:34). Although the leaders of these mega churches try to give evidence of their accountability in Wagner's *New Apostolic Churches*, the claim to be trustworthy, the leader has too much authority, to make single decisions that affect the whole church. Too much importance is attached to one, multi-talented pastor, in contrast to the New Testament pattern which teaches that the local church was pastored by a plurality of Godly men (Acts 14:23). The danger is outright abuse as senior pastors or apostles act as CEO's of big companies. They lay claim to the church as if it is their own property and together with their ministry to the church, many of them own a second "business" or ministry usually named after them, e.g. Benny Hinn pastors a church in the United States but he also manages Benny Hinn Ministries. Whenever the church becomes a business it loses its servant attitude towards the community. The argument from NAR advocates (Davids, 1999:234) that God speaks first to individuals before he speaks to groups is often taken out of proportion. We no longer live in period of the Old Testament when God primarily spoke through the prophets and individuals, but in the New Testament Canon God directs his instructions to the church that is to be governed by plurality of leaders according to the pattern of the early church in the Acts of the Apostles. According to New Testament writings no one man was ever given the rule over the church, neither was the congregation, but the early church was governed by a group of leaders (1 Timothy, Titus and 1 Corinthians 16). This pattern of governance might not be free from its own difficulties but it offers better accountability.

4.3.1 Apostles for today

The proponents of the NAR Movement argue that there are those cessationists¹ who do not accept the view that God is restoring the office of apostles in the Pentecostal-charismatic church today. These people are of the opinion that the office of apostle is not valid for the time we live in, as the foundations of the church have already been set. They hold the position that many spiritual gifts that were in operation in the first century Church were designed by God so that their use would “cease” with the close of the apostolic age and with the completion of the New Testament canon of scripture. The list of the gifts that would have ceased vary among various schools of cessationist, but prophets and apostles, whether considered as spiritual gifts or as offices or both, appear on many of the lists.

The question that demands an answer surrounding the NAR Movement’s thrust on the restoration of the apostles concerns what basis there is for believing that the office of the apostle must be restored? Where did they go? Have they not been with us all along, under one guise or another? Who asked these people to take on the “task” of restoring apostles to the Church? A critic of the NAR Movement, Terri Earl (1999) says it seems like this is a self-appointed group, who are self-congratulatory regarding their new found status, while writing glowing reviews for each other’s books and hanging out at the same NAR “pep” rallies. Meanwhile they are clearly trying to consolidate their power base and advance an agenda in churches that can only lead to compromise, inter-faith and outright abuse.

On 13 September, 2001 Peter Wagner addressed his followers in an open memorandum addressing the issue of the destruction of the twin towers of the World

¹ Cessationist – derived from the word cessation – refers to a group who believe that the office of apostle has ceased to exist

Trade Centre in New York City on 11 September, 2001. Amongst other things he claimed: *"The church is in a position now, characterized by the active and accepted roles of apostles, prophets, and intercessors to take up their rightful place in world events."* By implications he seemed to be saying that the church leaders he mentioned were in a position to have an effect on world events. The major problem with statements like these, and they are common amongst NAR Movement teachers, is who outside their own movement accept that they have any real authority or status for dealing in the public arena with the crisis faced by the world in the post 9/11 period. When did the church as a whole accept these people in their "roles" as apostles, prophets, etc.?

The fundamental understanding amongst Pentecostal-Charismatic people is that the offices of the foundational Apostles are over and done with. The modern day apostle is basically any church planting missionary who is there as a servant to those he disciples and oversees. (Powell, 2001) The office of the modern "apostle" is not a role or a title, but a function of goal and aim. It is for the establishing of churches and guidance as an elder. It is certainly not for the purpose of making declarations into the sky to bind demons.

On a conference advert in Brisbane Australia, Wagner (2000) makes a statement that reads: *"The Lord is establishing the foundations of the church for the new millennium. This foundation is built upon apostles and prophets."* The statement does not make sense either logically or theologically. How can the foundation of the church be built upon apostles and prophets? Scripture does not claim this even in respect of the original apostles and prophets. The meaning of Paul statement in Ephesians 2:20 in

the light of 1 Corinthians 3:10-11, is that the apostles and prophets were chosen by God to lay the foundation of the church. They were not the basis on which that foundation was laid. The belief of the NAR advocates comes closer to the belief in Roman Catholicism, which teaches that the church is founded on Peter.

