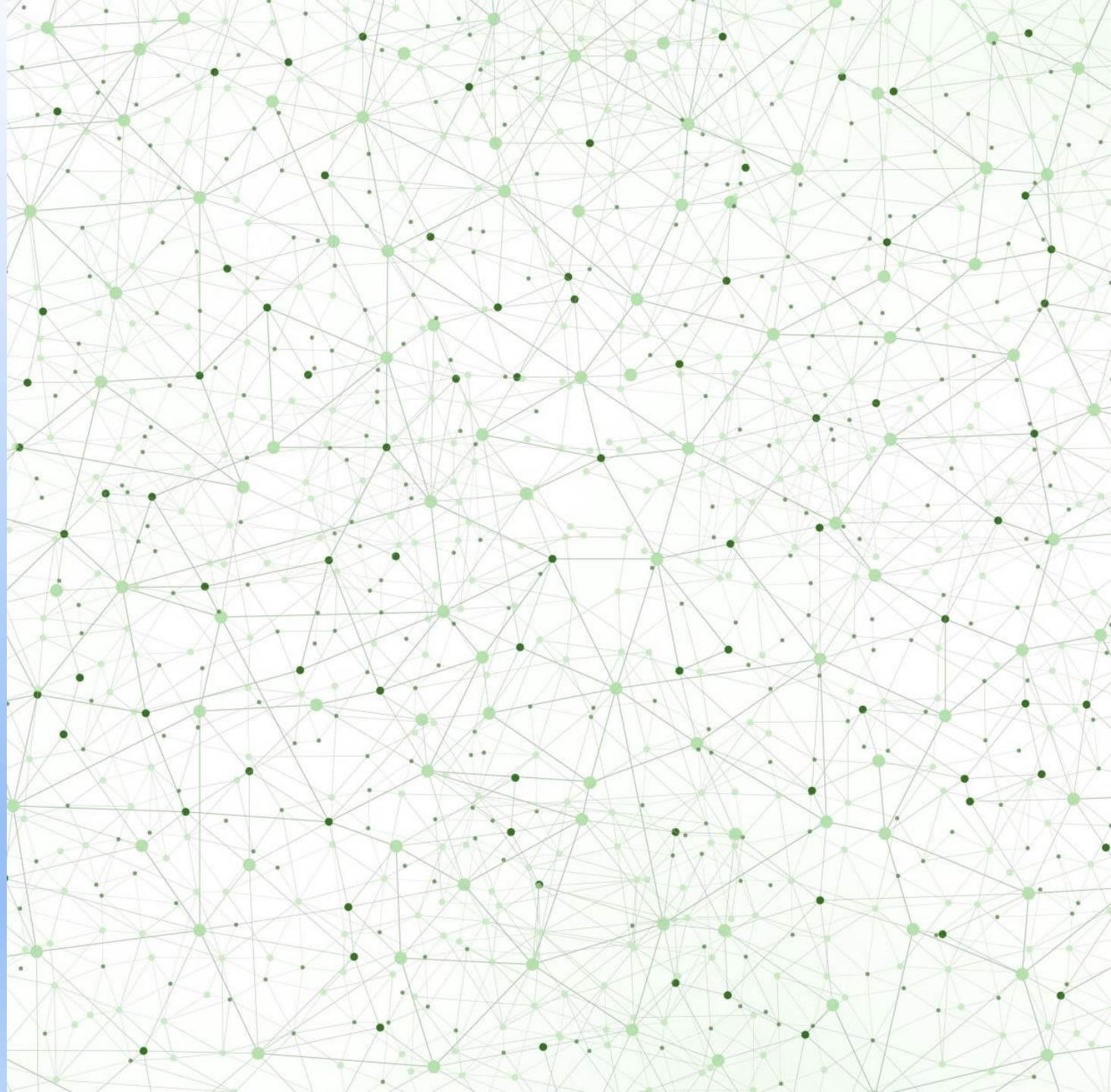


The Principles of Healthy Apostolic Leadership

THE GATHERING IN THE
HOLY SPIRIT 2026



3 categories of apostles

The Twelve

- unique witnesses to the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus

'Apostles (messengers) of the churches'

- sent out by local congregations for specific purposes

Post-ascension apostles

- commissioned directly by Jesus after the ascension

Contemporary apostles may...

