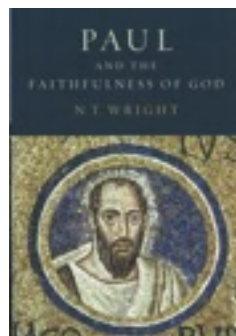


This morning we will come back to our series on Paul's early letters. Paul's early letters all focused on establishing his young churches in the gospel.

We finished 1 Corinthians, and the last three sessions we turned our attention to 2 Corinthians.

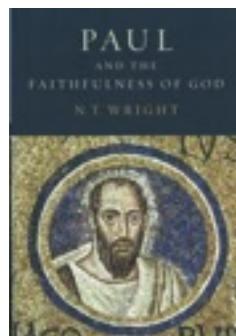
2 Corinthians is a very different type of letter since it is not primarily focusing on the kerygma and didache, but rather on Paul's relationship with the Corinthians.

Why would he devote a large letter to his relationship with the Corinthians? We will continue addressing this issue this morning.



This morning we will focus on apostolic teams. This is a very new concept to many evangelicals and even many of what we call “global Pentecostals” around the world, but very confusing to many as well.

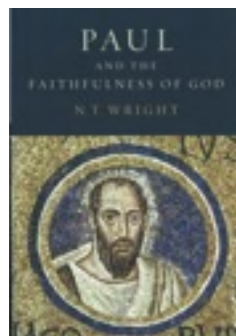
A recent example: I was working with a small network that had 6 churches, which made up that network. As the leader was mapping his movement, he assumed I was saying the 6 pastors of those churches were to now be called apostles.

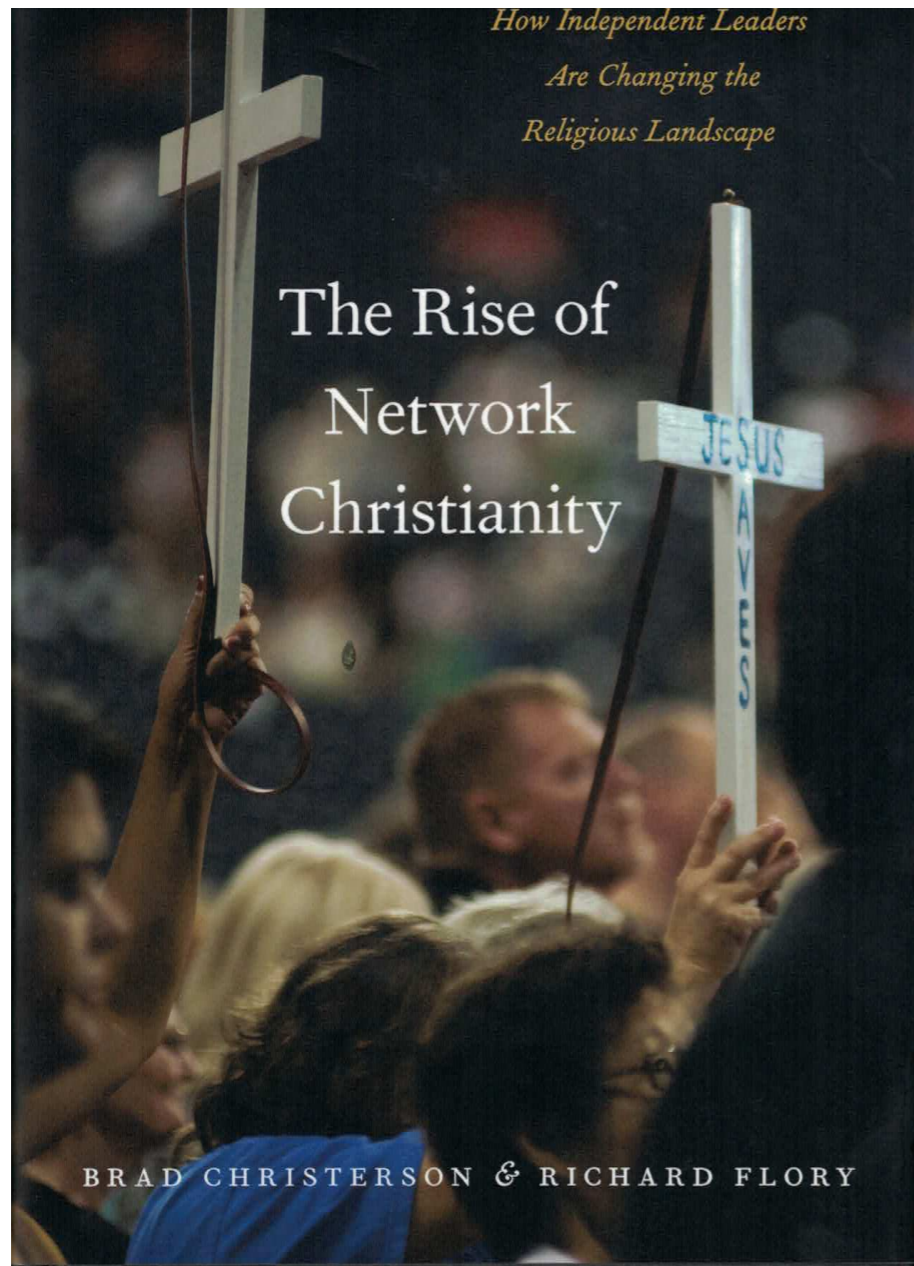


Passage: 2 Corinthians 10–12

Questions:

1. What was the core role of Paul as an Apostle? What did he see as his primary role and responsibility?
2. What kind of authority did he have amongst the churches? How did he exercise it?
3. Why did he suffer such opposition? How did he handle it?
4. Why was his role so critical? Why did the churches need to listen to him?

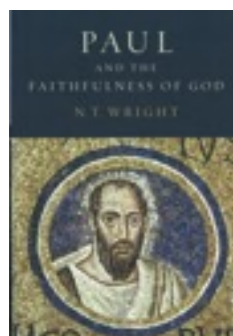


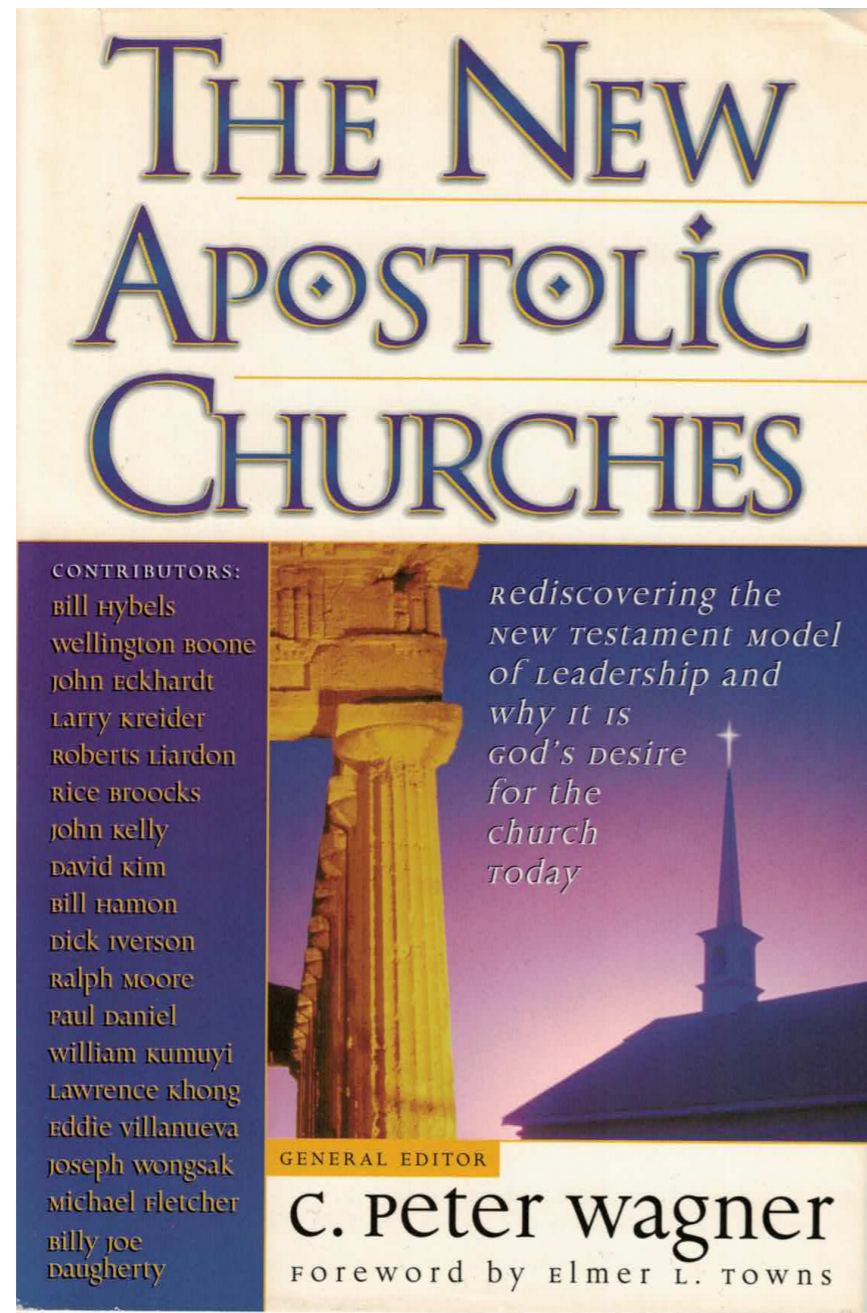


The Rise of Network Christianity: How Independent Leaders Are Changing the Religious Landscape, by Brad Christerson and Richard Flory (2017, Oxford University Press)

