

**Theme:** God uses “flawed” instruments. But gentle instruction humbly received will strengthen not just the individual, but the whole church.

**Background/backdrop** - Preparing for Paul’s ministry in Ephesus

- Luke is setting stage for Paul’s ministry in Ephesus.
- Sets sail for Syria (Antioch – his “home” church)
- Lands in Ephesus, leaving Priscilla and Aquila there
- As 3<sup>rd</sup> Missionary journey begins, he makes his way slowly back to Ephesus

**Introduction:** The “perfect” tool – sort of.

**I. Called of God:** A Flawed Instrument

A. Apollos

- Native of Alexandria
- A useful tool.

B. His strengths?

C. His Weaknesses

- Missing an important aspect/element of the work of Christ
- Only knew baptism of John (Acts 8:17; 19:2)

**II. Corrected in Love:** Instructing the Teacher?

A. Priscilla and Aquila

1. They listened well

- a. They were well taught, people well taught
- b. They listened closely

2. They confront Apollos

- a. Privately – not publically
- b. Went to him as brother and sister in Christ.

3. To correct what was missing, faulty

- a. They knew things he didn’t
- b. A Word not yet committed to writing (2 Timothy 3:16,17)

4. In Humility (Colossians 3:16)

## **II. Corrected in Love:** Instructing the Teacher? (cont.)

### B. Apollos –Receiving instruction?

1. He listened – with open heart, mind
  - He was teachable! (Psalm 25:4,5; Psalm 86:11)
2. In Humility
  - Not immediately defensive (Proverbs 21:24)
  - Looking to the Lord to instruct him (Proverbs 13:13; 23:12)
  - Especially true of those who teach. (James 3:1)
3. Love
  - For the His Lord and Savior, the Messiah
  - for the brethren in the Lord

## **III. Commended to Serve:** A Faithful Witness

### A. Apollos – a More Useful Tool!

- Encouraged and Commended in his call

### B. To the glory of God

- Powerful public ministry
- Exalting the Lord Jesus Christ

## **Application:**

1. God uses flawed, cracked, imperfect vessels. That's Us!!
2. God uses not just the Elders to instruct you/us. He uses our brothers and sisters, too.
  - God expects us to be teachable
  - From most educated to least educated.
  - Especially – let the younger learn from the older
3. God expects us to gently share the truth – for correction, instruction
  - The Word of God is perfect for this (2 Timothy 3:16,17)
4. God Expects us to *listen* when someone comes to us – to learn!  
So that together, we might be built up in knowledge, faith and love.