Plant

- plant new churches

Support

- support and advise existing churches and leaders

Create Networks

- To bring leaders and churches together

1. Healthy apostolic leadership requires sound theological foundations

Ephesians 4: 7-16

Ministries = people = the way that person contributes to the life of a church

The gift is the person
(i.e. no gift of apostleship)

Commissioned by Jesus
– not appointed by a church hierarchy

Two views of
apostolic
ministry –
ends of a
spectrum

1. Hierarchical view

A governance structure with
apostles at the top



Two views of
apostolic
ministry –
ends of a
spectrum

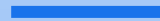
1. Hierarchical view

A governance structure with
apostles at the top

2. Functional view

Need apostolic people in the mix
– but they are not ‘offices’

2. Healthy apostolic leadership
will focus on others



Celebrity Christians

Magic aura

Make space
for me
(self-focused)

Special

Gifted

Impressive
stage
presence

Apostolic ministry

Unimpressive

Make space for others

Ordinary – chief of sinners

Treasure in earthen vessels

Offscourings of the world

3. Healthy apostolic leadership & proximity

Celebrities

Lack
proximity

Influence
from a
distance

*Apostolic
ministry*

Proximity

Relational

Early Church

– the context
for apostolic
ministry

100 AD –
1 in 10,000

300 AD –
1 in 10
(discipleship key)

Met almost
exclusively in
homes

Small networked
groups

Dominant
metaphor
= Family

4. Healthy apostolic leadership - spiritual parenthood

Mother- and father-figures

Chinese House Churches

'Super-planters' linked to spiritual parenthood



Good spiritual parents are non-possessive

- Focus = growth towards independence (actually interdependence)
- Help more concentrated in the planting phase
- No exclusive relationships – *Paul planted, Apollos watered*
- Share the wisdom of experience
- Our 'offspring' may exercise a greater ministry than our own

5. Healthy apostolic ministry creates teams and networks

Corinth – helped by Apollos, Peter, Silas, Timothy, Aquila, not just Paul

Paul's travelling team
– a large group of co-workers

Allows multi-skilled contributions

Fosters an apprenticeship model

Networks develop – Paul, Peter, John, James

APOSTOLIC AUTHORITY & GOVERNANCE

A thorny issue!

Apostolic authority not equal to
Scripture

Should not outweigh local leadership

1 Corinthians 12 – functional hierarchy

APOSTOLIC AUTHORITY & GOVERNANCE

Greater governance if an apostle
founds a church

Randy Clark's survey – 22 respondents

One regarded apostles as God's
generals

CTF – apostolic ministry = advisory

APOSTOLIC AUTHORITY & GOVERNANCE

VINEYARD

Cautious about the label but open to the function or role of an apostle

Only 'offices' are elders, overseers and deacons (local church leaders)

