

**Naked Bible Podcast Transcript**  
**Episode 179**  
**What is the New Apostolic Reformation?**  
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**Guest: Holly Pivec (HP)**

The New Apostolic Reformation (NAR) seems to quite clearly justify labeling it a movement or denomination. Millions of people around the world are part of its network of churches. However, many NAR leaders and advocates deny that it's a denomination or movement. Many Christians who are attracted by NAR teachings and practices have no idea that something called the NAR even exists. For those aware of its influence and presence within Christianity, the NAR has branded itself as representing the return of authoritative apostles and prophets to the modern church, complete with miracles such as healing and raising the dead. On this episode, we talk to Holly Pivec, and authority on the NAR, to learn what it is, what its defining characteristics are, and how we should think about its teachings.

NOTE: Shortly after our interview, Holly Pivec informed us that her statement about Michael Brown teaching at C. Peter Wagner's school was inaccurate. Dr. Brown is the founder of FIRE School of Ministry in Charlotte, NC. The doctrinal statement for that school is located here and includes a statement on modern apostles and prophets.

**Transcript**

**TS:** Welcome to the Naked Bible Podcast, Episode 179: What is the New Apostolic Reformation with Holly Pivec. I'm the layman, Trey Stricklin, and he's the scholar, Dr. Michael Heiser. Well, Mike, we're still here! We're way after September 23<sup>rd</sup>...

**MH:** Yes, we are.

**TS:** Unfortunately, we're still here... but happily, I guess.

**MH:** Yeah, I mean, think about that. We must be prophets!

**TS:** Yes! We are prophets. I don't know if that kind of goes hand-in-hand with the topic of today's episode, but I'm going to go ahead and claim that me and you might be prophets!

**MH:** Hey, and we can even bolster that claim because now the new date for the world ending is, I think, October 19. So we get to do this all over again and validate our prophetic credentials. Boy, we are so smart! [laughter] Do you want to talk Fantasy Football or do you want to get right into things?

**TS:** [laughing] Again, I am winless... or another loss. So we can just get right into the subject matter. No need to talk about Fantasy.

**MH:** [laughing] Right. No need to remind the audience that the Pugnacious Pugs are now 3-0 and at the top of the League.

**TS:** You are *dominating*. You are crushing it. Hats off to you, but that will change once me and you meet several weeks from now.

**MH:** Morrie and I have a pre-line-up meeting and I'm just taking direction!

**TS:** He's probably setting your line-ups and that's why you're doing so well!  
[laughter]

As crazy as your team doing good, what's even more crazy is the subject matter of this show.

**MH:** That's true, that's true. We have something really interesting to get into today.

**TS:** Yeah, I'm very interested in this because it's fascinating and it's going on, so I'm interested to learn more about it.

**MH:** Well, we are thrilled to have Holly Pivec on the podcast with us today. Holly's work is something I have followed, I guess fairly closely. I came across her blog and a few things about her online and wound up getting the book that she co-authored on the New Apostolic Reformation. That's going to be our topic for today, obviously.

I want to start out by asking you, Holly, to introduce yourself and give us a little bit of your background. Tell us how in the world you got drawn into this particular subject. What oriented you to say to yourself, "Hey, I really need to devote my ministry life (or a good part of it) to alerting people to the New Apostolic Reformation." How did that happen?

5:00

**HP:** Yes, well I worked at Biola University for about ten years. I was the managing editor of Biola's magazine. I was the University Editor there. In that capacity, I received correspondence from readers, and one day a reader from Colorado Springs contacted me and she asked me if I knew of a professor at Biola who could write some type of book in response to this movement she told me about called the New Apostolic Reformation. She said it was taking over churches in her city and she was very concerned about it. That piqued my curiosity because I liked research on cults and maverick groups and I had never heard of this movement. So I started digging around a little bit online and realized that this movement was extremely large and extremely influential. I was shocked I had never heard of it before. On top of that, I started putting pieces together and realized I had friends who were involved in this movement and I didn't know it because I had no framework for interpreting that until I began digging and researching its teachings and practices. I kept thinking, "Someone will surely write a book about this movement." Time kept passing and very little had been written in response to this movement, taking its teachings and holding them up to scripture to see how they stand up. So a few years ago, I contacted Doug Geivett, who is a philosophy professor at Biola University and asked him if he would be willing to co-write a book with me. He agreed, and so we ended up writing two books about this movement. One is called *The New Apostolic Reformation: A Biblical Response to a Worldwide Movement*. That is a larger book. It's much more thorough and heavily documented. The smaller book is called *God's Super-Apostles*. That book was intended to be kind of a quick introduction to the movement and it has a lot of more practical advice for people who have been caught up in this movement or know someone who is. It's more of a layperson's book.

**MH:** Right. I did the same thing with *Unseen Realm* as my academic book on the unseen world, and then we did a companion to it for basically what you just described. That's a good strategy. It's good for our listeners to know that both of those exist. Now you had been into apologetics just generally, correct? I mean, you have a degree from Biola in that?

**HP:** That's correct. I have a Master's degree in Christian Apologetics from Biola. And I've also been running my blog "The Spirit of Error" for a number of years about this movement.

**MH:** Yeah, we're obviously going to be putting links to your site on the episode page and a link for the book—both of them in conjunction with this. Real quickly, had Doug heard of this when you approached him about the book?

**HP:** Yes. The reason I had approached him initially is I had seen that he had been interviewed for a newspaper article about Todd Bentley and the Lakeland Revival that was going on about that time. So I thought, "Huh. Doug seems to share some concerns about this movement." That's one of the things that

prompted me to contact him. I had known him from my time working at Biola, as well.

**MH:** Okay, that's interesting. My listeners will know that having you on to do a full episode... we've mentioned it leading up this. There's an element of self-interest here for me because I jokingly refer to it as my "superpower." My superpower is apathy. What I mean by that is that I just don't pay any attention to pop Christianity and its movements and the movers and shakers. I honestly just don't care. I'm a text guy. That's where I'm oriented. I read peer-reviewed material and I don't really pay attention to anything else. I'm sort of in this little bubble, even though I try to produce a lot of content for free for the average person. But I just don't have my head in any of this. Our exposure as a podcast and as listeners to anything that remotely touches on this has been through the ministries of some people we support who minister to Dissociative Identity Disorder/ritual trauma survivors. They all come out of deliverance ministry, so they're very suspicious of deliverance ministry. Through them, I've heard about the NAR, and that drew me in a little bit and I started looking into some things. That's when I found your website and the book and so on and so forth.