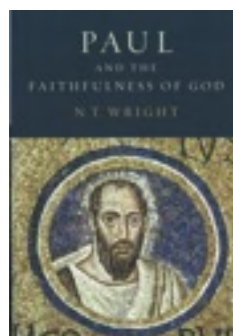
“The fastest growing movement in Christianity, both in the West and in the Global South, is now led by a network of dynamic independent entrepreneurs, referred to as “apostles.” p. 2

Paul's Early Epistles

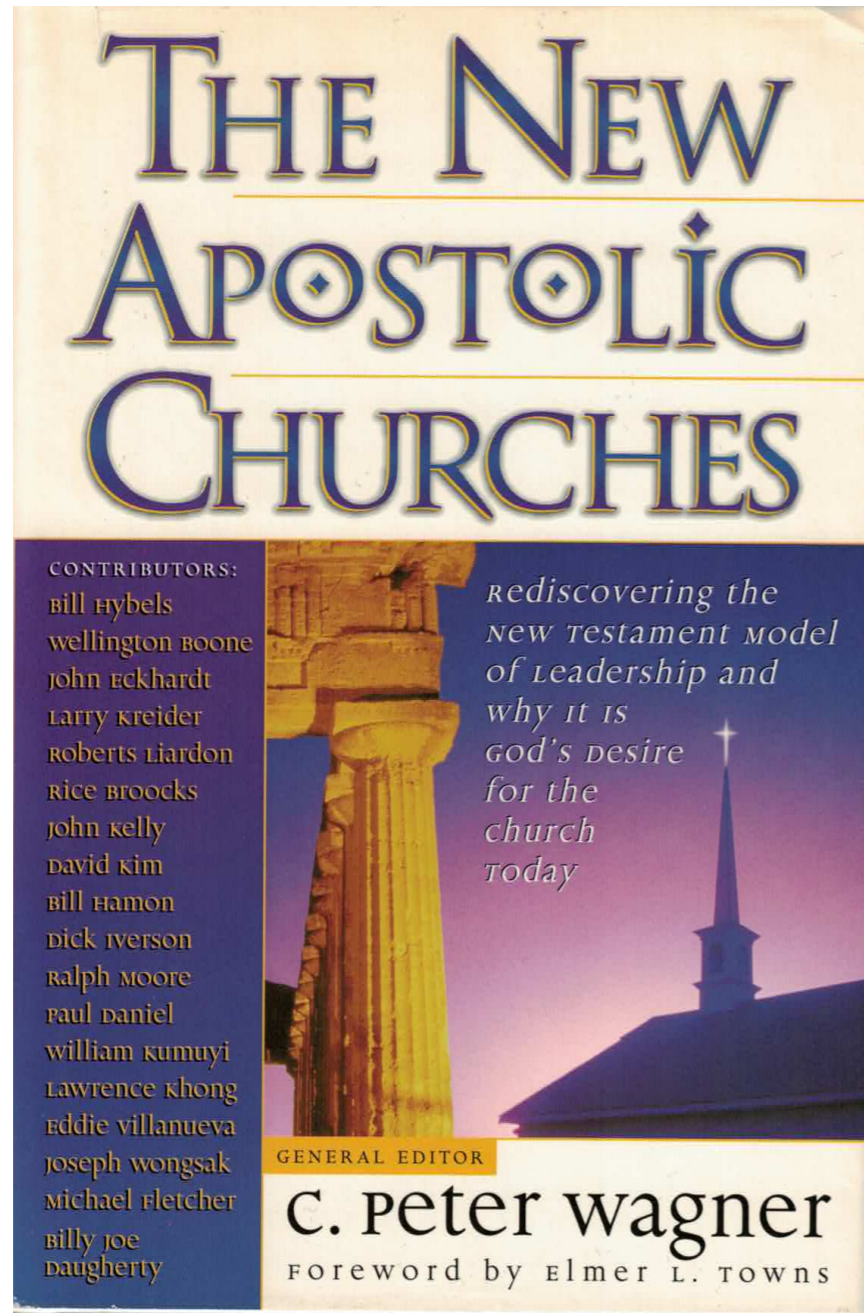




“The New Apostolic Reformation is an extraordinary work of God at the close of the twentieth century that is, to a significant extent, changing the shape of Christianity around the world.”
p. 18



Paul's Early Epistles



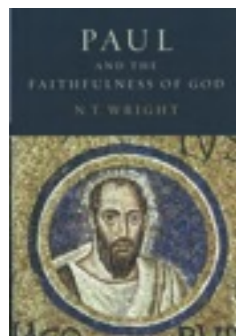
“Then, however, I did begin to notice a pattern among the amazing church growth movements:

1. The African Independent churches
2. The Chinese house churches
3. Latin American grassroots churches”

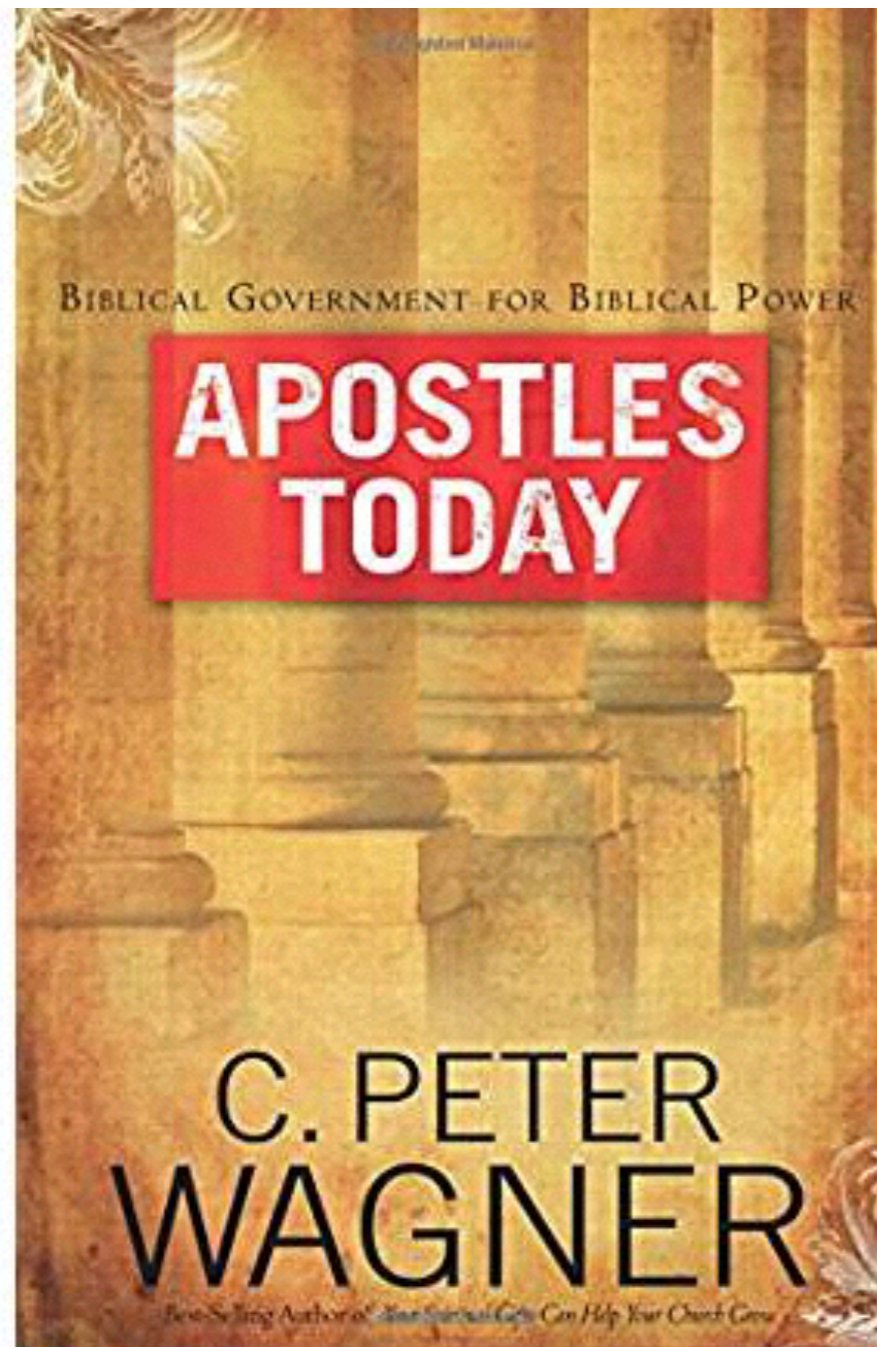
Now I add the Church Planting Movements (CPMs) in India.

