



**Slide #1**

In Part #1 of *Distinctions in Corporate Gifts*, each corporate gift was identified and the relation of each to the other was discussed. Their distinctions in spiritual gifts concerned differences in their particular ministries. Consequently, each gift had and/or has their part in the establishment and spiritual growth of the church. While each differed in ministry, together they combine in “corporate ministry.” In Part #2, that corporate ministry is addressed.

## Distinctions in Corporate Gifts *Part #2* Ministry

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**Slide #2**

The gifts of apostles, prophets, evangelists, and pastor-teachers in Ephesians 4:11 were given for a particular purpose. That purpose is stated in verse 12: “for the equipping of the saints.” Notice that the word *for* is used three times in verse 12. Each instance introduces an additional purpose. In fact, the verse gives a sequential chain of causes-and-effects, with each purpose following the prior one.

### EPHESIANS 4:11-12

#### Corporate Gifts

He gave some as **apostles**, and some as **prophets**, and some as **evangelists**, and some as **pastor and teachers**.

#### Corporate Gifts' Ministry

For the **equipping of the saints** for the work of service, for the building up of the body of Christ.

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### Slide #3

God gave these four gifted people to the church for the purpose of *equipping of the saints* (believers in the church). The term *equipping* is captured in the concept of *preparation*: in making ready a ship with provisions for a voyage or in mending a torn net for fishing. This preparation is the source for *the work of service* by the saints. The “work of service,” as explained in verse 16a,b, takes place only when believers with their own particular gifts function together in intimate connections and with mutual ministries. If the body experiences “the work of service,” the concluding purpose is experienced—*the building up of the body*. A paraphrase of verse 16 captures the essence of verse 12: *The body, properly functioning* (“the work of service”), *causes its own spiritual growth* (“building up of the body”). The ministry of the combined corporate gifts is to enable the body to function as a living organism and experience spiritual growth.



### Slide #4

Ephesians 2:19-21 teaches that God’s household includes all who believe in Christ alone for eternal life. All believers are citizens of His household, “having been built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus Himself being the corner stone” (v 20). Using a building metaphor, Paul pictures the beginning of a construction project. The placement of the cornerstone determines the alignment of the entire building along with the remaining portion of the foundation being the apostles and prophets. As discussed in Part #1, these apostles were the appointed and commissioned “eye-witnesses” of Christ, while the prophets provided divine revelation for the early church. These “are the historical persons who first formed the universal church.”<sup>1</sup> Upon this foundation, verses 21-22 continue with the metaphor and point to the church “being fitted together” and “being built together,” referring to the superstructure.

**MINISTRY OF CORPORATE GIFTS  
EPHESIANS 2:19-22**

19 So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are **fellow citizens** with the saints, and are of **God's household**,

20 having been built upon the **foundation of the apostles and prophets**, Christ Jesus Himself being the **corner stone**,

21 in whom the whole **building, being fitted together** is growing into a holy temple in the Lord;

22 in whom you also are **being built together** into a dwelling of God in the Spirit.

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## Slide #5

In 1 Corinthians 3, Paul sets up two metaphors using first a field (vv 6-9a) and another using a building (vv 9b-15) to correct a misunderstanding in the church body. Believers were aligning themselves with particular leadership personalities, failing to clearly understand the role of God's servants (vv 4-5). Illustrating the body of Christ as God's "field," which "God causes to grow," the workers in the field have different responsibilities but function as one in service to God. Nevertheless, God evaluates the work of each servant in the field, rewarding them accordingly.

### MINISTRY OF CORPORATE GIFTS

1 CORINTHIANS 3:4-9....

#### God's Servants

4 For when one says, "I am of **Paul**," and another "I am of **Apollos**," are you not mere men?

5 What then is Apollos? And what is Paul? Servants through whom you believed, even *as* the Lord gave *opportunity* to each one.

