

EPHESIANS - Ephesians 4:11
Message 62
February 17 2019
Words: 6141

INTRO: We are in Ephesians 4 this morning in verse 11. Let me read the verse:

11 And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers,

The verse sounds simple enough, but this verse required a lot of study. So I did another topic for a while to give me time to ponder this passage. The subject is that when Jesus ascended to heaven he gave gifts to men. And some became apostles, some prophets, some evangelists and some pastors and teachers. The question is this: how are we to take these gifts? My greatest difficulty was in seeking to identify who the prophets are.

Today we have the movement of the NAR, the New Apostolic Reformation. What is the NAR? The internet site, gotquestions.org says this: *The New Apostolic Reformation teaches that God's intended form of church governance is apostles and prophets, holding leadership over evangelists, pastors, and teachers.* In our passage we see some of the reasoning for this position. 1 Corinthians 12:28 says, "And God has appointed these in the church: first apostles, second prophets, third teachers etc..." So Apostles are first, prophets second etc... There we have the foundation of the NAR.

My main question was this: Who are these prophets? The apostles seemed simple enough. The more work I did the more I was pushed to try to go back to the original setting. We come to a question like we have here, thinking that church back then was like we have it today. We come to such a question with the whole NT before us. But when Paul wrote this letter to the Ephesians they did not have the NT. Some of the NT books would have been written at this time but they would not have known they were inspired books of the Bible and likely would not have been circulated much yet. Very few churches would have had more than one or two books, if any. It is very doubtful that any who were converted would have had access to any OT books and they would most likely have had no NT books.

Think of it, before Paul wrote this letter to the Ephesians there was no NT book called *Ephesians*. So here is the question I

asked myself, "How did these Ephesian Christians understand what Paul meant by prophets when they got the letter?"

Well, Paul stopped in Ephesus briefly on his second missionary journey. This is about AD 50-52. This church likely had its early beginnings there. Then on Paul's third missionary journey, about AD 53-58 he stayed there almost three years. So clearly they got a lot of teaching at this time. The church at Corinth and the church at Ephesus had their beginning about the same time. This is important to our discussion because we must seek to understand how the Ephesian readers would have understood what Paul meant by apostles and prophets etc...

As I was studying I came across this and thought you might find it interesting regarding the history of the Ephesian church:\

PICTURE #1: SPROUTING - A.D. 52.
PICTURE #2: WEEDING - A.D. 54-56.
PICTURE #3: NURTURING - A.D. 57.
PICTURE #4: WATERING - A.D. 62.
PICTURE #5: PRODUCING - A.D. 66.
PICTURE #6: WILTING - A.D. 96.
PICTURE #7: DEAD - A.D. 200.

[HTTPS://HOUSETOHOUSE.COM/THE-HISTORY-OF-THE-CHURCH-OF-EPHESUS-IN-TIME-LAPSE-PHOTOGRAPHY/](https://housetohouse.com/the-history-of-the-church-of-ephesus-in-time-lapse-photography/)

Well, in our studies in Ephesians 4, Paul has encouraged the Ephesians to unity. And now he will show them God's method of maintaining unity. We find this in Ephesians 4:11-16. He has pictured the Church as a body. And a body has various members that have been endowed with special abilities, or gifts. And in the same way, a church needs various members with special abilities or gifts.

b. God's method of unity (4:11-16)

1) The divine provision

So we want to look at God's method of maintaining the unity of the body. We begin with verse 11 the divine provision, which is spiritual gifts or gifted people. But we'll begin by reading verses 11-16. Paul says this:

11 *And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers,*
12 *for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ,*
13 *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;*
14 *that we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting,*
15 *but, speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head – Christ –*
16 *from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by what every joint supplies, according to the effective working by which every part does its share, causes growth of the body for the edifying of itself in love.*

Paul begins with listing some gifts, or should I say gifted people, in verse 11. Here is the divine provision for unity in the church. In this message I want to seek to explain the first two gifts of apostles and prophets. I did not expect that this verse would be so taxing in study.

When you look at verse 11, does it not look simple enough? But even D. Martyn Lloyd Jones struggled to explain it. He listed these gifts in two groups; gifts that were for the early church and gifts that were for all time. So he viewed as apostles and prophets and evangelists as those for the early church. He viewed the evangelists as not being such as we would call evangelists in modern times. Then pastors and teachers he viewed as those gifts in use after the Church was established.