This is the heart of the entire BILD ministry.

By the end of today you will see how this relates to everyone in this room.

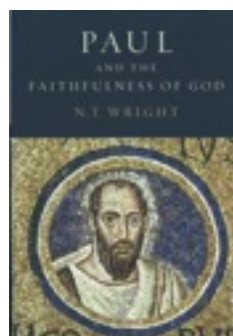


Paul's Early Epistles

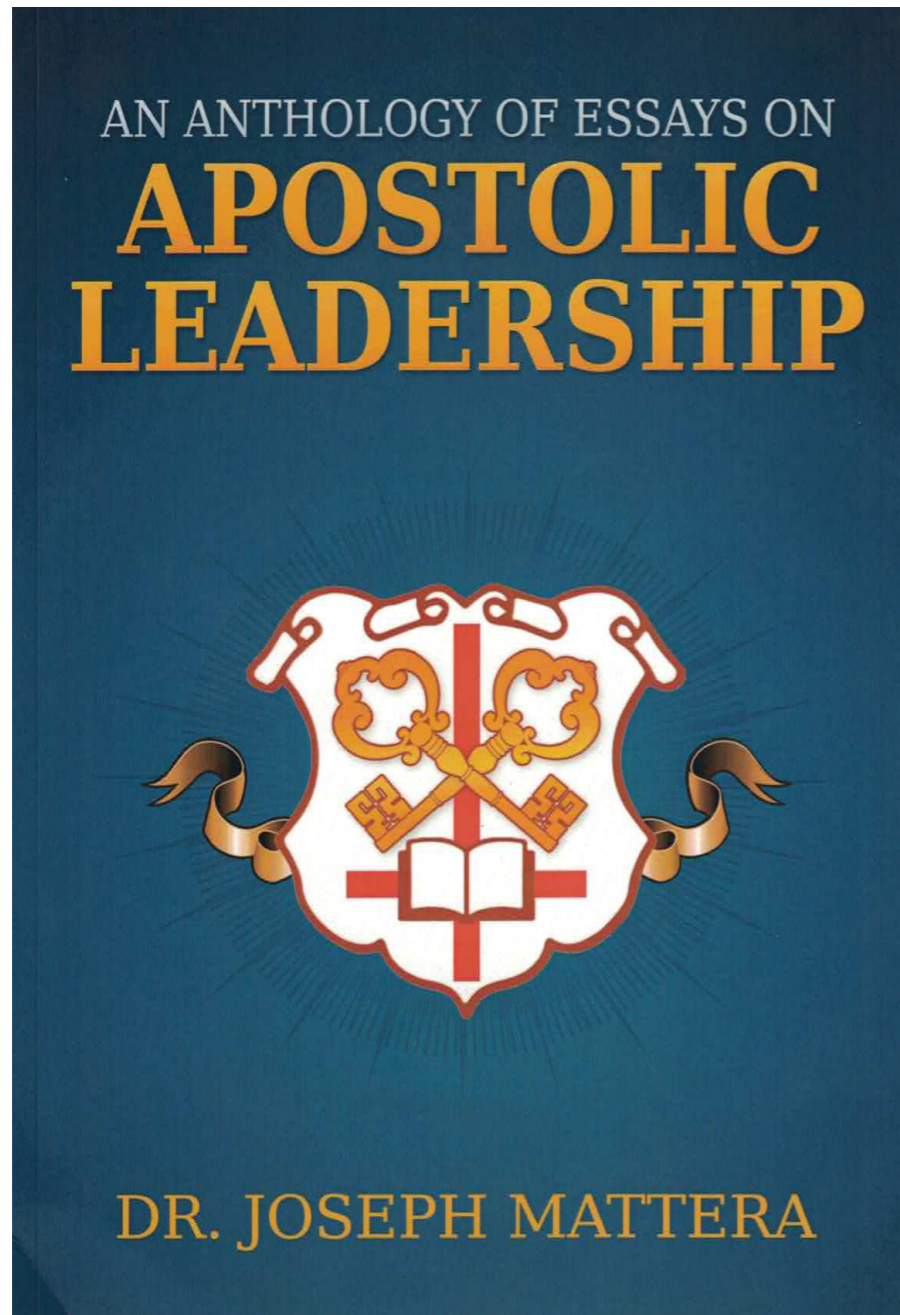


“The Second Apostolic Age is a phenomenon of the twenty-first century. My studies indicate that it began around the year 2001. The First Apostolic Age lasted for another 200 years after the first of the New Testament apostles concluded their ministry.”

Wagner, C. Peter (2012-03-08). *Apostles Today* (p. 6). Baker Publishing Group. Kindle Edition.



Paul's Early Epistles



A new movement grew up heavily influenced by Wagner, from which was formed the International Council for Apostles. (ICA)

Then came the US Council for Apostles (USCA).

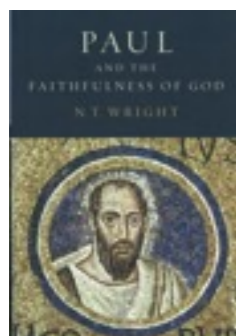
Mattera is now the director, and he is in the Antioch School doctoral program.

I convinced him to change the name to US Council for Apostolic Leaders (USCAL), which he did. They put me on the board as the 11th member and their resident theologian—I am the only non pentecostal.

Plus the large-scale movements in the Global South we're working with are part of what is called Global Pentecostalism.

Most evangelicals we work with are accepting the term *apostolic teams*. So I am deeply involved in moving forward the teaching we are going to see in 2 Corinthians today.

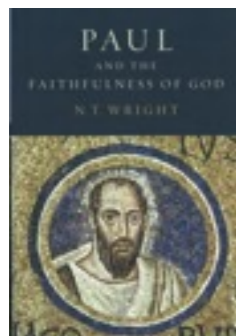
Paul's Early Epistles



Passage: 2 Corinthians 10–12

Questions:

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The Early Letters

Book 1: The Early Letters: Fully Establishing the Churches in the Gospel

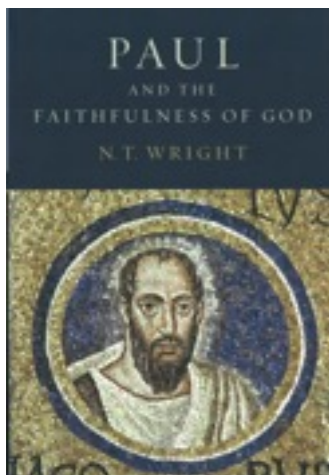
Book 2: Galatians: So Quickly Leaving the Gospel

Book 3: The Thessalonian Correspondence: Conversion to the Gospel

Book 4: The Corinthian Letters: Fragmentation of the Gospel

Book 5: The Corinthian Letters: Progressing the Gospel Through Multiplying Churches

Book 6: Romans: Complete Treatise of Paul's Gospel

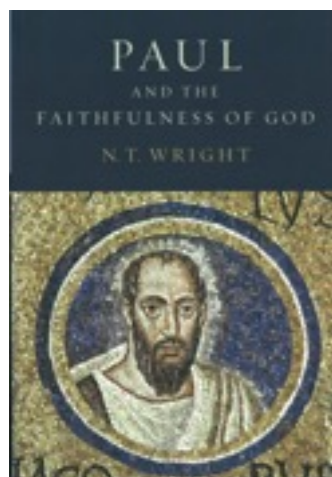


Paul's Early Epistles

The intention of these early letters was to establish the churches in the gospel.

Paul broadens the understanding of the gospel, rooting the solutions to the problems his churches were encountering to that growing and broadening understanding of the kerygma and its implications.

This intention will become clearer and clearer as each letter unfolds.



Paul's Early Epistles

Book 5: The Corinthian Letters: Progressing the Gospel Through Multiplying Churches

Session 1: The Pressure of Leading Church Networks

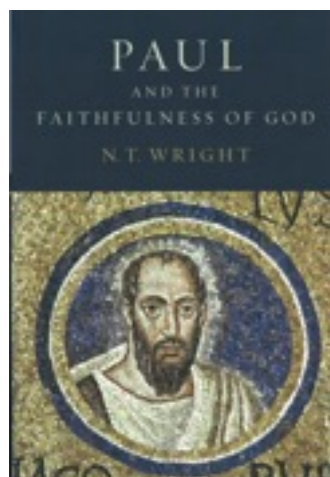
Session 2: The Ministry of the Gospel: Conflicts Without and Fears Within

Session 3: Sacrificing Network to Network for the Progress of the Gospel

Session 4: The Importance of Apostolic Leadership

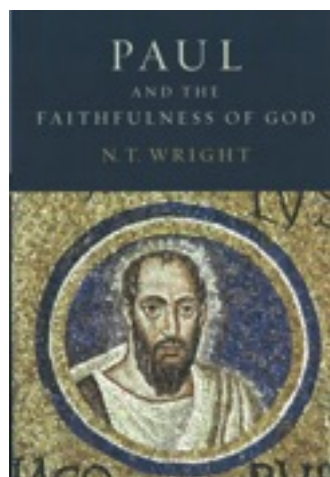
Session 5: The Appeal to the Corinthian Churches

Session 6: Use in Life and Ministry



Paul's Early Epistles

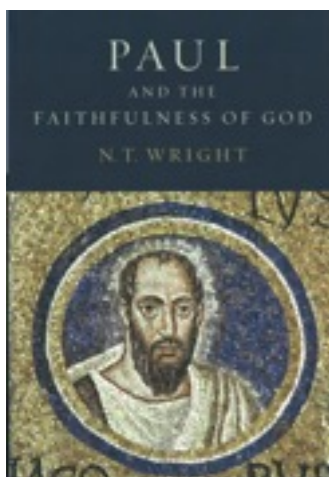
Quite a bit of background is needed to grasp the answers to the basic problems Paul was having with the Corinthian churches and to begin reconstructing Paul's intent in writing them.