#### Field Metaphor

6 **I planted**, **Apollos watered**, but **God** was causing the **growth**.

7 So then neither the one who plants nor the one who waters is anything, but God who causes the growth.

8 Now he who plants and he who waters are one; but **each** will **receive** his own **reward according to his own labor**.

9a For we are God's fellow workers; you are **God's field**,

#### Building Metaphor

9b . . . **God's building**.

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## Slide #6

Moving on to the building metaphor, Paul tells us that, as a master builder and apostle, he laid a foundation (v 10) and states the foundation is Christ (v 11). [This takes us back to Ephesians 2:19-20 where he taught, "the church's foundation consists of apostles and prophets and the main stone of the foundation is the cornerstone, Christ himself."<sup>2</sup> Notice that Ephesians 2:20 "is not in contradiction to 1 Corinthians 3:11 but is a complement, a fuller development of thought."<sup>3</sup>] Next Paul again addresses God's servants: himself as a master builder and apostle and Apollos as a teacher (cf. Acts 18:24-28). With the foundation already in place, the actual superstructure (God's building program) comes center stage (vv 10c, 12). The main issue then becomes the quality of their workmanship as teachers.

Using durable items such as gold, silver, and precious stones or perishable things like wood, hay, and straw, the construction materials determine the quality of the builder's work (v 12) and hence its evaluation (v 13).<sup>4</sup> The final portion of the building metaphor points to the Judgment Seat of Christ (2 Cor 5:10) where each believer's works are judged "according to what he has done, whether good or bad." Good workmanship brings rewards, while bad works produce loss or forfeiture of rewards. [Note: This text does not concern the judgment of unbelievers at the Great White Throne Judgment (cf. Rev 20:11-15). There the unbeliever's works are shown as insufficient to obtain entrance into the presence of God.]

### MINISTRY OF CORPORATE GIFTS

.....1 CORINTHIANS 3:10-15

10 According to the grace of God which was given to me, as a wise master builder **I laid a foundation**, and **another is building upon it**. But let each man be careful how he builds upon it.

11 For no man can lay a **foundation** other than the one which is laid, which is **Jesus Christ**.

12 Now if any man **builds upon** the **foundation** with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw,

13 each man's **work will become evident**; for the day will show it, because it is *to be* revealed with fire; and the fire itself will **test** the quality of each man's **work**.

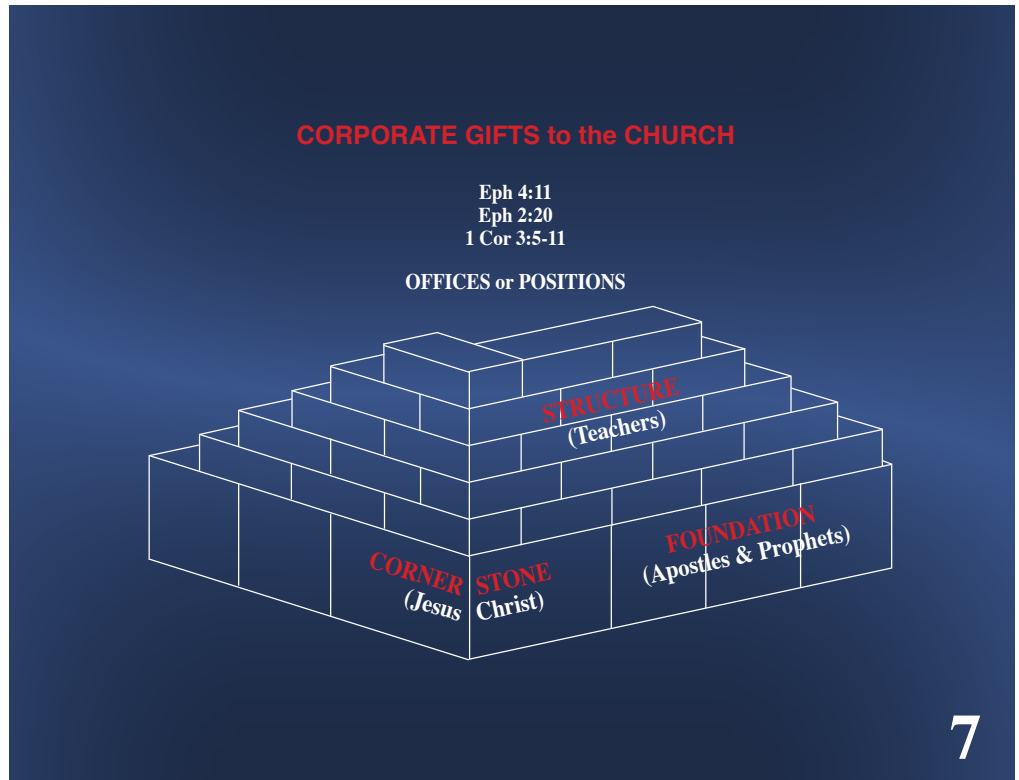
14 If any man's work which he has built upon it remains, he shall **receive a reward**.

