

CORE TEAM
TEACH NIGHT:
SPIRITUAL AUTHORITY

JANUARY 5, 2026

FIRST MENTION: Delegated Authority

GENESIS 1:27–28

...God created mankind **in his own image**, in the image of God he created **them; male and female** he created them. ²⁸ **God blessed them** and said to them, **“Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky and over every living creature that moves on the ground.”**

GENESIS 2:15–19

The LORD God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden **to work it and take care of it.**

¹⁶ And the LORD God commanded the man, **“You are free** to eat from any tree in the garden;

¹⁷ but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat from it you will certainly die.”

¹⁸ The LORD God said, “It is not good for the man to be alone. **I will make a helper suitable for him.**”

¹⁹ Now the LORD God had formed out of the ground all the wild animals and all the birds in the sky. He brought them to the man **to see what he would name them;** and whatever the man called each living creature, **that was its name...**

LET'S TRY TO DETERMINE
WHAT IS MEANT BY THIS PHRASE:

“...Rule over...”

This one passage gives us our primary understanding of DELEGATED AUTHORITY:

“...in his own image...”

intended to **resemble & represent God**

“...God blessed them...”

intended to **flourish because of God**

“...Be fruitful and increase...”

intended to **multiply relationally**

“...fill the earth...subdue it...”

intended to **shape & tame the chaotic**

“...work it...take care of it...”

intended to **cultivate health & life**

“...you are free to eat...”

intended to **benefit from their labor**

“...male and female...a helper suitable...”

intended for **collaborative partnership**

“...to see what he would name them...”

intended to **function with latitude & capability**

“...that was its name...”

intended to **produce order and identity**

WITHOUT GODLY SPIRITUAL AUTHORITY...

GOD'S PEOPLE WILL LACK PEACE

EXODUS 18:23 NLT

“If you follow this advice, and if God commands you to do so, then you will be able to endure the pressures, and **all these people will go home in peace.**”

GOD'S PEOPLE WILL BE DISORIENTED AND UNFED

NUMBERS 27:16–17 NKJV

“Let the LORD, the God of the spirits of all flesh, set a man over the congregation, who may go out before them and go in before them, who may lead them out and bring them in, that **the congregation of the LORD may not be like sheep which have no shepherd.**”

GOD'S PEOPLE WILL BE VULNERABLE TO ATTACK & DECEPTION

ACTS 20:28–29 NLT

“**So guard yourselves and God's people.** Feed and shepherd God's flock—his church, purchased with his own blood—over which the Holy Spirit has appointed you as leaders. I know that **false teachers, like vicious wolves,** will come in among you after I leave...”

GOD'S PEOPLE WILL BE ILL-EQUIPPED, AND NOT REACH MATURITY

EPHESIANS 4:11–13 NLT

Now these are the gifts Christ gave to the church: the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, and the pastors and teachers. Their responsibility is to **equip God's people to do his work** and build up the church, the body of Christ...**that we will be mature** in the Lord, measuring up to the full and complete standard of Christ.

GOD'S PEOPLE WILL LACK GOOD EXAMPLES

HEBREWS 13:7 NLT

Remember your leaders who taught you the word of God. Think of all the good that has come from their lives, and **follow the example of their faith.**

GOD'S PEOPLE WILL LOSE AN AVENUE TO HEALING

JAMES 5:14–15 NLT

Are any of you sick? You should call for the elders of the church to come and pray over you, anointing you with oil in the name of the Lord. **Such a prayer offered in faith will heal the sick,** and the Lord will make you well...

GOD'S PEOPLE WILL SURRENDER CARE

1 PETER 5:2–3 NLT

Care for the flock that God has entrusted to you. Watch over it willingly, not grudgingly—not for what you will get out of it, but because you are eager to serve God. Don't lord it over the people **assigned to your care,** but lead them by your own good example.

SO WHY DO WE STRUGGLE WITH THIS CONCEPT?

