

Apostolic Authority and Intervention

“Of the increase of His government and peace there shall be no end” Isaiah 9:7

We all believe the above promise, but as of yet we’ve failed to fully realize it. Are there reasons for that? Could it be that that we’ve missed or overlooked Biblical principles that have short-circuited God’s government? We’ve come to believe that we’ve overlooked a number of very important apostolic principles that must be restored. Carnality and division still run rampant and we seem to be no closer to unity in the Church than we were forty years ago.

We’ve seen and experienced the restoration of the doctrine of “the authority of the believer” through servants like Kenneth Hagin and others. We rejoice in all the authority of God and pray for His ever-increasing government and peace to touch every believer, in every city, and nation of the world. “Father, let your Kingdom come!”

We’re writing this paper with a view of full restoration of the governmental gift of the apostle. Many of the topics will require us to repent and rethink old mindsets. These topics have arisen from our study of the apostolic ministry in the scriptures, as well as, historical and personal experiences.

We’ve appraised the churches and our own labors. Consequently, we seek to Biblically correct our mistakes for the sake of the next generation of apostolic ministries. We feel called to better equip the next generation of apostles. The topics of this paper are our effort to honestly correct our mistakes and to help others avoid making the same ones.

We’ve realized that in our young apostolic zeal we failed to appreciate and apply some apostolic principles that could have led to more successes, and kept many churches we’ve labored in from failing.

Therefore, we humbly submit this for your review and input. We are not seeking to write a primer on the apostolic ministry, but rather to focus on a few controversial issues concerning apostolic ministry. *The topics are related to the sphere of apostolic authority and the apostles’ relationships to established local churches.*

Our discussion will be limited to the apostolic ministry. We are not seeking to demean the ministry of the prophet, evangelist, teacher, and pastor. We know that they are vital to the growth and perfecting of the saints. However, adding them to the discussion may detract, engender confusion, and hinder us from coming to any definitive conclusions on our topics.

We will not be discussing the tremendous passion those called to the apostolic have to preach the gospel with power. Nor will we seek to address the diversity of effects

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the apostles have upon the Body of Christ. As there is no one kind of prophet or one type of teacher there is also a great diversity in anointing, authority, and effectiveness within the apostolic ministry.

We believe the role and ministry of the apostle has been greatly misunderstood, and therefore misapplied in many, if not most, areas of the church. Many believe in the existence and ministry of the apostle, but because they misunderstand some basic Biblical principles, they fail to receive the anointing, power, spiritual covering, and spiritual order the apostolic was sent to provide to the Church. We will elaborate on divine authority as it relates to spiritual order a little later.

We believe that *the apostolic ministry is first of all governmental in nature*. If part of their role is to set order in the Church, then they must have the authority to implement any, and all, changes needed to bring about that order. Therefore, *they must carry governmental authority in the local church. (Please read Titus 1:5)*

The questions that arise are: "How important is the apostolic ministry to the Church in general and in the local church in particular?" "How expansive is their authority?" "Is there proof of apostolic trans-local government in the Bible?" "What are the limitations to apostolic trans-local authority?" "Does apostolic authority cease after local authority has been established, or is it optional?" "Who are the apostles to be accountable to?"

We've assumed that the reader already has accepted the fact that the ministry of the apostle is present in the Body of Christ and is absolutely an essential part for the "the equipping of the saints for the work of the ministry." The Church can't reach her glorious destiny without them.

Paul, states in Ephesians 2:20, "*The Church having been built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets Jesus Christ being the chief cornerstone.*" Paul, speaking by the Holy Spirit, is making a declarative statement and offers no other alternative to the foundation of the Church. The Church is to be built, rather, must be built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets. This truth doesn't offer any other plan of God for the foundation of the Church or local churches. Most Bible believers generally accept this in one form or another.