I want to propose that Paul here very carefully enumerates these gifts as those most crucial for the founding to the Church and then its ongoing operation. You most certainly need not agree with my conclusions. It is a most difficult verse.

At the outset let me say that I believe that the apostles referred to are the 12 apostles. The term 'apostle' is only used for the apostles of Jesus Christ. One time Jesus Christ is referred to in Hebrews 3:1 as the Apostle and High Priest of our profession. One time reference is made to false apostles.

Now let me mention here that Bible scholars have set out certain criteria that a person has to meet to qualify as an apostle of Jesus Christ. I don't want to take much time on this, but let me mention what is usually given: First, to qualify as an apostle one must have seen the Lord. Paul says in 1 Corinthians 9:1, "Am I not an Apostle? Am I not free? Have I not seen Jesus Christ the Lord?" The second is that an Apostle had to be commissioned by the Lord Jesus Himself. Third, he needed to have been given a supernatural revelation of Truth. The fourth, is that he was given infallibility. Fifth, he had the power to work miracles.

Well, I have not had the interest to study that in any depth. But if even only the first one is true, the NAR has the wrong system of church government. The NAR is the New Apostolic Reformation, and I understand it is one of the fastest growing, so called Christian movements today. Well, the office of 'apostleship' is not an ongoing office. It came to a close with the 12 apostles.

The difficulty now is, what is meant by prophets in our verse? And I see four possibilities. Let me give and explain each one as we go along: First it could refer to:

-OT prophets

Turn to Ephesians 2:19-20. It says:

19 *Now, therefore, you are no longer strangers and foreigners,
but fellow citizens with the saints and
members of the household of God,*

20 *having been built on the foundation of the apostles and
prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the
chief cornerstone,*

These Apostles and prophets are the foundation of the Church.

This gives them both a very, very important position. But I do not think the reference is to OT prophets. I covered the reasons for that when we went through those verses. But look at 3:5. The context speaks of the Church and verse 5 says:

5 *which in other ages was not made known to the sons of men, as
it has now been revealed by the Spirit to
His holy apostles and prophets:*

The Church was not made known to the OT prophets so It cannot refer to them.

-Book of Acts prophets

Turn now to Acts 21. There was a man by name of Agabus and he prophesied in Acts 11 of a famine that was coming and it did. Then in Acts 21:10-11 we have this account:

10 *And as we stayed many days, a certain prophet named Agabus
came down from Judea.*

11 *When he had come to us, he took Paul's belt, bound his own
hands and feet, and said, "Thus says the
Holy Spirit, 'So shall the Jews at
Jerusalem bind the man who owns this belt,
and deliver him into the hands of the
Gentiles.'"*

But yet again, I do not see how this type of prophet was
anywhere near important enough to qualify
as that on which the Church was built.

-Prophets as preachers in NT church

Turn now to 1 Corinthians 14. The third kind of prophet this
might speak of is the kind of prophet who
spoke to Christians to edify, exhort or
comfort them. It would be the same thing
preachers today do. We'll read verses 1-3:

*1 Pursue love, and desire spiritual gifts, but especially that
you may prophesy.*

*2 For he who speaks in a tongue does not speak to men but to
God, for no one understands him; however,
in the spirit he speaks mysteries.*

*3 But he who prophesies speaks edification and exhortation and
comfort to men.*

*4 He who speaks in a tongue edifies himself, but he who
prophesies edifies the church.*

It is here I want to spend some time because to understand this
part of Church history is helpful to our
subject. Then we will look at the fourth
kind of prophet.

Well, as I pondered this I came to the conclusion that this list
of gifts must be understood in a way that
the Church at Ephesus would have understood
it when Paul wrote to them. As I pondered
that I pondered how they had church back
then. Now it is most natural for us to
think they had church the way we do. So let
me ask you, how do you think they had
church? Think of this. This letter was
written was around AD 61-63. From the time
the church was born in Acts 2 until the
time of the writing of the letter to the
Ephesians is only around 30 years. What do
you think their church services were like?
Turn to Acts 2. We are told in Acts 2 how

they had church meetings in the earliest days of the Church age. We go to verse 41:

- 41 *Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls.*
- 42 *And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers.*
- 43 *And fear came upon every soul: and many wonders and signs were done by the apostles.*
- 44 *And all that believed were together, and had all things common;*
- 45 *And sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men, as every man had need.*
- 46 *And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart,*
- 47 *Praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.*

Now note in verse 40 that Peter encourages the listeners to be saved from this perverse generation. He is talking about the Jewish people of that day. He is preaching at the temple. About 3,000 people were saved and were added, verse 41. And we ask, added to what? Well, to the Apostles, which was the beginning of the Church, or called out ones. And what did they do? They were baptized! Here is the outward rite that showed they were now identified with Jesus Christ. I am amazed that huge persecution did not begin right there, but it says they had favor with all the people.

