



Position
of the New Apostolic Church on

The Salvation
Exclusiveness
Apostle Ministry
Following



1. The Salvation

- 1.1 In the Holy Scriptures the term “salvation“ is used in context with rescue, protection and redemption. In the Old Testament the hope for salvation is in the course of time ever more clearly referring to the expected Messiah. In the New Testament the term is quite plainly focusing on Jesus Christ. He is the Saviour and Redeemer (Acts 4:12), at the same time also Mediator for the redemption (Hebrews 8:6; 9:15; 1 Timothy 2:5). Lastly, He Himself is the salvation (Acts 13:47 in context with Isaiah 49:6).
- 1.2 The salvation in Christ is based on
 - His coming into the flesh as expression God’s love towards all men
 - His sacrificial death and His resurrection
 - the bestowal and activity of the Holy Spirit
- 1.3 For us human beings the salvation emerges out of Christ’s sacrifice and brings about release from sin, the permanent abolition of the separation from God and grants everlasting fellowship with Him.
- 1.4 The faithful is experiencing current salvation already through fellowship with Jesus Christ in word and sacrament by which he is prepared for eternal salvation, the participation in the glory with God.
- 1.5 In accordance with the interpretations in the Holy Scriptures, a conveying of salvation in the *current phase* of God’s plan of salvation is brought about by the apostle ministry that has the mission to preach the word of God and to dispense the sacraments.
- 1.6 Purpose of this conveying salvation is to gather the Bride of Christ, to prepare her for the Return of the Lord as well as to take part in the Wedding of the Lamb. Goal of the eternal salvation of the Bride, who faithfully accepted the godly offer of salvation, is eternal fellowship with God already on the Day of the Lord.
- 1.7 In the following phases of the salvation plan, salvation is experienced in different ways:
 - In connection with the great tribulation God grants salvation to the martyrs: They receive the grace of Jesus Christ (illustrated by the picture of the white robes – Revelation 7:13), take part in the First Resurrection and reign as priests together with Christ a thousand years.
 - In connection with the Last Judgment God once more grants salvation through His Son; by this salvation the concerned will have eternal fellowship with God in the New Creation.
- 1.8 In the various phases of God’s salvation history, kind and measure of the salvation conveyed therefore show different forms. But above all, it is God’s will that all men receive help!



2. Exclusiveness – Is the NAC exclusive?

- 2.1 The term “exclusiveness” is derived from the Latin expression *excludere* (= to exclude); in the general linguistic usage this means “uniqueness” “special feature”, “nobility”.
- 2.2 In current discussions about different religious denominations the term “exclusiveness” is primarily used in connection with the question whether there is but one Church that is exclusively entitled to convey salvation and all others not. In this context reference is made to a Church’s claim to absoluteness.
- 2.3 In this respect, the New Apostolic Church and its apostles are reproached with exclusiveness. NAC would exclude from salvation all who are not new apostolic so that they are exposed to everlasting damnation.
- 2.4 This indiscriminate form of reproach is inappropriate.

On the one side, the apostles have been commissioned and authorized by the Lord, to offer complete salvation to all; it is not the task of the apostles to exclude anyone from salvation or to conclusively evaluate other religious denominations.

On the other side, as aforementioned, salvation is conveyed in different ways in the various phases of God’s plan of salvation, partly outside the activity of the apostle ministry:

- 2.4.1 The activity of the apostle ministry is indispensable for the preparation of the bridal congregation. It is in God’s sovereign decision whether or not others will also be accepted on the Day of the Lord.
 - 2.4.2 With respect to the time of the great tribulation the question of exclusiveness of the New Apostolic Church with the apostle ministry does not exist, as the apostle ministry will no longer be active. Nevertheless, the martyrs of that time will attain eternal salvation.
 - 2.4.3 The same reflections apply to the “Thousand Years of Peace” and the Last Judgment.
- 2.5 The aforementioned (in particular items 2.4.2 and 2.4.3) clearly show that according to our doctrine containing distinctive, future-related (eschatological) elements, lastly all men can attain salvation, even without being a member of the New Apostolic Church. This reflects God’s will that all men shall find help. It is therefore inappropriate to designate the New Apostolic Church as the only Church where salvation can be found.
 - 2.6 Our belief that the apostle ministry is indispensable for the preparation of the bridal congregation does not rule out that outside the New Apostolic Church there are manifold elements of truth in other religious denominations which truthfully profess their faith in Christ. In this respect, the Holy Spirit is also active outside the New Apostolic Church.
 - 2.7 Despite these reflections, we lay claim to an absoluteness with respect to what the Son of God said of Himself: “I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me” (John 14:6). This entitlement has also been expressed by Apostle Peter who said: “Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other



name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved“ (Acts 4:12). In spite of this clear orientation towards the Son of God we consider it necessary to live a peaceful and good-neighbourly life together with all religions in this world and therefore reject any kind of religious fanaticism and fundamentalism.



3. Apostle Ministry necessary for salvation

- 3.1 The statement that the apostle ministry is necessary for salvation means that the apostle ministry is indispensable for attaining salvation in Christ. The question of indispensability only applies to that period in the salvation history in which the apostle ministry is active for preparing the bridal congregation.
- 3.2 First of all, the indispensability of the apostle ministry emanates from the fact that Jesus established just this one ministry and vested it with respective powers. Moreover, this is based on biblical testimonials of acts by apostles, such as for example the bestowal of the Holy Spirit in Samaria and Ephesus (cf. Acts 8:14 ff. and 19:1 ff.).
- 3.3 It is our conviction of faith that the apostle ministry was not historically unique but that it was re-established by God in the 19th century for the preparation of the bridal congregation for the Return of Christ. The question as to who will be accepted on the Day of the Lord and whether there will be any exceptions is left to God's sovereign decision.



4. Following

- 4.1 The topic of the following is always connected with the question as to whom we are to follow – Jesus Christ, the apostles, the ministry bearers ...?
- 4.2 For every Christian, the principal focus of following is Jesus Christ! It was Christ Himself who called upon to follow Him (cf. Luke 9:23). Following Him is necessary for salvation (cf. Matthew 19:16-21). This is also underlined by the distinctive feature of the 144'000 which runs: "... These are the ones who follow the Lamb wherever He goes" (Revelation 14, out of verse 4).
- 4.3 To follow Christ means to seriously orient oneself toward life and nature of Jesus. By such conduct one is already professing one's faith in the Lord.
- 4.4 Inseparably connected with the following is to always observe His will. Among other things, it is His will that His apostles gather the bridal congregation and prepare her for His Return (cf. 2 Corinthians 11:2). Accordingly, following finds concrete expression in that one follows the apostles sent by Him. This context is made clear by the Son of God Himself when He said: "He who receives you receives Me" (Matthew 10:40 – cf. John 13:20).
- 4.5 Apostle Paul expressed himself about following the apostles: "Imitate me, just as I also imitate Christ!" (1 Corinthians 11:1). The same principle also applies to the following of the ministry bearers ordained by the apostles.
- 4.6 Thus the words apply to all of us: „Remember those who rule over you, who have spoken the word of God to you, whose faith follow, considering the outcome of their conduct" (Hebrew 13:7).
- 4.7 A following under this aspect is easy if it is not understood as a subordination to human authority but if the ministry bearer is recognized as a gift of God.
- 4.8 The inner justification of all following for us is that, in any case, it is oriented towards Christ Jesus.

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