

The Precinct Ekklesia
A New Wineskin for the Third Millennium (Version 0.82)

By Porter Haskell Davis

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Forward to Version 0.8

This work is not a finished product. Though I wish it was, God continues to extend the vision and fill in the details in the most unexpected ways. He seems to show me fresh revelation and waits for me to flesh it out. Then He shows me pieces others are doing that show my task is just a small part of the major move. Some of the book is still in outline form.

Nevertheless, I'm releasing this version for an historic meeting of the US Coalition of Apostolic Leaders and representatives from the Missional Church Movement. These movements are at core of what God is showing me, and I want feedback.

When immersed in writing, it's easy to lose perspective, or to assume that others easily understand what has become clear to me. There's a good reason why authors thank so many people who have helped them write their books with questions, suggestions and constructive criticism. Whether it involves grammar and punctuation, correcting misunderstandings, suggesting additional insights or resources, I want to know.

As I've written, I've also become painfully aware that most of us process information very differently than we did before the internet. Few people seem to have the time and patience to wade through detailed books. Our attention spans have shortened. We want it short and sweet, and to the point. That's what I've tried to do.

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Introduction

America's survival as a free, Christian nation is at stake. The foundations of our Republic have been all but destroyed. As a result, our walls of civic security and social order are collapsing. If we don't restore them, the great American Experiment in liberty is finished. Moreover, Christianity itself is under unprecedented attack, with outright persecution on the horizon.

There is a solution that is biblical, practical and simple, with historical precedent in the first three centuries of the Church's existence, as well during the first three hundred years of America's existence. This book provides an answer to the question: "What shall the Righteous do?" (Ps. 11:3)

While this short book addresses American Christians and our specific problems, the principles are divine and universal.

Our Dire Situation

America is in what historians William Strauss and Neil Howe call the *Fourth Turning*. Looking at 80-year repeating cycles in our nation's history, they identify four 20-year cycles within the larger cycle. Each cycle is a new turning, a new era. Each larger cycle goes from a High when a new civic order arises from a previous crisis; to an Awakening of spiritual upheaval; that leads to an Unraveling as old institutions weaken; and finally, the Crisis (Fourth Turning) when massive upheaval replaces the old civic order with a new one. We are in the Crisis phase, which they predicted would occur around 2005 to 2025. (Fourth Turning, p. 3)

Our nation is the most divided it's been since the War Between the States. It's likely that a large portion of our nation will *not* accept the results of the 2020 election. The revolutionary, atheist Progressive Left is using the strategies and tactics of Cultural Marxism to destroy every foundational institution. Families are breaking up as fast as they start. Marriage is on the decline, as is our birthrate to non-replaceable levels. Social dysfunction is rampant, accompanied by addiction to legal and illegal drugs.

Economically, our middle class is all but gone, along with manufacturing jobs as a collectivist, globalist new world order ascends. Our debt is unsustainable and rising exponentially. A day of reckoning is sure to hit unexpectedly. We're being overrun by illegal immigration stoked by enemies within and without. Like the Roman Empire, our never-ending commitments to unnecessary wars and "police actions" are draining our treasury and sapping our national strength, as well as our international reputation. America has ceased to be a "city on a hill," a "light to the nations."

Overt Christian persecution is increasing. Whether led by judges, legislators or the media, the Church is besieged. Our pagan culture has legalized abortion as child sacrifice even to the point of birth. Moloch is pleased.

The American Church has become ineffective winning the lost and making disciples of its converts. America has over 200 million unsaved people, making it the world's third largest mission field, after China and India. Church attendance is falling rapidly, especially among youth who grew up in Christian homes. There are 18 million unchurched, born again Christians who don't think it's worth the effort. Since 1991 the number of Americans not attending church has almost doubled. And 80% of pastors are discouraged and struggle with depression. (Apostolic Church Arising [ACA] p.33-35)

With the rapidly declining influence of the American Church, no wonder paganism, humanism, and Cultural Marxism are running rampant. Rather than putting their faith in God and His liberty, an increasing number of Americans are calling for Socialism. It's no different than the ancient Israelites, living in disobedience to the responsibilities of liberty, yearned for a king. They want government to take over God's role, rejecting political liberty with Statism.

The American Church is effectively operating in cultural exile and increasing political captivity. We didn't need to be transported to Babylon. We've just allowed it to grow up around us.

What happened?

America's Foundations Have Been Destroyed

We're missing critical elements of social infrastructure that developed from our founding, functioning reasonably well for our nation's first three hundred years. These foundations birthed, supported and enabled those patriots who declared their Independence, fought for their Liberty, and shaped the Constitution intended to preserve it. Unless we restore these foundations, our nation will not survive.

Specifically, we're missing self-responsible, self-governing individuals; strong families that produce those individuals; functioning neighborhoods that support families; town meetings that provide the mechanism for local democracy, representative government and area administration; and networks for these townships to coordinate activities.