Paul's Early Epistles

All of this background is found in the letters and the book of Acts.

In addition, as we attempt to grasp the intention of these letters, we will rely on a wealth of early Graeco–Roman research, as gathered by a set of scholars over the last 40 years.

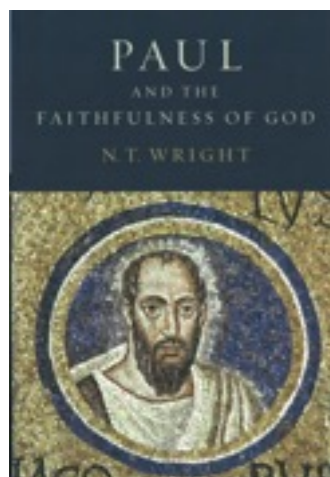


Paul's Early Epistles

The key work and author carrying the conversation is

The Social Setting of Pauline Christianity: Essays on Corinth by Gerd Theissen (Fortress, 1982).

Like Malherbe's *Paul and the Thessalonians: The Philosophical Tradition of Pastoral Care*, usually one author brings it down to the churches.



Paul's Early Epistles

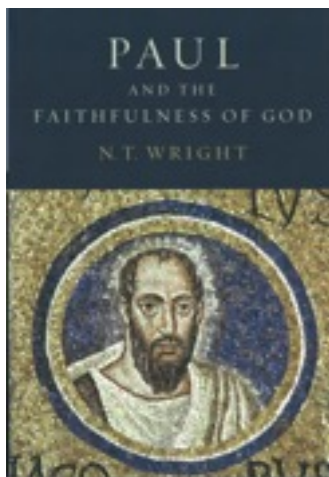
Intention Statement of 2 Corinthians

To defend his apostleship in the Corinthian churches, for which he was uniquely commissioned, that they might remain in his sphere of authority and therefore participate fully in the progress amongst the Gentiles

by describing his internal stress in carrying out his stewardship.

by describing the heart of the ministry of the gospel, “conflicts without and fears within,” as a context for victorious progress.

by defending his apostleship and seeking the Corinthians as partners in that progress.



Book 5: The Corinthian Letters: Progressing the Gospel Through Multiplying Churches

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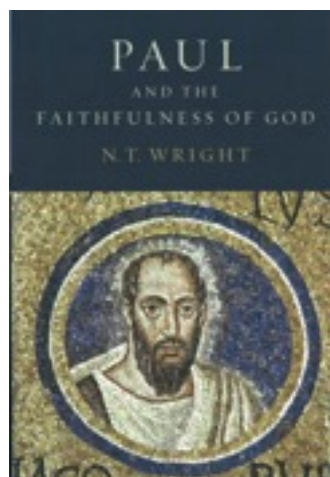
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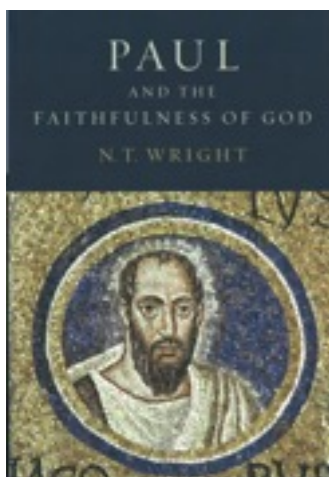


Paul's Early Epistles

We looked at 2 Corinthians 1:1–2:11, that served as an introduction, which enabled us to understand Paul’s intention in writing the letters.

It set a framework for understanding Paul’s philosophy of ministry.

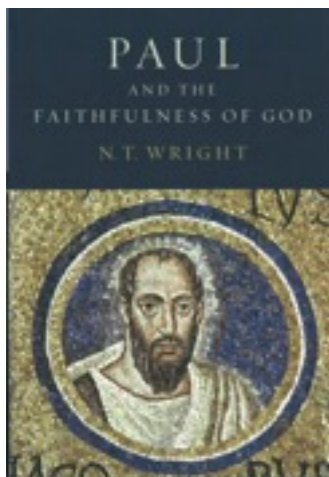
We concluded the following . . .



What do we learn so far about Paul's philosophy?

Paul's Philosophy of ministry:

- If we are not fully engaged in the progress of the gospel beyond our own sphere, we are not established in the gospel.
- Getting a church founded will involve a significant amount of strong leadership and confrontation.
- Progress of the gospel is very demanding, and it demands churches that fully participate in that expansion.
- Those on the front lines should expect constant pressure, deep discouragement, and a lot of criticism.
- Apostolic leaders must be able to make convincing, authoritative arguments to defend their authority, teaching, and ministry sphere.



Paul's Early Epistles

Book 5: The Corinthian Letters: Progressing the Gospel Through Multiplying Churches

Session 1: The Pressure of Leading Church Networks

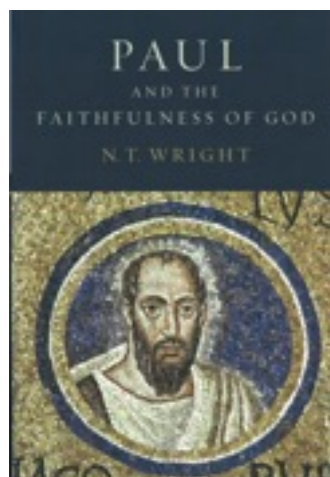
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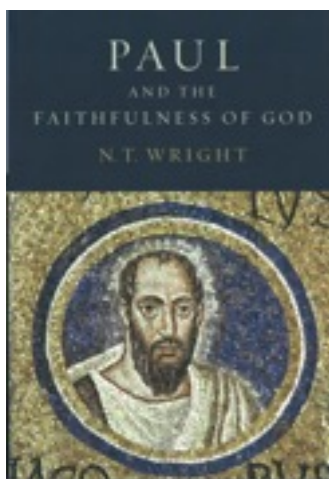
Session 6: Use in Life and Ministry



Paul's Early Epistles

Paul’s “theology of perspective on ministry”—his calling, what success really is (2 Corinthians 2:12–7:5):

1. Christ’s building of His kingdom is a “triumphal march” (which he is accomplishing through building His Church). But the process will be one battle after another, in which some will grow closer to His kingdom and some will be driven farther away. 2:14–17
2. Leaders are qualified as stewards of the New Covenant (not by our own merits), and as we proclaim the good news, the Spirit writes the words of the covenant on the hearts of those who believe and will transform them into the glory of the Lord himself. 3:1–18

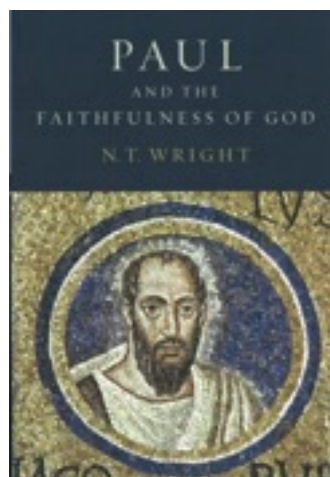


Paul's "theology of perspective on ministry"—his calling, what success really is (2 Corinthians 2:12-7:5):

3. We do not lose heart because we are simply clay pots filled with the glory of Christ, and when under all kinds of pressure the cracks allow others to see Christ (except those who are perishing). The entire process of our outer man decaying is producing inner renewal day by day and an eternal weight of glory. 2 Corinthians 4:1–17
4. We will be given new bodies like Christ's when our old one is destroyed, and we will appear before Christ in the future to give an account of our ministry as ambassadors for Christ; therefore, we need to press on in our ministry recognizing that we are new creations in process and see all believers through this lens. 2 Corinthians 5:1–21

Paul’s “theology of perspective on ministry”—his calling, what success really is (2 Corinthians 2:12–7:5):

5. We should anticipate a massive set of external and internal conflicts as we serve as ambassadors for Christ and view these conflicts as the process of Christ building His kingdom through His churches and motivating true, sacrificial participation of churches in this ministry. 2 Corinthians 6:1–18



Book 5: The Corinthian Letters: Progressing the Gospel Through Multiplying Churches