Paul expresses even greater importance and authority upon the apostolic ministry in 1 Corinthians 12:28, "*And God hath set some in the church, first apostles ...*" Of course, the Greek word for first means "*first in rank, importance, and chief (est).*" (I feel that some key words were left out to make your point. The word also means first in time or order Strong's: 1. firstly (in time, place, order, or importance) – so either rendering may be correct – but one doesn't exclude the other.) Some say this "first" is a "building order", which means that the apostles come first in rank and importance to start laying foundational truths in a local church, but after the church is "set in order" the apostles are no longer first in rank or importance but the local elders assume the "first in rank and importance in regard to that local church." We believe this view to be speculative and

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unfounded in scripture. Paul says, "God has appointed..." You see it is God who has chosen to rank the importance and authority of His gift ministries and not man. *God never indicated that the role and authority of the apostolic ministry would ever change.* He never stated that the apostles' authority would be replaced or diminished by a team of local elders. Our questions and concerns are as follows: *Is this governmental ranking and authority of the apostolic ministry only for a period of time in a local church? Or was this governmental relationship between apostles and local churches meant to be long-term and ongoing?*

The 12 Apostles of the Lamb's position and authority was, is, and will forever be permanent. They were given authority (Matthew 9 and 10). Therefore, we must ask the question: *"Does apostolic authority wane or weaken, or does it simply take on different forms as the Lord leads?" Is this a claim of apostolic succession to the same authority as the twelve apostles of the Lamb?*

We believe the ministry and scope of the authority of the apostles has been obscured by misinformation and hundreds of years of rejection at the hands of the dispensationalist.

Many churches, from the 1970's until the present, have known and been built on the foundation of present day apostles. However, because of the misunderstanding of the church leaders, and the apostles themselves, they have lost and have moved from the Biblical foundation and revelation of the apostles. Many local eldership teams have moved from a true apostolic foundation to a teaching/pastoral foundation. Many local leaders accepted the apostles' ministry as a "temporary necessity" to the planting of churches. This view included the idea that once a church eldership or pastoral team was established that the apostles' authority and role was essentially over. This coincides with the opinion that "first apostles" in 1 Corinthians 12:28 was a reference to a building order only.

Many apostles instinctively knew they needed to maintain a "relationship" with the newly ordained local government. However, they abdicated some, most, or all of their authority to the local church elders. Essentially, they were now "submitted" to the decisions and authority of the local church elders. We, personally, hold that this is based on an unscriptural view of the apostolic ministry, and has resulted in the destruction of many churches. Without foundations every building will crumble!

Another commonly held view that erodes the true ministry of the apostle is the "autonomy" of the local church. The view that the local church is "autonomous in nature" has produced leaders with a spirit of "independence" rather than a godly "interdependence." While I would tend to agree with your appraisal that the "spirit of independence" is a significant problem, I am not sure it is an apostolic issue as much as it is a flesh issue of people who simply want to be in control –boards, apostles, prophets and pastors included. It seems like everyone wants to build their top down kingdom today.

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Some dictionary meanings of the term autonomy are: “the right or state of self-government”, “independence”, and “self-determination with respect to local or internal affairs.” We must admit that in the past we’ve allowed this attitude to arise in the ranks of the elderships we’ve delegated oversight to. Perhaps autonomy is the wrong word to use in regards to the self-governance of the local church. The post apostolic period saw Bishops with much influence over their circle of churches, but not over other Bishops – at least in the first couple of hundred years. It seems there was a collaborative effort to gather to discuss problems, practices and doctrines in the church.

An autonomous church is therefore an independent, self-determining, self-governing community, or group without outside apostolic intervention, authority or oversight. This doctrine flies in the face of what the scriptures reveal concerning the relationships between churches in the Book of Acts and the Epistles. What scriptures reveal to us is ONE CHURCH working in co-operation and *interdependence*. There was a sharing in the Kingdom mandate and ministry. They supported the Great Commission together. They supported ministries together, as well as, the sharing of talents, gifts, and finances. The local churches readily accepted and submitted to apostolic ministries. We will see later that the apostolic ministry coordinated and fostered this godly interdependence and unity.

We, ATM, have sought to be a “relational apostolic ministry”. We all agree this is what the Lord has put on our hearts, and it is perhaps our greatest strength. However, after we’ve established churches we’ve sought to maintain divine order through friendships and relationships. We have abdicated our role and ministry within the churches and have many times lost all input into the local churches.

Our initial relationships with the churches we’ve planted or adopted were rooted in *relationship and authority*. Our history has been marked by a reduction in authority after we’ve ordained elders. We abdicated our governmental position and became mostly “advisors” and “influencers” without authority. The results were that many churches fell into disarray and disorder. We, unwittingly, violated some Biblical and apostolic principles. We find no evidence in the New Testament where Paul, Peter, or John ever simply rode off into the sunset to let elders in a local church do as they willed. Acts 14:23 – commend = “to place alongside, i.e. present (food, truth) 2. (*by implication*) to deposit (as a trust or for protection” It seems as though they “placed them along side of the Lord for protection and guidance.