15 If any man's work is burned up, he shall **suffer loss**; but he himself shall be saved, yet so as through fire.

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**Slide #7**

A visual representation of the corporate gifts to the church shows that the foundation includes the cornerstone, Jesus Christ, and the apostles and prophets. Remember, once the foundation has been laid, it does not again need to be re-laid. The superstructure that is built upon that foundation primarily concerns the work of the pastor-teachers.



**Slide #8**

Distinctions in the corporate gifts are the result of the particular ministry of each gift. Jesus said, “I will build my Church (God’s building; God’s people)” (Matt 16:18). As seen in Ephesians 2 and 1 Corinthians 3, the apostles and prophets are the foundational gifts who established the church. Along with the cornerstone, the apostles and prophets are the footing upon which the superstructure of the church is built. Those responsible for the structural growth of God’s building are the evangelists/heralds and pastor-teachers. Herald’s proclaim the message of eternal life in Christ and God continually adds new believers to the church. On the other hand, pastor-teachers shepherd and teach those who are added. The foundational gifts concerned prior ministries necessary for laying the church’s foundation, while the structural gifts currently build upon that foundation.



[This information may raise some questions. You may be thinking, “Aren’t preachers really modern-day prophets, forthtelling God’s truth?” Or maybe you might ask, “Are preachers different from pastor-teachers?” These particular questions are addressed in Part #3 of *Distinctions in Corporate Gifts*.]

Since the building program involves people who are in fact the superstructure, the pastor-teachers are the builders whose manual for spiritual growth is the Scriptures. The Scriptures must be accurately taught and followed in order for the body of Christ to be built up spiritually.

Slide #9

The manual for spiritual growth is the Scriptures. Second Timothy 3:16-17 tells us that the Scriptures are our guide for decisions and conduct. This applies to leadership as well as everyone else. Notice that “all Scripture,” being “God-breathed,” is given directly from God for four *purposes*: doctrine, reproof, correction, and training (v 16). The intended *result* is that believers “may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.” A better translation, which captures the idea of the text, would be “may be competent for every good work.”

Did you catch that? Paul taught that God’s Word provides each one of us with all that is necessary to be “competent for every good work”—the very good works for which we were created (Eph 2:10). Nevertheless, the choice is ours as to whether those good works become a reality. In order for that to happen our thinking has to be inline with God’s.

Knowing and living in harmony with God is key to everything we do, we are and will become. If right living is the result of right thinking, how do we begin the process?

**MANUAL FOR SPIRITUAL GROWTH**  
2 Timothy 3:16-17

16 All **Scripture** is given by **inspiration** of God, and is profitable for **doctrine**, for **reproof**, for **correction**, for instruction [**training**] in righteousness,





17 that the man of God may be **complete** thoroughly **equipped** for every **good work**.

