

WHY? | DR. RANDY WHITE
SESSION 2 | WHY ARE SOME PEOPLE NAR?

The New Apostolic Reformation (NAR) is a movement within evangelical Christianity that emerged in the late 20th century. It emphasizes the restoration of the offices of apostles and prophets in the modern church, believing that these roles are essential for the church to fulfill its mission on Earth. The NAR teaches that contemporary apostles and prophets receive direct revelations from God, which guide the church's direction and strategy.

Historically, the movement began gaining prominence in the 1990s, largely through the influence of leaders like C. Peter Wagner, who coined the term "New Apostolic Reformation." The NAR is characterized by a focus on spiritual warfare, the belief in miracles and healing, and the goal of transforming society to align with Christian values.

GETTING TO KNOW NAR

The Church Growth Movement, which led to the New Apostolic Reformation (NAR), began in the mid-20th century in the U.S. Figures like Donald McGavran emphasized evangelism and church expansion, using sociological insights. This approach influenced many evangelical leaders and contributed to the NAR, which added charismatic elements and modern-day apostles and prophets.

Neither the Church Growth Movement nor NAR is a cohesive unit. Both are frameworks adopted by various segments of evangelical Christianity, with diverse beliefs, practices, and leaders.

NAR: THE THIRD WAVE OF CHARISMATIC EVANGELICALISM

NAR is part of the "Third Wave" of Charismatic Evangelicalism.

FIRST WAVE: CLASSICAL PENTECOSTALISM

The First Wave began in the early 20th century, marked by the 1906 Azusa Street Revival. It emphasized the Holy Spirit's baptism, evidenced by speaking in tongues. Denominations like the Assemblies of God emerged from this wave.

SECOND WAVE: THE CHARISMATIC RENEWAL

The Second Wave started in the 1960s, spreading across various Christian denominations. It introduced charismatic practices like speaking in tongues, prophecy, and healing within traditional churches.

THIRD WAVE: THE NEO-CHARISMATIC MOVEMENT

The Third Wave began in the 1980s and 1990s, focusing on signs, wonders, and spiritual gifts, without emphasizing the Holy Spirit's baptism as a separate experience. Leaders like John Wimber of the Vineyard Movement influenced this wave. The NAR is associated with this Third Wave, emphasizing modern-day apostles and prophets.

FAMOUS NAR PERSONALITIES AND ORGANIZATIONS

- **C. Peter Wagner:** Considered the father of the New Apostolic Reformation (NAR) who coined the term and emphasized the roles of modern-day apostles and prophets.
- **Bill Johnson:** Senior leader of Bethel Church in Redding, California, influential in the NAR movement with teachings on miracles, healing, and prophetic ministry.
- **Cindy Jacobs:** Co-founder of Generals International, known for her prophetic ministry and significant following within the NAR community.
- **Mike Bickle:** Founder of the International House of Prayer (IHOP) in Kansas City, Missouri, making IHOP a central hub for the NAR with 24/7 prayer and a focus on prophetic and apostolic ministry.
- **Rick Joyner:** Founder of MorningStar Ministries in Fort Mill, South Carolina, emphasizing prophetic and apostolic focus, spiritual warfare, and societal transformation.

These personalities and organizations have shaped the NAR, spreading its teachings and influencing evangelicals worldwide.

THE NAR AGENDA

The 7 Mountain Mandate is a theology within the New Apostolic Reformation (NAR) that emphasizes the need for Christians to influence and transform seven key areas of society in order to establish God's kingdom on Earth. These areas, often referred to as "mountains," are:

1. **Religion:** Influencing religious institutions and spreading Christian beliefs.

2. **Family:** Promoting Christian values within the family unit.
3. **Education:** Transforming educational systems to align with Christian principles.
4. **Government:** Involvement in political processes to implement laws and policies based on biblical values.
5. **Media:** Using various forms of media to communicate Christian messages and values.
6. **Arts and Entertainment:** Creating and promoting art, music, and entertainment that reflect Christian morals.
7. **Business:** Conducting business in ways that honor God, promoting ethical practices, and using wealth to support Christian causes.

The 7 Mountain Mandate was popularized by leaders like Lance Wallnau and Bill Johnson, who argue that by taking dominion over these seven spheres, Christians can bring about societal transformation and advance God's kingdom. This mandate is seen as a strategic framework for engaging with and influencing the culture in meaningful ways.

Proponents of the 7 Mountain Mandate believe that each of these areas is a battleground where spiritual warfare takes place, and that Christians are called to reclaim these territories from secular influences. Critics, however, argue that this approach can lead to an overemphasis on political and cultural power at the expense of traditional evangelical priorities like personal salvation and spiritual growth. Despite the controversy, the 7 Mountain Mandate remains a central tenet of the NAR's vision for societal transformation.

CHARISMATIC BUT NOT NAR

The sine qua non of the New Apostolic Reformation (NAR) is the belief in the restoration of the roles of apostles and prophets in the modern church. This means that contemporary apostles and prophets are considered to receive direct revelations from God, which are essential for guiding the church's direction and strategy. This foundational belief underpins the movement's emphasis on spiritual warfare, miracles, healing, and societal transformation aligned with Christian values.