Another worrying statement is the continual reference amongst NAR Movement teachers that the Church has been without "apostles" for 1800 years. If that is the case then; either no churches have been established since the first century church or, Wagner and associates are claiming to be foundational apostles. This is problematic on two accounts. There have certainly been apostles in the church all along (Ephesians 4:11) and the foundational Apostles, who sat under the teaching of Jesus while he was on earth, wrote Scripture, and suffered as martyrs, are long dead and gone. (1 Cor. 15) The foundation of the Apostles (Eph. 2:20, 1 Cor. 3:10) is what the Church is built upon, it includes most importantly the Cornerstone (Eph. 2:20, 1 Pet. 2:6) and Rock (1 Cor. 10:4) which is Christ (1 Cor. 3:11). Fundamentalists believe that the building of the Church is now in its last stages (Powell: 2001). We are on the roof, so to speak. To lay another foundation on the new revelations and new paradigm of the new Wagner apostles is to tear out the original foundations and build it all over again.

4.3.2 Apostolic authority in the NAR

Wagner (1999:112) claims that apostles, compared to most traditional church leaders, like bishops, pastors, elders and deacons, possess and exercise unusual authority. The

logical question that followers such a claim will be; where do they get this authority? Critic's of the NAR Movement like Terri Earl and Sandy Simpson all agree that these modern day apostles in the movement are self appointed. The implication is that the so-called apostolic office has no basis other than an internal personal desire for an imposing title or for undue power. Counter arguments from Wagner (1999:112) claim that if it was a case of self appointed apostles for selfish gain then apostles would have very few followers, and there would be no movement called the NAR.

Advocates for the movement claim that the initiative for the whole process begins with God as it does with any other spiritual gift according to 1 Corinthians 12:18. Wagner says that if we are going to label apostles as self appointed we might as well do the same with teachers. Although Wagner and his colleagues from the ICA agree that there are some spurious apostles because of the lack of understanding of the role and function of apostles in the church today, but they do not believe we can label all apostles as self appointed. Wagner's (1999:14) description of a genuine apostle starts by pointing to the fact that modern day apostles are Charismatic leaders. The term charismatic is used here in a sociological sense rather than a theological one. Max Weber (1947:358-359) defines charisma as:

The term "charisma" will be applied to a certain individual personality by virtue of which he is set apart from ordinary men and treated as endowed with supernatural, superhuman, or at least specifically exceptional powers or qualities. These are such as are not accessible to the ordinary person, but are regarded as of divine origin or as exemplary, and on the basis of them the individual concerned is treated as a leader

Bill Hamon (1997) believes that such leadership charisma cannot derive from an organizational or bureaucratic promotion to some position of leadership. It cannot be

generated within a corporate system, such as a denomination, but it must come from God. Hamon goes on to say that Apostles have the delegated authority to represent the kingdom of God in a governmental official capacity. It is not a religious, hierarchical authority given by man but a spiritual authority given by God. It is always vague when spiritual statements are made to avoid the empirical reasoning of where do these apostles come from. In actual fact Hamon might as well have said, you can argue with me but do not argue with God, because the apostles come from God.

4.3.3 Accountability

The question of accountability is a contentious issue in the NAR Movement, because with unusual authority comes the need for stronger measures of accountability. Yet the NAR advocates are at a loss to clearly express themselves because they offer no clear solution to the lack of accountability expressed by the critics of the NAR. Naidoo (2004) maintained that we will always be faced with this problem of accountability and it ultimately boils down to the integrity of the leader. Wagner (1999: 123) admits that this is a part of the NAR Movement where no real plan has been put forward. The one danger of the movement is its vulnerability in the area of accountability. This leaves room for abuse in leadership. This is the motivation for establishing organizations like ICA and networks, although, no evidence suggest that the networks is a guarantee of stricter accountability. Members join voluntarily, so they have the choice to detach themselves from the networks, voluntarily.