The bedrock of all these foundational elements was the commonly accepted Christian worldview, morality and legal system. Together, they provided the vision of purpose, basis for unity, and hope for the future. That bedrock has largely disintegrated, as has the vital role the Church played in undergirding and directing the nation's course in colonial times. The American Church lost its prophetic voice and apostolic server. The covenant roots of America have been severely damaged. "God is dead" from the 1960's has led to "post-Christian America" sixty years later.

What Should the Righteous Do?

"If the Foundations are destroyed, what shall the righteous do?" (Ps 11:3)

Simply put, if the foundations of the society are destroyed, the righteous must rebuild and restore them, as well as the crucial institutions they support.

In our generation that means restoring America's spiritual, moral and legal foundations. It means restoring social infrastructure in our neighborhoods, families and self-governing individuals. Finally, it means rebuilding our walls of civic protection with precinct organizations that are decentralized, self-sustaining, self-governing, nonpartisan and networked.

That's a big job. Fortunately for us, it's a God-sized job! He has His people in place, and has given us divine patterns, spiritual gifts and callings, as well as the Holy Spirit to show us what to do and empower us to do it!

It is also our good fortune that a fresh movement of God is underway.

Who are the Righteous?

Who are the Righteous? In general, the Righteous are those in right standing with God. That means redeemed Believers who have entered the New Covenant through their faith in Jesus. Because of their faith, they have received an impartation from God, a seed which has implanted them with a new heart, a new spirit and eternal life. (1 Peter 1:23) Because they are joined to the life of Jesus, they get what Jesus has. They are empowered by the Holy Spirit to become all God has created them to be and do. Their calling is to extend His Kingdom, overcoming evil with good, and fulfilling the Great Commission by discipling the nations.

This book is addressed to a more specific subset of the Righteous who have a special calling for this time of crisis. Chuck Pierce calls them the *“Triumphant Reserve.”* (Apostolic Church Arising – (ACA) Ch 3) Different in purpose than a persevering remnant, God is preparing them to leave cultural exile and captivity to lead the advancement of God’s Kingdom right where they live. They will be playing a critical role in this fresh move of God.

While this movement has been given several names, I will refer to it as the Second Apostolic Age. Dr. Harold Eberle calls it the New Apostolic Reformation in his excellent exposition on Father-Son Theology. Since the First Apostolic Age declined rapidly after 300 AD, it helps to clarify our perspective to realize that 1700 years later, that same spirit is breaking out again.

Before we move to our solution, we need to put our era in historical context.

We’ve Entered the Second Apostolic Age

As the Third Millennium began, the Church entered what Peter Wagner called the *“Second Apostolic Age.”* Marking the date around 2001, he predicted it would bring greater change than the Protestant Reformation. (ACA p 36) That meant a fresh vision for the Church, and a new (to us) way of *“doing church.”* Because what we were doing was not working, if the Great Commission is our mission statement.

In his book, *The Apostolic Church Rising*, Robert Heidler gives an amazing portrayal of what gatherings were like for early believers around 90 AD. (pp. 38-43 ACA) They were nothing like what we know as *“going to church.”* They *“were”* the Church. They met in homes where they experienced loving fellowship, meals, prophecy, worship, healings and miracles, and the presence of God. The Church was growing rapidly, and nothing could resist its power.

Heidler writes *“This is how the Church met for 300 years, and it spread everywhere. It literally took over the Roman Empire. Some estimate that by the year 300 as much as half the Empire had converted to Christianity. That was the *life* of the Early Church! But then the Church died. By the year 500, the early church ceased to exist.”* (p. 43)

The Early Church was *“turning the world upside down.”* The Church in Rome had ten million believers when Constantine adopted Christianity as the official religion. At the Council of Nicea in 325, Heidler says *“Constantine literally reinvented Christianity. Christianity after Nicea was a different religion than what the original apostles had known.”* (p. 44, ACA)

Significantly, Constantine outlawed the house church infrastructure and the priesthood of the believers in favor of basilicas and bishops, priests and professional clergy beholden to the Emperor. Pagan

practices were reinvented as “Christian.” Romanism corrupted church leaders with political power, property and wealth. “When paganism and idolatry were brought into the Church, the Holy Spirit departed,” Heidler observes.

For the next thousand years the church was nothing like the Early Church. Then the Holy Spirit began breaking through with the Protestant Reformation, the Great Awakenings, and many significant movements in the 20th century: Pentecostal, Healing and Deliverance, Charismatic, Strategic Prayer, Prophetic, Apostolic, Missional. God is restoring His church to His original design. He’s building an apostolic wineskin for the release of His new wine in this Second Apostolic Age.

Since scripture tells us Jesus is building His Church on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, let’s see if what insight we might get from the Apostle Paul. What can we learn from his strategies and methods?

What Would Paul Do?

What would the Apostle Paul do if he were to appear today in 21st century America? How would he plan his mission to mobilize the Church to disciple or transform the nation, just as he did when setting his sights on Antioch, Ephesus, Corinth, Philippi and Rome 2,000 years ago? How would his plan account for our very different situation today?