AND LET'S MENTION THE EXTREME IMBALANCES THAT CLOUD THIS TRUTH

THE PROBLEM OF ABUSIVE LEADERSHIP IS NOT A NEW ONE

MARK 10:42-45

*Jesus called them together and said,
“You know that those who are regarded as rulers of the Gentiles **lord it over them,**
and their high officials **exercise authority over them.** Not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to
become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first must be slave of all.
For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve,
and to give his life as a ransom for many.”*

“...lord it over them...”

to **exercise dominion over** others

“...exercise authority...”

to **tyrannize**, to wield power over others **in an oppressive way**

LEXHAM THEOLOGICAL WORKBOOK, LEXHAM PRESS, 2014

*Proper motives and accurate boundaries
strengthen our embrace of spiritual leadership.*

Jesus demonstrated servant leadership, providing the perfect example
for evaluating **the motives with which we lead.**

The Bible as a whole, provides the guidance needed to understand
the boundaries within which we lead.

Spiritual leaders only have authority *to command within the context*
of their own faith community. This authority should be used cautiously and sparingly.
Even here, their leadership is established, and strengthened, by relationship
and all commands must be rooted clearly in scripture.

Spiritual leaders can offer Biblical encouragement, instruction, and caution for issues **within the home and government** but they have no divine authority in these environments. No matter what their status in the church, they should approach these other spheres from the perspective of a spiritual sibling, a friend, a counselor, or a citizen with a voice equal to those of others.

DOES MY UNDERSTANDING OF **SPIRITUAL AUTHORITY** COME FROM SCRIPTURE?

According to what we read in the New Testament, **the early church was clearly led by those with relevant spiritual authority**. There were **commands** to be followed. Those in the church were **expected to align their lives with declared truth**. The reality of love includes expressions of both comfort *and* corrective instruction – this is easily seen in the early church. The Old Testament scriptures, the ministry of Jesus, and the revelation of the apostles provided the foundation for **local church leaders to teach, correct, steer, and exercise judgment with consequences**.

Church discipline was an expected act of obedience and protection.

1 CORINTHIANS 5:12–13

What business is it of mine to judge those outside the church? Are you not to **judge those inside**? God will judge those outside. “Expel the wicked person from among you.”

Paul recognized and even boasted of his authority, understanding the true purpose for it.

2 CORINTHIANS 10:8

So even if I **boast somewhat freely about the authority** the Lord gave us *for building you up* rather than tearing you down, I will not be ashamed of it.

Paul had the authority to command, yet appealed in love.

PHILEMON 8–9

...I **could be bold and order you** to do what you ought to do, yet I prefer to appeal to you on the basis of love...

Timothy was charged to command and teach with authority.

1 TIMOTHY 4:11

Command and teach these things.

Leaders were instructed to command the wealthy to place their hope in God.

1 TIMOTHY 6:17

Command those who are rich in this present world not to be arrogant nor to put their hope in wealth, which is so uncertain, but to put their hope in God...

Titus was to encourage and rebuke with “all authority”.

TITUS 2:15

These, then, are the things you should teach. Encourage and **rebuke with all authority**...

The apostles commanded believers to separate from idleness and disorder.

2 THESSALONIANS 3:6

In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, **we command you**, brothers and sisters, to keep away from every believer who is idle and disruptive and does not live according to the teaching you received from us.

Believers were called to obey and submit to their leaders who watch over their souls.

HEBREWS 13:17

Have confidence in your leaders and **submit to their authority**, because they keep watch over you as those who must give an account. Do this so that their work will be a joy, not a burden, for that would be of no benefit to you.



THE LOCAL CHURCH AS *THE CITY OF GOD*:

- the **walls**: a place of protection (ISAIAH 26:1, JOSHUA 20:1-9, 1 CORINTHIANS 5:3-5, 1 TIMOTHY 1:20)
- the **homes**: a place of relationship (2 SAMUEL 9, 2 KINGS 4:8-17, ACTS 2:44-46)
- the **streets**: a place of communion (NEHEMIAH 12, JEREMIAH 14, 1 CORINTHIANS 12:26-27)
- the **citizens**: a place of significance (PSALM 84:5-6, 1 CORINTHIANS 12, EPHESIANS 2:19, 1 PETER 2:9-10)
- the **temple**: the place of His presence (2 CHRONICLES 5, 2 SAMUEL 6, EPHESIANS 2:20-22)

THE GATES: A PLACE OF LEADERSHIP

PROVERBS 31:23

Her husband is respected at **the city gate**, where he takes his seat among **the elders** of the land.