The NAR Movement proposes apostles that will rise up in the last days to lead the end time church will ultimately be a father-like figure to many pastors and these apostles

will also exercise authority over these pastors and their churches. One could argue if confronted with the question of accountability, that the apostle is accountable to an apostle that heads the fellowship of peer level apostles, but the problem with such a structure is; who will that apostle be accountable too? As I have stated, proponents of the NAR Movement have no clear answer to the question of accountability. Wagner attempts to come up with a strategy, whereby an apostle who oversees other apostles must find some father figure, a spiritual person or persons having little or no connection to the network to pledge his accountability to. These individuals will be the watchmen over his personal life and ministry. Should he err, they can call him to order, or reprimand him. (Wagner 1999:116)

Many problems arise from a pattern of church governance as Wagner proposes. The first one is the problem of a hierarchy, a system that the denomination has been struggling with for many years as it gave the local churches very little say in the affairs of their operations (Long, 2001:137-140). The tendency in the Pentecostal-Charismatic church since the 1980's is to move free from bureaucracy and too much hierarchy in their church structures, hence we get the development of the Independent Charismatic church. This development can once again be attributed to the church Growth principles of relevance, as individual churches felt that their adjustment to become relevant would be hampered by the denomination because of the resistance to change (Wagner, 1999:19). Hierarchical church government is normally associated with the Catholic or mainline Episcopalian governments. This proposed system of Wagner will lead to networks electing a leader who in turn will submit to a leader of a bigger network until the whole city is governed by one church leader. The challenge that all these leaders will have; is to voluntarily submit under the leader whom they

choose and the big question is, who is going to take the throne as the leading apostle over the city? Because the NAR Movement prophesies imminent developments the movement has not yet reached the stage where they have one apostle per city.

This leads us to the second problem with such a hierarchical form of governance, and that is the ability to humbly submit under one another. For the hierarchy to reach its apex individual apostles must humbly submit under the authority of a more senior apostle. One of the utopian scenarios in the NAR Movement is that there will eventually be an apostle in each major city. All the apostles in this city will then recognize this apostle and voluntarily submit under his authority. This can only be possible if the movement is totally divinely inspired, but I fear that the divisions that have already emerged between advocates in the United States and the Third World show signs of fragmentation and an unwillingness to submit to one another. If one considers ICA as an example, Peter Wagner and John Kelly are the leaders of ICA and yet many advocates of the NAR Movement in the United States and Third World countries have no relation or affiliation to ICA. If submission on the developmental level of the movement has failed how do the NAR proponents expect the movement to develop on the global stage where there is the voluntary submission of apostles to one another. Could the problem be one of power and prestige? The question that must be pertinent in the minds of these so called apostles is; who is going to have the honour of being the head apostle in the city?

The third problem is the likelihood of the movement becoming a denomination, the very thing it set out to turn around. In order to organize all these networks developing and to give sound advice to these apostolic groups springing up, some form of

organization is necessary. The more organized the movement gets the closer it gets to becoming a denomination, just like it happened to the denominations that developed in the Pentecostal movement. There will inevitably be a need for tighter control over the doctrine and structure of the movement. It is doubtful whether the movement will ever reach the growth figures of the Pentecostal church as its beliefs are too centralized on the emergence of the apostolic office. It has all the signs of developing as one of the denominations in the broader Pentecostal movement, as this was the case with the Latter Rain movement in the 1940's.

4.4 Terminology – New Buzz words

The NAR Movement proponents have also developed their own language, definition of terms and often times redefine the bible adding new concepts in places where there are none. On the ICA FAQ website (2004) Wagner's apostolic government is broken up into two divisions, Vertical and horizontal apostles and each has its own subdivisions.

Vertical Apostles

Ecclesiastical apostles: Apostles who are given authority over a sphere which includes a number of churches, presumably in an apostolic network headed by an apostle

Functional Apostle: Apostles who are given authority over those who have an ongoing ministry in a certain specific sphere of service which has defined boundaries of participation

Apostolic team members: Apostles whose apostolic ministry functions in conjunction with an apostle who is seen as the leader of a team of one or more other peer-level vertical apostles. They may be assigned specific spheres by the leading apostle. These are more than assistants or armour – bearers.

Congregational Apostles: Apostles functioning as senior pastors of dynamic, growing churches of more than 700-800 members.