So on one hand I have this peripheral attachment to the issue, but it's through those same people who first put this on my radar... They have told me that they have heard or read people in the NAR or people they think might be in the NAR. And that's one of the questions I have for you. There's sort of this nebulous kind of aspect to all of this. But using my academic work, which is about the unseen realm/heavenly host/demonology—that's my academic focus—to springboard certain ideas they have or name-drop and that sort of thing... I haven't seen much of that directly, although I've gotten a few website links and I've had email conversations with a few people that... I don't know, maybe they're in this or not. But again, I've tended to sort of just not really pay too much attention to it, in terms of involvement of addressing it. But when I do run into it, it's really disturbing. [laughs] It's disturbing stuff. I don't know, we've had brushes in our family with... the term that other people would use is "Charismania"... with this kind of thing. I'll just put it this way, without getting into too many specifics. It can really be destructive. It can really be destructive on a personal/spiritual level. It becomes sort of a new performance-oriented or experience-oriented approach to Christianity or to the gospel. I guess maybe that's a kind way to put it. I view that as not really understanding what the gospel is in the first place. It doesn't mean they're not believers or anything like that, but I think our audience will get the idea. I've just seen it really move from something that's kind of funny... Like, I've seen a Todd Bentley video before. It was kind of cartoonish and bizarre. But then when you see it affect people that you know and you get a little bit of a sense for the bigness of it, it really becomes something a lot more serious. That's why I wanted to have you on. Our listeners are going to have a little bit of context for this, but I just wanted to devote an episode of the podcast specifically to explaining this. You just seem like the best person in the world for this. So I'm just really glad that you came on.

10:00

Now that we've gotten to know you a little bit, let's just start here: What is this thing? If you walked up to somebody and had a conversation with them... you're at some event or whatever... and you got to talking about the Lord. Somebody brings up either the term "New Apostolic Reformation" or asks about it... How would you give people a basic introduction into what this is and, along with that, how would you identify it? We want a little definition (what is it?) and how do you spot it in the field in its natural habitat? [laughs]

**HP:** Sure. The thing is, first of all most people have not heard of the term "New Apostolic Reformation," so I want to break that out right away. If you ask somebody if they were part of that movement, many people wouldn't know what you were talking about. Many leaders in this movement will even deny that they're part of this movement. That's really important to recognize. The NAR is a movement of churches and organizations that are defined by their belief that their leaders are present-day prophets and apostles. That would be on the order of the Old Testament prophets, like Moses and Elijah, and Christ's apostles in the New Testament. These prophets and apostles claim to work spectacular miracles, like killing people or raising the dead. They give new revelations the Church "needs" in order to "bring heaven to earth." That's a buzz-phrase there in the movement. These are revelations that they would say they received during personal visits they've had from angels or trips to heaven. They are usually revelations about various spiritual warfare strategies or new practices that all Christians need to adopt so they can gain supernatural powers and bring God's Kingdom to earth with those powers. The most important belief that defines this movement is the belief that these prophets and apostles must hold formal authoritative offices in governing the church. They insist on that. These are offices like pastors or elders, except the difference is that apostles and prophets have much greater authority than just pastors or elders because a pastor or elder will typically govern in one church, whereas a NAR apostle or prophet often governs multiple churches.

**MH:** So this would be Church with a capital "C?" Authority...

**HP:** Right. They usually want to say that an apostle has authority over the entire Universal Church, but one apostle, for instance, like Ché Ahn, is an apostle over a network of 25,000 churches and organizations in 65 nations. He'll team up with a prophet, and so you can see the type of authority these people claim to have. In addition to that, the pastors and elders are expected to submit to them. So they're the highest offices in church governance. Often they'll claim their authority even extends outside the church into the workplaces, the cities, and the nations. So that is also a very far-reaching authority.

**MH:** The core here, like you said... Would you say the authority thing is non-negotiable? I don't know if that's the right word because the way you articulated

that makes it seem that all of these things are sort of non-negotiable. But you would put the authority thing at the top?

15:00 **HP:** Right. The offices. So that's what separates this from more traditional Pentecostals and Charismatics. They would say that there are people today with the gifts of prophecy or apostleship, but these are not authoritative offices that they traditionally believe these people have held. In the NAR, they would say they must hold authoritative offices governing the church, and they insist on that. So that's what sets the NAR apart from historical Pentecostal/Charismatic churches.

**MH:** This may sound like an obvious (maybe even a dumb) question, but who grants them this authority? Who grants this authority at the highest levels?

**HP:** They would say that they are given the gift of being a prophet or an apostle from God, of course. That must be recognized by those around them. Often apostles and prophets will kind of formally recognize each other during a ceremony or something like that.

**MH:** [laughs] That's kind of convenient! I don't know any better way to put it, but that just sounds like a "good old boy" network. "I got this revelation that I recognize you and you and you over there in the comfy chair." That just doesn't sound right.

**HP:** Right. And other Christians are expected to recognize their authority or be outside of God's will, and that's seen as a dangerous place to be because you're outside of God's blessing/will. So yes, Christians in a city are expected to recognize who the apostles are in their city and come under their authority.

**MH:** Let's just take City X. So Christians in the city are supposed to recognize the authority of "the apostles." Now, are there apostles in the local bodies, or when you say "recognize the authority of the apostles," is that a level up? Both, or which one?

**HP:** About three million people in the United States attend churches that are formally governed by apostles and prophets, and these are churches that have joined an Apostolic network. Therefore, they're formally under the authority of these apostles and prophets. In addition to that, though, you have many millions more in the US who attend Pentecostal and Charismatic churches where these teachings have gained a significant foothold to varying degrees. Within these churches, you will often have pastors of Pentecostal/Charismatic churches who are bringing in well-known apostles like Bill Johnson and inviting them to speak at their church. They're studying their books, they're doing small group studies on their materials, and then many people attending Pentecostal/Charismatic churches or even just regular non-denominational churches will follow these apostles and prophets through their organizations online.



**MH:** Okay, that makes it sound like... Let's just say we have a pastor of a Pentecostal church in City X that's not officially affiliated with one of these networks. He invites this apostle in. It sounds to me like the recognition that you referred to (people need to "recognize the authority" of these apostles)... It sounds like this is the way it happens. We invite the apostle in, he's a likeable guy, or we are somehow either convinced he is an apostle or we just want this guy to like us, so we're going to say he's an apostle. And then we tell our congregations as leaders, "Hey, look over there... that's an apostle and we need to recognize his authority." And then it just sort of is. Is that an oversimplification?

**HP:** No, that's true. Some churches will formally join Apostolic networks so it's a formal alignment under them, and these churches will contribute a part of their budget, usually, to that apostle. But you're right—in other churches that are part of Pentecostal denominations, like, say, the Assemblies of God... The Assemblies of God has official published documents *against* NAR teachings, and they've lost many churches to this movement. But nevertheless, many pastors of Assemblies of God churches have brought these teachings into these churches in the way you described.

20:00 **MH:** Again, that is suspiciously convenient. [laughs] Boy. I know a little bit about the AG because I have friends in the AG, including one that was a top executive. That person has just more or less told me that the AG is just as hodge-podge. "We have these commonalities, but if you actually go to one it could be like a Lutheran church and you go to another and they're climbing the walls." I could see where... there's so much independence there, so I can see what you just said—that some would sort of ignore what the denomination has said about this and go off on their merry way and have people in, and then give these endorsements. The recognition thing sounds to me like just an endorsement, for whatever reason—good, bad, self-interested, or whatever. I hope you can tell that I have a real suspicion of high-handed authority. I don't come from a Charismatic background. I don't know why I have that, but I just do. This just smells like that. I don't want to be too simplistic here or unnecessarily unkind.

