An Evaluation of 'the Five-Fold Ministry' and 'the Charismatic Restoration'
Mako A. Nagasawa
Last modified: August 4, 2012

The Smaller Question and the Larger Question
The 'five-fold ministry' is a belief held among charismatic Christians that the gifts referred to in Ephesians 4:11 determine the way churches should operate today. Those gifts are: apostle, prophet, evangelist, pastor, and teacher. Many in this camp call themselves 'charismatic restorationists' because they believe God is restoring supernatural gifts and the 'five-fold ministry' to the whole church. Apostles are defined as people who are church planters, movement starters, or missionaries, or alternatively those with special skills at strategic thinking, governance, and leadership of multiple local churches. Prophets are defined as people who exercise supernatural, miraculous gifting and speak a living word from God about the present situation. Both apostles and prophets therefore serve as special resources to multiple congregations and are not tied primarily to a specific local congregation. Pastors are defined as those who do care for a local congregation. Evangelists and teachers also operate mostly at the local level.

The narrative that restorationists tell involves a few key plot elements: the charismatic gifts disappeared at the end of the first century, only to reappear with the charismatic and Pentecostal resurgence of the early 20th century. Restorationists claim that Catholics and Protestants have only had evangelists, pastors, and teachers for most of their histories.

The larger question being asked, however, is about the nature of the church itself. This idea is put forward by those who want to see a more 'fluid' approach to church, where leaders are regional and not tied to a specific local church congregation. The 'five-fold ministry' is a critique of the Roman Catholic model of ministry which emphasizes geographical parish distinctions among the laity and hierarchy within the clergy. It is also a critique of the Protestant 'senior pastor' model of ministry where the senior pastor exercises a great deal of authority in the local congregation, which tends to breed a territorial competition among the laity.

Evaluation
Most critiques that I have read about the 'five-fold ministry' come from the cessationist framework, and many of the proponents of the 'five-fold ministry' in turn seem to be responding to the cessationist position. I find myself not impressed with this dialogue because I am not a cessationist. I am theologically charismatic and I believe that the Holy Spirit continues to deploy the gifts. Furthermore, I have attended a house church from 2005 to the present, and those in house church circles tend to exalt the 'five-fold ministry.' I believe this style of ministry and this concept of leadership have some validity, though not as much as some would like to believe. I also believe that advocates of a more 'fluid' vision of church are onto something very important. Like them, I am quite sympathetic to the critique of the hierarchical tendency of church leadership and the often territorial spirit of church attendance. So I put this forward with hope that it may be received as a critique from within.

Elsewhere, I have written about my understanding of church structure and leadership as it relates to the biblical texts and church history: *A Reflection on Church Structure and Authority* and *Should We All Be One Organization? Organizational Diversity and Relational Unity*.[1] My evaluation here rests on and advances the prior work done in those essays. However, for the sake of brevity, I will sum up my evaluation of the idea of the 'five-fold ministry' and the larger claims being made about the nature of the church.

1. Flaws in the Restorationist Telling of Church History

First, I deeply regret the charismatic restorationist belief that the prophetic gift and what is called the apostolic gift have been absent from the church for the greater part of two thousand years. Anyone familiar with the origins and accomplishments of the missionary monks of the Irish and Nestorian movements, Roman Catholic orders, Eastern Orthodox wise men, the earliest Christian engagement with Islam, the Anabaptist global mission including to slaves caught in the slave trade, and Protestant parachurches in Great Britain and the United States, can see that the prophetic gift and the so-called apostolic gift have actually been operating all along. Take for example the founders and developers of the Benedictine, Franciscan, Dominican, and Jesuit orders within the Roman Catholic Church. How did they accomplish the combination of communal monastic living with scholarship (Benedictines), radical

[1] Both are found at www.nagasawafamily.org/archives_question_church.htm

social justice activities (Franciscans), complex universities and other education programs (Dominicans), exemplary global mission work (Jesuits), and highly successful church renewals, etc. if there were not people with keenly entrepreneurial, movement-starting, strategic abilities, along with the ability to manage others with excellence? Or, to cite a contemporary example, how did a Protestant parachurch organization like WorldVision develop into a remarkable $2.6 billion (as of 2008) organization doing international economic development if not for so-called apostolic gifts that operated largely *outside* of charismatic and Pentecostal streams of ministry? I can list hundreds of examples like this. Yet this fits the description of the so-called 'apostolic gift,' does it not? Or, how did Eastern Orthodox and Roman Catholic wise men and women know how to read souls so accurately that thousands of people from all over the world made pilgrimages to the deserts or high mountains to receive guidance from them? Spiritual directors from all three traditions today have inherited that mantle. Didn't these 'shepherds of souls' use prophetic words of knowledge, words of wisdom, spiritual discernment, and even healings and miracles? And were there not other passionate and powerful preachers who condemned social injustice, who challenged kings, who abolished slavery in Europe during the medieval period, who advocated for the poor? These are all manifestations of the prophetic gift, are they not? When I read Gregory of Nyssa's writings, or John of Damascus' critique of Islam (which set the foundation for the Eastern Orthodox theological engagement with Islam), I cannot help but feel like they had profound measures of the prophetic gift.

Protestants in general tend to take a back-handed attitude towards the medieval church, as if the 'ritualistic and legalistic Roman Catholics and Eastern Orthodox' embody everything that was going wrong with the Church until the Protestant Reformation swept that junk away. In other words, Protestants tend to tell a self-serving narrative. Charismatic restorationists, however, seem to take that negative caricature to a whole new level. How do they completely minimize the gifts and accomplishments of Christians in previous centuries? Some are surely speaking out of complete ignorance. Frank Viola, a long time house church advocate, notes how advocates of the 'five-fold ministry' tend to forget even their own rather dubious beginnings.[2] Viola narrates it as follows: Edward Irving, a Presbyterian minister in Scotland, in 1824 was the first to teach the idea of the five fold ministry. Irving and his followers started the *Catholic Apostolic Church* in 1832. Its chief purpose was to restore the 'five-fold ministry' and 'usher in the Millennial Kingdom of Christ.' Christians were disproportionately focusing on 'end times' and apocalyptic because the revolutionary political climate in Europe created a climate of instability and expectation. The Irving camp believed another prophecy that they would be the last 'apostles' to appear on earth before Christ's return. However, in Germany, the *Catholic Apostolic Church* ordained twelve new apostles and called themselves the *New Apostolic Church*. In 1901, a Congregationalist named John Alexander Dowie founded the *Christian Catholic Church* in 1896 and became its overseer. Dowie and 5,000 followers established a Puritan theocracy (!) in north-east Illinois. In 1904, Dowie proclaimed that he had been commissioned by God to be the 'First Apostle' to fully restore apostolic Christianity, but in 1906, the community began to break down and Dowie died in 1907. Interest in the 'five-fold ministry' rose in 1906 with the Azusa Street Pentecostal revival in Los Angeles, then faded. It rose again in 1948 in North Battlefield, Saskatchewan, Canada, with the so-called *New Order of the Latter Rain* movement which was prophesied to restore 'the five-fold ministry' to prepare for the manifestation of the sons of God on the earth, but interest in the 'five-fold ministry' faded once again. The Charismatic Movement of the 1960's revitalized it, but it then faded again until the 1990's when Peter Wagner led a conference at Fuller Seminary in 1996 entitled the *National Symposium on the Post-Denominational Church*. This conference revitalized interest in a new way of doing church called the *New Apostolic Movement*. In 1999, Wagner sought to organize the movement, calling it the *International Coalition of Apostles* with himself as the 'Presiding Apostle' and claiming to restore the 'five-fold ministry.' Of this 'movement,' Viola writes tellingly that it's a lot easier to change labels than to change the underlying culture and structure: 'Parenthetically, the churches in the new apostolic movement are vanilla charismatic institutional churches replete with the office of modern pastor (now called "apostle"), Sunday sermons, pulpit, pews, church buildings, the 500 year-old order of worship, music led by a worship team, etc.' For Frank Viola – a theologically charismatic proponent of house churches, a widely recognized intellectual leader in those circles, and an advocate of a qualified sense of the 'five-fold ministry' – to give this rather unflattering correction to the typical story told by charismatic restorationists about themselves is highly significant.[3]

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[2] The following history is found in Frank Viola, *Rethinking the Five-Fold Ministry*, Present Testimony Ministry, 2005; see www.ptmin.org/fivefold.htm.