2 SAMUEL 19:8

So **the king got up and took his seat in the gateway...**

JOHN 10:7-15

...Jesus said again, “Very truly I tell you, **I am the gate for the sheep...They will come in and go out, and find pasture.** The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; **I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.**

“I am the good shepherd. **The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep.** The hired hand is not the shepherd and does not own the sheep. So when he sees the wolf coming, he abandons the sheep and runs away. Then the wolf attacks the flock and scatters it. The man runs away because he is a hired hand and **cares nothing for the sheep.**

“I am the good shepherd; **I know my sheep and my sheep know me...**and I lay down my life for the sheep.”

GODLY LEADERSHIP IS **MOTIVATED BY LOVE:**

LEADERS INVEST WITH CARE, VIGILANCE AND SACRIFICE

“...that they **may have life...I know my sheep** and my sheep know me...”

GODLY LEADERSHIP IS **A SOURCE OF PROTECTION:**

POSITIONED AT THE MOST COMMON POINT OF ATTACK

“...**I am the gate...the good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep...**”

A GOOD SHEPHERD

JOHN 10:7–15

“...They will **come in and go out, and find pasture.**

The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; **I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.**
I am the good shepherd. **The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep...**”

NUMBERS 27:15–20

Moses said to the LORD, “May the LORD, the God who gives breath to all living things, **appoint someone over this community** to go out and come in before them, **one who will lead them out and bring them in**, so the LORD’s people will not be like sheep **without a shepherd.**”

So the LORD said to Moses, “Take Joshua son of Nun, **a man in whom is the spirit of leadership**, and lay your hand on him. Have him stand before Eleazar the priest and the entire assembly and commission him in their presence. **Give him some of your authority** so the whole Israelite community will obey him...”

SPIRITUAL LEADERSHIP IS AN EMBRACED **RESPONSIBILITY**:
MOSES WAS ABOUT TO RETIRE BUT STILL BURDENED BY CONCERN
“...**appoint someone over this community...**
so the LORD’s people will not be like sheep **without a shepherd.**”

SPIRITUAL LEADERSHIP IS AN **AVENUE OF PROMOTION**:
GOD REQUIRED MOSES IN THE PROCESS OF PREPARING JOSHUA
“...lay your hand on him...**Give him some of your authority...**”

SPIRITUAL LEADERSHIP IS A **GIFT TO GOD’S PEOPLE**:
GOD USES MAN TO LEAD AND FEED HIS PEOPLE
“...**one who will lead them out and bring them in,**
so the LORD’s people will not be like sheep **without a shepherd.**”

GODLY LEADERSHIP IS A REALITY: GOD HAD PUT SOMETHING UNIQUE IN JOSHUA

“...Take Joshua son of Nun,
a man *in whom is **the spirit of leadership...***”

ROMANS 12:6–8 NIV

We have different gifts, **according to the grace given** to each of us.
If your gift is...**to lead, do it diligently...**

MAKING THE MOST OF THIS LEADERSHIP REALITY
IS EASIEST WHEN I UNDERSTAND

MY ASSIGNMENT AND THEIR ACCOUNTABILITY

ROMANS 12:4–5

For just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, so in Christ we, though many, form one body, **and each member belongs to all the others.**

1 CORINTHIANS 12:18

...God has set the members, **each one of them**, in the body just as He pleased.

ACTS 20:17–31

...Paul sent to Ephesus for the elders of the church. When they arrived, he said to them...

“Keep watch over yourselves and all the flock of which **the Holy Spirit has made you overseers.**

Be shepherds of the church of God, which he bought with his own blood...”

1 PETER 5:1–4

To the elders among you, I appeal as a fellow elder... **Be shepherds of God’s flock** that is **under your care, watching over them**—not because you must, but because you are willing, as God wants you to be; not pursuing dishonest gain, but **eager to serve**; not lording it over those **entrusted to you**, but being examples to the flock. And when the Chief Shepherd appears, **you will receive the crown of glory** that will never fade away.

HEBREWS 13:17

Have confidence in your leaders and submit to their authority, because they keep watch over you as those **who must give an account.** Do this so that their work will be a joy, not a burden, for that would be of no benefit to you.

LIVING IN THIS REALITY **AS A LEADER:**

1. ***“I will embrace my precious assignment.”***

ACTS 20:17–31

...Paul sent to Ephesus for the elders of the church. When they arrived, he said to them...