Session 1: The Pressure of Leading Church Networks

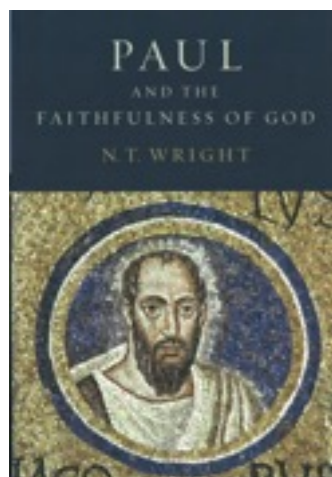
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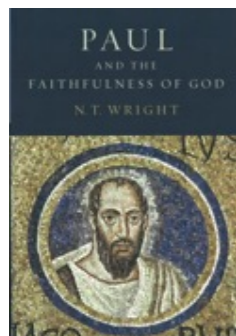
Session 6: Use in Life and Ministry



Paul's Early Epistles

Paul's Theology of Giving as Part of Churches Being Established in the Gospel

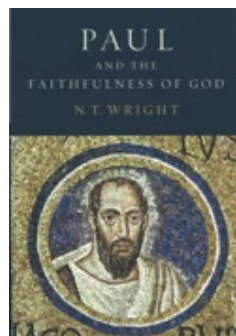
1. Networks of churches (Macedonian example), even if they are poor, need to sacrificially give to the progress of the gospel and the building of networks of churches worldwide—a vital model and motivation to others.
2. We need to take collections as churches to contribute to the progress of the gospel, to support apostolic team work (Paul receive a gift from Ephesus via Titus, which freed him up) and Paul used the need of the Jerusalem churches to build the network of networks.)
3. Churches need to think in terms of themselves as networks (Macedonian churches, Galatian churches, Achaia churches; China 5 families, India networks, etc.)



Paul's Early Epistles

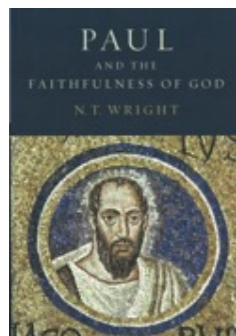
Paul's Theology of Giving as Part of Churches Being Established in the Gospel

4. Networks like Achaia (especially like Corinth), which have a wealth of gifts and resources, are not fully established if they do not excel in using their financial resources to progress the gospel.
5. It is easy for churches to begin strong in their commitment, yet fail to follow through. Evidently it is even easier for churches to fail (and of course individuals) if they have significant wealth.
6. There is a sort of “movement balancing” that takes place when churches that are wealthy support church networks and movements, as may be the case of wealthy networks in the future.



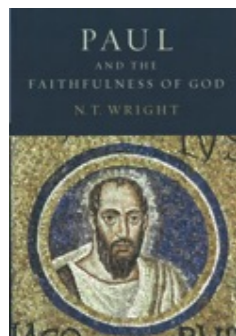
Paul's Theology of Giving as Part of Churches Being Established in the Gospel

7. Part of the job of apostolic leaders is to keep networks motivated around these ideas, to make and follow through on commitments, and to see they are used in an accountable way.
8. The proof that we mean business—that we are serious about the gospel and its progression, in our own lives and churches—is to participate with our resources, specifically in giving money.



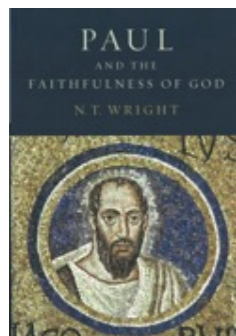
Paul's Theology of Giving as Part of Churches Being Established in the Gospel

9. Commitments to give in significant collections is contagious and motivates others (example of a foundation who recently came here), so key, more wealthy churches and church networks need to take the lead.
10. Paul saw part of his “business” (the ministry is not run like a “profit” business), and that of his team’s, was motivating these more wealthy networks.



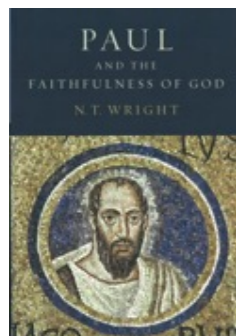
Paul's Theology of Giving as Part of Churches Being Established in the Gospel

11. Churches need to understand (applies to individual households as well) that when we give in this way to the progress of the gospel we are “enriched in every way,” so the actual motivation to major giving by apostolic leadership to the churches is actually for their benefit.
12. The true, fullest motivation, though, is really coming to grips with the gift we have received from Jesus—the gospel and all its benefits, an indescribable gift—which is all part of becoming fully established in the gospel through the giving of our own gifts.



Now we turn our attention to the last major section of 2 Corinthians where Paul reflects on his role and function as an Apostle.

2 Corinthians 10–12



Book 5: The Corinthian Letters: Progressing the Gospel Through Multiplying Churches

Session 1: The Pressure of Leading Church Networks

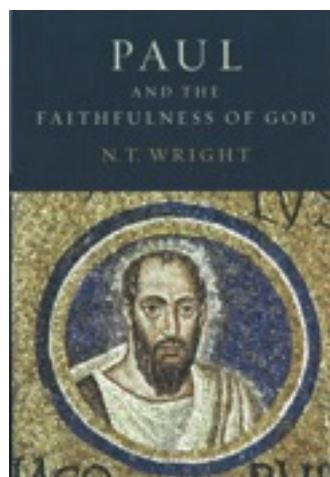
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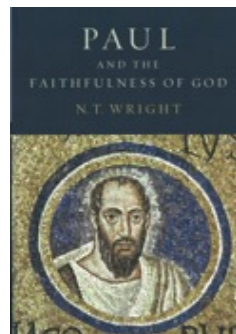
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Session 6: Use in Life and Ministry



Paul's Early Epistles

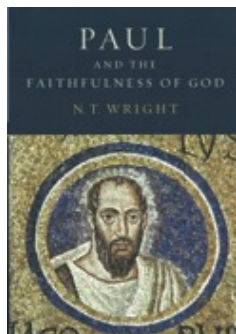
10:1 Think of the Messiah, meek and gentle; then think of me, Paul— yes, Paul himself!— making his appeal to you. You know what I'm like: I'm humble when I'm face to face with you, but I'm bold when I'm away from you! ²Please, please don't put me in the position of having to be bold when I'm with you, of having to show how confident I dare to be when I'm standing up to people who think we are behaving in a merely human way. ³Yes, we are mere humans, but we don't fight the war in a merely human way. ⁴The weapons we use for the fight, you see, are not merely human; they carry a power from God that can tear down fortresses! We tear down clever arguments ⁵and every proud notion that sets itself up against the knowledge of God. We take every thought prisoner and make it obey the Messiah. ⁶We are holding ourselves in readiness to punish every disobedience, when your obedience is complete. 2 Corinthians 10:1–6 (N. T. Wright)



Paul's Early Epistles

⁷Look at what's in front of your face. If anyone trusts that they belong to the Messiah, let them calculate it once more: just as they belong to the Messiah, so also do we! ⁸For if I do indeed boast a bit too enthusiastically about the authority which the Lord has given me—which is for building you up, not for pulling you down!— I shan't be ashamed. ⁹I wouldn't want to look as if I were trying to frighten you with my letters. ¹⁰I know what they say: "His letters are serious and powerful, but when he arrives in person he is weak, and his words aren't worth bothering about." ¹¹Anyone like that should reckon on this: the way we talk in letters, when we're absent, will be how we behave when we're present.

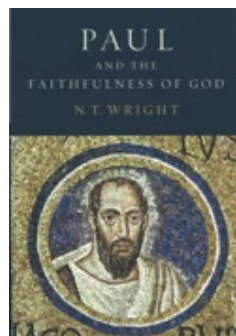
2 Corinthians 10:7–11 (N. T. Wright)



Paul's Early Epistles

Paul's Defense of His Apostolic Role and Responsibility

1. Paul's authority rested in the authoritative word given to him from Christ (embodied in his letters) and his gifted ability to hold the teaching against any human arguments made against it.
2. He was humble in his general teaching, but exercised the authority needed to hold his churches to that body of teaching, challenging any arguments brought against it, knowing the word of Christ carried supernatural power.
3. Though he was weak, his weapons (his letters and his arguments of defense) carried enormous spiritual power, which he would teach boldly and confrontationally (even face to face) as needed.

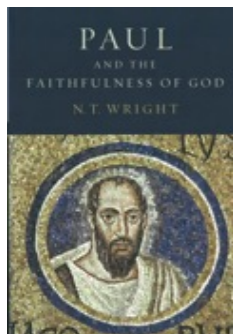


¹²We wouldn't dare, you see, to figure out where we belong on some scale or other, or compare ourselves with people who commend themselves. They measure themselves by one another, and compare themselves with one another. That just shows how silly they are! ¹³But when we boast, we don't go off into flights of fancy; we boast according to the measure of the rule God has given us to measure ourselves by, and that rule includes our work with you! ¹⁴We weren't going beyond our assigned limits when we reached you; we were the first to get as far as you with the gospel of the Messiah. ¹⁵We don't boast without a measuring rule in the work someone else has done. This is what we hope for: that, as your faith increases, we will be given a much larger space for work, according to our rule, ¹⁶which is to announce the gospel in the lands beyond you, not to boast in what has already been accomplished through the rule someone else has been given. ¹⁷"Anyone who boasts should boast in the Lord!" ¹⁸Who is it, after all, who gains approval? It isn't the person who commends himself. It's the person whom the Lord commends.