[3] In addition, rarely do I hear charismatic and Pentecostal restorationists acknowledge the various outbreaks of ecstatic movements in Christian history, such as the Montanist heresy, which lasted from the second to the eighth century, the ecstatic experiences of various medieval saints like Francis of Assisi and Teresa of Avila, the Anastenaria dancers of the Greek and Bulgarian Orthodox Churches which started in the medieval period and continues to today, and ecstatic Quakerism, which was present at the beginning of American Quaker services.

But forgetfulness is only the superficial problem. More significantly, restorationists apparently do not consider Catholic orders and Protestant parachurches to be a full part of the Church and its mission. This is the deeper problem. They think of the Church as made up of a bunch of 'local congregations.' In this, I believe they are falling into a classic Protestant mistake of trying to fit all meaningful ministries into the structure of 'the local church.' Because the so-called apostolic gift and the prophetic gift have not always been visible within Catholic parishes or Protestant 'local churches,' but were present in other forms of Christian organization, they simply don't see the evidence. This moves me to my next point.

2. Flawed Understanding of the Church and the Mission

Second, charismatic restorationists are still largely operating out of a particular vision of ministry flowing out from 'local churches.' Hence they primarily talk about gifts as operating in the context of the local church. They speak of the so-called apostolic gift in terms of planting 'local churches,' or the prophetic gift operating mostly during Sunday services of a 'local church.' I believe that while this is important, it is a fundamental oversimplification of what the larger Church truly is and is called to do. Consider the following examples: When Gary Haugen founded International Justice Mission so lawyers could fight sex trafficking internationally, or when Chris Dearnley and John Sage founded Pura Vida Coffee to put business to work for South America's poor, were these not apostolic, and somewhat prophetic, initiatives? When Christian psychologists try to carefully integrate knowledge of humanity from the Scriptures and from their secular field, to offer fresh ways of doing Christ-centered counseling, does that not take incredible spiritual discernment and time-consuming mental labor akin to prophetic prayerfulness? Are these initiatives somehow lesser works of the Church compared to the establishment of 'local churches'?

We must think of gifts operating ultimately in the context of the world, not just the 'local church.' And when we do that, then I think we will find that we must take up multiple kinds of organization to accomplish the fundamental task Jesus has given us: to make disciples who live out all that Jesus taught, including defending the poor and the weak in multiple ways, who are calling others to Jesus not just in our existing friendship circles but in workplaces and classrooms, and are making disciples of people in context-specific ways. In essence, I don't think that charismatic restorationists, for all their enthusiasm at 'having rediscovered a lost truth,' have connected their ideas of leadership and the life of the congregation to the largest and most vital questions the larger Church has always faced, some of which have been with us from the beginning: Isn't tithing to your local church an ethical problem in a world of increasing mass urban poverty and wealth disparity (2 Corinthians 8 – 9)? How do multi-ethnic and multi-cultural factors in Christian mission translate into the life of an organization and/or a community (Acts 6, Galatians, Romans, Ephesians)? How do you raise up and evaluate leaders, and especially hire and fire paid staff? How do you run a Christian organization with excellence in following Jesus' mission, including setting up systems for performance management and making smart financial decisions? How do we deal with the challenges posed by urban mobility, economic labor shifts, gentrification, and forced migrations where congregations are much more transient and often contain socio-economic disparities that cause tension within the congregation (James)? What is the relationship between local churches and parachurches? How do we have partnership across multiple ministry organizations? What is the relationship between churches and seminaries? How can we organize and empower Christians in secular fields or in settings dominated by people of other religions, i.e. in the true mission field itself? How can the church, through partnerships, live out the responsibilities of being a transnational peace-making community in a world torn by national conflicts? What is the proper Christian use of institutional power in the face of sex slavery and human trafficking and other forms of incredible human vulnerability? Do we exercise a political role? In all these questions, we must train up Christians to be leaders not just for 'local churches' – although again, that has its place – but for multiple capacities in the world.

3. Flawed Exegesis

Third, as someone who has stood within the 'house church' stream of ministry, and the charismatic camp theologically, I am rather embarrassed at the low level of intellectual responsibility taken by charismatic 'five-fold ministry' restorationists before they put these assertions forward. The biblical exegesis is often quite bad. The key points are as follows:

Apostles

Restorationists call 'apostleship' an ongoing ministry. Paul said he was the last apostle (1 Cor.15:8) but restorationists take that to mean that Paul had simply been the last apostle only up to that point, and that Jesus was not precluding himself from appointing other apostles. Restorationists also hold that the 'five-fold ministry' must continue for the church to function properly. They argue that all five gifts must be currently operating in living people since Paul says that this must continue 'until we all attain to the unity of the faith' (Eph.4:13). They believe that this amounts to saying that the 'five-fold ministry' must continue 'until we all attain to the unity of the faith.'

The definition of an apostle in the New Testament is an *eyewitness* of Jesus' resurrection. This criterion of apostleship is found throughout the New Testament. Jesus commissioned his apostles with the phrase, 'You are *witnesses* of these things' (Lk.24:48), with the phrase 'these things' referring to the life, teaching, death, and resurrection of Jesus along with his commissioning them to the world to call for repentance for forgiveness of sins (Lk.24:44 – 48). At his ascension, Jesus reissued his commission to witness about him to the world: 'You will be my *witnesses*' (Acts 1:8). When the eleven apostles in Acts 1 sought a twelfth to replace Judas Iscariot, their criterion was that the individual have been an *eyewitness* of all the events they had also seen: 'Therefore it is necessary that of the men *who have accompanied us all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us – beginning with the baptism of John until the day that he was taken up from us* – one of these must become a witness with us of his resurrection' (Acts 1:21 – 22; cf.5:32). Peter also says, significantly, that he is an *eyewitness* of Jesus' resurrection along with events like the transfiguration (2 Pet.1:15), unlike the false teachers who had not been eyewitnesses. In 1 Corinthians, in response to those who suspect that Paul is not a true apostle ('if to others I am not an apostle,' in 1 Cor.9:2), Paul says that his encounter with the resurrected Jesus constitutes him as an apostle: 'Am I not an apostle? *Have I not seen Jesus our Lord?*'