By the way, in your book, I think you guys make a real effort to not be unkind—to try to be fair with people in this movement. But again, I'm the outsider and it just doesn't look good to me.

Let's go into the second thing I really want to ask in our time. You've alluded to this already, but this is a big question I have because I know people in a number of these groups under these labels. What is the difference Pentecostalism, the Charismatic Movement, the Vineyard Movement, the Signs and Wonders Movement, and the New Apostolic Reformation? I know there's some overlap somewhere in I guess all of these groups, but there have to be fundamental differences, as well. I know people who would be attached to the Vineyard Movement and they've told me, "Boy, we're just really not into that New Apostolic

Reformation thing. We have a pretty low view of that." And so it makes me wonder, well, how would I articulate a difference there? So what's the difference here? What separates these things?

**HP:** Okay, first of all, Pentecostals attend churches that are part of classical Pentecostal denominations—like I'd mentioned the Assemblies of God is the largest Pentecostal denomination. These denominations/churches emphasize the miraculous gifts of the Holy Spirit, of course, like speaking in tongues and prophesying. These are churches that are part of a denomination, whereas in the Charismatic Movement... Charismatics are people who attend non-Pentecostal churches. So they may be in mainline denominations or in independent Charismatic churches, and they also emphasize the miraculous gifts of the Holy Spirit. But they're not part of a Pentecostal denomination.

**MH:** I've heard "Charismatic Catholic" or "Charismatic \_\_\_\_\_" (fill in the blank). One is the adjective, the other is the noun. So that's what you're talking about?

25:00

**HP:** Right. That's where people within those denominations or churches that are traditionally not Pentecostals, they still embrace these Pentecostal-type beliefs. You mentioned "Charismania." As I understand it, that's a term that's been used by critics of the Charismatic Movement to describe some of the craziness that takes place in Charismatic churches, like the barking, making animal noises, rolling on the ground, and that kind of stuff. The Vineyard Movement is a denomination. Its beliefs are essentially charismatic, but it's a denomination that has about 1500 churches worldwide. It was started, of course, in the late 70's and 80's and John Wimber was a very influential early leader in that movement. The interesting thing is that John Wimber gave the NAR prophets a prominent platform early on in the Vineyard Movement, but then he ended up parting ways with the prophets. He believed they were not being provided with adequate accountability and there was a falling-out. He ended up apologizing for promoting these prophets and distancing himself from them. So that's where the Vineyard split ways. However, I should say that NAR beliefs and practices have entered some Vineyard churches again in varying degrees. You can find Supernatural Schools of Ministry, which is essentially an NAR practice. You can find those in some Vineyard churches. And just like all Pentecostal/Charismatic churches, NAR infiltrated pretty much all Pentecostal and Charismatic churches, but to varying degrees. Then you have the Signs and Wonders Movement that you mentioned. That was a term that was used especially in the 80's and 90's to describe churches like the Vineyard churches that emphasized the importance of miraculous signs and wonders for church growth and just for the "Christian experience." To the NAR, what we've been talking about... The distinctive belief in NAR is that there are governing offices of prophets and apostles—these authoritative governing offices.



**MH:** So when you say "NAR beliefs and practices are infiltrating churches," what are those beliefs and practices? It would be things like this apostolic authority doctrine, right?

**HP:** Well, specifically what I was thinking of with the Vineyard churches is there's something called "Supernatural Schools of Ministry." Have you heard of Bethel Redding... Bill Johnson?

**MH:** I've heard of that and I've heard of his name, but I couldn't tell you what he looks like.

**HP:** He's the most influential apostle in this movement currently in North America—maybe the world. He's extremely influential. Bethel music, which is coming out of his church, is being played in churches across America every Sunday morning—just your typical non-denominational/non-Charismatic churches, even. It's hugely popular music coming out of there. He has something called the Bethel School of Supernatural Ministry, which takes in something like seven million dollars in tuition a year and has something like 1900 full-time students who go there to learn to work miracles. It's a very influential school. Other churches throughout the nation and the world have been starting Supernatural Schools of Ministry, where they go to learn how to work miracles like prophesying, raising the dead, and healing people. So that's a distinctive practice in this movement—the idea that you can teach people how to work miracles and the idea that the apostles and prophets in this movement are revealing these new practices and new truths that will enable all Christians to learn to work miracles to bring God's Kingdom to earth. So that's one distinctive practice (these Supernatural Schools of Ministry). You also have the 24/7 Prayer Rooms that have been popularized by Mike Nichols' International House of Prayer, where people will sign up for shifts and take part in non-stop around-the-clock prayer seven days a week in prayer rooms in their communities. You have healing rooms, where people go to receive prayer for physical healing through an organization under Cal Pierce (he's an apostle in this movement who has popularized these healing rooms in communities throughout the nation). You have prayer and fasting events that are being held in large arenas in cities, often organized by the prophet Lou Engle of The Call. He's organizing a big event in Washington, D.C., actually. I believe it's next month—another big prayer and fasting event, and they're partnering with the National Day of Prayer for that in a lot of organizations. Looking for these types of practices... there's something called "Sozo," which is being popularized in this movement. It's a type of ministry that the movement's prophets do, where they help people kind of uncover the root cause of their emotional problems or physical problems through prophetic words and pray for that person's healing. So that's happening in these healing rooms. It's called "Sozo." Treasure-hunting is another very popular practice in this movement. This is where teams of five or six people will pray and ask God to give them clues that will lead them to an individual in their community. Like, they might be at a Walmart and they might pray and ask God to give them clues about

a person and they'll think God gave them a clue to look for somebody with red hair who is wearing a blue shirt and is walking on crutches. So they'll look for that person and then they'll go up to that person and ask if they can pray for them, and they'll use that as a form of prophetic evangelism. That's another practice that's distinctive to this movement.

**MH:** I'm sure you get this question. It's like, "Okay, Holly, what's wrong with a 24/7 prayer room? What's wrong (at least in theory) with coming with an idea of tracking somebody down to pray over them? What's wrong with prayer and fasting events?" So what do you say?

30:00

**HP:** Of course, right. Of course nothing is wrong... Prayer is great, and if people want to engage in 24/7 prayer rooms, that's a great thing. We wouldn't critique that. But what lies behind these practices is the idea that the prophets and apostles in this movement have revealed these practices as new strategies that the church world-wide needs to adopt and take part in in order to bring God's Kingdom to earth.

**MH:** Let's drill down there. "Well, Holly, wouldn't God want these events to be held? Wouldn't God be behind this?" Would you deny or affirm that, or how would you talk about that?