To differentiate between a charismatic church and a charismatic NAR (New Apostolic Reformation) church, consider the following key characteristics:

1. **Apostles and Prophets:**
 - **Charismatic Church:** While charismatic churches may believe in the gifts of the Holy Spirit such as prophecy and healing, they typically do not have formal roles for apostles and prophets.
 - **Charismatic NAR Church:** NAR churches emphasize the restoration of the roles of apostles and prophets and often have recognized individuals in these positions who are believed to receive direct revelations from God.
2. **Focus on Spiritual Warfare:**
 - **Charismatic Church:** Charismatic churches may engage in spiritual warfare, but it is usually not as central to their identity.
 - **Charismatic NAR Church:** Spiritual warfare is a significant focus, with teachings that emphasize battling demonic forces to reclaim cultural and societal territories.
3. **Societal Transformation:**
 - **Charismatic Church:** The primary focus is often on personal salvation, spiritual growth, and community support.
 - **Charismatic NAR Church:** There is a strong emphasis on transforming society to align with Christian values, often through the 7 Mountain Mandate, which seeks to influence key areas of society including government, education, and media.
4. **Miracles and Healing:**
 - **Charismatic Church:** Belief in and practice of miracles and healing are common but are considered part of the broader experience of faith.
 - **Charismatic NAR Church:** Miracles and healing are central and often serve as validation of the church's apostolic and prophetic authority.
5. **Church Governance:**
 - **Charismatic Church:** Governed similarly to other evangelical churches, with a focus on pastoral leadership.
 - **Charismatic NAR Church:** Often governed by apostles and prophets who are seen as having direct insight into God's will for the church and its mission.

By examining these elements, one can discern whether a church is part of the broader charismatic movement or specifically aligned with the New Apostolic Reformation.

ESSENTIALLY POSTMILLENNIAL

Postmillennialism is a Christian view where the millennium, a time of peace and righteousness, occurs before Jesus Christ's second coming. This belief holds that the spread of the gospel will gradually transform society, leading to peace and prosperity with Christian values dominating global culture.

Postmillennialists believe this era will see moral and spiritual progress driven by the church's influence. After this period, Christ will return to judge the living and the dead, establishing God's eternal kingdom.

Unlike premillennialism, which expects Christ's return before a thousand-year reign, and amillennialism, which views the millennium symbolically, postmillennialism sees the "last days" as an ongoing process starting from Jesus's first coming. This period involves the church spreading the gospel and transforming society.

This view aligns with scripture if you do not believe in a Pauline "parenthetical" period. Acts 2:17 and the Great Commission in Matthew 28:19-20 support the idea of a continuous process of spiritual progress leading to Christ's return, fitting seamlessly into the biblical narrative without interruptions.

DIFFERENCES BETWEEN CLASSIC POSTMILLENNIAL VIEWS OF THE 1800S AND THOSE OF THE NAR

Classic Postmillennialism (1800s):

1. **Gradual Improvement:** Belief in the gospel leading to a gradual societal improvement before Christ's return.
2. **Cultural Transformation:** Focus on moral and spiritual regeneration of individuals to better society.
3. **Optimism:** Expectation of a world progressively aligning with Christian values.
4. **Mainstream Acceptance:** Widely accepted among mainstream Protestant denominations.

New Apostolic Reformation (NAR) Postmillennialism:

1. **Active Dominion:** Emphasis on taking control over society's spheres (e.g., 7 Mountain Mandate).
2. **Apostles and Prophets:** Belief in modern-day apostles and prophets receiving direct revelations.
3. **Spiritual Warfare:** Focus on combating demonic forces to establish God's kingdom.
4. **Miracles and Healing:** Emphasis on charismatic practices as tools for transformation.
5. **Strategic Framework:** Systematic approach to influencing society to align with Christian values.

Summary: While both share the belief in a future period of peace and righteousness, NAR adopts a more active and strategic approach, emphasizing apostles, spiritual warfare, and dominion over societal spheres.

Dominionism

Dominionism is the belief that Christians are mandated to control societal aspects like government and media to implement biblical values, based on Genesis 1:28. It overlaps with NAR through concepts like the 7 Mountain Mandate but includes unique features like modern-day apostles and prophets guiding the church's mission.

Summary: Dominionism is a broader belief that overlaps with NAR's goals, but NAR includes additional elements like apostolic and prophetic roles.

CONCLUSION

The New Apostolic Reformation (NAR) is a movement within evangelical Christianity that emphasizes the restoration of apostles and prophets in the modern church. Many people are part of the NAR because they believe we are in a last days movement, in which God has initiated apostles and prophets with a mandate to retake society for Him. This involves transforming various spheres of society, such as government, education, and media, to align with Christian values. The ultimate goal is to prepare the world for Christ's return, so that He may come to receive His kingdom.