Mission, situation, resources and timing determine strategy. With an estimated 160 million American Christians in place, and an unsaved mission field of over 200 million, what would be the appropriate strategy for today? How would Paul operate in the age of the internet and instant communications? How would he locate, activate and mobilize discouraged Christians?

Paul was a strategic thinker. His marching orders came straight from Jesus, as well as the “Great Commission” given the disciples before the ascension:

“All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore, go and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.” (Mt 28:18-20, NIV)

Jesus claimed total authority over Satan and delegated that authority to His disciples to transform the world system. He said they would do even greater things than He did, because they were empowered by the indwelling Holy Spirit. (Jn 14:12-13) He commissioned them the same as a military commander sending his subordinates on a mission. The disciples’ mission was to extend God’s Kingdom reign over the earth. That’s still our mission today.

The strategy the Holy Spirit gave Paul and the other apostles began with establishing regional *apostolic centers* in target cities. Those cities were large, multi-cultural, and at crossroads for trade and communication. Apostolic centers were based on the model developed in Jerusalem, with teaching and training the major activities. “An apostolic center is a beachhead for the gospel in a territory. It’s a regional resource center established to provide everything necessary for churches in the region to grow and multiply.” (ACA p 119) Those centers were linked to hundreds, even thousands, of small house churches in the neighborhoods where Christian life and ministry occurred.

Christianity was a home-based religion on a Jewish model. Larger assemblies for teaching, worship and celebrations occurred in synagogues and similar venues. Local churches were easy to start.

The apostolic centers gave all churches access to the five-fold ministry. The goal was to equip and empower the body of Christ to mature and fulfill its destiny.

“So Christ himself gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers, to equip his people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.” (Eph 4:11-13).

We saw this model in Jerusalem, Antioch, Corinth, Ephesus, Philippi, Rome and elsewhere. These were teaching and training centers, as well as sending centers for new churches. Antioch was where the disciples were first called “Christ-ians,” or “Little Christs.” That’s because believers were living and practicing what they were taught, acting as the Holy Spirit empowered them, healing the sick, casting out demons and winning the lost. They were ministering to the people where they lived.

With this background, what strategy might Paul employ for America?

An Apostolic Strategy for the Third Millennium

Today’s situation is vastly different than in Paul’s time. Modern travel, communications and the internet have had the effect of “flattening” the earth. There’s no need to board a ship to reach most destinations. With teleconferencing and video-on-demand, there is much less need for a physical presence of high-profile leaders. And with social media, online communities, chat, collaboration and community building apps, the possibilities for empowering transformation are limitless.

The American mission field is full of Christians operating in various degrees of maturity, unity of purpose, ministry and church participation. Millions have stopped participating in the institutional church. Many others attend traditional churches but are frustrated. They know we’re in a battle for our nation, but don’t know what to do. They lack vision. And we know that without vision, the people are “unrestrained,” even “perish.” (Pr. 29:18) They are the good seed in the wheat and the tares kingdom parable. They are far from the maturity and mission-fulfillment that Christ intends. They feel like the smothering weeds of the enemy are stealing their future.

Too many Christians are starved to live the “real Christian life.” In Acts they read about early church gatherings where the new life brought by Jesus, the Way, transformed pagan cultures. Ordinary believers operated in gifts of prophecy, healings and miracles, with love, involvement and service that makes today’s church-centered activities seem anemic by comparison. We’re nagged by the belief that “there must be more.” If we can help Believers experience the fullness of the life promised by Christ, the results will be transformational.

Fortunately for our 21st Century Paul, the Spirit of God has raised the previously mentioned movements in the Body that are now coming together just on time, in the fullness of time. The perfect place for them to operate in unity is the Apostolic Mission Center.

Apostolic Mission Centers

An Apostolic Mission Center is an outgrowth of regional apostolic centers. It is a missional strategy to divide the work of transforming the region into manageable units defined by the precinct boundaries where people live. It focuses on the precinct's neighborhoods, businesses, schools and other concerns. This is also where the apostolic movement dovetails with the missional church movement. It's where the leaven transforms the loaf. The analogue from the early American experience would be the local church that serviced surrounding neighborhoods, also functioning as a place of assembly for town meetings.

The first apostolic mission center might be the first in a city or region. The goal would be to set up an apostolic center for the city and seek God's leading for the people, strategy and methods to plant mission centers in the precincts

Everything in God's design for the Church is scalable and replicable, with everything originating in Jesus and His ministry. Jesus said that *He* would build His Church. We are His co-laborers and work with those He draws to us. If we follow God's design, we should experience the same explosive growth as occurred in Rome.

Rome had an estimated 200,000 believers by the end of the first century. That's a fifth of the population converting! The Church in Rome probably started with a house church of about 20 people around mid-century. Fifty years later, often amid severe persecution, Rome had about 10,000 house churches. By the end of the third century, half the Empire's population (ten million) had become Christians!