**HP:** I would say that God would not be behind false teaching that is promoting people who claim to be apostles and prophets in the way people in this movement do. And you have to realize that at these prayer and fasting events, it's not just prayer and fasting. You have all kinds of distinctive NAR practices that are taking place at these events and NAR leaders that are being brought in to do the teaching. So a lot of Christians will take part in these events, not realizing that they're being organized by NAR leaders.

**MH:** So you're saying they're basically recruitment tools, as well. Is that what you're saying?

**HP:** Definitely. In these 24/7 Prayer Rooms... Mike Bickle teaches that one purpose of these 24/7 Prayer Rooms is that in the end-times there will be Christians in these prayer rooms throughout the world who are calling down God's plagues that are described in the book of Revelation on the unbelievers all at the same time in all the prayer rooms—simultaneously calling down the same plagues on nonbelievers. So there's a lot more that's going on here. The type of prayer is also not your typical petitionary prayer, "God we ask, will you please do this, will you please do that?" It's a NAR-style of prayer, where people are prophetically declaring that God *will* do this or *will* do that.

**MH:** Do you think that these are successful because—I hate to put it this way, but I will—"normal" churches aren't doing these things?

**HP:** I do think that it could be possible that where churches are neglecting certain teachings, then groups that are in error will come in and capitalize on that. That seems to be standard. Even with cults of Christianity, I think that they do the same thing. They'll find a teaching that's being neglected in many churches and then go, "Oh, look! They're not teaching that. Therefore, you should come over here and do what we're doing." So yeah, I think that's true.

**MH:** So you have a lot of Christians out there that think, "Boy, I don't ever remember our church asking its people to fast" or "We never really have prayer meetings" or "We never really do X, Y, Z" (fill in the blank) and they're hungry for that, so when they hear about something like this or a friend tells them, they go. And if I'm hearing you correctly (more or less for the sake of our audience here), hunger to do these things and even the idea of organizing these things isn't a bad thing. But when you go, you're going to be exposed to ideas that really are scripturally aberrant, and that's the concern, correct?

**HP:** That's correct. Yes.

**MH:** Okay. Because you've mentioned this International House of Prayer (IHOP) thing. I've heard of that. I can't say I know if anybody that I know is specifically involved in that, but I can see again where Christians want to do things to serve the Lord and they might have had these experiences, or at least these disciplines/practices in one part of their Christian life and it's been years since they saw this or that, or participated in something like that. So it doesn't surprise me that there's a receptive audience. This probably isn't the best term to use, but it's kind of like a gateway drug. [laughs] You get them in the door, you get them into the location with this, and then... It's not bait & switch. What they went to do there happens, but then this other stuff sort of gloms onto it and then they think, "This was a great idea! Who organized this?" And it was Apostle So-and-So. It was his idea. "Well, he must be a great guy." Then you start hearing about the apostolic authority thing. It's not hard for me to see how this works and how legitimate things can be used as carrots dangled before the Christian that wants that carrot. Time goes by and you get exposed to some things that really are questionable.

35:00

**HP:** I would say that what a lot of people don't realize is that terms have been redefined. In the NAR when they talk about prayer, again, they're not talking about asking God to do this or that. They are declaring that God *will* do this or that and that words have creative power. It's a different thing. It's not a traditional view of prayer.

**MH:** How is that articulated? How is that explained? Because I'm sure NAR leadership or people who have been exposed to this for quite a long time... Somebody is going to ask them, "Why would I say 'declare?'" What is this declaring thing? How can I declare something that God is going to do?" How do they explain that? What's the rationale for that?

**HP:** Well, C. Peter Wagner talks about this different type of prayer. It's often called "warfare prayer," and it's just described that there are different types of prayer and that some prayer is petitionary but some prayer is actually... they call it "apostolic prayer." There are different terms: "prophetic decrees," "prophetic proclamations." They will say that these are times when something more is needed and that God has actually given believers the authority to make these types of proclamations.

**MH:** So every believer is a prophet in this sense?

**HP:** Well, no.

**MH:** Because that would be trading their authority, or somebody's authority.

**HP:** Right. So apostles and prophets are seen usually as having more authority, so that's why they will call proclamation. They make maybe apostolic or prophetic proclamations.

**MH:** Like papal bulls. [laughter] No, really. There's a special label that goes on statements that are intended by the faithful to be understood as the pope speaking *ex cathedra*, as opposed to the pope just sounding off on something.

**HP:** Right. Whereas individual believers are seen as having authority to make proclamations, but those might be more proclamations like in their own life. Like, "I'm going to decree that my son will stop using drugs"—things that pertain to them more individually. But if it's something that would be for a city or a nation or something like that, usually that would come from an apostle or prophet and their followers would agree and decree that with them.

**MH:** So what happens when failure occurs? "I decree that my son or daughter is going to stop using drugs," and then they don't. How is failure processed?

**HP:** These things are unfalsifiable. It always comes down to there being some reason why it didn't work, it didn't take.

**MH:** And it's never God, so it must be you. Because you were the only two people involved. [laughs]

**HP:** C. Peter Wagner, one of the influential leaders in this movement who coined the term "New Apostolic Reformation," basically said, "One reason why we've been issuing all these decrees and they haven't worked is because we didn't realize the importance of another type of apostle that we never knew about before. This type of apostle is called a 'workplace apostle.' And workplace apostles have authority over the sectors of society, like media, government, and education. So now that we're recognizing these apostles whose spheres of

authority are in the workplace, now they can issue these decrees that are in their sphere of authority. And now we'll finally have the transformation of our cities and nations. This is why it hasn't happened yet." So there's always a new revelation that comes along that explains why it hasn't been working so far.

40:00

**MH:** We need some kind of sound effect here, because I'm rolling my eyes right now. That sounds to be like, "Well, the average person in the pew really doesn't have any connection to God. We need this networked hierarchy for God to pay attention." Again, that's just me processing what you just said. I just don't see how people think that's coherent or—to be more blunt—put up with that. Is it biblical illiteracy, or what is it? If I'm jumping through all these hoops that you're telling me I need to jump through, and I'm at these activities and I'm really making an effort, and the effort is sincere, and then we have these things that don't happen... "Well, the reason that these things don't happen is because we need a few more layers between you and God." That just strikes me that it should be self-evidently absurd, but apparently it's not.

**HP:** Right. The ironic thing in this movement is that they would say they are actually the only churches that truly follow the priesthood of all believers—that they allow people to have this direct access to God that the other denominations and churches haven't allowed. But you're right—it's really the apostles and prophets who have the authority and power.

**MH:** Your priesthood is nothing without those other people.

**HP:** Right.

**MH:** That's just a shame. It really is just a shame. You mentioned you had friends... When you started getting into this, you discovered you had friends that were in churches that were either part of these networks or dabbling with this or that. What did you do? And what would you do today? I'm sure there's probably a difference between what you did then and what you would do today, but that's a springboard into this question: How do you gently but honestly talk to someone who's really hooked into this in a helpful way?