“Keep watch over yourselves and all the flock of which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers.

Be shepherds of the church of God, which he bought with his own blood...”

- I’m not looking for a way out.
- I’m not here for the benefit package.
- God, with the affirmation of others, is the only one who can release me.
- The only one who can take me off the job is the one who gave it to me.
- I adapt. I learn. I develop. I persevere.

2. ***“I will build well.”***

1 CORINTHIANS 3:13–15 NLT

...on the judgment day, fire will reveal what kind of work each builder has done. **The fire will show if a person’s work has any value.** If the work survives, that builder will receive a reward. But if the work is burned up, the builder will suffer great loss. The builder will be saved, but like someone barely escaping through a wall of flames.

- I am accountable to Christ alone as the Judge.
- I serve for His approval. Not my own. Not that of others.
- It is His Church. I will build according to His Word and His Spirit by His example.

3. ***“I will stay nourished in the Vine.”***

JOHN 15:5 NLT

“Yes, I am the vine; you are the branches. Those who remain in me, and I in them, **will produce much fruit.** For apart from me **you can do nothing.**”

- I am a conduit. I do this with Him. Drawing from Him.
- I’m not saying things, completing tasks and developing strategies. I’m sharing His life – or not.

4. ***“I will stay connected to the Body in love.”***

ROMANS 12:4–5 NLT

Just as our bodies have many parts and each part has a special function, so it is with Christ’s body. We are many parts of one body, and **we all belong to each other.**

- I am connected. I’m not the only one placed in this body – and **every part matters.**
- If I have not love I am nothing, so I deepen relationship, staying involved and invested.
- I address offenses. I guard my heart. I love well.
- I accept reassignment. I’m part of a body and want others to play their part. I am willing to adapt so they can do so, and we can be healthy!

LIVING IN THIS REALITY **AS A FOLLOWER:**

1. ***“I want to receive Spiritual Leaders as a gift in my life.”***

EPHESIANS 4:11-12

...these are the gifts Christ gave to the church: the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, and the pastors and teachers.

MATTHEW 10:40-41

“Anyone who welcomes you welcomes me...

Whoever welcomes a prophet as a prophet will receive a prophet’s reward...”

Whether or not you believe this leader is a gift in your life, *you are right.*

Even Jesus was limited in how he could minister in Nazareth because of how he was perceived by those in his hometown (MARK 6:1-6).

- **Speak with honor and examine your heart to make sure it’s legit.**
- Honor is outward. **Let your respect be known.**
- If you don’t have something nice to say, **say it anyway.**
- If your heart can’t get to a sincere expression of honor for church leaders, **ask for guidance in this arena.**

2. ***“I will contend in prayer and support for the mission we share.”***

EXODUS 17:9-13

Moses said to Joshua,

“Choose some of our men and go out to fight the Amalekites.

Tomorrow I will stand on top of the hill with the staff of God in my hands.”

So Joshua fought the Amalekites as Moses had ordered, and Moses, Aaron and Hur went to the top of the hill. **As long as Moses held up his hands, the Israelites were winning**, but whenever he lowered his hands, the Amalekites were winning. **When Moses’ hands grew tired, they took a stone and put it under him** and he sat on it. **Aaron and Hur held his hands up**—one on one side, one on the other—so that his hands remained steady till sunset. So **Joshua overcame the Amalekite army** with the sword.

Stay confused about who gets credit for the victory.

- Moses was the only whose raised hands would change the battle. **But others still had a crucial part to play.**
- Don’t compete for credit or your preferred role. **Use your prayer and gifting to contribute in any way you can.**
- **Don’t respond with frustration when your leader’s anointing fades.** Be part of the process of making it work.
- Grab a stone! Raise an arm! **Swing your sword no matter what’s happening on the hill. Lives are at stake!**
- **Talk to God about your leaders more than anyone else!**

3. ***“I want to welcome the blessing of unity by fighting for alignment.”***

PSALM 133:1, 3

How good and pleasant it is when God’s people **live together in unity...**
there the LORD bestows his blessing, even life forevermore.

Your own authority will be reflective of your alignment, or lack thereof.

1 CHRONICLES 12:16–18

David went out to meet them and said to them,

“If you have come to me in peace to *help me*, I am ready for you to join me...”