This experience of being an eyewitness to Jesus' resurrection is vital to the definition of 'apostleship' and cannot be dismissed. In 1 Corinthians, Paul quotes what many biblical scholars believe is an early Christian creed circulated everywhere the gospel was proclaimed. It deals not only with the fact of Jesus' resurrection, but also how we know such a remarkable thing – through his eyewitnesses: 'For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received, [i.e. this creed:] that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried, and that He was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures, and that He appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve. After that He appeared to more than five hundred brethren at one time, most of whom remain until now, but some have fallen asleep; then He appeared to James, then to all the apostles [and adding to the creed] and last of all, as to one untimely born, He appeared to me also' (1 Cor.15:3 – 8). So when Paul refers to himself as the 'last' apostle, he is not simply referring to 'up until that point.' He is referring to a one-off event placed beside other one-off events. To substantiate this point, consider: Why does Paul not suggest to the Corinthians that they desire or ask for the gift of apostleship? He tells them to desire the greater gifts, but for the Corinthians, the gift of prophecy seems to be the highest gift available to them (1 Cor.14:1). Why not apostleship? Perhaps because the very basis for being an apostle was not available to them. Having a direct physical encounter with the risen Jesus – physically, not just in a vision or dream – constitutes that person to be an apostle, an eyewitness of his physical, bodily resurrection; therefore the number of apostles is closed. Even more telling is the fact that the Corinthians had had all kinds of spiritual experiences, and wanted them, but Paul does not suggest they desire or ask for the gift of apostleship because the basis for that commission – an encounter with the resurrected Lord himself – was no longer available.

On one occasion, Paul calls Silvanus and Timothy 'apostles of Christ' along with himself (1 Thess.2:6; cf.1:1), but Silvanus may have been part of the original five hundred, and Timothy, whose mother and grandmother introduced him to Christian faith (2 Tim.1:5), is being grouped into the category by virtue of his working association with Paul. Otherwise, all the other people in the New Testament outside of the Twelve identified as apostles are of this group of five hundred: Barnabas (Acts 14:14), Andronicus and Junia (Rom.16:7), and Epaphroditus (2 Cor.8:3).

The way 2 Peter and Jude refer to the apostles is very significant for our purposes. Peter, writing because he believed his death would be soon (2 Pet.1:13 – 14), exhorts his readers to avoid false teaching by recalling the *past teaching* of the apostles. Peter writes, 'This is now, beloved, the second letter I am writing to you in which I am *stirring up your sincere mind by way of reminder*, that you should *remember* the words spoken beforehand by the holy prophets *and the commandment of the Lord and Savior spoken by your apostles*' (2 Pet.3:1 – 2). He puts the Old Testament 'holy prophets' and the 'apostles' on at least the same level, although the apostles might be regarded as being higher because they spoke 'the commandment of the Lord and Savior.' Notice that Peter does not say, 'Listen to the apostles who are alive today.' He says, 'Remember what we, the apostles, have said.' Similarly, Jude seeks to remind his readers of a past deposit of knowledge that was given to them by the apostles. He wants them to

'contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all handed down to the saints' (Jude 3), which came by the apostles: 'But you, beloved, ought to *remember the words that were spoken beforehand by the apostles* of our Lord Jesus Christ' (Jude 17). They tell their audiences to remember the things that were said by past apostles, not to listen to current apostles.

It is significant that the apostles do not appoint new apostles, but 'elders' and 'deacons' (1 Tim. 3; Ti.1). Luke records the apostles' practice of appointing 'elders' for local Christian communities: 'When they had appointed elders for them in every church, having prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord in whom they had believed' (Acts 14:23). This does not preclude them appointing more 'apostles' but no evidence for it exists. On the other hand, many scattered references to 'elders' exist (Acts 15:1 – 4; 15:22 – 23; 16:4; 20:17; 1 Pet.5:1 – 5; Heb.13:17; 1 Th.5:12 – 13). The main role of the 'elders,' naturally, is to pass on the teaching (1 Tim.3:2; 5:17).

Thus, the apostles certainly continue to have an impact, not because there are apostles alive today, but because they were the first eyewitnesses and the bearers of Jesus' word to us. The church continues to have Christ as its cornerstone and the 'apostles and prophets' as its 'foundation' (Eph.2:20), and now the whole structure continues to grow *based on their teaching and eyewitness accounts*. Since Jesus wrote nothing, the truth from Jesus which the apostles have bequeathed to us is our 'foundation.' This is why there are repeated reminders to 'abide' in Jesus' word which was given to us by the apostles (Jn.8:31; 15:7; 1 Jn.2:24 – 25), or equivalently, to hold onto 'the tradition' we received from the apostles (2 Thess.3:6), or to 'retain the standard of sound words which you have heard' from the apostles (2 Tim.1:13). Luke wanted to make a consolidated account from 'eyewitnesses and servants of the word,' by which he can only mean the apostles, who have 'handed down to us' 'an account of the things fulfilled among us' (Lk.1:1 – 2). The apostles played a vital, irreplaceable role, but all the language of the New Testament indicates that they were the only eyewitnesses of Jesus and that they would not continue to be among the living. Hence, restorationists are making an unwarranted conclusion by reading Ephesians 4:11 and saying that there must be apostles alive today.

Restorationists also ignore the patristic evidence which shows that the earliest Christians outside the New Testament period understood that 'the apostles' were a limited group of people who had all died or been martyred without leaving new or ongoing 'apostles.' Four early Christian writings are worth considering here. The *Didache* is the common name for a document called *The Teaching [Didache] of the Twelve Apostles*. It is a condensed version of various teachings found elsewhere in the New Testament. Most scholars take the internal data within this document to reflect a very early date, somewhere in the first century. By the year 100, the *Didache* had been widely disseminated and became increasingly important in the second and third Christian centuries because it contained information about three practical subjects: Christian lessons (*Didache* 1 – 6), rituals such as baptism, fasting, prayer, and the eucharist (*Didache* 7 – 10), and church organization (*Didache* 11 – 16). *Didache* chapter 11 refers to apostles and prophets itinerating through various churches, but this does not necessarily mean apostles were an ongoing group within the church. Rather, this instruction (again, if this is historically trustworthy as a Christian document) reflects a time when apostles were expected to stay less than 'three days' in any one place, lest he be considered 'a false prophet' (*Didache* 11:5). As for the second generation of Christian leaders, in chapter 15, there are instructions to 'appoint for yourselves elders and deacons' just as Paul wrote in 1 Timothy and Titus. The Didache does not give us conclusive evidence about how the term 'apostle' is defined, but I do note that it agrees with the New Testament pattern of leadership that apostles handed leadership to elders and deacons. There is no written expectation that the apostles would raise up other apostles.

The Epistle of Clement of Rome to the Corinthians does give us more evidence, however. This epistle was sent from the Roman Christians to the Corinthian Christians, and is attached to the name of Clement either because Clement was the leading elder (Catholic tradition calls him the Pope at that time) or simply one of the elders. The letter says in about the year 97 AD, 'The greatest and most righteous pillars [of the Church] have been persecuted and put to death. Let us set before our eyes the illustrious apostles. Peter…Paul…' (*1 Clement* 5). He also refers to the apostles in the past tense in another place: 'The apostles have preached the Gospel to us from the Lord Jesus Christ; Jesus Christ [has done so] from God. Christ therefore was sent forth by God, and the apostles by Christ. Both these appointments, then, were made in an orderly way, according to the will of God. Having therefore received their orders, and being fully assured by the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ, and established in the word of God, with full assurance of the Holy Ghost, they went forth proclaiming that the kingdom of God was at hand. And thus preaching through countries and cities, they appointed the first-fruits [of their labours], having first proved them by the Spirit, to be bishops and deacons of those who should afterwards believe. Nor was this any new thing, since

indeed many ages before it was written concerning bishops and deacons. For thus saith the Scripture in a certain place, 'I will appoint their bishops in righteousness, and their deacons in faith.'' (*1 Clement* 42). This is the first time the term 'bishop' appears. While questions may be asked about that, we find that the agreement in these documents about the transition of leadership from apostles to bishops or elders is remarkable.

