

In light of the controversy surrounding the terms “New Apostolic Reformation” (NAR) and “Christian Nationalism,” we are issuing this statement of clarification.¹



S T A T E M E N T

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WE AFFIRM the importance of Ephesians 4:11 ministries for the Church today and believe that such ministry functions have existed throughout Church history, even if not described in these exact terms.

WE AFFIRM that contemporary apostolic and prophetic ministries are important for the well-being and mission of the Church, just as evangelistic, pastoral, and teaching ministries are important.

- *By “apostolic,” we are referring to visionary leaders who are missional, fathering, and pioneering, such as church planters, networkers, or movement leaders, often marked by their focus on gospel expansion beyond one local region. Such leaders are identified by their function, whether or not they use the term apostolic and whether or not they are Pentecostal or charismatic.*
- *By “prophetic,” we are referring to Church leaders who understand and declare the mind of God for specific times and seasons, helping the Lord’s people respond biblically. Such leaders are identified by their function, whether or not they use the term prophetic and whether or not they are Pentecostal or charismatic.*

WE REJECT the belief that contemporary apostles carry the same authority as did the original Twelve Apostles.

1. By “NAR” we are referring to a phrase coined by several leaders in recent years to describe what they perceive as a new church reformation led by apostolic leaders. Because “NAR” means different things to different people, both positive and negative, we wanted to clarify what we do believe and distance ourselves from what we do not believe.

WE REJECT the belief that contemporary prophets have the exact same function or carry the exact same authority as did Old Testament prophets.²

WE REJECT the belief that every church must be submitted to apostles and prophets to be in right order before the Lord.

WE FURTHER OPPOSE the possible abuse of ecclesial titles that manifests itself in self-proclaimed apostles and prophets claiming territorial authority over pastors in a community, city, or nation.

WE REJECT the belief that “new revelation” is essential for the life and growth of the Church or that contemporary apostles or prophets are the only ones privy to such “new revelation.”

WE AFFIRM the full sufficiency of Scripture for the health and mission of the Church.

WE AFFIRM that the spirit of true apostles and prophets should exemplify the attitude and lifestyle of Jesus (Philippians 2:4-12), coming alongside other church and workplace leaders to serve them, not replace them.

In short, **WE DENY** any affiliation with what is presently characterized as “NAR” in many circles of both Christian and secular press. We also believe that reports of an alleged conspiratorial, worldwide, dangerous “NAR” movement are highly exaggerated and misleading.

As for “Christian nationalism,” **WE RECOGNIZE** that for some, this simply refers to a healthy form of Christian patriotism, of loving God and loving one’s country. In that sense, the term is benign.

WE ALSO RECOGNIZE that some media outlets put the worst construction on our words, take us out of context, falsely associate us with dangerous, fringe groups, and unfairly malign us. For those who genuinely want to separate fact from fiction, we make these clarifying statements.

WE RECOGNIZE that America has a rich Christian heritage, despite its many historic failings, and that to the extent we have honored that heritage, the nation has been blessed. And we applaud those who encourage other Americans to pattern their lives after Christian principles that have helped bring God’s favor to our nation through the generations.

2. For further details of our view of prophetic ministry today, see the statement at *PropheticStandards.com*

In addition, **WE BELIEVE** that nationalism is a biblical concept in the sense of nations having defined borders and identities, as mentioned by Paul in Acts 17 and by Moses in Deuteronomy 32. God sets national borders and governments and authority spheres for a purpose.

WE ALSO BELIEVE in the positive value of respecting national borders and national authority, in contrast with an international one-world government.

At the same time, **WE REJECT** as unbiblical the belief that America is a uniquely chosen nation, similar to Old Testament Israel being the chosen nation of God. (Although God has used the USA in various ways to bless the world with humanitarian aid and military support, and although the Church of America has sent out missionaries worldwide, in the New Testament, Jesus, as the King of kings and Lord of lords has a special assignment for every nation, tribe, kindred and tongue represented on the earth.)

WE ALSO RECOGNIZE that there is a dangerous and unhealthy form of “Christian nationalism,” one that speaks of a potential Christian uprising against the government or hints at the use of force to advance God’s kingdom.