Precinct Ekklesia is the name I've given to the local apostolic mission center.

The Precinct Ekklesia – An Apostolic Mission Center

The *Precinct Ekklesia* is a new organizational form based on time-tested patterns developed in the Early Church, with analogues in the Early American experience. Each Precinct Ekklesia is an Apostolic Mission Center designed to extend the Kingdom of God within its geographical boundaries. A network of Precinct Ekklesias can transform their city, state and nation.

Its first major purpose is to cultivate community, by strengthening the neighborhoods, families and individuals within. The foundational task is to disciple believers to maturity, by healing, delivering, reconciling, educating, training and empowering them to bloom where they're planted, fulfilling their God-given destiny. They do that mainly outside the church walls, doing works of missional service where they live and in their spheres of influence or concern. Those spheres are their different gardens.

Like Adam and Eve, our job is to steward our own gardens. (Gen. 2:15) Garden stewardship is the primary method God gave them, and us, to fulfill our assignment to "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth, and subdue it; and rule over (it)." (Gen. 1:26-28)

As Dennis Peacocke says, God's "Big Idea" is for us to change the world, one garden at a time.

"God wants to share His power, knowledge and lifestyle with His children as we walk together with Him, both now and in eternity. He didn't just 'save us.' He saved us to share His life with us – to think His thoughts, see reality as He sees reality, and share His power to change things."
(Tending Your Garden [TYG], Ch 1)

“Tending our gardens is literally entering into Christ’s ministry with Him. . . . Only Christ’s ministry can change the world, and tending our gardens is letting Christ do that through us.” (TYG Ch. 2)

For those called to servant leadership in our precinct, its boundaries define a significant garden in our areas of responsibility. Starting with the gardener, ourselves, we steward our affairs and relationships with our families, friends and neighborhoods. As we go about our daily activities, we allow the Holy Spirit to help us be Christ-like with all we meet.

The second major purpose is social transformation. The primary methodology is obedience to God’s Word, especially loving God first, then our actual neighbors as we love ourselves. As we do that the Kingdom will spread on the shoulders of the gospel in action.

We also have an urgent Nehemiah task, the third major purpose. Our walls of civic protection and stability have crumbled. Government is out of control at all levels, and far too many of our representatives owe their allegiance to special interests, rather than to their constituencies. A disturbing trend of Christian persecution is happening politically. It’s being advanced by the demonic assault of Cultural Marxism in the universities and media. We need to restore representative government and political liberty by building a wall of living stones. Precinct leaders need to operate on both defense and offense, utilizing both sword and trowel.

The Precinct Ekklesia - A New Wineskin for the Third Millennium

The Precinct Ekklesia provides a new wineskin for this fresh movement of God unfolding in the third millennium. It is designed to restore and maintain the foundations of social order that made America exceptional, strong and prosperous. It employs the division of labor and responsibility at the most decentralized levels where people live.

Apostles function to establish the church, to create an administration where the five-fold ministry gifts can operate and develop. Then the saints will be equipped and mature, and the Kingdom will advance. Apostles’ anointing is to establish God’s order, so the many members of Christ’s body work together as intended. Then the Body will operate in great power. When we are trained and released to do what we were created to, we will experience meaning, purpose and fulfillment in life.

Five-Fold Gifts and the New Wineskin

The keys to operating in this new level of God’s administration are the five-fold “ascension gifts” identified in Ephesians 4:8-13 – the apostle, prophet, teacher, pastor and evangelist. All five of these gifts were functioning in the Early Church. They need to be aligned and functioning properly, in a “new wineskin” to contain and unleash the full power of the spirit and to mature the body of Christ. Their common goal is to equip God’s people for the work of ministry.” God is calling us out to fulfill His original plan.

The Early Church saints were equipped to minister, and the world was transformed. It is time to build a new wineskin based on the early principles.

“God is restoring His temple. He is restoring the structure of the Church. He is teaching us a new way of ‘doing church’ where apostles and prophets form the foundation (Eph 2:20). Teachers give us an understanding of the Word and train people to fulfill their destiny. Evangelists draw

the lost to Jesus, and pastors are available to heal, comfort and strengthen the flock. This is God's plan for the church." (p. 70, ACA)

"In the apostolic church all are trained and equipped. All discover their call and purpose. All do the work of ministry, and the Church becomes a mighty army in the earth. The territory is transformed. This is where the new wineskin church is heading." (p 111, ACA)

Extending the garden analogy to our sphere of influence, Dennis Peacocke says "Generally speaking, apostles build gardens [infrastructure], evangelists cull the seed, pastors and teachers nurture and fertilize, and the prophet gives the vision and context for the workers in the garden." (TYG, Ch. 7)

Alan Hirsch has done amazing pioneer work fleshing out the meaning and application of the five-fold ministry for today. He uses the acronym APEST to designate the Apostle, Prophet, Evangelist, Shepherd (Pastor) and Teacher. His books *5Q*, *The Permanent Revolution* and others are essential to helping us rediscover these important truths.