2 Corinthians 10:12–18 (N. T. Wright)

We, however, will not boast beyond limits, but will keep within the field that God has assigned to us, to reach out even as far as you. ¹⁴ For we were not overstepping our limits when we reached you; we were the first to come all the way to you with the good news of Christ. ¹⁵ We do not boast beyond limits, that is, in the labors of others; but our hope is that, as your faith increases, our sphere of action among you may be greatly enlarged, ¹⁶ so that we may proclaim the good news in lands beyond you, without boasting of work already done in someone else's sphere of action.

2 Corinthians 10:13–16 (NRSV)



Paul's Early Epistles

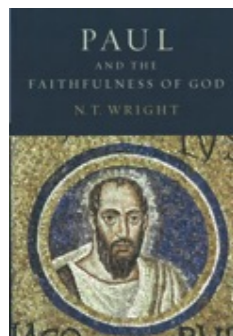
Paul's Defense of His Apostolic Role and Responsibility

Key word here

field—area, sphere, territory (LN), sphere of action or influence (BGD)

“as your faith grows” when faithful in current sphere of church networks . . . God will enlarge it. That we can boast in!

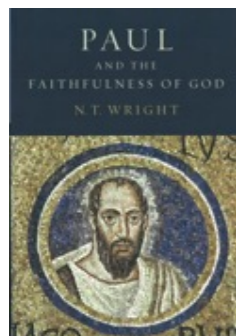
“may be greatly enlarged, so that we may proclaim the good news in lands beyond you”



Paul's Early Epistles

Paul's Defense of His Apostolic Role and Responsibility

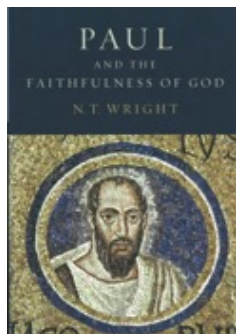
4. Paul's authority was not a formal authority based on rank, in which one has higher rank than another and boasts they are more important because of position.
5. Paul's boasting was in stewarding *the field* God had given him, and as the churches' faith grew, he sought to enlarge that sphere by seeking to proclaim the gospel in other lands.



11:1 I'd be glad if you would bear with me in a little bit of foolishness. Yes: bear with me, please! ²I'm jealous over you, and it's God's own jealousy: I arranged to marry you off, like a pure virgin, to the one man I presented you to, namely the Messiah. ³But the serpent tricked Eve with its cunning, and in the same way I'm afraid that your minds may be corrupted from the single-mindedness and purity which the Messiah's people should have. ⁴For if someone comes and announces a different Jesus from the one we announced to you, or if you receive a different spirit, one you hadn't received before, or a different gospel, one you hadn't accepted before, you put up with that all right. ⁵According to my calculations, you see, I am every bit as good as these super-apostles. ⁶I may be untutored in speaking, but that certainly doesn't apply to my knowledge. Surely that's been made quite clear to you, in every way and on every point!

2 Corinthians 11:1–6 (N. T. Wright)

Paul's Early Epistles

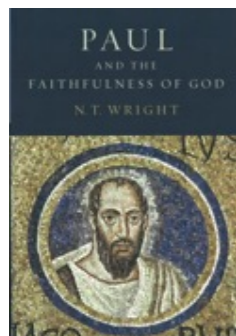


⁷Did I then commit a sin when I humbled myself in order to exalt you? When I announced the gospel of God to you without charging you for it? ⁸I robbed other churches by accepting payment from them in order to serve you; ⁹and when I was with you, and was in need of anything, I didn't lay a burden on anybody, because my needs were more than met by the brothers who came from Macedonia. That's how I stopped myself from being a burden to you—and I intend to carry on in the same way. ¹⁰As the Messiah's truthfulness is in me, this boast of mine will not be silenced in the regions of Achaëa. ¹¹Why? Because I don't love you? God knows. . . ! ¹²I'm going to continue to do what I've always done, so as to cut off any opportunity (for those who want such an opportunity!) for anyone to look as if they can match us in the things they boast about. ¹³Such people are false apostles! The only work they do is to deceive! They transform themselves so that they look like apostles of the Messiah— ¹⁴and no wonder. The satan himself transforms himself to look like an angel of light, ¹⁵so it isn't surprising if his servants transform themselves to look like servants of righteousness. They will end up where their deeds are taking them.

2 Corinthians 11:7–15 (N. T. Wright)

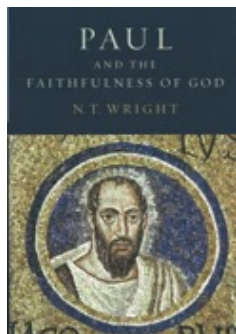
Paul's Defense of His Apostolic Role and Responsibility

6. Paul had the view that he needed to get the churches established in Christ's teaching so he could turn elsewhere and they could continue to mature in Christ and impact their area, but he was afraid their minds were being corrupted—not one minded, embracing a different gospel.
7. Paul was untutored in speaking (not a skilled or trained orator from the professional class), but was very skilled in his knowledge; his arguments were superior at every point.
8. Paul worked hard to cut off the churches from so-called apostles (orators of light) who did not follow the teaching he was delivering.



¹⁶I'll say it again: don't let anyone think I'm a fool! But if they do — well, all right then, welcome me as a fool, so that I can do a little bit of boasting! ¹⁷What I'm going to say now, I'm not saying as if it came from the Lord, but as if I was a fool, as if I really did want to indulge myself in this kind of boasting. ¹⁸Plenty of people are boasting in human terms, after all, so why shouldn't I boast as well? ¹⁹After all, you put up with fools readily enough, since you are so wise yourselves. ²⁰You put up with it if someone makes you their slave, or if they eat up your property, or overpower you, or give themselves airs, or slap you in the face. ²¹Well, I'm ashamed to say it: we weren't strong enough for that!

2 Corinthians 11:16–21 (N. T. Wright)

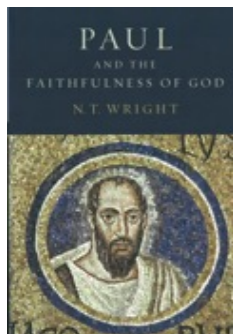


Paul's Early Epistles

Whatever anyone else dares to boast about (I'm talking nonsense, remember), I'll boast as well. ²²Are they Hebrews? So am I. Are they Israelites? So am I. Are they the seed of Abraham? So am I. ²³Are they servants of the Messiah?— I'm talking like a raving madman— I'm a better one. I've worked harder, been in prison more often, been beaten more times than I can count, and I've often been close to death. ²⁴Five times I've had the Jewish beating, forty lashes less one. ²⁵Three times I was beaten with rods; once I was stoned; three times I was shipwrecked; I was adrift in the sea for a night and a day. ²⁶I've been constantly traveling, facing dangers from rivers, dangers from brigands, dangers from my own people, dangers from foreigners, dangers in the town, dangers in the countryside, dangers at sea, dangers from false believers. ²⁷I've toiled and labored; I've burned the candle at both ends; I've been hungry and thirsty; I've often gone without food altogether; I've been cold and naked.

²⁸Quite apart from all that, I have this daily pressure on me, my care for all the churches. ²⁹Who is weak and I'm not weak? Who is offended without me burning with shame? ³⁰If I must boast, I will boast of my weaknesses. ³¹The God and father of the Lord Jesus, who is blessed forever, knows that I'm not lying: ³²in Damascus, King Aretas, the local ruler, was guarding the city of Damascus so that he could capture me, ³³but I was let down in a basket through a window and over the wall, and I escaped his clutches.

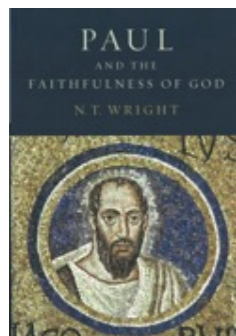
2 Corinthians 11:28–33 (N. T. Wright)



Paul's Early Epistles

Paul's Defense of His Apostolic Role and Responsibility

9. Paul defends his authenticity as an Apostle by reminding them he worked harder than anyone, under great opposition; traveled constantly; and burned the candle at both ends.
10. He adds to that the daily pressure on him of caring for the churches as part of his authenticity.



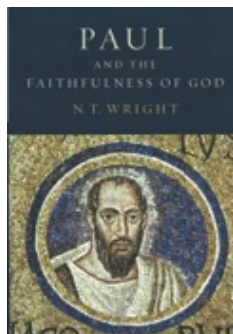
12:1 I just have to boast— not that there’s anything to be gained by it; but I’ll go on to visions and revelations of the Lord. ²Someone I know in the Messiah, fourteen years ago (whether in the body or out of the body I don’t know, though God knows), was snatched up to the third heaven. ³I know that this particular Someone (whether in the body or apart from the body I don’t know, God knows)— ⁴this person was snatched up to paradise, and heard . . . words you can’t pronounce, which humans aren’t allowed to repeat. ⁵I will boast of Someone like that, but I won’t boast of myself, except of my weaknesses. ⁶If I did want to boast, you see, I wouldn’t be mad; I’d be speaking the truth. But I’m holding back, so that nobody will think anything of me except what they can see in me or hear from me, ⁷even considering how remarkable the revelations were. As a result, so that I wouldn’t become too exalted, a thorn was given to me in my flesh, a messenger from the satan, to keep stabbing away at me. ⁸I prayed to the Lord three times about this, asking that it would be taken away from me, ⁹and this is what he said to me: “My grace is enough for you; my power comes to perfection in weakness.” So I will be all the more pleased to boast of my weaknesses, so that the Messiah’s power may rest upon me. ¹⁰So I’m delighted when I’m weak, insulted, in difficulties, persecuted, and facing disasters, for the Messiah’s sake. When I’m weak, you see, then I am strong.