WE CATEGORICALLY AND UNEQUIVOCALLY DENY any affiliation with or connection to that form of Christian nationalism.

Because **WE BELIEVE** that God made one human race expressed through different ethnicities and races, all of which deserve dignity and respect as His image bearers, **WE REJECT** all ideologies and movements claiming ethnic or racial superiority.

WE DENOUNCE calls to violent, armed resistance in the name of Christian nationalism or as an alleged means of advancing the cause of the gospel.

WE REJECT the triumphalist, top-down, take-over of society as part of a so-called “dominion mandate,” also noting that we do not know of any major Christian movement that espouses such a top-down, take-over mentality.

WE REJECT the merging of Christian identity and national identity, as if the Kingdom of God and our particular nation were one and the same.

In contrast, **WE BELIEVE** the biblical way to influence society is by living the cruciform life in which believers lay down their lives in the service of others, resulting in human flourishing for the glory of God. This can include Christ-like engagement in every sphere of society.

And **WE DO BELIEVE** that Christians have as much right as any other group to have their voices heard in the public square and to influence society, functioning as the salt of the earth and light of the world, and we encourage such activities as good citizens of our various nations and as part of our sacred calling.

WE BELIEVE that Christians should seek to make a positive impact on every aspect of society, including education and media, along with politics, and that by acting on gospel principles, whole nations can be changed.

WE BELIEVE that Christians should be politically informed, should exercise their right to vote, should hold elected officials accountable, and when called by God, should run for political offices themselves.

BUT WE SEE IT AS SPIRITUALLY DANGEROUS IF/WHEN...

1. *We wrap the gospel in the American flag (or any national or state flag).*
2. *We equate our country with the Kingdom of God.*
3. *We confuse patriotism with spirituality.*
4. *We compromise our ethics to keep our party (or leader) in power.*
5. *Our church/denomination/ministry becomes an appendage of a political party.*
6. *We put more trust in earthly methods than in spiritual methods.*
7. *We marry the cause of Christ to the cause of a political party (or leader) as if they were one and the same.*
8. *We become as vulgar and rude as the candidates we follow.*
9. *We look to the White House or any branch of government in any nation more than to God.*
10. *We make a human being into a political savior.*
11. *We equate loyalty to God (which should be unconditional) with loyalty to a party or political leader (which should be conditional).*
12. *Our prayers and our prophecies become politically partisan.*

FINALLY, WE CONCLUDE BY **CONTRASTING THE KINGDOM OF GOD
WITH EXTREME NATIONALISM:**

- The *Kingdom of God* prioritizes the advancement of the gospel. *Extreme nationalism* prioritizes the advancement of its ideology even at the expense of the gospel.
- The *Kingdom of God* produces loyalty to Christ above all else. *Extreme nationalism* produces loyalty to one's nation above all else.
- The *Kingdom of God* raises the banner of Jesus above all else. *Extreme nationalism* raises the national flag above all else.
- The *Kingdom of God* promotes the interests of God above the world. *Extreme nationalism* promotes the interests of one's nation above the Kingdom.
- The *Kingdom of God* views the world through a biblical lens. *Extreme nationalism* views the world solely through a geopolitical lens.
- The *Kingdom of God* is dependent upon neither an earthly kingdom nor an earthly ruler but upon Jesus as the King of kings (Revelation 19:16). *Extreme nationalism* is dependent upon both the ideology of an earthly nation and its ruler.
- Followers of the *Kingdom of God* are passionate about a Christ-centered global awakening. Adherents of *extreme nationalism* are focused primarily on a political/ideological awakening.
- *Christ-followers* are primarily identified with the Kingdom of God. *Extreme nationalists* derive their primary identity from their nation.
- *Christ-followers* derive their primary value from being children of their heavenly Father (Romans 8:14-17). *Extreme nationalists* derive their primary value from being citizens of their country.

May the Church put God's Kingdom and His righteousness *first* so that He can trust true believers, who genuinely represent His heart, to be the salt of the earth and the light of the world.