Then the Spirit came on Amasai, chief of the Thirty, and he said:

“We are yours, David! *We are with you, son of Jesse! Success, success to you, and success to those who help you,* for your God will help you.”

So David received them and made them leaders of his raiding bands.

- Be teachable. Flow easily. Ask questions. **Use your gifting to contribute to the established culture!**
- When you don’t understand or agree with something, **start from the assumption that you have more to learn.**
- Never teach contrary to what is being taught by church leaders. **Honor the doctrine of the house.**
- Make it easy for a leader to teach you – be the kind of student that **you would want to teach.**
- Push back, question, poke doctrinal holes **with the leaders that are involved**, while still seeking to learn.
- Recognize your ripple effect! **Remove, never create, obstacles for others.**
- Don’t discuss your differing viewpoint with others **until you have done so, thoroughly, with your leaders.**
- **Look for ways to understand and agree.** Never amplify problems, even among friends and your own family.

If the issue of disagreement is severe enough that you cannot serve the church with honor and gratitude for the leaders, begin the discussion of how to graciously find a new church home.

4. ***“I will exercise generous grace more than generous judgment.”***

1 TIMOTHY 5:17–20

Elders who do their work well **should be respected** and paid well, especially those who work hard at both preaching and teaching... do not listen to an accusation against an elder unless it is **confirmed by two or three witnesses**. Those who sin should be reprimanded **in front of the whole church**; this will serve as a strong warning to others.

Give more grace than you want to receive.

- Assume the best. And **help others gain perspective so they can learn to be gracious.**
- **Leaders are easy targets for petty people.** They have feelings & families that are hindered by harshness.
- **Obvious patterns should be addressed** but thin-skinned critics should be ignored. They will never be satisfied.
- Take your leaders off a pedestal. **We will never condone sin but we will be gracious about their humanity.** Are they commonly late? They are introverted and need alone time? They have expensive hobbies?
- Don’t complain or criticize. Don’t vent. **Your words matter & will make the issue worse in the wrong ears.**
- **Take concerns to those that can help.** Approach them as a brother or another elder that can evaluate the pattern.
- It is harder to approach the people you **should be speaking to** than those you **want to be speaking to.**

PRAY FOR, AND EXPECT, SOMETHING SUPERNATURAL

NUMBERS 11:16–17

Then the LORD said to Moses,
“Gather before me seventy men who are recognized as elders
and leaders of Israel. Bring them to the Tabernacle to stand
there with you. I will come down and talk to you there. **I will
take some of the Spirit that is upon you, and I will put the
Spirit upon them also.** They will bear the burden of the people
along with you, so you will not have to carry it alone.

GENESIS 14:14

When Abram heard that his nephew Lot had been captured,
he mobilized the **318 trained men** who had been
born into his household...

1 TIMOTHY 1:2

To Timothy **my true son** in the faith...

PHILIPPIANS 2:19–22

I hope in the Lord Jesus to send Timothy to you soon...
For **I have no one else like-minded** who will genuinely care about your interests;
all seek their own interests, not those of Jesus Christ.
But you know his proven character, because he has served with me
in the gospel ministry **like a son with a father.**

“...like-minded...”

Isopsychos

ἰσόψυχος

a Greek term literally meaning "**equal-souled**"

IT IS DERIVED FROM TWO WORDS: *ISOS* (EQUAL) AND *PSYCHĒ* (SOUL/LIFE/SPIRIT).

SO WHEN YOU UNDERSTAND WHO YOU ARE ASSIGNED TO FOLLOW...

MAKE IT EASY AS POSSIBLE FOR HIM TO LEAD YOU

HEBREWS 13:17

Obey your spiritual leaders, and do what they say. Their work is to watch over your souls, and **they are accountable to God**. Give them reason to do this **with joy and not with sorrow**. That would certainly not be for your benefit.

FIND ALIGNMENT, THEN REALIGNMENT, AS OFTEN AS POSSIBLE

PSALM 133:1,3

How good and pleasant it is when God's people **live together in unity...**
there the LORD bestows his blessing, even life forevermore.