Ignatius's letters also give us historical insight into how the early Christians thought about the term 'apostle.' Ignatius was the third bishop of Antioch and a student of John the apostle. On his way to being tried and martyred in Rome in 108 AD, he wrote letters to churches and another Christian bishop named Polycarp, encouraging them to not intervene on his behalf, and also to maintain Christian unity. In his *Epistle to the Romans*, he makes a sharp distinction between himself and the apostles Peter and Paul as it relates to his authority: 'I do not, as Peter and Paul, issue commandments unto you. They were apostles; I am but a condemned man: they were free, while I am, even until now, a servant' (*Epistle of Ignatius to the Romans*, chapter 4). Once again, it is significant that he does not compare himself to any apostles alive during his time. Though this is an argument from silence in some sense, because we are dealing with matters of authority and how Ignatius could best construct an effective analogy, the silence is telling. He does not compare himself to any apostles in existence in his time. If apostles had been a continuing group, he would have been able to refer to them as such. Likewise, in his *Epistle to the Trallians,* Ignatius makes a series of analogies to make a case for the bishop and the elders. He likens the bishop to Christ and the elders to the apostles: 'For, since you are subject to the bishop as to Jesus Christ…And be subject also to the presbytery, as to the apostles of Jesus Christ' (*Epistle of Ignatius to the Trallians*, chapter 2 – 3). This analogy also requires the apostles to not be a living group of people present at the time of Ignatius' writing because being subject to living apostles at the same time that one is trying to be subject to elders ('the presbytery') in the same way creates a problem of priority that would undermine the effectiveness of the admonition itself. The analogy simply makes more sense if both 'Jesus' and 'the apostles' serve as foundational reference points who are not physically present, but whose ongoing authority is felt.

Finally, the *Epistle to Diognetus* is probably the earliest example of Christian evangelistic writing. It appears to be addressed to a non-Christian, though we do not know who Diognetus addressed in the first verse was, and is a persuasive argument meant to inspire belief. Dated sometime between 130 AD and the end of the second century, the *Epistle to Diognetus* makes a significant remark about apostles. It says in chapter 11, 'I do not speak of things strange to me, nor do I aim at anything inconsistent with right reason; but having been a disciple of the Apostles, I am become a teacher of the Gentiles.' By itself, this statement would not tell us anything conclusively about whether apostles were a past or contemporary group relative to the author of the letter. However, later in the same chapter, the author speaks of apostles as unique eyewitnesses to Jesus: 'For which reason He sent the Word, that He might be manifested to the world; and He, being despised by the people [of the Jews], was, when preached by the Apostles, believed on by the Gentiles…Then the fear of the law is chanted, and the grace of the prophets is known, and the faith of the gospels is established, and the tradition of the Apostles is preserved, and the grace of the Church exults' (*Epistle to Diognetus* chapter 11). The apostles, to this author, were a group no longer physically alive and present. Their *tradition* is preserved, but the author takes for granted they are no longer alive.

The historical evidence of the early Christian writings is valuable to my point. No one defined 'apostle' as an ongoing gifting or role. Had they defined it that way and then observed that fewer Christians were filling it, the restorationists would have a much stronger case that the term 'apostle' was at any point meant that way. However, *no one* corroborates that position. Therefore, the restorationists' narrative, that at one time the term 'apostle' was understood by the New Testament authors as an ongoing group present in the church, is without any support, both exegetically and historically.

At the very least, this requires us to distinguish true 'Apostles' with a capital 'A' when we want to speak of the original eyewitnesses to Jesus, and 'apostles' with a lowercase 'a' when we want to speak of a 'church planter' or 'missionary' or 'movement starter' or 'one who governs well' or 'strategist.' My preference, however, is to be consistent with the biblical and patristic semantic decision to refer to apostles as a closed group of eyewitnesses hand-picked by Jesus, and to use those other words to say what we mean.

In my opinion, with the exception of the 'missionary' where the gift of evangelism is obviously involved, those strengths are different flavors of the gift of 'leadership' of Romans 12:8 and/or 'administration' in 1 Corinthians 12:28, without the connotations of bureaucracy we might associate with the word 'administration,' because in what sense was the New Testament church or early church bureaucratic? It simply wasn't. So while the gift might adjust

to deal with the question of scale, it must refer originally and most deeply to something else about leadership: the development of people and programs, and pastoral care. I am not worried that 'movement starter' or 'strategist,' etc. do not appear in the New Testament lists of spiritual gifts because there are various ways to handle this. In 1 Corinthians, Paul appears to be describing *categories* of gifts, as he suggests that there are various 'gifts,' in the plural sense, of 'healings, helps, and administrations.' In other words, there are different *types* of gifts of healing, gifts of helps, and gift of administrations. So I suspect he would be happy for us to try to label certain gifts more precisely. Furthermore, I do not think any of the lists of spiritual gifts (in Eph.4:11; Rom.12:3 – 8; 1 Cor.12 – 14, and 1 Pet.4:10 – 11) are exhaustive, nor do I sense that Paul or Peter want to be exhaustive. What seems to matter to him is whether the person can say, 'Jesus is Lord,' and demonstrate the conviction of the Holy Spirit (1 Cor.12:3). So I am much happier identifying gifts of 'church planter,' 'missionary,' 'movement starter,' 'manager,' 'strategist,' and so on.

I do firmly believe these other gifts tend to have a de-stabilizing effect on the life of a 'local church' for the sake of larger kingdom expansion. They pull talented people away from formal roles in the 'local church.' They draw money away from the local church; Protestant parachurches alone have budgets that are much larger than the typical local church. They create complex relationships where people work for a Christian supervisor in an organization outside of the direct purview of a pastor. Yet I believe these gifts must be awakened and deployed, and in that I stand in agreement with the charismatic restorationists. However, I suspect that restorationists claim the biblical label 'apostle' in an attempt to carve out a role that can compete with the pastor or priest of the traditional parish or 'local church.' After all, what title carries such strong connotations of authority, credibility, and significance? My conviction, however, is that the term 'apostle' cannot be used in this way.

Prophets
Concerning the gift of prophecy, I have no real quarrel with the restorationists, but with the cessationists, because I believe the gift still exists today. How it is used and how one develops it in Christian community might be areas where I have more concern, but those are subjects that go beyond any simple exegesis of Ephesians 4:11 or even 1 Corinthians 14.

Evangelists, Pastors and Teachers
Some divide 'pastor' and 'teacher' into separate gifts (or 'offices') based on the English translation of Ephesians 4, whereas the original Greek strongly suggests that they were meant to be held together as one. The verse reads literally, 'He gave some as apostles, some as prophets, some as evangelists, and some as pastors and teachers.' The phrase 'some as' does not occur before the word 'teachers.' That suggests that 'pastors and teachers' were meant to be held together and understood as one gift. That would logically make more sense because pastors teach and teachers pastor. There is no division between truth and life, as truth must be embodied by us, and people must be developed into Christ-likeness.