¹¹I've been a fool! You forced me into it. If I was to have received an official commendation, it ought actually to have come from you! After all, I'm not inferior to the super-apostles, even though I am nothing. ¹²The signs of a true apostle, you see, were performed among you in all patience, with signs and wonders and powers. ¹³In what way have you been worse off than all the other churches, except in the fact that I myself didn't become a burden to you? Forgive me this injustice! ¹⁴Now look: this is the third time I'm ready to come to you. And I'm not going to be a burden, because I'm not looking for what belongs to you, but you yourselves. Children, after all, shouldn't be saving up for their parents, but parents for their children! ¹⁵For my part, I will gladly spend and be spent on your behalf. If I love you all the more, am I going to be loved any the less? ¹⁶Grant me this, that I didn't lay any burden on you. But—maybe I was a trickster, and I took you by deceit! ¹⁷Did I cheat you by any of the people I sent to you? ¹⁸I urged Titus to go to you, and I sent the brother with him. Did Titus cheat you? He behaved in the same spirit as me, didn't he? He conducted himself in the same manner, didn't he?

2 Corinthians 12:11–18 (N. T. Wright)

¹⁹You will imagine we are explaining ourselves again. Well, we're speaking in God's presence, in the Messiah! My beloved ones, it has all been intended to build you up. ²⁰I'm afraid, you see, that when I come I may find you rather different from what I would wish—and I may turn out to be rather different from what you would wish! I'm afraid there may still be fighting, jealousy, anger, selfishness, slander, gossip, arrogance, and disorder. ²¹I'm afraid that perhaps, when I come once more, my God may humble me again in front of you, and I will have to go into mourning over many who sinned before and have not repented of the uncleanness and fornication and shameless immorality that they have practiced.

2 Corinthians 12:19–21 (N. T. Wright)

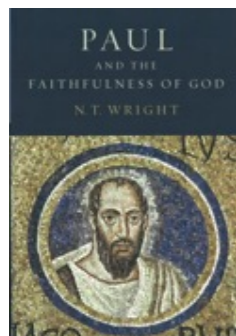


Paul's Early Epistles

Paul's Defense of His Apostolic Role and Responsibility

11. Paul continues his defense by describing the special experience he was given to see parts of the heavenly places behind Christ's building of his Church along with the thorn in the flesh (probably some kind of recurring illness) he was given, a weakness the false apostles were exploiting.
12. Paul's commendation includes their very existence as churches. He is not invalidated by super-apostles undermining his weakness or financial needs claiming he is a huckster just seeking money, noting that Titus, one of his team members, exhibited the same traits as him.
13. Paul's intense letters and his powerful arguments, always causing conflicts, are because he is afraid they will still be torn apart by divisions and disorder.

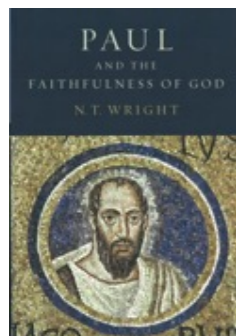
Paul's Early Epistles



Issue: The importance of apostolic leadership/teams today

Questions:

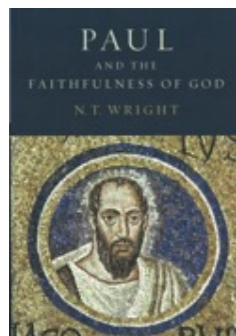
1. What is the importance of apostolic leadership today? Why do you think it is resurfacing at this point in history?
2. What would that leadership look like today? What would be the makeup of apostolic leadership today?
3. What kind of authority does apostolic leadership carry? Is it a formal authority? or of a different kind?
4. How does the idea of apostolic leadership and apostolic teams reshape our understanding of local church leaders? of the profession of pastor and missionary?



Paul's Early Epistles

Role and Responsibility of Apostolic Leaders Today

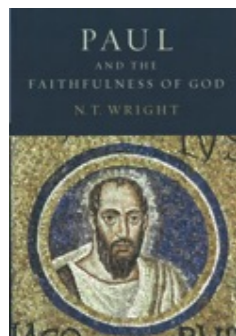
1. The authority of apostolic leaders rests in the authoritative word given to the churches from Christ (embodied in the apostolic writings) and their gifted ability to hold the teaching against any human arguments made against it.
2. Apostolic leadership be humble in their general teaching, but exercise the authority needed to hold their churches to that body of teaching, challenging any arguments brought against it, knowing the word of Christ carries supernatural power.
3. Though apostolic leaders often appear insignificant, their weapons (Paul's letters and his arguments of defense) carry enormous spiritual power, which they teach boldly and confrontationally, even face to face as needed.



Paul's Early Epistles

Role and Responsibility of Apostolic Leaders Today

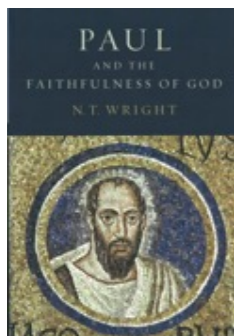
4. Apostolic leadership's authority is not a formal authority based on rank, in which one has higher rank than another and boasts they are more important because of position.
5. Apostolic leadership's boasting is in stewarding the field God has given them, and as the churches' faith grows, apostolic leaders seek to enlarge that sphere by proclaiming the gospel in other lands.



Role and Responsibility of Apostolic Leaders Today

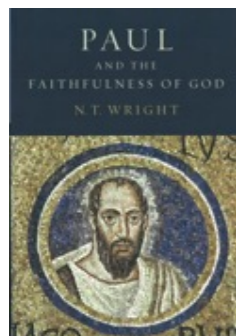
6. Apostolic leaders hold the view that they need to get the churches established in Christ's teaching so they can turn elsewhere and the churches will continue to mature in Christ and impact their area (spontaneous expansion), but they often cannot because churches are being corrupted by other teachings, therefore not one minded, but embracing a different gospel and teaching.
7. Apostolic leaders are often not from the professional class or the most skilled speakers, but they are very skilled in their knowledge; their arguments are superior at every point.
8. Apostolic leaders are willing to cut off the churches under their influence from so-called apostles (orators of light) who do not follow the teaching Paul is delivered to the early churches.

Paul's Early Epistles



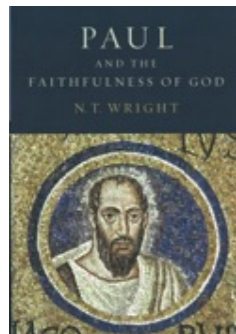
Role and Responsibility of Apostolic Leaders Today

9. Their authenticity as apostolic leaders is seen in that they work harder than anyone, often under great opposition; travel constantly; and burn the candle at both ends, with little or no personal reward.
10. They can be seen carrying the daily pressure on themselves of caring for the churches under their sphere of influence.



Role and Responsibility of Apostolic Leaders Today

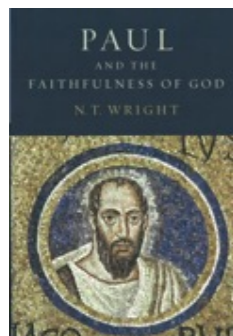
11. They often describe special experiences that shaped their calling, along with weaknesses that professionals in formal positions exploit.
12. Their primary qualification as apostolic leaders is the church networks under their influence. That is not invalidated by others with official positions and “professional training” or those with significant resources (the “majority” in paradigm terms). They possess an apostolic team who exhibit the same passions and abilities.
13. They are known for powerful arguments, based on Paul’s intense letters, that often cause conflicts out of their concern to see churches established in the apostolic teaching—disrupters.



What is BILD?