There was no church building. There was no place of gathering except the temple, and they continued to go

there. But they were now followers of Jesus Christ. Those they met with in the temple did not follow Jesus Christ. So they did not have true fellowship with them.

So what did they do? Notice now in particular verse 42:

42 And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers.

Well, verse 46 says they went from house to house. They had church from house to house where they practiced those things that pertained to them as followers of Christ.

So we have a mixed worship. They went to the temple and to their Christian gathering where they continued in the teaching of the apostles, and here they fellowshiped as believers and had communion together and prayed together.

Now here is what we must realize. In those early days, none of those who became Christians had a Bible. So their main source of spiritual food was the teaching of the Apostles. You can imagine from this that no new convert would have wanted to miss their gatherings. I expect they might be informed at each meeting where the next meeting would take place, as meetings took place from house to house.

So the education of these early Christians centered around the teachings of the Apostles. The Apostles would have recounted the things they learned from Jesus and they would have told and retold stories of their experiences of Christ. The picture is this: They did not have a Bible. There was no NT. They were dependent on their knowledge of the reading of the OT scrolls in the synagogue or at the temple, of OT teaching, and they were dependent on the disciples for the teachings of Christ. As to an understanding

of the Church, they had none. Everything was new.

Well, we go on from there. After this early time persecution began to set in as people left Judaism and became Christians. And more and more Judaism and believers in Christ were separated. Then Herod, the son of Herod the Great who also killed John the Baptist entered the persecution of Christianity. When he saw that this pleased the Jews he persecuted Christians even more and thus persecution drove the Christians out.

So because of this persecution believers were pushed out beyond Jerusalem. The first Christian church to be established outside of Jerusalem was in Antioch. The Christians in these new places could no longer go to the temple. How did they have church now? In their house meetings they likely had no OT books nor any NT books. They were dependent on those who knew the OT and those who had been with Jesus or had been with those who had been with Jesus. That is all they had. Many cities at that time had synagogues, so did they could go to the synagogue which some may have done but they would have had their own services where they would commemorate the resurrection. This was an important part of the early church service and would not have been welcome in a synagogue. Somewhere here they may have begun to have church in a place set up for that.

Well, we now go to a NT example of a church at this time. We go to 1 Corinthians. This is a carnal or fleshly church filled with pride and divisions about gifts and numerous other things. But in chapter 14 we get some idea of how they met and did church.

Now the issue dealt with in particular in this chapter is speaking in tongues. Today we have divisions about this subject in charismatic circles. The Southern Baptist Churches are

seeing great movements of this phenomena in their circles today. The NAR is largely a charismatic movement. We are not going to deal with the subject of tongues. I have a booklet on speaking in tongues if anyone wishes to study this subject. What we want to look at briefly is how they had their services or how Paul instructs them to run their services.

Now my interest here is how they had their services, and in particular, the role of the prophet. In 11:18 Paul said, "For first of all, when you come together as a church, (here we have their church meeting) I hear that there are divisions among you, and in part I believe it." In chapter 11 he deals with their problems at communion, which was a big part of early church worship. In chapter 12 Paul deals with the problems they experienced regarding gifts, but he says there is a more important matter, and that is love, so he deals with that in chapter 13. Then he begins chapter 14 like this:

1 Pursue love, and desire spiritual gifts, but especially that you may prophesy.

Our interest is in the prophet. Those who prophesy are prophets.
Verse 2:

2 For he who speaks in a tongue does not speak to men but to God, for no one understands him; however, in the spirit he speaks mysteries.

3 But he who prophesies speaks edification and exhortation and comfort to men.

Let me just say this, that I understand speaking in tongues to mean speaking in foreign languages. I can't deal with that here. Again, I have this all in the booklet I mentioned for those who might wish it. I can e-mail it to you. But in verse 3 we now have a clear explanation of what Paul means when he speaks of a

prophet. It is one who speaks edification and exhortation and comfort to men.