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Slide #10

The way to right thinking is addressed in the four *purposes* of the Scriptures found in 2 Timothy 3:16. The *first purpose* is “teaching,” pointing out and making plain the will of God for everyday life. As an earthly father wants the best for his children, these instructions are for the child’s protection and character development. If understood in that manner, God’s children should be properly motivated to follow the desires of their heavenly Father. Yet, going the way of our own desires is seen in the *second purpose* of the Scriptures—“reproof.” If you go the wrong way down a one-way road, the police will stop you. Likewise in life when we go down the wrong path, God confronts us (e.g., Heb 12:9-11). Going further, the Scriptures provide “correction,” the *third purpose*, revealing the procedure for changing one’s desires. And then the *fourth purpose*—“training,” which gives us the process for changing our thinking, leading to godly living.

**PURPOSES OF THE SCRIPTURES**  
2 Timothy 3:16

ILLUSTRATION	MEANING	IMPLICATION
	TEACHING	Reveals Desires of God
	REPROOF	Reveals Wrong Desires of Men
	CORRECTION	Reveals Procedure for Changing Desires
	TRAINING	Reveals Process of Change

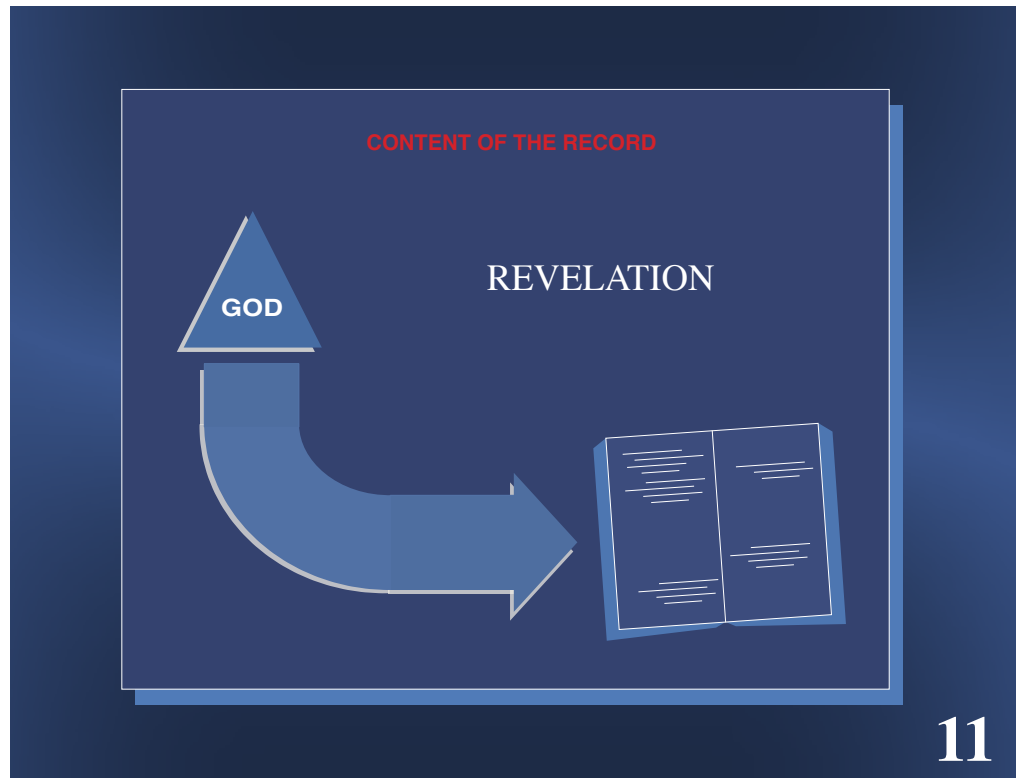
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Now lets see how the Scriptures and the corporate gifts to the church intersect in order for God’s people to grow spiritually together.