**HP:** I'll just mention that in our book, *God's Super-Apostles*, we actually have one entire appendix that addresses that question at great length, in case people want to hear more on that. But first, I would say it's really important to clarify what somebody actually believes. A lot of people might be attending these churches and not actually know what the leaders of the churches are actually teaching. They might hear them mention an apostle or a prophet and just think they're talking about this in more of a standard Pentecostal or Charismatic kind of way and not know that they're actually seeing something much more than that. To really clarify what they believe and that they understand what the leaders of their church or organization are teaching is important.

Then what I really did (and what I think people really need to do next) is to ask people who are getting caught up in this movement to support their beliefs from scripture. Leaders of this movement will say that scripture is the highest authority that we should all appeal to. Of course, they approach scripture much differently (and that's a different topic of discussion), but they will say it's our highest authority. So to really ask someone to support their beliefs from Scripture, and you have to keep gently coming back to that. What I saw with people I knew is that over time, if you keep challenging them with scripture gently and asking them to support their beliefs from scripture, it may not seem like you're getting through at all, but suddenly there are starting to be a few cracks in the worldview and they start seeing where it falls apart.

So I have seen people leave this movement and have their eyes opened, but it takes time. [laughs] It takes a lot of patience with them and a lot of prayer. It's very important to be gentle and kind, especially because leaders in this movement will often demonize critics of this movement—literally. They will say that people who oppose this movement are under the influence of one of the highest-ranking demonic principalities that they call the "corporate spirit of religion." If you oppose this movement or question its leaders, they'll say you have a Jezebel spirit, you're a Pharisee, you're a legalist... there is just a full list of names of what they will call people who criticize their teachings. So people in this movement have been taught to anticipate that people who oppose this movement are "mean people." So it's very important that if you are just gentle and kind with them, that alone may cause them to start questioning the other things their leaders have told them—if you're not acting in the way their leaders said you would act. Pastor or others who have a platform... Doug and I urge these people to use their platform (like you are) to warn people about this movement and the encroachment of NAR teachings in their churches. It's really important that church leaders learn about this movement themselves and familiarize themselves with the key NAR teachings and NAR interpretations of scripture that are used to support those teachings. This movement is so huge—it's worldwide and it's in every city and town and it's flying under the radar. That wouldn't be happening if more pastors and church leaders were using their platforms to warn their people.

45:00

**MH:** Is it intentionally politically connected? Here's why I ask this. I don't know if you've read this book, but a few years ago I read Jeff Sharlet's book called *The Family*. Sharlet is on the political left, which I'm not a lefty, but I thought it was a good book. He put his cards on the table so you knew where he stood at any given point, but this thing called "The Family" that really was something that has grown out of evangelicalism and was really connected to what could legitimately be called "the religious right," as opposed to pejoratively called "the religious right." So I'm wondering if NAR has some sort of political intentionality to it?

**HP:** Well, there is a revelation that has been given to some NAR prophets known as the "Seven Mountain Mandate." This is a revelation or a strategy that they



believe God has revealed to the Church in the end-times and that's that apostles are supposed to take control of the seven most influential sectors of society (like education, media, the arts, government) and that apostles are supposed to cast out the demons that rule over these institutions and then rise up to the top, and that's how they can bring God's Kingdom to earth. They believe government is prized because government makes the laws. So they do want to see apostles rise up to top positions in government, but the truth is that most NAR leaders are not directly involved in politics. Their real influence comes from their perceived spiritual authority. Since they're viewed as God's anointed spokespeople, their followers will listen to them when they say you should vote for this or that candidate or you should vote this or that way. Some prominent NAR prophets endorsed Trump for president prior to his election. So they do use their authority to influence how their followers vote. I think that's where their real political influence comes. But there have been certain politicians like Sarah Palin and Rick Perry (governors) who have had ties to NAR leaders in the past.

**MH:** If I went up to somebody and asked (trying not to come across cynically), "Why isn't the Seven Mountain Mandate in the Great Commission? The Great Commission just seems so simple—you bring people to Christ and they get changed hearts and they're supposed to repeat the process. The Kingdom of God is advanced when people are redeemed and they start imaging God. They start being like Jesus in every place and circumstance where they're at to change other hearts and minds. I'm not reading the Seven Mountains in there. Why isn't one of the Seven Mountains like sacrifice or unselfishness or laying down your... the stuff the apostles did. Good grief! Why don't we have the Seven Mountains be that stuff—being willing to suffer?" What would somebody say to me? I have a Jezebel spirit? Is that the quick answer? [laughter]

**HP:** The Seven Mountain Mandate is seen as a new truth—that God continues to reveal new truth and these are seen as strategies. So it's a strategy to fulfill the Great Commission, they would say. It's not directly found in scripture because it's a new truth. They would also say that one mistake we've made is we've always seen the Great Commission as a commission to make disciples of individuals, but as Peter Wagner would say, the mandate is to make disciples of *nations*. That involves taking socio-political control of entire nations, and that's the way the Great Commission is really supposed to be fulfilled.

50:00 **MH:** Boy, that's... that's bad exegesis. [laughing] I don't know how else to say it! I guess that answer would make sense in their context. So I'd have to work a little bit harder to be called a Jezebel spirit! [laughs] Oh, man.

**HP:** I think by doing this podcast you probably already qualify! [laughs]

**MH:** Well, I've been called a Jesuit and I'm working on becoming a member of the Illuminati, so we can add this to the list.

**HP:** I do want to mention that they do say the Seven Mountain Mandate can be compared to Israel's mandate to conquer seven nations before they could enter the promised land (Deuteronomy 7:1). They believe that prophets receive prophetic illumination into certain passages of scripture like that one, so they're able to see an understanding of a certain verse that nobody in the Church has ever seen in Church history. The light goes on for them and then that's a new truth that they bring to the Church. So they would say it does have biblical precedent, but it's a new take on a verse that nobody's ever seen before until God has now revealed it to them.

**MH:** You'd expect to run into elite knowledge at some point, because that's usually how these things work. What happens when apostles disagree?

**HP:** The New Apostolic Reformation (like we said) is a movement. It's not a formal organization. So these are all independent churches and organizations led by different apostles and prophets. They'll often network together for specific causes and events, but because it's not a formal denomination or organization, they're free to disagree with each other. You often don't see that publicly. I do know they do privately because I've had meetings with the leaders of this movement who have privately told myself and Doug, "I don't agree with this apostle over there about that." But they don't say that publicly often.

**MH:** How can they honestly, then, validate the other person's apostolic standing? If they're getting new revelation—new insight—from God, how is that coherent? How does that work?

**HP:** First of all, much of the teachings of this movement are not coherent, and that's what we try to show in our books.

**MH:** [laughing] Pardon me for assuming coherence!

**HP:** It's important to understand that they believe that apostles and prophets can make mistakes. They believe a prophet can be a true prophet of God and still make mistakes when they prophesy, and that does not disqualify them from being a true prophet of God. That's a very common teaching in this movement.

**MH:** If they're the same as the old prophets, how does that work? Because I don't really see the Old Testament prophets making mistakes a lot.