SHOW HONOR, BE GRACIOUS, TRUST THE PROPER ROUTES FOR CORRECTION

1 TIMOTHY 5:17-20

Elders who do their work well **should be respected** and paid well, especially those who work hard at both preaching and teaching... do not listen to an accusation against an elder unless it is **confirmed by two or three witnesses**. Those who sin should be reprimanded **in front of the whole church**; this will serve as a strong warning to others.

LOOK FOR A WAY TO SHARE HIS BURDEN OF MINISTRY

EXODUS 17:12-13

When Moses' hands grew tired, they took a stone and put it under him and he sat on it. **Aaron and Hur held his hands up—** one on one side, one on the other—so that **his hands remained steady** till sunset.
So **Joshua overcame the Amalekite army** with the sword.

RECEIVE GLADLY FROM HIM, WHILE ALSO TAKING PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY

ACTS 17:11

Now the Berean Jews were of more noble character than those in Thessalonica, for **they received the message with great eagerness and examined the Scriptures every day** to see if what Paul said was true.

REPRESENT HIS HEART, VALUES AND MISSION WELL

2 CORINTHIANS 8:16-17

But thank God! He has given Titus the same enthusiasm for you that I have.
Titus welcomed our request that he visit you again. In fact, **he himself was very eager** to go and see you.

EMBRACE THE GODLY PATTERNS YOU SEE IN HIM

PHILIPPIANS 3:17

Join together in following my example, brothers and sisters,
and just as you have us as a model, **keep your eyes on those who live as we do**.

RUN WITH THE MESSAGE YOU'VE RECEIVED FROM HIM, AND HELP OTHERS DO SO ALSO

2 TIMOTHY 2:1-3

You then, my son, **be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus**.
And the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses **entrust to reliable people who will also be qualified to teach others**. **Join with me in suffering**, like a good soldier of Christ Jesus.

WHAT EASILY EMERGES ABOUT THE CHURCH FROM THE PAGES OF THE NEW TESTAMENT:

AUTHORITATIVE: There were **commands** and expectations of aligning lives with declared truth. **The reality of love includes expressions of both comfort *and* corrective instruction** – this is easily seen in the early church. **The Old Testament scriptures, the ministry of Jesus, and the revelation of the apostles provided the foundation for local church leaders** to teach, correct, steer, and exercise judgment with consequences.

RELATIONAL: This was a movement of “love” but so much more than that – it was a movement of deliberate **devotion** and genuine **affection**, resulting from hearts transformed by Jesus, **ongoing partnership** and **specific lifestyle patterns** that were intrinsic to the “called out” life. Leaders demonstrated this devotion to each other and churches they “fathered”.

SO WHAT DOES LEAVING LOOK LIKE?

Kevin Conner's Hermeneutical Principles

Summarized from these books: *Interpreting the Scriptures*, *The Foundations of Christian Doctrine*, and *The Temple of Truth*

1. Scripture Interprets Scripture

The Bible is its own best interpreter; prioritize internal cross-references.

Difficult passages must be understood in light of clear passages.

Patterns, parallels, and echoes across Testaments are intentional and revelatory.

2. The Whole-Bible Storyline Matters

Interpret passages within the overarching plan of redemption—from Genesis to Revelation.

Typology, symbols, and shadows only make sense in the context of the whole canon.

Scripture forms a cohesive, unfolding revelation with increasing clarity in Christ.

3. Christ Is the Central Key

Jesus Christ is the interpretive center of all Scripture.

Old Testament types, shadows, feasts, priesthood, sacrifices, and covenants find fulfillment in Him.

The New Testament provides the authoritative lens for understanding the Old.

4. The Church Is the Spiritual Fulfillment of Many Old Testament Patterns

Conner emphasizes that many promises, types, and symbols culminate in Christ and His Church.

He distinguishes between **natural Israel** (historic, ethnic) and **spiritual Israel** (all who are in Christ).

He does *not* erase natural Israel but insists *the NT must set the definitions*.

5. Let the New Testament Define Old Testament Terms

OT language (e.g., temple, priesthood, circumcision, Zion, Israel, seed) must be interpreted through NT usage.

NT revelation has priority; it clarifies and sometimes redefines earlier shadows.

The NT gives the spiritual reality behind the OT natural symbol.

6. Context, Context, Context

Every passage must be read in:

Immediate context (paragraph, chapter) **Book context** **Biblical context** (canon) **Historical & cultural context**

7. Genre Awareness

Interpret poetry, prophecy, narrative, apocalyptic, parables, and epistles according to their literary form.