**Slide #11**

The content of the record that God disclosed is His special revelation to mankind. The Scriptures are God-breathed (2 Tim 3:16).

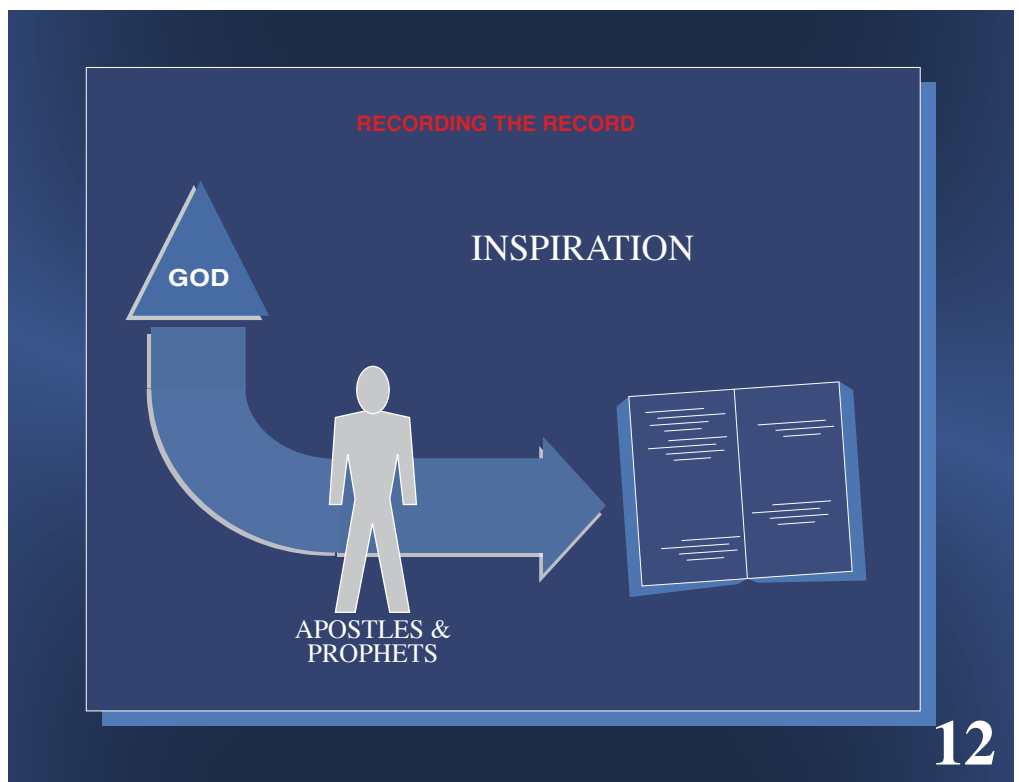


**Slide #12**

While the content is the revealed written truth in the Scriptures, the recording of the content is through the Spirit's moving of human authors. That recording of the Scriptures concerns inspiration and the basis for inspiration is found in Peter's instruction in 2 Peter 1:21: "No prophecy was ever made by an act of human will, but men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God." One theologian defines inspiration:

God's superintendence of the human authors so that, using their own individual personalities, they composed and recorded without error His revelation to man in the words of the original autographs.<sup>5</sup>

The Old Testament writers were Moses, the prophets, and the leaders of Israel, while New Testament authors included the apostles, the "eye-witnesses," and associates of the apostles (e.g., Luke and Mark).



**Slide #13**

To properly understand or interpret the Scripture, two factors come into play: (1) illumination by the Spirit and (2) diligent study by the believer. While illumination or teaching is the continual ministry of the Spirit assisting believers to understand the truth, insight is not automatically guaranteed. Even though the Scriptures can be accurately appraised only by a believer (1 Cor 2:9-3:2), understanding the Word directly relates to conscientious study. Illumination coupled with study by the student are inextricably linked.