Quite the contrary, we see the apostles still speaking, judging, and setting things in order long after their departure from localities. Even in Revelation chapter 2 we see John, through the Holy Spirit, correcting, encouraging, and redirecting the seven churches. We believe we’ve failed for a number of reasons:

Firstly, we never worked through and established a trans-local apostolic governmental doctrine within the network.

Secondly, we released elders with the doctrine, or an assumed idea, of local church autonomy. Once the beast of independence is loosed in a local church, apostolic

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order will be rejected. We've reaped a harvest for abdicating apostolic authority to the local elderships. In so doing, we have placed a heavy burden on the local leaders that they have not been equipped by God to deal with. WHAT? Local Elders are dumbed down versions of real ministries, i.e. apostles who are equipped by God to do everything? While I would most certainly agree that each of the five-fold ministry gifting have their unique anointing and function and ALL 5 must function in the church, to say that God placed elders in the church but failed to equip them is a bit of a stretch. What is it that Elders are not equipped to do in the local church? They preach, teach, study, move in the gifts, sacrifice their lives, time, money and at times personal desires; They discipline the congregation, counsel exhort, evangelize, prayer seek God, and they are intimately involved in the lives of the people every day. We've also forfeited the authority needed to rescue the churches from deception and doctrinal heresy. Many, if not most, of our early church plants went the way of the world. Wolves arose in the midst of the churches and led many into damnable heresies and perversions of the gospel. Entire churches moved from the network as elders, and individuals, sought to gather disciples to themselves. They rejected divine order and many have now been lost to the way of the flesh. Most of these churches have stagnated, failed to grow, failed to plant other churches, or even disciple the saints in their respective churches. *(Please read the book of Jude)*

Many churches and sincere saints have been shipwrecked because of our desire to simply to have a relationship with local leaders. All the while, we were ignorantly abdicating the Biblical principles of Divine authority.

Thirdly, we failed to apostolically intervene into local churches' problems and use the God-given apostolic authority to bring *correction and redirection* to the local leaders. We believe that early on we could have readjusted our apostolic doctrines and corrected our oversights. We ignorantly thought that relationships, without authority, would be strong enough to stop Satan from destroying the churches.

The first century apostles sought to relate to and love all the churches as loving fathers, but we DO NOT see them abdicating their fatherly authority or commission from God to maintain friendly relationships. Nor do we see them looking on as wolves or false doctrines were leading churches astray. They intervened in the problems of the local churches. Their authority could be accepted or rejected, and it was, but it was never abdicated. Anytime we seek relationship without authority we fail to see "the increase of His government." *All healthy godly relationships are built upon the principle of headship authority. Scriptures???*

We acknowledge the use of apostolic, or fatherly, authority may/should change depending upon the maturity of the individuals or church. However, seeking godly relationships *with* an established authority flow must be a constant in how we relate to churches. Once apostolic doctrine and fatherly authority is firmly fixed in the hearts of a local church, the spirit of independence will be dealt with, and Divine order can be maintained by and through the apostolic and prophetic ministries.