**HP:** They'll grant that they have authority similar to the Old Testament prophets, but they don't believe they're held to the same standards of accuracy as the Old Testament prophets were. So that's how they do that. They point to 1 Corinthians 15:29, where Paul says, "Let two or three prophets judge what the other said" (I'm paraphrasing). And they'll say, "See, that shows that prophets since the New Testament times can be mistaken because people are responsible for listening to what they say and judging it. Which sounds good, but on the other hand they'll

say they have the same level of authority as the Old Testament prophets do. So they want it both ways.

**MH:** This may seem like a real foolish question here, but what role does biblical scholarship play in any of this? What I mean by that is, is any effort made to defend these ideas using the tools of biblical scholarship? I can't believe that... Wimber... I know he was on the faculty at Fuller or something. I don't know what he taught. You've got to believe that somebody has some kind of credentials here in some way. Is that a meaningful part of this?

**HP:** There are some people who have some academic credentials who have tried to put forth a defense of some of these teachings, like Michael Brown or Jack Deere (he came out of Dallas Theological Seminary).

55:00

**MH:** Would he and Michael... I know Michael Brown—he's an Old Testament guy. Would they really be NAR, or are they defending spiritual gifts? I wasn't at Dallas when Deere was there. I spent two years at Dallas before going to grad school. I remember him and another guy whose focus really seemed to be trying to move away from cessationism to being open to the operation of spiritual gifts, which by your definition would be a lot wider than NAR. So where's the overlap there?

**HP:** Jack Deere would be beyond that. In one of his books (something about prophecy... the title is escaping me) he goes beyond that to promoting the office of prophet, I believe. One thing is that both Jack Deere and Michael Brown have taught in the Wagner Leadership Institute. I believe both of them have. This is an institute created by C. Peter Wagner specifically to train up leaders for the New Apostolic Reformation.

**MH:** I don't want to get Wagner and Wimber crossed up here. So Wimber was the one that left this stuff and later distanced himself from them, and Wagner's role is what, historically?

**HP:** C. Peter Wagner was at Fuller Seminary for about 30 years and he started introducing the idea of present-day apostles and prophets to the larger church. He brought a lot of church leaders to Fuller for a big symposium on this. He really developed a lot of the theology of the movement. He wrote a number of books about apostles and prophets today and he gave a lot of credibility to the movement because of his association with Fuller. He's one of the most influential apostles in this movement. He died fairly recently, but he's one of the most recognized leaders in the movement. He started what was essentially a seminary for the NAR, although I use the term "seminary" very loosely because it taught people to work miracles and stuff like that, and not your normal biblical scholarship. He called it the Wagner Leadership Institute, which both Michael Brown and Jack Deere have both taught at in the past, to my knowledge.

**MH:** How old was that institute? I'm losing Wagner chronologically here. Was he like in the 80's or something?

**HP:** It's ongoing. It has a presence today in multiple countries—the Wagner Leadership Institute. Wagner started it in [looking at the website]... Oh, now it's called Wagner University, interestingly. You can go to the website and read about that there: [www.wagner.university](http://www.wagner.university).

**MH:** I don't know Jack Deere, but Mike would certainly be in the Charismatic orientation. It's not like I've read all of his books, but I've been on his show a couple times and I've chatted with him in email. He's never pushed any of what I would call (based on our discussion here) some of the darker elements of this. It has me wondering where he's at. I know it's a moving target. I can already tell it's a moving target! What you thought at one point might be different from what you think now, and so on.

**HP:** Right. So first of all, it looks like the Wagner Leadership Institute started in '98. But from what I've read recently by Michael Brown, he defends people who I would call leaders of this movement, and he will kind of say it's not really a movement—it doesn't really exist. It's a figment of people's imaginations. That's kind of the approach he's taken—that people have mischaracterized the leaders of this movement and it's not as bad as people like myself are saying. It's not what we're saying it is. So I'm a little concerned with how... I know that Michael Brown has a reputation, like you just shared, as being more Charismatic. But he has been a real defender of the leaders of this movement, and that's concerned me a bit because I think by saying that this is not really a movement and people are just making more out of it than it is, that's really concerning to me.

1:00:00

**MH:** How would we define "movement?" Is movement a numbers question? Is it a networking question? In other words, setting the numbers aside, you have a group of like-minded churches that are just really well-networked. They've really learned how to do this well. Is that what a movement is? Is it networking? Is it numbers? Is it both? Is it something else? What's are the criteria for a movement.

**HP:** It certainly has the numbers: millions of people worldwide. I didn't mention this earlier, but in the global South, according to church growth researchers at Gordon Conwell Theological Seminary, this movement is responsible for much of the explosive church growth taking place in Africa, Asia, Latin America. It's part of the fastest-growing segment of non-Catholic Christianity worldwide. It's called the "independent segment" and it has about 369 million participants. So this is a huge movement recognized by sociologists and church growth researches. When we use "movement" in our book, we are defining people who share the belief in the present-day governing offices of apostle and prophet. They certainly do network together; many of them join in networks. But as I mentioned before, they're not formally connected with one another. It's kind of loose networks where they team up for specific causes and purposes.

**MH:** This question will be more or less about your impression, because I don't imagine you could actually answer this with any kind of data. "Explosive church growth"... when I hear that, I always ask myself, "Well, what does that mean?" Are those people genuinely being won to the Lord, or is it people coming out of the woodwork going to a building or a place on a weekly or mostly-weekly basis for some ostensibly positive reason? In other words, we have big churches that we can point to now that have grown at explosive rates, but to put it bluntly, you just wonder if any of the people are believers. Do they really understand the gospel or is it replacing a sense of community for them? Do they like the coffee? Do they like the support group that happens to meet there? There could be all sorts of reasons why a church grows numerically, only one of which is actually conversion. What's your impression of what goes on in these church-growth statistics?

**HP:** That's the question. Like you said, other than knowing people's hearts, I don't know how to address that impression.

**MH:** People you know that have been in this... I imagine you'd look at them and say, "Yep, they understand the gospel. They're a genuine believer. We're not asking them to be theologians, but they know the Lord and they have positive intentions here." I imagine a lot of it could be that. "There's something exciting going on over here in Building A. My church meets at Building B, but I'm going to go over to Building A because there's something going on there." Whereas they don't have the same perception. There's always this perception problem involved in this. So the one church grows, the other one dwindles. Have you come across that with any of the people you have met that sort of gravitate from something else to this, or is it with the ones you know that their individual churches were assimilated into this?

**HP:** First I'd say that I do have a question of whether some people in this movement do understand the gospel—the gospel of salvation from sin. In this movement, that's often downplayed. What's really emphasized is the teaching about how to gain supernatural and miraculous power. That's really what becomes the emphasis. Often you hear very little about the gospel of salvation from sin. So I do have a question of, first of all, if people really are understanding the gospel. And there also has been a question that people have raised of where is the church growth coming from? Are churches in this movement simply drawing people from other, more conservative churches? That's probably largely the case. They're coming from the Baptist churches and the more conservative churches over to the NAR churches. Recently I visited the International House of Prayer in Kansas City on a Sunday morning for their church service. Meanwhile, the church down the street is completely empty—just down the street!