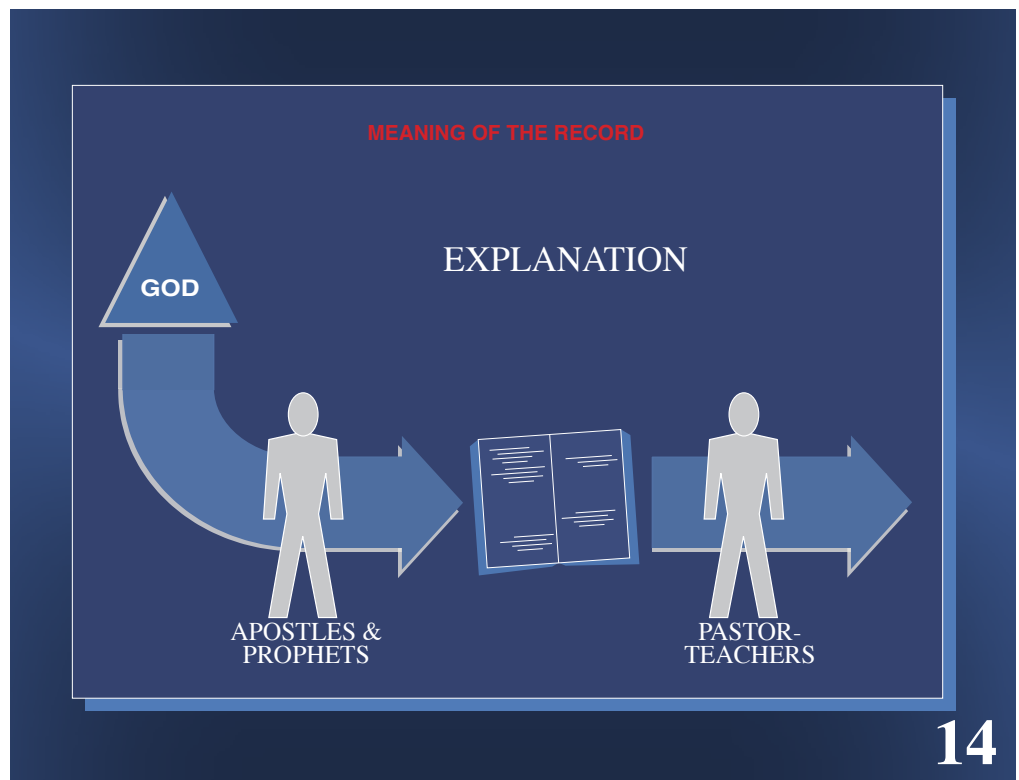
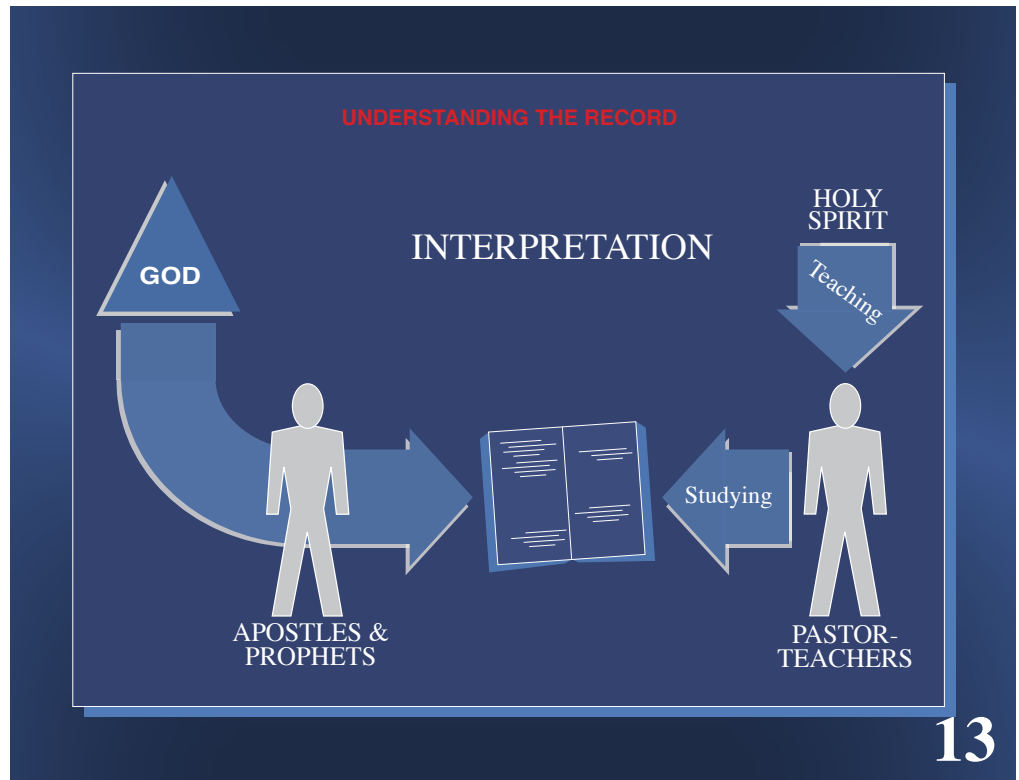
James particularly directs his attention toward teachers in the church to diligently study the Scriptures. He warned, "Let not many of you become teachers, my brethren, knowing that as such we will incur a stricter judgment" (Jam 3:1). Writing to Timothy, Paul said, "Be diligent to present yourself