Every local body needs the APEST gifts operating to help them fulfill their mission. God will supply those gifts throughout the body as needed as needed for Kingdom purposes.

Ekklesia is a Governmental Body

The Ekklesia is Christ's body of Believers, with their unique gifts, talents and callings, knit together and empowered by the Holy Spirit to advance God's Kingdom. God's Kingdom government is defined by the principles put forth in God's word.

Ekklesia is the term Jesus used for his Church. He declared, "I will build my church (ekklesia) and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." (Mt. 16:18) Jesus used the term two places in the gospel (Matthew 16 and 18), while the apostles used it 115 times in the epistles.

Ekklesia is a Greek word that refers to the governing body of Greek city-states. The practice arose around the 7th century BC and continued through the days of Roman occupation during Jesus' time. The local leaders assembled to administrate the affairs of the territory with specific borders and a constitution. Both the Jews and gentiles who heard Jesus and the apostles used this word, understood it in this meaning and historical context.

Dr. Patti Amsden, in her book, *Ekklesia: Kingdom Government in Operation*, observes:

"Whatever was in the mind and heart of Jesus, the term for His covenantal ambassadors was *ekklesia*. His disciples then and His disciples throughout history are called out to assemble in local areas to conduct kingdom business for a designated territory and by means of the biblical constitution, which is God's Word." (p. 66, Ekklesia)

"God always intended to have a people who managed the earth by the patterns of the eternal Kingdom of God. God always intended for the earth to reflect heaven. From the beginning when God created Adam in His own image and gave man dominion over the earth, God had demonstrated His will to co-labor with His sons. Jesus declared the continuation of that perpetual plan." (p. 81, Ekklesia)

The Ekklesia, as Christ's called out body, is central to God's plan for the earth. It is the delivery system for his vision, will and purposes. Its role is ambassadorial and governmental. It is kingdom citizens managing the earth.

The Precinct - - The Boundary of Our Garden

Precinct refers to a district or area of a city delineated with boundaries for governmental or administrative purposes. The precinct is the smallest geo-political unit in the county. The entire nation is divided into almost 200,000 precincts that fit together like a giant jigsaw puzzle. Most people know them simply as the area where they vote. My state, Oklahoma, has almost 2,000 precincts.

Choosing the precinct as our apostolic territory is a strategic, commonsense application of the division of labor. Localism provides the best form of government. It's much easier to care about and demonstrate practical concern for the smaller area where one lives than for the larger city, state or nation. We can save and transform our nation, each of us working in our home precincts. As a movement of networked precincts working together, we can generate synergistic power to great effect.

Chuck Pierce says, "Unless Holy Spirit continues to be enfolded into the history of any *land* [emphasis mine] directing its covenant with God, evil overtakes the society, and the covenant root with our Creator withers. Holy Spirit enables us to triumph . . . the real issue is always concerned with the change of heart and unified expression of His people that will release an anointing throughout the earth. The anointing breaks the yoke." (ACA p 17)

When precinct leaders focus their attention on the territory defined by their own precinct boundaries, God will give them focused insight into their concerns. Spiritual warfare can target the powers and principalities over that precinct. Specific people, families, neighborhoods, business, schools etc. can be the object of prayer. Portals between heaven and earth can be opened or closed with binding and loosing. We can approach the Courts of Heaven for help bringing heaven to earth in our precinct.

The Precinct Ekklesia - - A Mediating Institution.

The Precinct Ekklesia is what sociologists call a "mediating structure." In their groundbreaking work, *To Empower People*, Peter L. Berger and Richard John Neuhaus defined mediating structures as "those institutions standing between the individual in his private life and the large institutions of public life." (p 158. They focus on four of these mediating structures: the neighborhood, family, church and voluntary association.

Alexis de Tocqueville in the 1830's identified these mediating structures as the source of America's unique civic pride and participation. Churches and voluntary associations reinforced citizens' spiritual and moral values. Voluntary social welfare organizations ministered to the vulnerable. Town hall meetings, ward conclaves and similar assemblies gave citizens a chance to discuss issues and make crucial public decisions that directly affected them.

Sadly, the rise of modernity and Progressivism in the 20th century led to more of an emphasis on the National Community. Political power passed from town meetings to often-corrupt political machines and parties. As the federal government amassed more power with the New Deal and subsequent policies, and as control of schools passed from the parents to unaccountable bureaucrats with an anti-Christian agenda, American citizens became more misinformed and powerless.

Berger and Neuhaus propose that we will only be able to restore civil society with a determined effort to reverse the gravitation of power and authority to the Federal government and place it back closest to the people with local government and voluntary associations. The Precinct Ekklesia is a vehicle to carry that positive, transformative vision to empower citizens to make informed, wise, public decisions to effect the changes they want.