Horizontal apostles

Convening Apostle: Apostles who have authority to call together on a regular basis peer level leaders who minister in a defined field.

Ambassadorial apostle: Apostles who have itinerant, frequently international ministries of catalysing and nurturing apostolic movements on a broad scale.

Mobilizing apostles: Apostles who have the authority to take leadership in bringing together qualified leaders in the body of Christ for a specific cause or project.

Territorial apostles: Apostles who have been given the authority for leading a certain segment of the body of Christ in a given territorial sphere such as a city or state.

Marketplace apostles: I am not familiar enough with marketplace apostles to suggest sub categories

Can anyone find these divisions terms and interpretations from scripture? Woodroffe (2001:11) has a whole glossary of terms to explain what certain new terms mean. My concern for the ordinary church members are that these terminologies are numerous and not easy to understand. They also have no biblical foundation. The NAR followers like Woodroffe argue that all new movements bring new terminology which is a fact we cannot deny, but the scope of new terms has never been as big as what we experience in the NAR Movement. The Pentecostal, Charismatic and Signs and Wonders movements introduced us to terms such as baptism in the spirit, spiritual dancing and warfare prayer but the amount of new terminology hardly compares with the NAR movement.

4.5 Eschatology in the NAR

Many NAR Movement advocates especially those of the Third World group challenge the literal interpretation of the biblical text, replacing it with an allegorical one. One way some are changing the meaning of scriptures is with the prophecies of the end

times. Instead of a rapture of the church, a spiritual return of the Spirit comes first (the Latter Rain view) without a physical return of Christ. Some promote a coming glory in the church to empower her first. Instead the church then becomes God's government on earth with the people as warriors, judges, and rulers exercising their kingdom authority by supernatural powers to bring in a global kingdom rule. After we get the job done then Jesus will come back they say. The new apostles and prophets are going to lead the church into a new era, the last great revival.

Each generation since the time of Christ's death has had believers who believe they are the last generation. Unfortunately, this means they may listen to extra-biblical theories that would make themselves the ones who would "finish" the job or somehow be more special or loved or blessed than previous generations. Every generation is a special one, because every generation has unbelievers to be evangelized, fellowships to be laboured over, and believers to lead toward maturity in Christ.

Ironically, I have yet to see anyone prophesy that this special group or equippers will rise one hundred years from now when they and their audiences are long gone and dead. Somehow, it is always stated that "now" is the time and "this" is the generation. It is the same in this instance. Nostradamus also predicted the end of the age and so has Hal Lindsay in the not too distant past. Sects who do so only lose credibility if ten or twenty years later their followers discover that nothing has changed as prophesied.

4.6 Conclusion

The length of this paper does not allow me to highlight more areas of concern about the NAR Movement. I am sure as the movement becomes more and more exposed to other Christian groups, more critique will surface. The defining problematic areas in this chapter however, are the foundation of the CGM in the NAR Movement, and the governance structure proposed. Whether the imminent apostles will address the problem of consumer Christianity is not likely, as bigger seems better in the NAR Movement. The more members, the more recognition the apostle will receive, the better his chances of heading the network or even heading the city.

The uncertainty in the area of accountability and the proposed structure of apostles in one city bring up more questions about the movements possibility to thrive. NAR terminology is a defining feature of the movement, but one that might appeal only to a select proportion of followers. The eschatological stance is an area where Pentecostal/charismatic are most likely to feel uncomfortable as the NAR outlook declares that Pentecostals and Charismatics at large were totally wrong in their interpretation of the end time scriptures.

Chapter 5

Conclusion

In concluding this paper I want to mention one final concern about the NAR Movement and that is its claims to be a movement in comparison to the movements of the past century. Not only that, but it dares to proclaim it's the greatest movement since the reformation of the 1600's. The problems arise when one looks at the definition of a movement. The movements of the past century like the Pentecostal revival and the Charismatic revival had a direct origin. There was a historical event to pinpoint the exact birth of these movements. If there was any controversy about the exact date one could be sure that it could more or less be narrowed down to a particular event. With the NAR Movement it is not clear what historical event kick started this movement. In the opening chapter I have highlighted this plight of defining the birth of the movement. Wagner mentions the study on church growth as being the catalyst to drawing his attentions to the development of the NAR.