approved of God as a workman...accurately handling the word of truth" (2 Tim 2:15). This takes us back to the building metaphor, warning that each workman/teacher must "be careful how he builds" on the foundation of the apostles and prophets (1 Cor 3:10), because "the quality of each man's work" will be evaluated by God (v 13). Certainly teachers in the church must be meticulous in the study of the Scriptures so that with the illumination of the Spirit he may accurately handle the truth of God.

[Illumination should not be confused with some special act of "anointing." John wrote that believers "have an anointing from the Holy One" (1 John 2:20) and that "His anointing teaches you about all things" (v 27). In both instances the anointing refers to the indwelling Spirit. The Spirit is "the anointing" Who teaches. We then should not confuse "the anointing" with an endowment of fresh revelation. That concept is foreign to the New Testament.]

**Slide #14**

Explaining the meaning of the God's word requires that the teacher understands the text being taught and does not deviate from the God's original, intended meaning. If not, it isn't God's word at all, but a mere conjecture, lacking the authority of Scripture. Therefore a teacher's first responsibility is to accurately interpret the revealed word and then to explain that truth to the body of Christ in order for believers to learn and apply it. Remember, however, biblical teaching is not just the transmission of facts; it concerns the transformation of lives. Biblical



teaching is life transformative. Of necessity, it requires both instructing and modeling. For this to take place, the local church must provide an environment that promotes both. [LeaderQuest's 3-part series *Office of Elder* address the environment for both the verbal and visual communication of God's Word.]

We have seen how the Scriptures and the corporate gifts to the church intersect in order for God's people to grow spiritually together. The content of the Scriptures came through the foundational gifts establishing the church. Now it is the responsibility of the structural gifts, particularly pastor-teachers, to communicate the Scriptures in order for God's people to experience spiritual growth. The quality of the workmanship of the pastor-teachers will be reflected in the spiritual building up of the body as well as in their eventual evaluation when they face Christ.



**Endnotes:**

1. Harold W. Hoehner, *Ephesians* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2002), 399.
2. *Ibid.*, 404.
3. *Ibid.*
4. Thomas L. Constable, *Notes on 1 Corinthians* (2019), 41-42. — [www.planobiblechapel.org](http://www.planobiblechapel.org).
5. Charles Caldwell Ryrie, *A Survey of Bible Doctrine* (Chicago, IL: Moody Press, 1972), 38.