In addition, many restorationists reason poorly when they try to describe the spiritual gifts. The gifts themselves are discussed in rather one-dimensional ways, especially where 'the evangelist' is separated off from other people as the main one reaching non-Christians, rather than holding up Christian evangelistic mission as everyone's responsibility to a greater degree. This last point is especially troubling.

I do not believe 'the evangelist' simply 'does evangelism' while 'the teacher' 'teaches the converts' and 'the pastor' 'pastors Christians and walks with them.' This way of subdividing responsibilities – which is how many enthusiasts describe it – for instance, Wolfgang Simson in *Houses That Change the World* – is an astonishingly shallow understanding about what spiritual gifts are and how we develop them. It would, in fact, require a pastor-teacher, for example, to ignore the developmental framework embedded in each New Testament book for all believers: Jesus' mission. Each Gospel ends with a 'Great Commission' mandate for the disciples to go out into the world. Therefore, we must read the Gospels as Jesus training *all* his disciples for his global mission, not just his original apostles, and not just select individuals in 'a local church.' The fact that Matthew's Gospel, in particular, is structured the way it is – as a manual for discipling others – supports this claim. The same is true as we read Paul's letters: Paul was not simply a 'pastor' as we might think about it. He was especially not an 'ivory tower theologian.' He was first and foremost a cross-cultural missionary as his apostleship demanded, and his letters remind us all to keep Jesus' evangelistic mission to all humanity uppermost in our minds. From an exegetical and conceptual standpoint, discussion about Jesus' mission comes before, during, and after any discussion about spiritual gifts.

To translate this into concrete terms, what I have found in campus ministry and in urban ministry is that I need to do evangelism with younger or less experienced Christians. They need to observe me talking to non-Christians, and I them. We debrief the experience afterwards, talking about where they might have felt stuck, or why I took a certain conversational path. This helps them understand how to engage non-Christians (just as Jesus gathered disciples and immediately brought them into the evangelistic action with him in Matthew 4:12 – 25). As part of their ongoing development, we talk about the role of Christian community witness (you are salt and light) and individual character issues like anger, conflict resolution, lust, integrity, sacrifice, prayer and other spiritual disciplines, materialism, and judgmentalism (all conveniently addressed by Jesus in Matthew 5 – 7), for the sake of relating to more non-Christians, not just Christians. We talk about the uniqueness of Jesus and his Spirit as God's solution to evil that has corrupted our human nature (especially shown in the baptism and wilderness temptation of Jesus in Matthew 3 – 4, the narrow gate of Matthew 7 and the power of Jesus' word in Matthew 8 – 9). As they become the answer to their own prayers for God to work in the lives of people they care about (as the disciples pray for more laborers in the harvest, and then are sent on a short term mission to Israel in Matthew 10), they learn to engage other religions, worldviews, and lived stories (part of the emphasis of Matthew 11 – 13). They learn to relate the questions raised by our culture(s) more deeply to Jesus. They have more robust conversations with more and more non-Christians about evil and our complicity in it, our desire to live in a happy ending story where good triumphs over evil, distinctively Christian social justice, sexuality, race and culture, politics, etc. They learn to develop other Christians themselves. They see the body of Christ as much larger and more complex than they did before, especially along the lines of ethnicity, culture, and mission. They learn more about people and culture (anthropology, sociology), history, literature, and language – not just the biblical text or their own spiritual gifts – as part of growing into Jesus' mission to the world (just as Jesus took his Jewish disciples back and forth across the Sea of Galilee to minister to Gentiles in Matthew 14 – 18). We talk about how to use power and wealth in ways that help us grow into the radical teachings of Jesus, for the sake of reaching more non-Christians and bearing witness to Jesus that in him God is offering us a new humanity that helps us struggle with our own evil (part of the emphasis of Matthew 19 – 25). This does not all happen sequentially all the time, and it is not just in reference to Matthew's Gospel, but I do have a general list of topics I want to talk about and activities I want to do with Christians and non-Christians; I have used Matthew's Gospel here for simplicity's and clarity's sake.

Yet people who define themselves as 'pastoral,' since they focus mostly on Christian relationships and working on them, will tend to develop Christians into good members of 'Christian community' – a community that feels 'safe' at the expense of the dynamic instability that comes as a result of Jesus' call for us to engage the world. This results in an inward-focused community that cares more about itself than about non-Christians. 'Leadership development' tends to be defined as 'training younger Christians to take on more formal leadership roles in the local church,' even if those roles are not mission-oriented and outward-oriented, and even if those people are resistant to God launching them into unexpected opportunities with non-Christians that go beyond their 'formal role,' as we see that God did with deacons like Stephen in Acts 6. Moreover, most people who have attempted Christian ministry of some sort knows that we all have a way of looking at younger Christians in order to encourage them to grow spiritually. We have a 'next step' in mind for them. But where does that intuition come from? Probably our own limited experience. So if our development has never been framed in the largest possible frame, i.e. Jesus' mission to the world, then any pastoral development of other people that we do is necessarily incomplete, and is likely to produce Christian disciples who are more self-focused than mission-focused.

Thus, I don't think Paul would be happy for us to make 'neat divisions' between these gifts, especially when we make concrete job descriptions for formal positions. Evangelistic mission must be integrated into everything, especially into the role of the more traditional pastor-teacher. *If pastor-teachers are not constantly learning how to engage non-Christians themselves, they will lead Christians away from Jesus' mission, and train the church into incompetence.* To use rather unsavory language, they will attract and encourage 'free riders' and 'dead weight' in the Christian community. Brutal honesty, as well as a more systematic approach to the New Testament, yields the conclusion that evangelistic mission is to be integrated into everything the church is and does, and integrated into who each Christian leader is, and who each Christian individually is. Leaders, if they are following the development pattern of the Gospels, and the New Testament in general, must develop Christians into Jesus' global mission *starting from their conversion and perhaps even prior to that*. This posture might be the factor that best keeps the body of Christ more dependent on the Spirit of God, fluid, dynamic, less territorial, less possessive of its people, and more focused on the task Jesus gave us rather than our own self-maintenance and traditional structures. Every Christian is called by Jesus to develop a baseline competency in certain skills – like engaging non-Christians,

passing on Jesus' teaching, expressing truth about the person and work of Jesus, integrating one's will and choices into a pattern of spiritual growth, finding their identity and significance in Christ and his mission and not in a particular 'local church' or role therein, etc. – related to expressing the mission of Jesus in their particular context. Only after walking in that baseline ministry competence, in my opinion, do spiritual gifts begin to reliably emerge in individual Christians.

Offices and Gifts

Some restorationists make a distinction between the 'office' of apostle or prophet or evangelist or pastor or teacher, and the 'gift' corresponding to it. If I am not mistaken, the practical import of this distinction is relatively simple: the difference is one of frequency and intensity. For example, restorationists believe that someone in the office of prophet gives prophecies far more often than someone who has the gift of prophecy, and feels the urge or impact to do it more intensely. The same could be said of the other 'offices' which are apparently rooted in the more intense experience of the underlying 'gift.'

This distinction is sometimes said to rest on a subtle semantic move made by New Testament authors to describe a person with a label ('prophet') as opposed to describing that person as possessing a gift ('prophecy'). It is true that some people are described by a label or title. Outside of 'apostle,' for example, the people so named are: a group of 'prophets' from Antioch including Agabus (Acts 11:27); 'prophets and teachers' in Antioch like Barnabus, Simeon, Lucius of Cyrene, Manaen, and Saul (Acts 13:1); Judas and Silas are called 'prophets' (Acts 15:32); Philip is called 'the evangelist' (Acts 21:8); and the four daughters of Philip were called 'prophetesses' (Acts 21:9). But was this simply the noun form of the person who has the gift – not necessarily a more intense or effective version of the gift, but simply the gift itself? A person who has the gift of teaching is a teacher. A person who has the gift of prophecy is a prophet. A person who has the gift of evangelism is an evangelist. Is there another passage that would come to our aid?