Prophets are of two kinds. You can remember them like this. The one type of prophet foretells the future. Some of those are given in the book of Acts. The other type does not foretell, but forth-tells. That is he speaks edification, exhortation or comfort to men. That is what we today call a preacher or a pastor. In the early church they were called prophets. Look now at verse 4:

4 He who speaks in a tongue edifies himself, but he who prophesies edifies the church.

5 I wish you all spoke with tongues, but even more that you prophesied; for he who prophesies is greater than he who speaks with tongues, unless indeed he interprets, that the church may receive edification.

Let me just briefly comment. Why is the preacher, or the prophet greater than the one who speaks in tongues? The prophet speaks the same thing as the one who speaks in tongues, only he does it in a language that is understood by people present. The message of the one who speaks in tongues is understood either by only a few people, or if it is an unknown tongue nobody present understands. To edify, the language must first be interpreted. So, in verse 5, if the one who speaks in a foreign language can interpret into the common language, now he is just as great as the prophet. Why? Because now it is understood.

Let me just mention, Corinth was a sea port city and had people of many different languages present in their services. That is what caused the need to speak in various languages, and that is why it was not to be done unless there was an interpreter. Verse 6:

6 But now, brethren, if I come to you speaking with tongues, what shall I profit you unless I speak to

you either by revelation, by knowledge, by prophesying, or by teaching?

Then Paul takes some time to show that if one speaks in a language not understood by the rest, that it is has no benefit as far as edification is concerned. And we pick up in verse 23:

23 Therefore if the whole church comes together in one place, and all speak with tongues, and there come in those who are uninformed or unbelievers, will they not say that you are out of your mind?

24 But if all prophesy, and an unbeliever or an uninformed person comes in, he is convinced by all, he is convicted by all.

25 And thus the secrets of his heart are revealed; and so, falling down on his face, he will worship God and report that God is truly among you.

We now come to an important aspect of early church meetings. Remember they have no OT present and there not likely any NT books in circulation in the churches. So they learn from each other. In light of that understanding look now at verse 26:

26 How is it then, brethren? Whenever you come together, each of you has a psalm, has a teaching, has a tongue, has a revelation, has an interpretation. Let all things be done for edification.

What I understand this to say is that when they gather, one person has a Psalm they know. How valuable would that be in a church with no Bible books? Then one has a biblical teaching that would be useful to Christians. Another has a tongue. So there is someone present who does not understand a certain teaching because they don't know much of the common language and there is another who has the ability to speak that language who can interpret for such a person. Another has a

revelation. I would understand this, not as a divine revelation in the sense of something we would put on par with Scripture. But let us say in a service like this where they are sharing things with each other, another sitting by all of a sudden realizes how that applies or how that fits together with something else and it is a revelation to him, and something he can share with the others. Remember, this is their teaching time. They have no Bible present.

Then it says another has an interpretation. The interpretation intended here, I think is not the interpretation from one language to another, although that could be, but the interpretation of the meaning of the application of some truth. This is what I am seeking to do right now, to interpret what apostles and prophets are in Ephesians 4. And last, note what the overriding principle is that Paul gives here: let all things be done decently and in order. Now note how Paul instructs tongues speakers and prophets to keep things in order. We go on to verse 27:

27 If anyone speaks in a tongue, let there be two or at the most three, each in turn, and let one interpret.

28 But if there is no interpreter, let him keep silent in church, and let him speak to himself and to God.

Now note whom Paul calls prophets in the church. Verse 29:

29 Let two or three prophets speak, and let the others judge.

30 But if anything is revealed to another who sits by, let the first keep silent.

31 For you can all prophesy one by one, that all may learn and all may be encouraged.

Now note he does not say, "You MAY all prophesy one by one." He says, "You can..." or "you are allowed to..." In chapter 12 Paul says, "Do all prophecy?" And the answer is, "No." Not all are prophets. But in a congregation like this, those that were prophets, that is they could speak to others to edification, exhortation or comfort, these were all allowed to speak but it must be one by one. Verse 27:

32 And the spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets.

33 For God is not the author of confusion but of peace, as in all the churches of the saints.

Verse 32 is most important. When someone must speak or they are not in control of themselves, you know one thing, this is not of God. Verse 34:

34 Let your women keep silent in the churches, for they are not permitted to speak; but they are to be submissive, as the law also says.

35 And if they want to learn something, let them ask their own husbands at home; for it is shameful for women to speak in church.