What Does It Look Like?

While we can speculate how the Precinct Ekklesia will operate, the truth is that we will learn from doing. We have plenty to learn, especially from each other, history and the Holy Spirit. As Christ intended, many members of the body will supply the skills and work needed. Through divine crowdsourcing, God will provide revelation and direction.

Each mission center should offer five-fold ministry. Leadership is shared, contrary to the lead-pastor model. Eldership is demonstrated and recognized based on servant leadership, not appointment or status. Together they seek God's will and the Holy Spirit's direction. Leadership is about principles, not personality. Membership is voluntary.

The Precinct Ekklesia is decentralized. Each unit is independent, though it may, and should, align itself with covering from a recognized apostle, city or regional apostolic center (like the Global Spheres Apostolic Center in Corinth, Texas) or any of the apostolic networks. We can learn a lot from the book of Acts and Early Church history. Precinct Ekklesias will relate to each other horizontally, not vertically. Current books on organizational behavior, like *Tribal Leadership* and *The Starfish and Spider*, provide additional insight.

The Precinct Ekklesia is not meant to replace existing, traditional churches, but to be a mission center where believers are equipped to practice ministry where they live. Some contemporary local churches will reinvent themselves as apostolic mission centers focusing on their precinct and equip their members to live a missional lifestyle. They will encourage members to participate in their precinct or neighborhood gatherings in homes, just as believers did in the Early Church.

Precinct Ekklesias should seek to *demonstrate the Way of Love*. The Great Commandment tells us to love our *actual* neighbors. In Jesus' day, neighbor meant neighbor, those in very close proximity to one's home. That means across the street and next door. Not many rode donkeys ten miles to the synagogue to be with their "neighbors" on Sundays and Wednesdays.

The fact that most Christians don't even know their actual neighbors, much more love them, means that *we are living in a state of basic disobedience*. We're missing out on the blessing of being transformed into the image of Christ by loving others. If every believer was disciplined in the art of loving our neighbors, and did so, we would see a Third Great Awakening to top anything we've seen so far.

In this Fourth Turning we need to realize that most every person and family is going through crisis. The collapse of the family has led to the collapse of individuals. Dysfunctional families are the norm, and we suffer the effects at every level. People are starved for human connection. The Church is called to provide that connection.

The Precinct Ekklesia is meant to be a continuing, self-sustaining, recognized and necessary component of American social infrastructure. Resources needed for its operation need to be raised by the

members. Expenses can range from very low to more elaborate if the leaders decide to establish a physical resource or meeting center. Crowdsourcing will produce any number of ways to fund the efforts.

The Precinct Ekklesia is non-partisan politically. History shows that political parties have become the bane of politics, just as George Washington warned. Our political interest is transformation according to the Founding Principles that made America a free, prosperous nation. Members are encouraged to work through their political parties, if they decide to join one. The Precinct Town Meeting is where all citizens in a precinct will be encouraged to assemble to discuss political issues, build relationships and work to address problems and opportunities larger than the boundaries of the precinct.

Networking is essential. Politically this is easy to see. The precinct is the smallest geopolitical unit. All voting districts are comprised of different arrangements of precincts. Depending on the voting district – City ward, county, house, senate, school, etc. – the precincts will network with a different configuration for each. Within each precinct, the various neighborhoods, blocks, neighborhood associations, businesses and such will be networked to address intra-precinct issues. Other issues that may affect several proximate precincts, like new housing or commercial developments.

Who will be doing the work? How will we find the Precinct Leaders?

The Triumphant Reserve

As mentioned earlier, the Triumphant Reserve are those prophesied in Isaiah 58:12: “Your people will rebuild the ancient ruins and will raise up the age-old foundations; you will be called Repairer of the Broken Walls, Restorer of the Streets with Dwellings.” They are a triumphant people called to take the keys to the Kingdom, and do even greater works than Jesus, as He promised in John 14:12. They are an “apostolic people . . . that will build a new prototype [wineskin] for today, and unlock a Kingdom mentality that hell cannot withstand. They will have centers for gatherings that will be known as . . . [Apostolic Centers]” (ACA p 4-5)

“Most . . . will be those who have risen and fallen, and risen again and fallen again. . . . Many were coming off the shelf and being used as we advanced with strength into the next harvest season. Many were ‘second timers’ who knew the power of amazing grace. . . . Many of this reserve had once been out of His perfect timing, but have now been developed for a time such as this. . . . Each has come through narrow places of transition. They are a righteous troop who stand and release different types of prayers into the earth. They have reformation in their hearts. . . . Their consciences are cleansed, and they have become bold. They can go up and enter boldly into the Throne Room of Grace, gain new vision, and pave the way for many to follow. . . . They do not fear death. They are energized by His Spirit. This group will leap from high place to high place, and always remain in their abiding place.” (ACA 27-28)

The Triumphant Reserve has been prepared with brokenness, testing, and purification. They are called and waiting in place for God’s timing and direction. Many are frustrated because they are aware of the gravity of our crisis, are ready and want to do something for God, but they don’t know what to do yet. They need to be identified, connected with their gifts and callings, shown the vision, trained and released for a greater level of service.