Apostolic team with 2 powerful tools

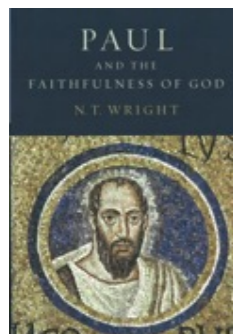
Who am I? Who are you? exercise



Paul's Early Epistles

What is Micheal doing in India these 10 days? (Left Saturday)

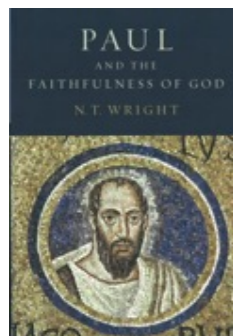
What is Steve doing in India these 2 weeks? (Left this morning)



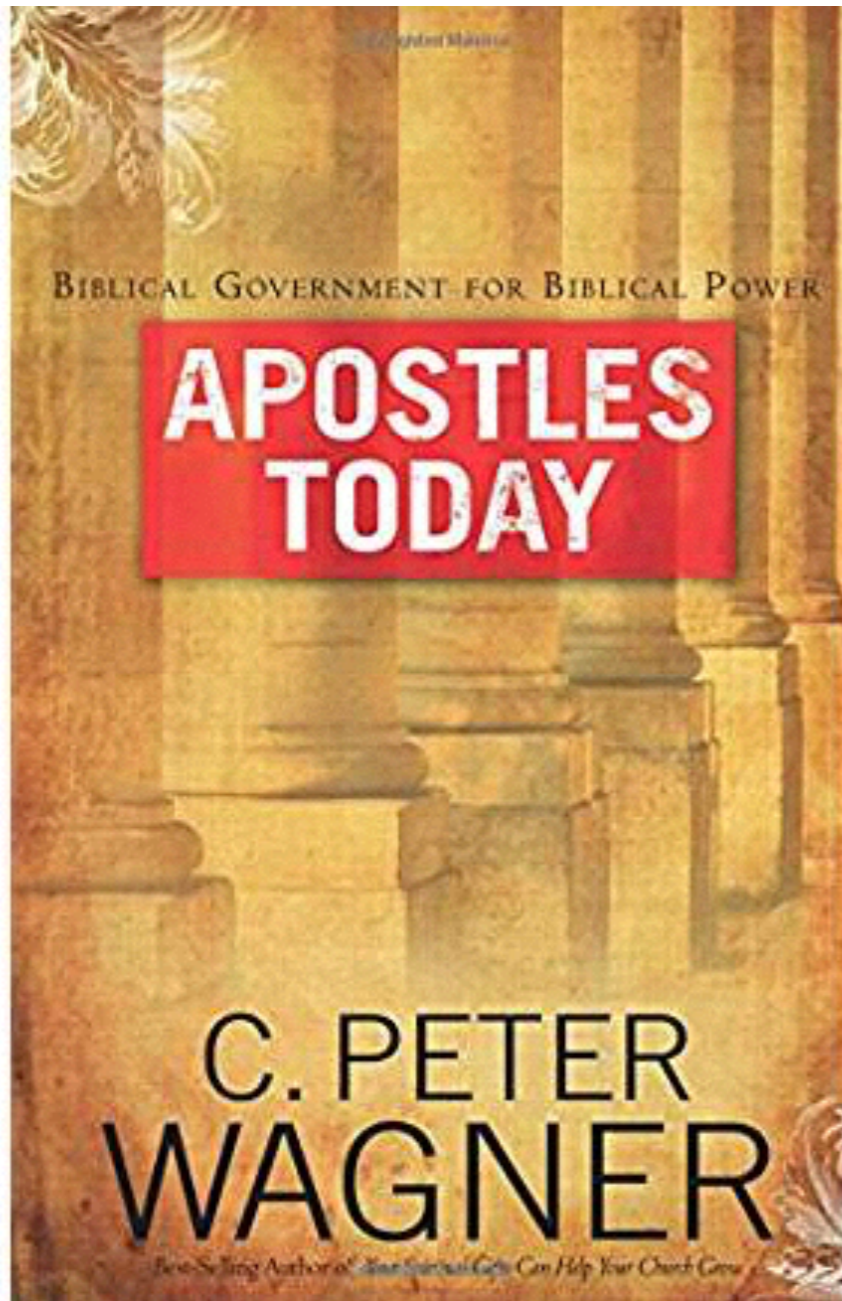
Paul's Early Epistles

Why should this matter to you?

Wagner: It gives real significance to each believer—
participation in the progress of the gospel.

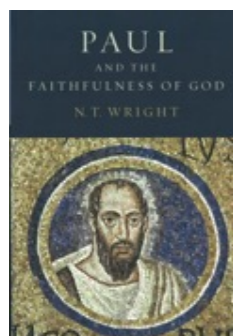


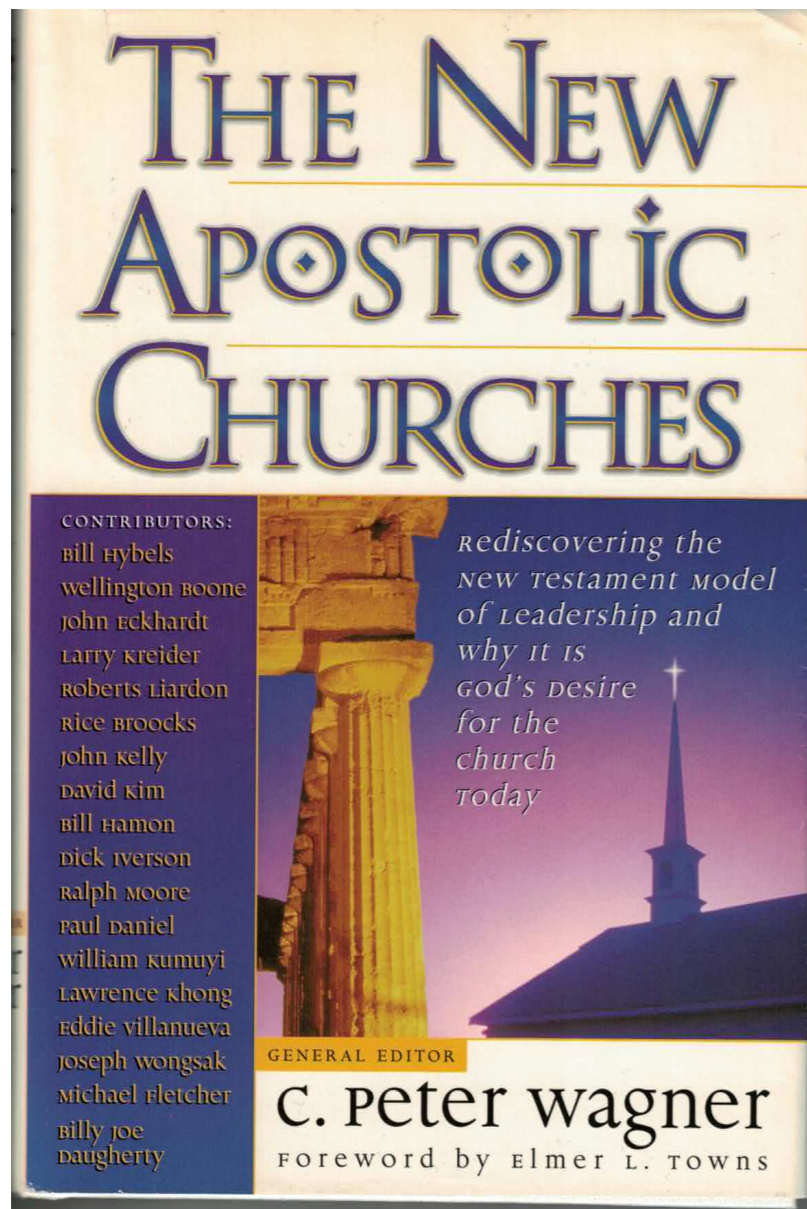
Paul's Early Epistles



Protestant denominationalism over the past 500 years has been, for the most part, governed by teachers and administrators, rather than by apostles and prophets. That means that denominational executives are actually administrators— good, godly and wise ones, but administrators nonetheless. Most pastors of local churches are assumed to be teachers (at least ever since the sermon became the central point of weekly congregational gathering), with the sermon being their primary vehicle for teaching their people.

Paul's Early Epistles



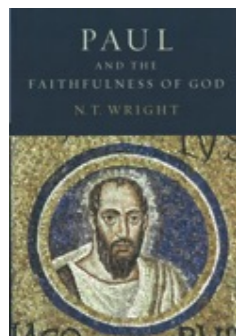


Being part of the new apostolic churches, gives every believer the chance to be a vital part of the progress of the gospel just like happened in the early churches of the New Testament.

We are experiencing that today:

- Our wealth helps key leaders and churches around the world
- Our service, as a resource center, Antioch type of church, makes us strategic in God's plan.
- The use of our gifts plays a significant part.

Paul's Early Epistles



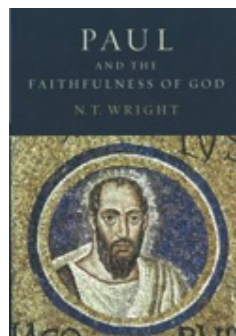


THE
APOSTLES' CREED
FOR TODAY



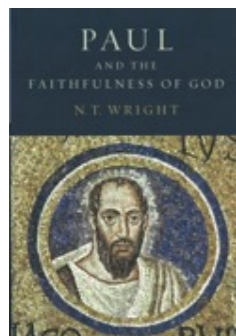
The Rise of Network Christianity: How Independent Leaders Are Changing the Religious Landscape, by Brad Christerson and Richard Flory (2017, Oxford University Press)

“The fastest growing movement in Christianity, both in the West and in the Global South, is now led by a network of dynamic independent entrepreneurs, referred to as “apostles.” p. 2



Paul's Early Epistles

Next week: Paul's appeal to the churches at Corinth



Paul's Early Epistles