Not all biblical language is literal—especially when dealing with symbols, visions, and types.

8. “Threefold Interpretation” of Scripture

A three-level understanding:

Literal/Historical:

What happened? What did it mean then?

Typological/Illustrative:

How does the event, person, or object point forward to Christ?

Moral/Spiritual:

What principles apply to believers today?

9. Laws of Typology

Conner systematized typology more than most modern teachers.

His rules include:

A valid type must be verified or hinted at in the New Testament, and must uplift Christ & His work.

Types follow patterns: People, Places, Events, Objects, Institutions

Types always move from **natural** → **spiritual**, **shadow** → **substance**.

10. Symbolic Interpretation Has Boundaries

Symbols must be interpreted consistently across Scripture.

OT symbols are only authoritative when backed by NT usage or universal biblical patterns.

Symbolism should never override clear doctrinal teaching.

11. The “Law of First Mention”

The first biblical mention of a concept often sets the foundation for its meaning.

Later passages expand on the initial revelation but do not contradict it.

12. Progressive Revelation

God reveals truth in stages; later revelation adds clarity but never reverses earlier truth.

The NT does not change the OT but *unveils the fullness of what was hidden*.

13. The Balance of Word and Spirit

The Spirit does not contradict the Word He inspired.

Interpretation must be:

Grounded in sound exegesis

Empowered by the illumination of the Holy Spirit

14. Alignment with the Great Doctrines

If an interpretation violates core doctrines, Conner rejects it.

Interpretation must harmonize with: The nature of God, The person and work of Christ, Salvation by grace, The character of Scripture

15. Application Must Flow from Interpretation

Interpretation (what it meant then) must come before application (what it means now).

Scripture's practical use flows from accurate understanding—not imagination.

Kevin J. Conner (2/6/27-2/18/2019) originally from Melbourne, Australia, was a Pentecostal theologian recognized as one of the leaders of the Latter Rain Movement. He served with Pastor Dick Iverson at City Bible Church, and as the dean of Portland Bible College, from 1972-1981 before returning to Australia to lead Waverley Christian Fellowship (now City Life Church) in Melbourne. Conner is the author of nearly 60 books and has taught internationally at many churches, conferences and bible colleges. His books appear in prestigious bible college libraries across the world (including Harvard Divinity School and Princeton Theological Seminary) and are used as textbooks at several bible colleges. Conner has had significant impact on the theology of churches related to Ministers Fellowship International.

UPCOMING:

JANUARY 12TH - 18TH

RADICAL FAST: "CHILDREN OF LIGHT" | NIGHTLY PRAYER & WORSHIP MEETINGS

FEBRUARY 2ND

"TABLE NIGHT" | IN HOMES

MARCH 5TH

~~**"TEACH NIGHT" | IN THE SANCTUARY**~~

CANCELED!

MARCH 17TH, 18TH, 19TH

"COUNTDOWN TO ETERNITY" | IN THE SANCTUARY | 6:30-9:00PM

THIS IS A 'CORE TEAM ONLY' EVENT FOCUSED ON UNDERSTANDING END TIMES PROPHECY, PRIMARILY FROM THE BOOK OF REVELATION.

THIS INVOLVES A GUEST SPEAKER AND A SIGNIFICANT INVESTMENT OF CHURCH FINANCES.
PLEASE DO ALL YOU CAN TO ATTEND.
PLEASE DON'T INVITE OTHERS.

READ "IN LIGHT OF ETERNITY" BY JAY ZINN

SCAN QR CODE TO ORDER >



APRIL 5TH

EASTER SUNDAY!

APRIL 6TH

"TABLE NIGHT" | IN HOMES

APRIL 16-17TH

MFI REGIONAL CONFERENCE | HOSTED AT NEW CITY CHURCH

APRIL 23-25TH

MEN'S RETREAT | HOSTED AT CAMP UTMOST

MAY 4TH

"TEACH NIGHT" | IN THE SANCTUARY

MAY 16-17TH

SERVE DAY WEEKEND! | SATURDAY WORSHIP & BAPTISMS / SUNDAY SERVE DAY

JUNE 1ST

"TABLE NIGHT" | IN HOMES