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A few men have used the illustration that apostolic authority could be likened to a father's authority with his sons. Their view is: While sons are children the father can and must utilize loving authority and discipline in their lives. However, after the sons marry and start their own families, the father has little or no authority to intervene in the son's family, or personal business, unless invited, or it becomes *absolutely necessary*. This illustration has many problems. First, those who embrace this illustration usually use a Western mentality/mindset of fathering. As you know the Bible must be viewed through an Eastern lens or window. The authority of the father in the Eastern family structure is vastly different than in our Western family structure. There was, and is, a recognized authority structure in the Eastern family which has a Divine origin. The structure of which we speak is commonly referred to as "headship" in the Bible. Where is headship used in the Bible, other than Christ is head of man who is head of woman?? The HEAD OF EVERY MAN is CHRIST. God has purposed that a fatherly headship Didn't Jesus say, "Call no man on earth your father?" should be a viable part of family, whether we are talking about natural families or God's family! In 1 Corinthians 11:3-7 headship in heaven and earth is clearly declared to be a part of God's divine order. This scripture says nothing about apostles and says the head of every man is Christ. In this passage, we see the role of one who is under headship should be to reflect the image and/or glory of their head. Sons should reflect the values, character, conduct, and will of their father. Even the Son of God reflected the headship of His Father rather than His own authority. The Eastern family mindset, for the most part, has clearly embraced this mentality of a fatherly headship from the Old Testament times even to this present day. They understood that the father's authority in the family order doesn't change when sons marry. The sons may move into their own homes but the family order and structure does not change. The practicality of this is questionable when the father, rooted in past tradition and heritage won't make the necessary changes and perpetuates mistakes: the domination of women, arranged marriages, etc. Failure to embrace a world of change is evident in both patriarchal societies and in the modern Amish. This is a problem with a lot of authority structures; they are only as good as the people leading them so if authority flows down then it seems that stagnation and ungodliness (if present) would also flow down. However your premise SEEMS to be that while elders are prone to error, an apostolic calling prevents that.

We must understand that within the church structure that the principle of authority, headship, and government are equal to; and *sometimes must supersede the normal boundaries of relationships*. Yes, sometimes people need to be told NO!

My children's relationship with me is one of love, respect, and authority. Our relationships have grown and matured over the years as we've matured, so the necessary use of my fatherly authority has lessened. My God given authority as the head of my family has not changed but how we relate has. Having raised them as Christians, they respect authority, honor gifting, and love counsel. They would do nothing to move from the values, and foundations I've built into their lives. If they did I wouldn't hesitate to use my authority as a father. How would this work in a practical sense in relation to a church – for instance if your son did go in a direction

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that you didn't approve of and refused your counsel? Would you remove him as head of his family and appoint another father? Disfellowship him from the family? Withdraw love and relationship until he submitted? Would you tell the grandkids that Grandpa won't come see them until Dad gets right with you? I fail to see how this application of apostolic authority relates in real life. Now if you are saying that your relationship has invested an authority that will cause submission, I agree with that, however you seem to be talking about governmental control including determining doctrine, practice and if necessary removing or disciplining local leadership. Submission and subjection are two different things. We, as apostles, should have an Eastern mindset concerning fathering and not be moved by Western trends and philosophies. Many of the local elderships thought little of moving from the apostolic values, purpose, and vision that were laid.

All relationships should/must be established and rooted in divine order and authority. Husbands, wives, and children are all related, but an essential component to maintain those healthy relationships is the establishment and respect for divine authority. *There are no relationships in the earth where divine authority isn't an essential element to God's blessing and Kingdom. For authority to be divine, it must be predicated upon and incorporate "Divine Headship." When Divine authority is violated or ignored, even by good intentions, chaos and disorder will be the result!* Are we then building a doctrine that true apostolic counsel is infallible? That a group of elders can not be trusted to remain true to God, but a group of apostles can? Another point is who is the authority over the apostles – the apostles themselves?

F.F. Bruce in his wonderful book "The Spreading Flame" reveals that the unity and power of the early church was maintained by the flow of life from one local church to another. He states the unity, love, and interdependence of the early church were the results of the apostolic ministry. The apostolic ministry was the one common denominator between the early churches. As long as the apostles had authority in and over the local churches there was unity, power, and interdependence. Let us briefly state a few of our beliefs:

The apostolic ministry is the trans-local government of God.

Many view the local churches with a "city-state" philosophy like seen in ancient Greece. The city-state governments and leaders would determine the laws, traditions, and lifestyle of the people. (However, in the Bible we see the apostles setting the traditions and order of the local churches.) What developed was many city-states with little in common except language and geography. Many times they fought over lands, finances, and authority over certain peoples. Doesn't this sound a little familiar? All the city-states were Greek but there was disunity caused by autonomy.

Many are trying to put together "city-states" and build unity in their locality. We applaud those efforts, however, if we fail to see trans-local government as an essential to the overall unity and power of the local churches, what we will be left

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with is a city-state mindset. We can be unified in a city but it can still look like a city-state. There will and should be differences in churches, but there must be many things held in common, such as apostolic doctrines and governmental order. God is not a god of disorder. The apostolic can foster unity within, and beyond, the city. Their trans-local authority could help the local churches break the spirit of independence and a return to a spirit of unity. I am not sure how this would work since you probably would not allow two ATM churches in a town and the Baptists sure aren't going to recognize your apostolic authority.