There is: in 1 Corinthians 12:28 – 31, Paul says,

> 1 Cor.12:28 And God has appointed in the church, first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, administrations, various kinds of tongues. 29 All are not apostles, are they? All are not prophets, are they? All are not teachers, are they? All are not workers of miracles, are they? 30 All do not have gifts of healings, do they? All do not speak with tongues, do they? All do not interpret, do they? 31 But earnestly desire the greater gifts.

In this passage, I notice first that Paul jumbles the two different types of languages quite happily. He describes some people with labels (apostles, prophets, teachers, miracle-workers) and then describes other 'gifts' (healings, helps, administrations, various kinds of tongues).[4]

Next, I notice that Paul never refers to 'offices' as a category in his thinking. He refers in 12:31 to the 'greater gifts,' but not the 'greater offices.' After a discourse on Christian love (13:1 – 13), he returns to the topic of what those 'greater gifts' are, and he describes the 'gift of prophecy' as compared with the 'gift of tongues' (14:1 – 40).

> 1 Cor.14:1 Pursue love, yet desire earnestly spiritual gifts, but especially that you may *prophesy*. 2 For *one who speaks in a tongue* does not speak to men but to God; for no one understands, but in his spirit he speaks mysteries. 3 But *one who prophesies* speaks to men for edification and exhortation and consolation. 4 *One who speaks in a tongue* edifies himself; but *one who prophesies* edifies the church. 5 Now I wish that you

[4] I also notice that this list has a different composition than the list in Ephesians 4:11. In Ephesians, the evangelist came before the pastor-teacher. Whether this reflects a kind of chronological priority (non-Christians need to become Christians in order to be developed pastorally in Christian truth, therefore evangelism must logically come before pastoring and teaching) or something else, I am not certain, but I find it curious that the list in Corinthians lacks 'evangelist.' In Romans 12, Paul lists spiritual gifts once again, and the list has a different composition. One can see that the fairly significant gift of 'evangelist' is missing again in Romans 12. 'Miracles' found in 1 Corinthians 12:28 is not found in Romans or Ephesians. The same is true for 'healings, helps, administrations, various kinds of tongues,' and 'interpretation of tongues.' 'Service' in Romans 12:7 might be the larger category to which 'helps' and 'administrations' belong, as a comparison with 1 Peter 4:11 suggests. 'Giving,' 'exhortation' and 'mercy' found in Romans 12:8 are not found in 1 Corinthians or Ephesians. This leads me to the rather straightforward conclusion that there is no 'master list' of spiritual gifts. At no point does Paul or Peter try to present an exhaustive, once-for-all list of what the Spirit's gifts are. This makes me conclude that in no letter does Paul present an exhaustive list of the Spirit's gifts.

> all *spoke in tongues*, but even more that you would *prophesy*; and greater is *one who prophesies* than *one who speaks in tongues*, unless he interprets, so that the church may receive edifying…

Then after repeatedly using the term 'one who prophesies,' Paul switches back to using the noun form of the person, the 'prophet.' But he does so in a way that makes it fairly clear that he is simply talking about 'one who prophesies,' for just as he has done throughout this passage, he compares prophetic-speech with tongues-speech:

> [27] If anyone *speaks in a tongue*, it should be by two or at the most three, and each in turn, and one must interpret; [28] but if there is no interpreter, he must keep silent in the church; and let him speak to himself and to God. [29] Let two or three *prophets speak*, and let the others pass judgment. [30] But if a revelation is made to another who is seated, the first one must keep silent. [31] For *you can all prophesy one by one*, so that all may learn and all may be exhorted; [32] and the spirits of *prophets* are subject to *prophets*; [33] for God is not a God of confusion but of peace, as in all the churches of the saints… [37] If anyone thinks he is a *prophet* or spiritual, let him recognize that the things which I write to you are the Lord's commandment. [38] But if anyone does not recognize this, he is not recognized. [39] Therefore, my brethren, desire earnestly *to prophesy*, and do not forbid *to speak in tongues*. [40] But all things must be done properly and in an orderly manner.

At no point in this discussion does Paul seek to clarify that the noun form 'prophet' is anything higher or more intense than 'a person with the gift of prophecy.' He does not speak of an office of 'speaker of tongues,' probably because there is no such thing, and because there is no noun form for the person who has the gift of tongues, whereas there just happens to be a noun form 'prophet' for the 'one who prophesies.'

Finally, if the New Testament church and early patristic church regarded 'offices' in this manner, there is no written evidence that they left. The only role-related responsibilities that seem like 'offices' are 'elder' and 'deacon,' as I discussed above. So I am left to conclude that the restorationists are being overly subtle. There is no distinction between 'office' and 'gift,' especially as it relates to intensity or frequency of how that gift is used. A 'prophet' is simply 'one who prophecies.' An 'evangelist' is simply 'one who evangelizes.' A 'pastor-teacher' is simply 'one who pastors and teaches.'

The Ascension Gifts

Some restorationists elevate Ephesians 4 above 1 Corinthians 12 – 14 and Romans 12, calling the gifts of Ephesians 4:11 the 'ascension gifts.' The basis for this lies in the reference to Jesus' ascension in the immediate context of Ephesians 4:11. Paul says:

> Eph.4:7 But to each one of us grace was given according to the measure of Christ's gift. [8] Therefore it says, 'When He ascended on high, He led captive a host of captives,' and he gave gifts to men. [9] (Now this expression, 'He ascended,' what does it mean except that He also had descended into the lower parts of the earth? [10] He who descended is Himself also He who ascended far above all the heavens, so that He might fill all things.) [11] And He gave some as apostles, and some as prophets, and some as evangelists, and some as pastors and teachers, [12] for the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ; [13] until we all attain to the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a mature man, to the measure of the stature which belongs to the fullness of Christ.

I find this nomenclature strange because in fact all the spiritual gifts flow out of Jesus' ascension. This is why Paul says that the Holy Spirit will move genuine Christians to say, 'Jesus is Lord' (1 Cor.12:3), reflecting the reality of Jesus' ascension. It may be that these gifts in Ephesians 4:11, all of which have to do with speaking, are particularly important in verbal proclamation to the world and spiritual formation of the Christian community as we engage with Jesus' mission. As Paul says in 1 Corinthians 12 – 14, there are 'greater gifts' that have to do with edification of the body. But to call them 'ascension gifts' – as if all the other gifts are not also 'ascension gifts' – is denigrating to the other gifts and exegetically unsound.