36 Or did the word of God come originally from you? Or was it you only that it reached?

37 If anyone thinks himself to be a prophet or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things which I write to you are the commandments of the Lord.

38 But if anyone is ignorant, let him be ignorant.

39 Therefore, brethren, desire earnestly to prophesy, and do not forbid to speak with tongues.

40 Let all things be done decently and in order.

So the type of prophet we have here is one who speaks in the church to others to edification, exhortation or comfort. Once again, remember, they did not have the OT present

in their services nor the NT. They depended on those who had some knowledge from the apostles or those who had learned from the Apostles.

Now I give this to give us some idea of how different church was in those early days. And again, I do not think the kind of prophet mentioned here is what Paul has in mind in our passage. The prophet Paul has in mind, I think, is one who along with the apostles makes up the foundation of the church as he has already mentioned to these Ephesians to whom he is now writing. In Corinth there was carnality among the prophets, as is evidenced by 1 Corinthians 14. Surely that would not be part of the foundation of the church.

So note once more the prophets in Ephesians 2:19-20:

- 19 *Now, therefore, you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God,*
- 20 *having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone,*
- 21 *in whom the whole building, being joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord,*
- 22 *in whom you also are being built together for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit.*

The foundation of the universal church rests upon these prophets. Now listen to Ephesians 3:1-5:

- 1 *For this reason I, Paul, the prisoner of Christ Jesus for you Gentiles—*
- 2 *if indeed you have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which was given to me for you,*
- 3 *how that by revelation He made known to me the mystery (as I have briefly written already,*

4 *by which, when you read, you may understand my knowledge in
the mystery of Christ),*

5 *which in other ages was not made known to the sons of men, as
it has now been revealed by the Spirit to
His holy apostles and prophets:*

The mystery of the Church was revealed to the Lord's holy apostles and prophets. I believe the apostles and prophets spoken of here are those to whom God revealed His Word in what we now have as the NT books.

We go to Acts 15. Paul and Barnabas had run into trouble in their mission work. Jews who were converted among the Gentiles insisted that Gentiles needed to be circumcised and keep the Jewish laws like the Jews did. And Paul and Barnabas went to Jerusalem to work this out with the Apostles. And after they concluded on this verse 32 says:

32 *And Judas and Silas, being prophets also themselves,
exhorted the brethren with many words, and
confirmed them.*

When it says Judas and Silas were also prophets, that means as well as Paul and Barnabas. I am using this to show that Paul was considered to be a prophet. So the prophets in the churches, and we note in 1 Corinthians 14 that they are not called pastors in that chapter, got their information from the Apostles or those who had been with the Apostles or with Jesus. That is, those who propagated the teachings of the Apostles and prophets were also called prophets. When we come to Ephesus they are referred to as pastors and teachers.

Listen to Ellicott's commentary on our passage in Ephesians. He writes: "It is sufficient here to note (1) that from very early times the 'prophets' are mentioned as a separate class (see Acts xi. 27; xv. 32; xxi. 10) distinguished from teachers (Acts xiii 1), and that, in this

Epistle especially, they are spoken of, in connection with the Apostles, as receiving the revealed mystery of the gospel (chap. 33>5), and being (or, *laying*) 'the foundation of the Church;" (2) that their office, like the Apostolate, is clearly extraordinary, distinct from the ordinary and permanent teaching of the evangelists and pastors, and, probably, best described by the two phrases so constantly applied to the prophets of the Old Testament - 'The word of the Lord came to me;' 'the Spirit of the Lord was upon me.'" End quote.

I think it is this that explains the use of Apostles and prophets in our text. The Apostles would refer to the 12 apostles, and the prophets are those who received the Word of God and wrote it down, but they are not necessarily Apostles. So Paul would be both an apostle and a prophet. Not many the Apostles wrote books that went into the NT, only a few did.

So let me give you the writers of the NT who were Apostles and those who were not and would be prophets.

Of the Apostles Matthew wrote 1 book, John 5, Peter 2 and Paul 13; for a total of 21 books. If the prophets who make up the foundation of the Church are writers of NT books, those who wrote but were not apostles are: James 1 book, Luke 2 books, Jude 1 book, and Mark one book; and we do not know who wrote Hebrews. This is for a total of six. Two Gospels were written by Apostles and two by prophets.

So let me read Ephesians 2:19-20 once more:

19 Now, therefore, you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God,

20 *having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone,*

When it speaks of the Church universal being built on the foundation of the Apostles and prophets, it is these writers of the NT books, for surely the Church rests on these books.