What is being recorded for historical data? Are the rapid growing churches with new operational procedures going to be the highlight of this movement or will there be something more? If the NAR's prophetic outlook fail to produce the mighty revival it foretells then I am afraid this movement will quickly be forgotten. We will remember the time when a certain small sect of the Christian church called themselves apostles or used the word 'apostolic' in most of their preaching and teaching, but that will be all. It can hardly then be called a movement in the magnitude of the Pentecostal or the Charismatic Revival.

Throughout Chapter 2 and chapter 3 of this paper I have highlighted the gap that has developed between what I called First World and Third World proponents of the NAR Movement. Although these groups are aware of each other there is a tendency for them to move within their own circle of peers. The First World group which includes Peter Wagner, John Kelly and other American preachers have formed the International Coalition of Apostles (ICA) whereas the Third World groups have formed networks that interrelate with each other. This division is obviously not as straight forward as suggested above, because some of the members of the ICA have networks that stretch into the Third World countries. John Elkhart for example has churches in Africa that belong to his network. It is not common however for Third World groups to extend their networks into First World countries. I believe that this is a sign of the power of economics in operation in the NAR Movement. Many Third World countries choose to join networks for the economic benefit that they find in the relationship.

Noel Woodroffe openly speaks of this economic stronghold and he argues that the tide is changing for the Third World churches. However what he prophetically claims will be the case is still not evident today as money still has enormous power in church relationships. It is precisely this grip that the First World has on the Third World that is a major cause of the movement splintering into two major divisions. My research shows that in the Third World, proponents of the NAR Movement are splintering into smaller groups. I noticed a splintering in the area of theology and ideology about what the movement really professes. Although Woodroffe from Trinidad was instrumental in introducing the NAR Movement in SA, major leaders of the NAR Movement like Thamo Naidoo from Pietermaritzburg and Robert Munien from Durban has

withdrawn from Woodroffe's World Breakthrough Network and started their own networks (Naidoo, 2004). This could be because of minor doctrinal differences or maybe it's the old problem of power struggle so inherent in the human spirit. The tendency in the NAR Movement in SA is for each leader to have his group of churches that he relates to or to work together with in annual conferences. This is hardly a positive move towards being as big a reformation as Martin Luther's was in the 1600's.

As the movement develops there is sure to be more exposure and critique to come from both the advocates and the critics. The NAR advocates make claims that they cannot easily substantiate. Claims to return to the Bible are ideological claims that are intended to authenticate the actions and beliefs of the group by laying claim to biblical legitimacy, and every claim is intended to delegitimize other groups

Because of the movement's organization and aggressive promotion, a rapid growth has taken place throughout the world. Wagner and a number of others have expanded their structure to form numerous other subdivisions besides the international Coalition of Apostles. These men and their movement will move into more areas sooner than later and many will be challenged by what they say. As Tillin (2002) said, you either will crumble to their challenge or be prepared to withstand a coup d'etat of your church. Many will accept it because it offers something they all are looking for, growth, and on the surface can make sense, others will resist because they have equipped themselves to know what this is about.

If one reads the materials thoroughly we find that these apostles and prophets will receive from God the “vision” for a City Church. Many of these apostles and prophets see themselves as personal “trainers” or “coaches” for other to be apostles and prophets (David, 1999). But is this the same kind of ministry in Scripture? The end result of the five fold ministry is found in Eph 4:13-15: “till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ; that we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting.” This tossing too and fro is the very thing that many today who claim to be apostles and prophets are doing to the church.

What will be the conclusion of this whole movement, will it end with much more devastation than any shepherding movement ever has, because of its extensive in-reach to the church, or will it disappear as quietly as the Toronto Blessing? But there is even a greater concern if it would accomplish its goals and have many swept along in this age of consumer Christianity.

However as Hollenweger (1972) once said, “In many countries, Pentecostal movements has and is been ignored by opponents on account of its relatively small size. No one can tell whether the Latter Rain movement or the apostolic type of Pentecostal belief may not yet develop into a great revival movement.” Can we say the same of the New Apostolic Reformation movement? We will have to wait and see.

Luke 18:8b “However, when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on the earth?”

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