Has NAR Disqualified the Apostolic?

Dylan Jones 23 September 2026



I love the charismatic church. I have had the privilege of seeing the Lord move powerfully in the life of my local church and in the lives of many individuals. But I fear that the charismatic church as a whole is entering a McCarthy era.

McCarthyism and Mother Russia

Let me explain. The Second World War had just ended. The Allies and the Soviet Union had defeated Hitler, but soon after victory, tensions began to rise between the two former allies, and the Iron Curtain started to descend.

The Cold War had begun, and Korea became the first theatre of a decades-long struggle between capitalism and communism. It was during this volatile period that Senator Joseph McCarthy led aggressive campaigns to expose alleged communist infiltration. While covert communist agents were operating in the West, and I'm not questioning the right to expose them, the Red Scare, as it became known, caused a level of panic and suspicion in society that eventually led to unsubstantiated claims, intimidation, and rampant guilt by association.

Suddenly, being associated with communists, even by a large degree of separation, meant that you could be implicated as an agent, sympathiser, or conspirator. If this was not bad enough, even those who had no ties to Mother Russia were often falsely charged and tried, with little to no actual evidence provided. This type of atmosphere usually creates two classes of people: those with the power to accuse and those who are powerless against the accusations.

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Let me bring this all back to the church. The charismatic church has faced many challenges from the outside, but now it faces its biggest challenge from both inside and out. With the rise of the New Apostolic Reformation (NAR), the charismatic church is facing its own McCarthy moment as accusations of affiliation, participation, and guilt by association are made against any and all churches with an apostolic leaning.

The Apostolic Panic

It's no secret that the NAR is a hot topic on social media. Just open a browser, and every online Berean and self-appointed elder is waxing eloquent about the dangers of the movement – and not without good reason. As a movement, the NAR has unbiblical theology and practice (such as Kingdom Now, Seven Mountains, and Word of Faith), and this article is in no way an endorsement of the movement. But I do think we have entered into an apostolic panic.

What do I mean by that? Joseph McCarthy set out to expose and root out communism in the United States. Similarly, there are people in the church today who have set out to expose and root out NAR doctrine. Neither of those things was or is inherently bad. The problem with both is that what starts as a pragmatic and praiseworthy effort can eventually descend into panic, where fear begins to outrun the evidence.

Guilt by association, accusation, insinuation, and intimidation start to replace charity, nuance, and areas of agreement or overlap. Simply believing in the role of post-ascension apostles automatically places you on the NAR blacklist. Believe in the fivefold gifts? You're NAR. Read a book by C. Peter Wagner in the '90s? NAR. Sing a few Bethel songs at church? NAR. Liked an Instagram reel about the Azusa Revival? NAR.

You get the point.

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It doesn't matter if you disavow, disown, or distance yourself from the movement; if you have any association or overlap, real or perceived, you are guilty. You don't get to decide whether you are aligned with the movement or not; that responsibility falls to the online experts.

Again, I'm not advocating for an end to pastors warning their congregations about the dangers of these doctrines. I think we must! But my real fear is that, if we carry on the way we are, before you know it, every charismatic and apostolic movement will either be labelled proto-NAR, post-NAR, NAR-adjacent or aligned, NAR-informed, or NAR-influenced. Let me be clear. Not every apostolic movement is NAR.

What is interesting about this particular moment is that the accusations are coming from both inside and outside the charismatic church. The lack of charity, patience, and understanding from within the charismatic movement towards its own is astonishing.

This should be a calm and considered moment of mending, not a panic-driven purge. As we have seen before, the nature of panic is that, once the accusers have rooted out all the extreme cases, they turn on the moderates and innocents before eventually turning on themselves.

The Biblical Witness

Before I offer some final thoughts, I want to look at a few Scriptures that should inform our approach.

"The one who states his case first seems right, until the other comes and examines him." – Proverbs 18:17 (ESV)

This passage in Proverbs is especially relevant to this article. All too often only one side of an argument is presented without both sides being represented.

"Put them all away: anger, wrath, malice, **slander**, and obscene talk from your mouth." – Colossians 3:8
(ESV)

The danger of making accusations, even with the best intentions, is that it can easily become

slander if you misrepresent, either knowingly or unknowingly, a brother in Christ.

“A lone witness is not sufficient to establish any wrongdoing or sin against a man, regardless of what offense he may have committed. A matter must be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses.“ – Deuteronomy 19:15 (BSB)

This passage is vital for us to understand in a day and age where a single man and a microphone can become a modern McCarthy. In ancient Israel, accusations were not meant to rest on anonymous allegations or the untested claims of a single individual. Matters were to be established through credible witnesses and dealt with within the proper judicial process, before the appointed judges and authorities. The principle is clear: accusation requires evidence, witnesses must be accountable for their testimony, and justice should not be determined by public suspicion.

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NB: While Deuteronomy 19:15 concerns Israel’s judicial process, it establishes a broader principle that Scripture takes accusations seriously and does not treat the testimony of a lone witness as sufficient to establish guilt.

Panic Can’t Prevail

Final thoughts. I think the charismatic church needs to take a step back, reflect, slow down the panic, and stop the fear-based rhetoric. If there are abusive apostolic and charismatic churches and movements, they should be addressed strongly, but the whole process needs to be less McCarthyesque and more measured.

By this, I mean allowing churches the right to reply, approaching them before publishing an exposé, presenting both sides of a story, encouraging public dialogue, having private discussions before issuing public rebukes, celebrating repentance, and so on.

I don’t think any of these are unreasonable, but they do require work that mostly happens behind the scenes and off camera. Are you saying that a matter should never go public? No. Going public with a charge or accusation should ordinarily come after reasonable efforts to establish the facts, seek clarification, and allow a meaningful opportunity to respond – unless the

nature or urgency of the matter requires immediate public action.

Currently, the first step seems to be making an accusation with little to no real evidence, context, or conversation, and then expecting the public to reach an unbiased conclusion. During the McCarthy era, panic meant that simply being subpoenaed or named in a newspaper article could imply guilt. In this day and age, putting a video or Instagram reel up with a sinister-looking thumbnail and a provocative headline has the same effect. The critics will keep doing this, but my sincere prayer is that we as Charismatics would value overlap and nuance over outrage and name-calling.

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