1:05:00

**MH:** What did you find when you went to the International House of Prayer for their service?

**HP:** It was a very dynamic service. The music was very dynamic, quality music. There was a large bookstore and resources that were being sold right there in the sanctuary. The teaching... they had a guest speaker and he was encouraging people to take part in an evangelistic kind of crusade for the city, and kind of getting people excited and taking part in that. I did not hear too much explicit NAR teaching that morning. I heard a couple of things that only people that really know the NAR movement would have picked up on (vague references to certain NAR prophets that most people wouldn't pick up on). Michael wasn't speaking that morning.

**MH:** Do you know anything about the Calvary Chapel denomination?

**HP:** A little bit.

**MH:** They seem like a bit of an antidote to this. Right, wrong? They emphasize verse-by-verse exposition, which is what I grew up with and to me it's just been kind of shocking that you could found a movement that would explode based upon this simple idea that I thought, "Doesn't everybody know this?" And apparently, no—there are a lot of churches who have never heard of this idea before! [laughs] Like it was something new. So they're open to the spiritual gifts and what-not, but they really focus on the text of scripture. So is my perception on target there? Because it just seems like that would be a place you would go to learn something and you'd still hear talk about how God can do X, Y, or Z today if God wants to. But you're obviously not going to hear this apostolic authority talk. That's why I say it seems like an antidote or something better. Certainly better.

**HP:** Right, the NAR leaders and people in NAR churches would view people who attend Calvary Chapel churches as "dead" pretty much—spiritually dead. I think the Calvary Chapel distanced itself earlier in its history from some NAR teachings.

**MH:** Finish this sentence: "You're spiritually alive if and when \_\_\_\_\_." Go ahead. If you're a NAR person. "I can tell you're spiritually alive because \_\_\_\_\_."

**HP:** Because you are encountering God's presence and seeing miracles being performed through yourself, maybe daily. [laughs]

**MH:** And what's a miracle?

**HP:** You're praying for people and seeing them be healed, you're having dreams and visions regularly, you're receiving prophetic words from other people and giving prophetic words to other people. Being spiritually alive is really about practicing the miraculous gifts and having encounters with God and angels regularly.



1:10:00

**MH:** See, when I hear this kind of thing... I've been interested in the paranormal since I was a teenager, so I've read a lot in it. We have another podcast where we do a Christian review of paranormal stuff. We focus on peer-reviewed literature there. But I've read a lot of this stuff. And when you really get into that field, you understand certain things. You understand how things can be misinterpreted and misprocessed. You learn that the power of suggestion is real. You learn how easy it is to sort of mislead people and be misled—that sort of thing. So when I hear you answer the question that way, I'm thinking that there's a lot of self-suggestion and self-deception (that might be an appropriate word)... In other words, you want this to be evident in your life so badly that you see it even when it's just not there. So I think of that, and I also can't help but not hear very (I think) normative things that we read in the book of Acts like self-sacrifice, a selfless spirit, repentance, an emphasis on very practical help to people, the "all things in common" kind of thing (which, of course, isn't communism—you meet people's needs when the means are at your disposal), and you do it consistently. I just don't hear that. I don't hear about God's love, that if you repent God will forgive you... I don't hear some very normative things in this that seem kind of obvious to me. In other words, what's missing from this picture? The emphasis is consistently on something unusual—some unusual event that happens to me or that manifests around me or in response to me. There's a lot of "me" going on here. And I don't hear things like being willing to suffer for the Lord. So Sudanese Christians who are laying down their lives for their faith because they haven't had a miracle leap from their fingertips—they're dead? They're spiritually dead? Really?

**HP:** The theology is that Christ suffered so that we don't have to. That's the theology.

**MH:** That's quite contrary to some pretty clear New Testament teaching! But that would make sense. Again, in their context that makes sense to say that. Holly, this is another fine mess! [laughs] This can get really messy. Boy, I have all sorts of thoughts. None of them are terribly uplifting. But yeah—I can see why you're concerned. Do you think I'm overreacting? What do you do to help here? Honestly, other than to talk about it... I guess that's probably the major thing at this point—and like you said, try to be clear and gentle. But I'm just wondering, since some of this is so self-evident, do you think conversation helps? Is all of this symptomatic of some deeper problem that needs to be addressed in our churches?

**HP:** I have a lot of thoughts going through my head right now, too. For one thing, I think the de-emphasis on teaching doctrine in churches has really fostered an environment where people can be susceptible to these teachings. If churches were really teaching people theology and doctrine, they would be able to spot the error. But they can't spot it. I wrote a post recently on my blog about how one of

the leading prophets in this movement (James Goll) grossly misinterpreted Luke 7:44.

**MH:** Oh, I read that!

**HP:** It was unbelievable. He's the prophet for that network I told you about earlier that has 25,000 churches in its network in 65 nations. Can you imagine the influence he has? And did anybody who he was teaching that day pick up their Bible? All they would have had to do was read it (like I did) and see that he was completely misrepresenting what was there.

**MH:** Yeah, he got the wrong guy! [laughs]

**HP:** Yeah, the wrong Simon. So if people were learning Hermeneutics, to read the Bible in context, theology, and doctrine in their churches more than they are—and I think that's kind of an inadvertent problem that came out of the rise of nondenominational churches... I've been a part of many nondenominational churches over the years, but they've de-emphasized doctrine because they want to focus on what binds us all together—the core beliefs. In doing so, I think inadvertently people have stopped knowing doctrine and theology, and thus aren't able to detect these errors.

**MH:** Wow. Yeah, it seems like a generational thing. If there's a fix to this, it would be generational. There's no silver bullet.

1:15:00

**HP:** I am encouraged. I just heard a leader of the Assemblies of God in Bolivia who just contacted me to tell me that their denomination just adopted some formal documents opposing NAR beliefs. I've been contacted by a church that asked for help crafting a position paper because their church was almost destroyed by this movement. The new pastor just came in and the elders said, "We need to adopt a position paper." So on my blog, I'm encouraging churches to adopt position papers. As my co-author often said, "It's going to take a movement to stop a movement." We need to think strategically. Large Christian organizations could adopt position papers. They could take formal stances that would go far in stemming this movement.

**MH:** If we went to the Evangelical Theological Society meeting and we're in a room and you're there and you suggest that, my gut reaction would be to think that what's going through a lot of people's heads (because it's that particular event where you don't have a lot of Charismatic representation—you have some, but not a whole lot)... I think that the dominant thought would be, "That's a Charismatic problem. Let them handle it."