Catch the Fire – apostolic team is only advisory to local churches

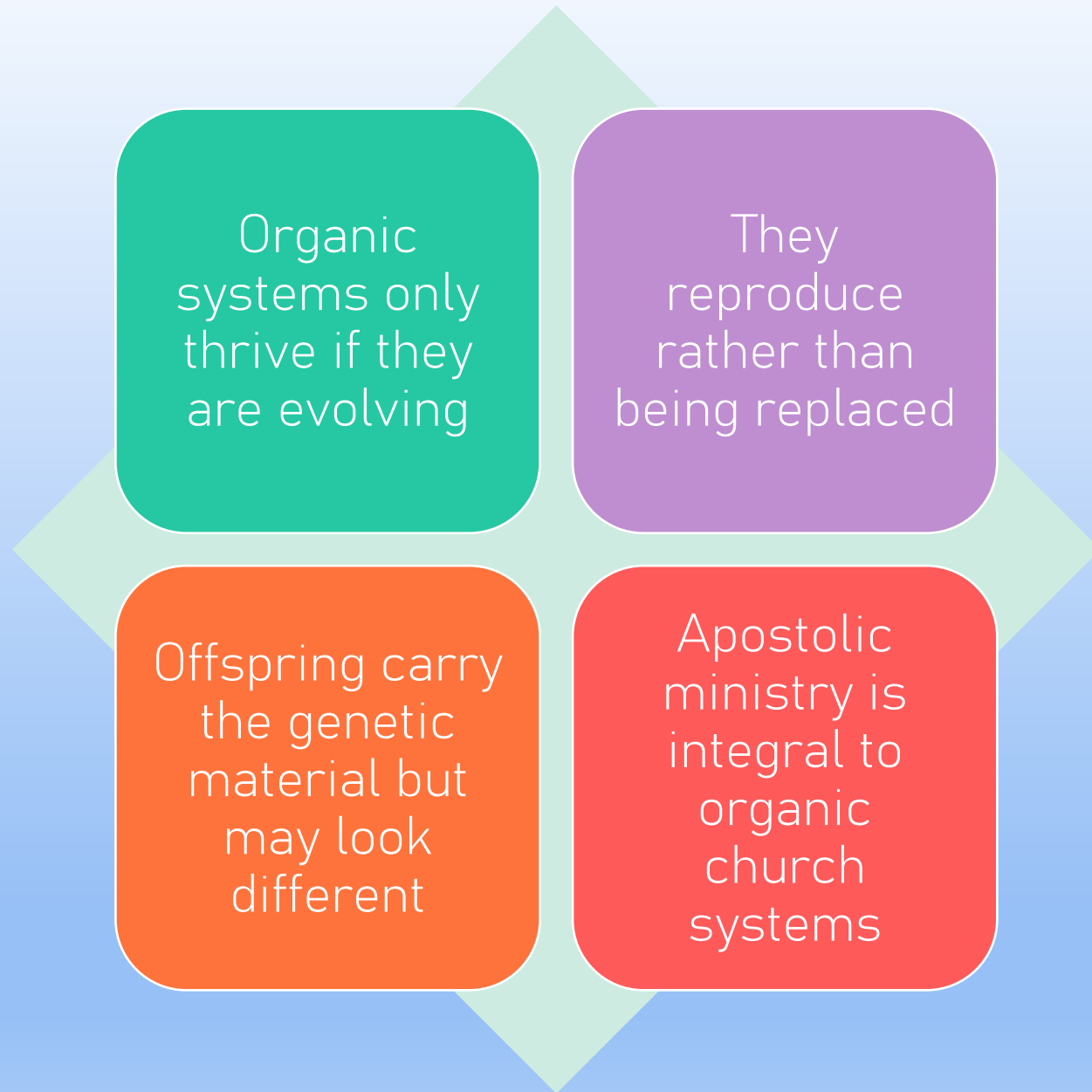
ORGANIC vs MECHANISTIC SYSTEMS

Mechanistic systems rely on stability

Change = the thing is broken

Old models are either repaired or replaced by updated ones

ORGANIC vs MECHANISTIC SYSTEMS



ORGANIC vs MECHANISTIC SYSTEMS

Is Church more like a family than an institution?

In mechanistic systems the emphasis is on budgets, governance, keeping the show on the road, a good public profile...

Are some New Churches drifting towards a mechanistic model?

APOSTOLIC MINISTRY TODAY?

IT HAS
ALWAYS
BEEN
AROUND

WHAT MIGHT
THIS LOOK
LIKE TODAY?

THE DANGER
OF SEEKING
PROMINENCE
OR POWER

IT IS OFTEN
VIEWED AS A
THREAT

APOSTOLIC MINISTRY TODAY?

NEEDS TO BE
RECOGNISED

APOSTOLIC
PROTESTANTS -
PARACHURCH

CATHOLIC
ORDERS AND
LAY
MOVEMENTS

RELATIONSHIPS
& TEAMS