The church is not simply a localized institution or organism. We must see government and relationship between the churches on a much higher level. If not, we will never see the unity of the faith and one perfect man. This is most certainly a true statement, but is it governmental control or hearts in tune with the master that brings this to pass. We believe the apostolic ministry is the bridge between churches, cities, regional groups, and eventually national and international churches. The apostle Paul, and his team, were a bridge between city churches, and a unifying factor throughout Macedonia. In the kingdom there will be men with authority over a city. There will be men with authority over cities. (Matthew 25, some will rule over a city, some will rule over cities etc.) This, we believe, points to not only an eternal reality, but to the structure of the Kingdom of God. We see *local authorities and trans-local authorities in the scripture*. We don't believe that the Lord views his Kingdom as a bunch of city-states without apostolic authority unifying them. The Apostolic ministry must become the unifying factor between churches located in a given city and those who should be related on a wider scale. This is a patriarchal relationship structure and NOT a governmental hierarchal structure. Meaning that the local church has no say in the Patriarchal system because it is top down? Either way I fail to see the difference between a governmental structure and a patriarchal structure – especially since you have worked hard to join the two terms.

The apostles and prophets are the foundation of the Church

In any Kingdom, or nation, we see local government accountable to and submitted to regional or higher authorities. Yes, they have latitude to make many decisions, but they do not hold *absolute authority* over the congregations. They must not become the final authority in issues of doctrine, values, character, and relationships. Why is this? Have we gone back to the “Elders are ill-equipped to really follow God without having their hands held by infallible apostles,” concept? We believe that the local eldership has authority, but it too must be submitted to higher authorities in the Kingdom of God. Ultimately the analogy is backwards – The government was limited in authority BY the People – at least in the Democratic countries – If you look at the countries that practice top down authority it is absolute chaos and corruption because there is no governmental accountability. We do not believe that any or every apostle has authority in every church, but to those to whom he has been sent by God. The apostolic ministry cannot intervene or exercise authority in or over

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every eldership team. He has authority in an eldership team by virtue of a fathering relationship and being commissioned by God. So how does the idea of a CITY or REGIONAL CITY Apostle work when he would likely have relationship to only one church in that town?

A building's foundation can't be removed without devastating damage to the structure. We've removed ourselves, foundational ministries, from local churches and left the churches without foundation. We expected them to carry on with, not only the "equipping of the saints", but also with the maintaining and changing of the foundation to accommodate continued growth. They, the local elders, unless graced with apostles in their midst by God, can't do the work of the apostle. If there is not a resident apostle or a trans-local apostolic ministry operating and serving them, then apostolic impartation will cease within the local church. Certainly, local elders do equip, but only within the framework of their particular gifts. We believe leaving local elders to carry on the "full" work of the ministry bred disorder and chaos because they tried to fill the void created by the lack of apostolic presence & ministry. We believe this took them beyond their God-given sphere of authority! The church is ***not*** built simply with doctrine, but it ***is*** built upon the ministries of apostles and prophets. They, specifically and in particular, have been called and commissioned by God to be foundational men. This God-given commissioning causes them to operate in more than a "charis" gift to the body; they actually are a gift given by Christ to the Church – Ephesians 4:8, 11. As are elders, pastors, teachers and prophets. The point is that many churches have forsaken the apostolic ministries, and indeed the other 3, for a Pastor driven church. I will be the first to agree with you and confront this issue as unbiblical, but having genuine trans-local apostles operating amongst the churches does not automatically equate to governing authority.

Ephesians 4 uses the words "until we all come", which we believe means the apostolic ministry wasn't to move on, but to continue their ministry in the local churches "until" the entire Body of Christ reaches her destiny. This is a stretch. You seem to be saying with Paul, (who spoke tongue in cheek) "I magnify my office. We now believe that *it is essential that apostles remain in relationship, with authority, to local churches.* They should be accepted as fathers in God's house.