So when Paul says God gave some apostles and some prophets, I believe he is speaking of those who became the foundation of the Church. Jesus Christ is the chief cornerstone and all Christians are built up a spiritual house on that foundation.

Now though I have mentioned it before, today it is important that we understand this in light of the modern movement called the NAR. When you read our verse in Ephesians and you look at what they believe you will understand where they get their understanding from. So let me read what I gave when we were in Ephesians 2. I said:

It (the NAR) is largely associated with Pentecostal churches. It has thousands of churches and millions of believers, according to Gotquestions.org. This site says regarding the NAR:

The New Apostolic Reformation teaches that God's intended form of church governance is apostles and prophets, holding leadership over evangelists, pastors, and teachers. However, this has not been the case for the vast majority of Christian history. So, according to the New Apostolic Reformation, God began to restore prophets and apostles over the last thirty to forty years. Only now, as the church is properly guided by the appropriate spiritual leaders, can it fulfill its commission. This commission is seen as more than spiritual, as it includes cultural and political control.

In the New Apostolic Reformation, apostles are seen as the highest of all spiritual leaders, being specially empowered by God. True maturity and unity, per the New Apostolic Reformation, is only found in those who submit to the leadership of their apostles. According to this teaching, as the church unifies behind the apostles, these leaders will develop greater and greater supernatural powers. Eventually, this will include the ability to perform mass healings and suspend the laws of physics. These signs are meant to encourage a massive wave of converts to Christianity. These apostles are also

destined to be recipients of a great wealth transfer (in the end times), which will enable the church to establish God's kingdom on earth.

Prophets in the New Apostolic Reformation are almost as important as apostles. These people have been empowered to receive "new" revelations from God that will aid the church in establishing dominion. According to the New Apostolic Reformation, only prophets, and occasionally apostles, can obtain new revelations. Evangelists, pastors, and teachers cannot. The prophets' new revelations are crucial to overcoming the world, and the success of the church depends on the apostles following through on the information prophets provide. Most of their prophecies are extremely vague and easy to re-interpret, and the New Apostolic Reformation is willing to modify them, since they set no standard of infallibility for themselves.

According to New Apostolic thinking, mankind lost its dominion over earth as part of the fall of Adam. So Jesus' sacrifice on the cross not only resolved our sin debt, but it empowered mankind—specifically, Christians—to retake control of the earth. The New Apostolic Reformation sees seven areas in which believers are supposedly empowered and expected to dominate: government, arts, finances, education, religion, family, and media. Of these, the New Apostolic Reformation sees government as the most important because of its ability to influence all of the other facets of life. As a result, the New Apostolic Reformation overtly encourages Christian control over politics, culture, and business. In some ways, this is nothing unusual, as people should be expected to vote and lobby according to their convictions. The New Apostolic Reformation, however, is often accused of pushing for outright theocracy.

Then I added this: "Well, it is important to know a little about that movement. But their understanding of apostleship is very unbiblical. Its history is wrong. Its form of church government is wrong. Its view on biblical revelation is wrong. Its view of the future is wrong. It is an unbiblical movement."

CONCL: So we conclude on Ephesians 4:11 which says:

11 And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers,

I conclude that the Apostles spoken of here are the 12 Apostles and the prophets as those who wrote NT books that were not necessarily apostles. Of the 12 Apostles only 4 wrote a NT book. Paul says in Ephesians 3:1-5:

1 For this reason I, Paul, the prisoner of Christ Jesus for you Gentiles—

2 if indeed you have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which was given to me for you,

3 how that by revelation He made known to me the mystery (as I have briefly written already,

4 by which, when you read, you may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ),

5 which in other ages was not made known to the sons of men, as it has now been revealed by the Spirit to His holy apostles and prophets:

God gave special revelation to the Apostles and Prophets, things that had not been revealed before. That is what we have in the NT books. So in giving only a few of the gifts in Ephesians 4:11 he begins with the foundational gifts first. No man since the writing of the NT, not even in the NAR has ever equaled as an apostle or prophet such as we have in those who are the foundation of the Church. Nor is either of those offices a continual office. The NT is complete and will never have another book. This is the foundation of the Church.

Now these gifts are God's method of unity. We have plenty of disunity while we have these books, imagine what it would be like if we did not have them? Would the Church even exist if we only had the writings of what others said the Apostles and prophets said? Not likely. Here is the foundation.