The Three Percent Solution

A reasonable guess for the number in the Triumphant Reserve is at least three percent of Believers. These are the people who are willing to put their lives on the line for the greater good. God reduced Gideon's army to 3%, from 10,000 to 300. History indicates just 3% of the American colonists were active in the American Revolution, while supported by 20%. Perhaps Isaiah's remnant of 7,000 represented close to this number. The number could be less or more, but no doubt God has set His people in place, gifted appropriately, ready to be called out for this current movement.

The Three Percent are by nature apostolic and prophetic, with a God-given desire to see order, liberty and justice in society. God has equipped them with unique gifts and talents to be used in their calling to fulfill their destiny. Some are actively working in these capacities directly with, and through, the church. Other obvious candidates are social and political activists. Others comprise a significant number of people who work in the justice system or as entrepreneurs. If you're reading this, it is quite likely you are called as one of them.

Knowing God has already set these people in place is a great comfort. That means we don't need to convince a lot of people to get involved. Rather, we need to develop strategies to locate the Triumphant Reserve, help them understand their calling, and how they can exercise it in this move of God. As in the parable of the wheat and tares, the mission field is planted and already growing. Our job is to cultivate that field so that it overpowers the weeds as the kingdom expands.

The Missional Church Movement Should be a Great Source for Leaders

God is raising the missional church movement as the ground troops the New Apostolic Age. Missional living is about a new way of life and being the Church. "To think and to live missionally means seeing all life as a way to be engaged with the mission of God in the world," says Reggie McNeal in *Missional Renaissance*. (p. xiv MR) He describes "tectonic shifts" that will change our church thinking and behavior:

- "From internal [church] to external [kingdom] in terms of ministry focus
- From program development to people development in terms of core activity
- From church-based to kingdom-based in terms of leadership agenda"

"They will move you from doing church as primarily a refuge, conservator, and institutional activity in a post-Christendom culture to being a risky, missionary, organic force in the increasingly pre-Christian world in North America." (p. xvi MR)

This movement is happening in the context of three cultural phenomena that make conditions ripe for this renaissance:

- the emergence of the altruism economy where people want to engage in meaningful community service;
- the search for personal growth for people to become all they were meant to be;
- the hunger for spiritual vitality as a way of life.

"All this calls for an expression of Christian spirituality that does not reflect or rely on the Constantinian world order for its major self-understanding. . . . The movement founded by Jesus was a marketplace phenomenon, an organic connection among people who were

experiencing a way of life together . . . focused on the simple teaching of Jesus, with particular attention to living lives of sacrifice and service to one another and one's neighbors. . . . Jesus invaded all areas of life. Church was not an event or a place; it was a way of life." (MR pp. 13-14)

Tending our gardens of responsibility is missional living. Tending the garden defined by our own precinct is the unique calling addressed in this book.

Rebuilding our Political Walls of Civic Protection

Political Education, Training and Citizenship

The vision of the Precinct Ekklesia evolved from an idea for restoring political power to the people. My eBook, *OK Grassroots Project*, spelled out that vision. As I began to think through the implications of the structure and functioning of a network of self-sustaining, decentralized, non-partisan precinct organizations, I began to realize these activities were part of what the Church should be doing!

The essence of the political aspect of the Precinct Ekklesia is to restore the function of what Alexis de Tocqueville identified as critical to American government, the town meeting. Those assemblies were held for a township, an area which was generally a neighborhood of neighborhoods, often with a population close to that of today's precincts. They were schoolhouses of citizenship where participants discussed common issues and formulated solutions in a democratic setting. Those meetings were the genesis of representative government. People elected those they knew and trusted to speak for them at higher levels of government.

The Precinct Ekklesia is a natural place for political and social activists to exercise their gifts and calling. The effort to restore representative government will be a massive undertaking. With this fresh move of the Holy Spirit operating, it could be accomplished relatively quickly. But it cannot be sustained, without restoring America's moral, spiritual and social infrastructure.

The Precinct Ekklesia and Area Security

The adage "when seconds count, the police are just minutes away" underlies the need for making area security an important function for the Precinct Ekklesia.

The most basic level is spiritual warfare, defensively and offensively. As familiarity with one's precinct increases, prayers should become much more targeted and specific to deal with what God reveals. General prayers yield general answers. Specific prayers yield specific results.

Beyond that, the social breakdown and chaos that we surely will experience during our transition through this Fourth Turning makes neighborhood watch programs of prime importance. Depending on where we live, that may mean anything from exercising situational awareness to armed patrols. This kind of training will also help with natural and manmade disasters like war, terrorism and economic collapse.