Apostles must be accountable to apostles and apostolic teams members

True apostles are men *both with authority and under authority*. No man is a super-apostle and reigns over everyone else. That distinction is reserved solely for the only true Potentate and King of kings, Jesus. However, there is divine authority even among apostles. Paul's authority was to the Gentiles and Peter's was to the Jews. Every apostle has a "sphere" of authority that is to be determined wholly by God. It seems you just negated what you were trying to say. Every apostle must be under authority, BUT he also has a direct mandate from God. If apostles are appointed by the apostles that came before them, then are they not in effect perpetuating their own belief system and traditions (potential errors in doctrine

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and practice), because they are not going to appoint an apostle that doesn't agree with and submit to them. For an apostle to operate beyond his God-given sphere is an unauthorized appropriation of Divine authority. However, for an apostle to operate in less than his God-given sphere is also an unauthorized appropriation of Divine authority. An eldership team that influences, pressures, or actually causes apostles to operate beyond or beneath their sphere of authority is in itself out of Divine order. Read 1 Corinthians 3:10-11. I don't think this verse has anything to do with the subject at hand. **I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon.** Where is the continuation of apostolic authority?

The character, conduct, practices, and doctrine of every true apostle must be subject to evaluation by other apostles. An apostle must meet the requirements for eldership or he too can be disqualified.

Biblical Apostolic intervention into local church issues and disorder

1. Paul continued to correct and bring order to existing churches after his departure. (Many times using apostolic team members to deliver his/their judgments) Titus 1; 1 Corinthians 11 and 14
2. He, and his team, planted churches, laid apostolic foundations, established local governments, and carried apostolic authority to impart gifts to established churches. True – but this doesn't automatically indicate continual total authority
3. Paul judged sin when he instructed the Corinthians to turn one sinner over to the devil. He didn't ask permission from the local elders to speak into that sin issue, he used his God given right.
4. They refuted false doctrines, carnality, and sectarianism of the local churches. 1 Corinthians 3: 1-4, Colossians, 2 Peter 2
5. They reprovved and corrected local individual leaders. 2 John
6. They continued to instruct the local churches after they were founded. 1 Corinthians and Romans are filled with examples of the on-going input of the apostolic in established churches. True! Often they were asked to give guidance on issues
7. They did not leave it to local leaders to establish doctrine. Paul, John, Peter all were continually instructing and correcting false doctrine within the churches.
8. They continued to teach and lay the foundation of Jesus Christ to the churches. Book of Hebrews well yes that was a given that, since the bible wasn't written yet, they would continue to write stuff down. Does this follow through then that modern Apostles will come up with new doctrines and practices to impart to the established churches?
9. They gave instruction on the "spiritual life and walk" of the church 1 John, Romans 7-8, Galatians 5
10. They established and maintained loving unity and fellowship between churches. We see this in 2 Corinthians 9 as they gave freely in accordance to the

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instructions of Paul. I really fail to see close interaction between local churches until after the apostolic period when the Bishop system was established.

Our conclusion is: The ministry of the “apostle” is absolutely essential to the on going equipping and ministerial success of the saints. This is very true. Defining that is the real issue at hand. Their authority and relationship with the local church doesn’t diminish after the establishment of a local eldership. They are God’s on-going trans-local government and when it comes to matters of doctrine, church order, and Christian conduct, their authority is to supersede that of a local eldership.

True apostles are servants of God given to the churches “until” we all come unto the fullness of Christ.

Here are a few questions for our discussion: (you will probably have more come to your mind. This is just a sampling. Please feel free to bring up any and all questions you may have)

1. *“How important is the apostolic ministry to the Church in general and in the local church in particular? Very Important that is not the question it is superseding the authority of the local church that is at question.*
2. *“How expansive is their authority?”*
3. *“Is there proof of apostolic trans-local government in the Bible?”*
4. *“What are the limitations to apostolic trans-local authority?”*
5. *“Does apostolic authority cease after local authority has been established, or is it optional?”*
6. *“Who are the apostles to be accountable to?”*
7. *How do apostles to come into office? Can they be self-appointed (between an individual and his God)?*
8. *Can five fold ministry elders ordain apostles or must it be other apostles?*
9. *How does one test apostles to determine whether they be true apostles or false apostles? Whose responsibility is it to judge in these matters?*
10. *Is there such an animal as the “market place apostle”?*

Thank you so much for taking the time to read our paper. We trust that it stimulated your thoughts and, hopefully, as we pray and seek the Word He will bring further clarification to the apostolic ministry.