Like the restorationists, I would tend to elevate the gifts listed in Ephesians 4 above the others, but I do so for what I think is a different reason. In 1 Corinthians 12:31 and 14:1, Paul tells us to 'earnestly desire the greater gifts…especially that you may prophesy.' He seems to do this because of his emphasis on the edification of the body:

[14:3] But one who prophesies speaks to men for *edification* and exhortation and consolation. [4] One who speaks in a tongue *edifies himself*; but one who prophesies *edifies the church*. [5] Now I wish that you all spoke in tongues, but even more that you would prophesy; and greater is one who prophesies than one who speaks in tongues, unless he interprets, so that the church may receive *edifying*. [6] But now, brethren, if I come to you speaking in tongues, what will I *profit* you unless I speak to you either by way of revelation or of knowledge or of prophecy or of teaching?...[12] So also you, since you are zealous of spiritual gifts, seek to abound for the *edification of the church*. [13] Therefore let one who speaks in a tongue pray that he may interpret. [14] For if I pray in a tongue, my spirit prays, but my *mind is unfruitful*. [15] What is the outcome then? I will pray with the spirit and I will pray with the *mind* also; I will sing with the spirit and I will sing with the *mind* also. [16] Otherwise if you bless in the spirit only, how will the one who fills the place of the ungifted say the 'Amen' at your giving of thanks, since he does not know what you are saying? [17] For you are giving thanks well enough, but the other person is not *edified*. [18] I thank God, I speak in tongues more than you all; [19] however, in the church I desire to speak five words with my mind so that I may *instruct others* also, rather than ten thousand words in a tongue… [26] Let all things be done for *edification*… [31] For you can all prophesy one by one, so that all may learn and all may be *exhorted*…

The word 'edify' occurs seven times in 1 Corinthians 14, and there are a host of related words (profit, mind, instruct others, exhort) that support the basic idea that Paul believes that the gifts that are 'greater' have a direct impact on others based on the spoken word. Tongues, for instance, is a lesser (but still good) gift that does not edify others, even the one speaking in tongues, unless there is also an interpretation.

In that sense, prophets, evangelists, and pastor-teachers, founded on the teaching of the apostles, all have speaking gifts that are to be used for the edification of the church and can therefore be called the 'greater gifts,' or at least some of the 'greater gifts.' And, in my personal experience, leaders who have these gifts do greatly help a body of Christians be developed, and those people's gifts can be leveraged in various ways. This is probably why elders are required to be effective at teaching (1 Tim.3:2; 5:17; Ti.1:9), which seems to be the only spiritual gift they need to have, in combination with all the requirements of Christian character and integrity listed. But unless the reasoning process for Ephesians 4:11 unfolds this way, and passes through Paul's stress on 'edification' from 1 Corinthians 14, it is not clear why one can elevate the *gifts* of Ephesians 4, some of which are listed in 1 Corinthians 12 – 14 and Romans 12, above the other *gifts*. For one cannot simply make an arbitrary decision to elevate Ephesians 4 as a *passage* above the other *passages*.

Conclusion

In short, while I am in agreement with some of the underlying, basic goals of charismatic restorationists, in that I firmly believe that we need to honor gifts outside of the traditional paid pastor or priest, need multiple paradigms for leadership and expression of Jesus' mission, need to have more inter-church and inter-organizational partnerships, I deeply regret the ignorance, the misuse of some biblical language, the frequent intellectual and biblical sloppiness, and the 'local church'-centric tendencies of this movement. Unfortunately, seminary education seems devalued, especially in house church circles, as do various other forms of knowledge-based discipleship. Many jump on oversimplified bandwagons and fall for easy formulae, thinking that problems in church leadership can be solved simply by having the 'five-fold ministry' represented. These postures are unwise, and I hope they will be resisted whenever they surface.

Appendix A: The Patristic Evidence

The Didache (prior to 100 AD)

The Didache is the common name of a brief early Christian treatise (dated by most scholars to the late first/early second century). 'The Didache [Teaching] of the Twelve Apostles' had been written and widely disseminated by about the year 100, and became increasingly important in the second and third Christian centuries. It is an anonymous work not belonging to any single individual. The text, parts of which may have constituted the first written catechism, has three main sections dealing with Christian lessons, rituals such as baptism and eucharist, and Church organization. It was considered by some of the Church Fathers as part of the New Testament but rejected as spurious or non-canonical by others, eventually not accepted into the New Testament canon with the exception of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church 'broader canon' which includes the Didascalia which is based on the Didache. The Catholic Church has accepted it as part of the collection of Apostolic Fathers.

11:1 Whosoever, therefore, comes and teaches you all these things that have been said before, receive him. 2 But if the teacher himself turn and teach another doctrine to the destruction of this, hear him not; but if he teach so as to increase righteousness and the knowledge of the Lord, receive him as the Lord. 3 But concerning the apostles and prophets, according to the decree of the Gospel, thus do. 4 Let every apostle that comes to you be received as the Lord. 5 But he shall not remain except one day; but if there be need, also the next; but if he remain three days, he is a false prophet. 6 And when the apostle goes away, let him take nothing but bread until he lodges; but if he ask money, he is a false prophet. 7 And every prophet that speaks in the Spirit you shall neither try nor judge; for every sin shall be forgiven, but this sin shall not be forgiven. 8 But not every one that speaks in the Spirit is a prophet; but only if he hold the ways of the Lord. Therefore from their ways shall the false prophet and the prophet be known. 9 And every prophet who orders a meal in the Spirit eats not from it, except indeed he be a false prophet; 10 and every prophet who teaches the truth, if he do not what he teaches, is a false prophet. 11 And every prophet, proved true, working unto the mystery of the Church in the world, yet not teaching others to do what he himself does, shall not be judged among you, for with God he has his judgment; for so did also the ancient prophets. But whoever says in the Spirit, Give me money, or something else, you shall not listen to him; but if he says to you to give for others' sake who are in need, let no one judge him.

12:1 But let every one that comes in the name of the Lord be received, and afterward you shall prove and know him; for you shall have understanding right and left. 2 If he who comes is a wayfarer, assist him as far as you are able; but he shall not remain with you, except for two or three days, if need be. 3 But if he wills to abide with you, being an artisan, let him work and eat [2 Thessalonians 3:10] but if he has no trade, 4 according to your understanding see to it that, as a Christian, he shall not live with you idle. 5 But if he wills not to do, he is a Christ-monger. Watch that you keep aloof from such.

13:1 But every true prophet that wills to abide among you is worthy of his support. 2 So also a true teacher is himself worthy, as the workman, of his support. [Matthew 10:10; cf. Luke 10:7] 3 Every first-fruit, therefore, of the products of wine-press and threshing-floor, of oxen and of sheep, you shall take and give to the prophets, for they are your high priests. 4 But if you have not a prophet, give it to the poor. 5 If you make a batch of dough, take the first-fruit and give according to the commandment. 6 So also when you open a jar of wine or of oil, take the first-fruit and give it to the prophets; 7 and of money (silver) and clothing and every possession, take the first-fruit, as it may seem good to you, and give according to the commandment.

14:1 But every Lord's day do ye gather yourselves together, and break bread, and give thanksgiving after having confessed your transgressions, that your sacrifice may be pure. 2 But let no one that is at variance with his fellow come together with you, until they be reconciled, that your sacrifice may not be profaned. 3 For this is that which was spoken by the Lord: In every place and time offer to me a pure sacrifice; for I am a great King, says the Lord, and my name is wonderful among the nations.

15:1 Appoint, therefore, for yourselves, bishops and deacons worthy of the Lord, men meek, and not lovers of money, [1 Timothy 3:4] and truthful and proved; for they also render to you the service of prophets and teachers. 2 Despise them not therefore, for they are your honoured ones, together with the prophets and teachers. 3 And reprove one another, not in anger, but in peace, as you have it in the Gospel [Matthew 18:15 – 17] but to every one that acts

amiss against another, let no one speak, nor let him hear anything from you until he repent. 4 But your prayers and alms and all your deeds so do, as you have it in the Gospel of our Lord.