The Precinct Leader – Be the Change You Want to See

"To bring transformation to others we must first be that transformation ourselves." - - Dennis Peacocke

Precinct leadership, and the development of leaders, is a subject deserving its own book. In the meantime, I'm sharing a few of my thoughts to stimulate your own thinking and prayers.

Precinct Leaders are servant leaders answering God's call to bring kingdom order and rule within their precinct. The precinct defines the "garden" for which the Precinct Leaders assume responsibility. Most will have prophetic and apostolic five-fold ministry gifts. Most political and social justice advocates have these callings and would be the first recruits to be pioneers and early adopters.

Leaders are readers. I've relied heavily on the insights of many good teachers in their books. You'll find a bibliography of some at the end. Dennis Peacocke's *Tending Your Garden* is an excellent source of inspiration and practical principles for our task. God changes us while we are in the yoke with Him changing the world. *Missional Renaissance* by Reggie McNeal offers much rich insight, direction and examples from practical experience.

Compliment these books with Harold Eberle's *Systematic Theology for the New Apostolic Reformation: An Exposition in Father-Son Theology*. He makes clear how Western Christian thought and practice was distorted in critical areas by the Classical-Reformed worldview that informed it. Freed from the shackles of those misunderstandings, we find a God who loves us better than the best father we can imagine, who wants help us become mature sons and daughters who fulfill their destiny.

Alan Hirsch has done ground-breaking deep thinking on the importance and continuing work of Apostolic Ministry in *The Permanent Revolution*, *The Forgotten Ways* and *5Q*.

I'd be remiss if I didn't mention Laurie Beth Jones' excellent book, *Jesus CEO: Using Ancient Wisdom for Visionary Leadership*. Using the leadership principles Jesus demonstrated, she deals with the developing the strengths of self-mastery, action and relationships.

The Precinct Ekklesia and the Seven Mountains of Culture

The Seven Mountain mandate identifies seven influential spheres of culture that must be transformed as the Kingdom is brought in. They're education, religion, family, business, government, arts/entertainment and media. Those spheres are currently dominated by pagan philosophies. Our job is to transform them with kingdom principles.

It should be evident that restoring the social, moral and spiritual infrastructure in America is a necessary condition for seven mountains transformation. If Christians are motivated and trained to love our *actual* neighbors, and begin to do it, both we and our neighbors will be changed. This could happen virally. As social transformation spreads from the grassroots upwards and outwards, revival will break out. People in every mountain of culture will be transformed and the nation will change. Every mountain stands on a solid foundation.

Implementation [bare outlines]

Resources needed:

Digital Infrastructure - software and database that combines numerous capabilities: community and team building, collaboration and project management, political/social organizing, social media and anything else that facilitates the mission.

Education and training materials appropriate to the tasks.

Thought leaders.

Relationships needed:

Many of the people we need to reach and activate are affiliated with various movements referenced earlier. The Precinct Ekklesia provides a venue for all of them to come together in common cause to extend the Kingdom. Our neighborhoods are rich mission fields for ministry. If these networks can promote the effort through their affiliate to their members, this idea could go viral.

For a generation strategic prayer networks have been warring over our cities, states and nation, bringing healing and reconciliation for sins in our national history. They've been providing the air cover and the artillery bombardment in the heavenlies. It is now time to send in the ground troops and occupy the land!

Strategies and tactics for each phase will be developed:

Vision Planting

Pioneering Implementation

Early Adopters

Rapid growth

Maturation

Generational transfer

The Promise

There's a fresh move of God underway early in the Third Millennium that will transform the world. Jesus is building his Ekklesia. We need to get in the yoke with him. As we all do our part, we will be the leaven that penetrates and transforms the world. Through spiritual warfare we will cut off sustenance to the weeds in our gardens and nourish the growth of God's seed. We will find that we're building the temple of God on earth, Christ's Body!

Imagine what a network of 200,000 fully functioning Precinct Ekklesias looks like. Think of what they can do to extend the Kingdom of God by restoring the spiritual, social and political infrastructure of America. Imagine the better life our children, grandchildren and their progeny will have as a result. Imagine the fulfillment you will feel as a part of this movement. That's a vision worth living for!

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About the Author

Porter Haskell Davis is a long-time political activist. He served in the Oklahoma House of Representatives, has been a three-time Delegate to National GOP conventions, and served numerous times as a precinct chairman. He founded a state-level public policy think tank and was instrumental in forming a grassroots movement that passed a major tax limitation amendment to the Oklahoma Constitution.

in the late 1980's he helped found one of the first City Action Councils in conjunction with Dennis Peacocke. The fruits of the seeds sown in this effort are manifesting today in the most remarkable ways.

His career includes wholesale food distribution, retail store, radio broadcasting, and wholesale flowers. He has a BBA from the University of Oklahoma and an MBA from the University of Michigan, with a concentration in Organizational Behavior. Subsequently he did two years of graduate study and teaching of sociology at the University of Illinois.

He has been married to Terri for forty-two years and is the father of three children. They have four wonderful grandchildren. And he's an avid gardener.