**HP:** Yes, that's been a problem. Doug and I, in fact, did give a paper at the Evangelical Theological Society a few years ago. It was well-received, but I think one reason this movement has been able to get so big is because a lot of people

who aren't in the Charismatic/Pentecostal world are kind of oblivious to what's going on there. "Who cares? That's just what's going on in those churches." But they need to start caring because it's coming into their churches. There are young people attending Baptist churches who are traveling to International House of Prayer or Bethel Church in Redding to attend their conferences, or they're viewing them online. People in their churches are reading books by these leaders. They just don't know it because they're oblivious to many of the teachings. We found when we were seeking publishers for our books that many of the mainstream evangelical publishers would tell us, "This sounds like a great book, but we can't publish it because we've never heard of this movement. And if we haven't heard of this movement, there won't be a readership for it!" That's been proven wrong. Our books have sold very well and there has been a large market for these books, but the editors at large publishing houses weren't in Pentecostal/Charismatic circles and didn't know this movement existed! That's a shame because it's been able to grow and grow and grow.

**MH:** Last question. I don't want to make it sound like some sort of espionage event here, but if you suspect your friend or your church or somebody you know is being unduly influenced or drawn into this, give me one or two questions you would ask to sort of expose that it is happening or not happening. How would you reduce it to just one or two kinda "gotcha" questions? In other words, the answer would give you clarity on what they're really thinking. What would some questions be?

**HP:** Often, I listen for references to organizations and leaders of this movement and that will tell me. They're plan on attending Bethel School of Supernatural Ministry or they're reading Bill Johnson's books. If they use certain buzzwords like "Five-Fold Ministry," they base that term on Ephesians 4:11 that Christ has given the Church apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, teachers to govern the church. That's the core verse they use to support this movement, and it's being used inappropriately. So the term "Five-Fold Ministry" is one. If they use terms like "apostolic" or "prophetic" to refer to church leaders or "bringing heaven to earth" phraseology... You don't know for sure, but these are all clues that will make me think they've come under the influence of NAR teachings. That kind of helps me know how to begin approaching them and talking with them.

**MH:** Wow. Well, this has been good. I think it will be helpful. I'm sure it will get a wide listenership for our audience. For me, it comes up peripherally. I guess that wasn't my last question! What I'm looking for here is how Holly would handle this... Have you ever been asked to go to speak at one of these NAR conferences or events or whatever or a radio/TV/whatever show? How would you handle that? Would you go? Me personally, my rule of thumb for a lot of things... Not just this, and nobody's beating their way here from the NAR to specifically ask me this stuff, but I do get enough threads that I figure that someday this is going to happen and what should I do. My rule of thumb has been that I'll go anywhere if I can be useful. "Be useful" means I'm not there to endorse anything.

1:20:00

If something comes up, I'm going to just tell you what I think. If it's uncomfortable for you, well, that's kinda too bad. But that's what I think, this is the way I would approach this, I'm essentially free to criticize, as well as do what you've asked me to do. How would you handle something like that? Would you go and speak your mind, or would you say, "Man, I'm not touching that with a ten-foot pole!" How would you do that?

**HP:** If they invited me to come and speak about the NAR, I would go for sure. But they would not do that. They stifle criticism of the movement. So that would never happen. But if I was being invited to speak about something else... no, I don't think I would go. Here's the thing: There have been some evangelical leaders like Francis Chan, Ronnie Floyd of the Southern Baptist Convention, Dallas Willard, and different people who have gone to the International House of Prayer and spoken at their conferences and been on the platform there. The problem is that this has brought credibility to this movement. Because then they turn and say, "Well, we're not bad! If they'll come speak here, they think we're fine." That has made my job and Doug's work a lot harder. People don't want to listen to you when you say, "Wait, this movement is way off—this is dangerous!" And they say, "How can it be when these guys are speaking there?" So I've been very concerned about the credibility that people have brought to this movement, and I think it's important to avoid lending any credibility there.

**MH:** All right. Well, thanks for spending a little over an hour with us. Like I said, I think this will be useful. It'll be helpful. Maybe it'll even be a little controversial, but that's fine. We're used to that here. So thanks for taking the time out and answering our questions.

**HP:** My pleasure, and thank you, Mike.

**TS:** Holly, before we let you go, can you tell us your blog address again and your book and where we can get that?

**HP:** Yes, my blog is [www.spiritoferror.org](http://www.spiritoferror.org). The books are *A New Apostolic Reformation* and *God's Super-Apostles*. They can be found on Amazon or Barnes and Noble. I'm just very grateful to you, Mike and Trey, for having me on the program and for just helping spread the word to warn people about this movement. Thank you so much!

**MH:** You're welcome.

**TS:** All right, Mike. I've got tons of questions. My mind is just racing about the subject matter here. It's so dangerous to me, but yet I can sympathize with these people wanting to believe in the supernatural and trying to tap into it and practicing it and believing in it. But there's such a fine line that can turn into... I don't have the word. It's just dangerous, it seems to me. It seems like a lot of people are gullible and falling for stuff that's just...

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**MH:** Yeah, and especially when you marry it to things that do have a scriptural attachment, like praying for people, fasting, and some of these things we talked about that are really normal—or at least should be normal. Christians want to be involved in that. Those are real hooks, and again, there's nothing wrong with those things. But if they're essentially... It's kind of like the theological or ecclesiastical version of click-bait. We get people in the room and then we expose them to some of these other things. You could just see how this could be effectively growing like it is.

**TS:** Yeah, and I sympathize with these people because their intentions are good and their hearts are in the right place, but how easily they are misled by these appointing apostles! I'm oblivious to it because I'm not a part of it, and I can't believe it's as big as it is. Like you and Holly talked about earlier, it's almost like they're filling a need for people that's not in the Church.

**MH:** Yeah, I think there's a vacuum there and it's being filled with this.

**TS:** And it's the supernatural void that we're trying to fill, too! So that's interesting. It's almost like the Naked Bible Approach goes head-to-head with the NAR.

1:25:00

**MH:** I can sort of see that, too. Some of the stuff that Holly alluded to about some of the teachings... She alluded to this one by James Goll in this particular passage that all you gotta do is go read it and you realize that he messed it up. I've blogged about Apostle Brian Simmons claiming that Jesus visited him in person and commissioned him to make a NAR translation of the Bible. Like, come on. If you look at who this person is, they don't have any credentials to really be doing this. But there you go—it's just stuff like this that you look at and you wonder, "How can these not be red flags?" But they're not. They're just not.

**TS:** So we're probably going to be labeled on this show here. I can only imagine if this episode becomes that popular [laughter], we're going to get something. So I'm going to go ahead and coin a term. Instead of the NAR, I'm just going to call them the "Nah." [laughter]

**MH:** We'll be the Jezebel Podcast or something like that.

**TS:** I can only see and hear that now. It's going to be interesting. I'm going to keep my eye on that. All right, Mike, that was a great episode. Next week we're back into the book of Hebrews.

**MH:** Yes we are. Hebrews chapter 3.

**TS:** Again, we just want to thank Holly Pivec for coming on our show and we want to thank everybody else for listening to the Naked Bible Podcast! God bless.