Clement of Rome to the Corinthians (~97 AD)

This letter was sent from the Roman Christians to the Corinthian Christians. The name 'Clement' is attached to it, which is interpreted various ways. Catholics tend to see it as alluding to Clement being the Pope. Others say that Clement was one of the elders at Rome, but the letter was written jointly.

But not to dwell upon ancient examples, let us come to the most recent spiritual heroes. Let us take the noble examples furnished in our own generation. Through envy and jealousy, the greatest and most righteous pillars [of the Church] have been persecuted and put to death. Let us set before our eyes the illustrious apostles. Peter, through unrighteous envy, endured not one or two, but numerous labours and when he had at length suffered martyrdom, departed to the place of glory due to him. Owing to envy, Paul also obtained the reward of patient endurance, after being seven times thrown into captivity, compelled to flee, and stoned. After preaching both in the east and west, he gained the illustrious reputation due to his faith, having taught righteousness to the whole world, and come to the extreme limit of the west, and suffered martyrdom under the prefects. Thus was he removed from the world, and went into the holy place, having proved himself a striking example of patience. (Chapter 5)

The apostles have preached the Gospel to us from the Lord Jesus Christ; Jesus Christ [has done so] from God. Christ therefore was sent forth by God, and the apostles by Christ. Both these appointments, then, were made in an orderly way, according to the will of God. Having therefore received their orders, and being fully assured by the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ, and established in the word of God, with full assurance of the Holy Ghost, they went forth proclaiming that the kingdom of God was at hand. And thus preaching through countries and cities, they appointed the first-fruits [of their labours], having first proved them by the Spirit, to be bishops and deacons of those who should afterwards believe. Nor was this any new thing, since indeed many ages before it was written concerning bishops and deacons. For thus saith the Scripture in a certain place, "I will appoint their bishops in righteousness, and their deacons in faith." (Chapter 42)

Ignatius's Letters (108 AD)

Ignatius was the third bishop of Antioch and a student of John the apostle. On his way to being tried and martyred in Rome, he wrote letters to churches and another leader named Polycarp, encouraging them to not intervene on his behalf, and also to maintain Christian unity.

Epistle to the Trallians: For, since ye are subject to the bishop as to Jesus Christ, ye appear to me to live not after the manner of men, but according to Jesus Christ, who died for us, in order, by believing in His death, ye may escape from death. It is therefore necessary that, as ye indeed do, so without the bishop ye should do nothing, but should also be subject to the presbytery, as to the apostle of Jesus Christ, who is our hope, in whom, if we live, we shall [at last] be found. It is fitting also that the deacons, as being [the ministers] of the mysteries of Jesus Christ, should in every respect be pleasing to all. For they are not ministers of meat and drink, but servants of the Church of God. They are bound, therefore, to avoid all grounds of accusation [against them], as they would do fire. Be ye subject to the bishop as to the Lord, for "he watches for your souls, as one that shall give account to God." Wherefore also, ye appear to me to live not after the manner of men, but according to Jesus Christ, who died for us, in order that, by believing in His death, ye may by baptism be made partakers of His resurrection. It is therefore necessary, whatsoever things ye do, to do nothing without the bishop. And be ye subject also to the presbytery, as to the apostles of Jesus Christ, who is our hope, in whom, if we live, we shall be found in Him. It behoves you also, in every way, to please the deacons, who are [ministers] of the mysteries of Christ Jesus; for they are not ministers of meat and drink, but servants of the Church of God. They are bound, therefore, to avoid all grounds of accusation [against them], as they would a burning fire. Let them, then, prove themselves to be such. (Chapter 2)

In like manner, let all reverence the deacons as an appointment of Jesus Christ, and the bishop as Jesus Christ, who is the Son of the Father, and the presbyters as the sanhedrim of God, and assembly of the apostles. Apart from these, there is no Church. Concerning all this, I am persuaded that ye are of the same opinion. For I have received the

manifestation of your love, and still have it with me, in your bishop, whose very appearance is highly instructive, and his meekness of itself a power; whom I imagine even the ungodly must reverence, seeing they are also pleased that I do not spare myself. But shall I, when permitted to write on this point, reach such a height of self-esteem, that though being a condemned man, I should issue commands to you as if I were an apostle? And do ye reverence them as Christ Jesus, of whose place they are the keepers, even as the bishop is the representative of the Father of all things, and the presbyters are the sanhedrim of God, and assembly of the apostles of Christ. Apart from these there is no elect Church, no congregation of holy ones, no assembly of saints. I am persuaded that ye also are of this opinion. For I have received the manifestation of your love, and still have it with me, in your bishop, whose very appearance is highly instructive, and his meekness of itself a power; whom I imagine even the ungodly must reverence. Loving you as I do, I avoid writing in any severer strain to you, that I may not seem harsh to any, or wanting [in tenderness]. I am indeed bound for the sake of Christ, but I am not yet worthy of Christ. But when I am perfected, perhaps I shall then become so. I do not issue orders like an apostle. (Chapter 3)

Epistle to the Romans: I write to the Churches, and impress on them all, that I shall willingly die for God, unless ye hinder me. I beseech of you not to show an unseasonable good-will towards me. Suffer me to become food for the wild beasts, through whose instrumentality it will be granted me to attain to God. I am the wheat of God, and let me be ground by the teeth of the wild beasts, that I may be found the pure bread of Christ. Rather entice the wild beasts, that they may become my tomb, and may leave nothing of my body; so that when I have fallen asleep [in death], I may be no trouble to anyone. Then shall I truly be a disciple of Christ, when the world shall not see so much as my body. Entreat Christ for me, that by these instruments I may be found a sacrifice [to God]. I do not, as Peter and Paul, issue commandments unto you. They were apostles; I am but a condemned man: they were free, while I am, even until now, a servant. But when I suffer, I shall be the freed-man of Jesus, and shall rise again emancipated in Him. And now, being a prisoner, I learn not to desire anything worldly or vain. (Chapter 4)

Epistle of Diognetus (130 AD)

I do not speak of things strange to me, nor do I aim at anything inconsistent with right reason; but having been a disciple of the Apostles, I am become a teacher of the Gentiles. I minister the things delivered to me to those that are disciples worthy of the truth. For who that is rightly taught and begotten by the loving Word, would not seek to learn accurately the things which have been clearly shown by the Word to His disciples, to whom the Word being manifested has revealed them, speaking plainly [to them], not understood indeed by the unbelieving, but conversing with the disciples, who, being esteemed faithful by Him, acquired a knowledge of the mysteries of the Father? For which reason He sent the Word, that He might be manifested to the world; and He, being despised by the people [of the Jews], was, when preached by the Apostles, believed on by the Gentiles. This is He who was from the beginning, who appeared as if new, and was found old, and yet who is ever born afresh in the hearts of the saints. This is He who, being from everlasting, is to-day called the Son; through whom the Church is enriched, and grace, widely spread, increases in the saints, furnishing understanding, revealing mysteries, announcing times, rejoicing over the faithful, giving to those that seek, by whom the limits of faith are not broken through, nor the boundaries set by the fathers passed over. Then the fear of the law is chanted, and the grace of the prophets is known, and the faith of the gospels is established, and the tradition of the Apostles is preserved, and the grace of the Church exults; which grace if you grieve not, you shall know those things which the Word teaches, by whom He wills, and when He pleases. For whatever things we are moved to utter by the will of the Word commanding us, we communicate to you with pains, and from a love of the things that have been revealed to us. (Chapter 11)