

The Lord's Message: Priscilla: A Faithful Christian Wife

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Where: Tilghman Methodist Church

Scripture Reference: Acts 18:1-4, 24-26

Would you name for me some famous Biblical married couples that are an inspiration to you? Abraham and Sarah, David and Bathsheba, are examples. For me, there is one couple in the Bible that is inspirational, and that is Priscilla and Aquilla. Today as we continue our Faithful Women of the Bible, we are going to examine this wife and husband that I find to be very inspirational and perhaps you as well. We are going to discover that Priscilla goes from being the disciple, to the teacher, and finally the leader of the house church.

Let us pray.

To begin with, the names of this couple are mentioned 6 times in the Bible starting with Acts 18:1-4. The other times are: Acts 18:26, Romans 16:3, 1 Corinthians 16:19, and 2 Timothy 4:19. With this many references in the New Testament, this couple must have been particularly important to Paul in spreading the Gospel. They had spent 18 months with Paul in Corinth.

In **Acts 18:2**, Aquilla and Priscilla's travel from Rome to Corinth was because of an order from the Roman Caesar, Claudius, expelling all Jews from Rome. This happened in 52 AD. The Roman historian, Suetonius, writes that Claudius did this because the Jews were constantly making disturbances. The disturbances were based on Christus or Jesus Christ. Most scholars have concluded that this was based on the conflict of the Jews and Christians in regard to Jesus being the Son of God. The Romans did not view the Jews and Christians as distinct religious sects but regarded them all of them as Jewish. They did not care about any religious debate, but they severely disliked street brawls and social unrest.

So, Aquilla and Priscilla were forced to pack up their belongings and most likely travel by sea to Corinth, which in their day would take approximately one to two weeks if the weather were favorable. The good news is that their occupation of tent making was needed everywhere. It was not hard for them to find work. Roman soldiers were always looking for tents. They settled down in Corinth making tents with other tent makers.

Sometime a little later, another tent maker shows up named Paul, verse 3. Paul is on his second missionary journey. Now, we are not sure if Aquilla and Priscilla are Christians at this time. If they were not already, they quickly became Christians after listening to Paul. Paul would spend 18 months with them in Corinth discipling them in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus. In verse 18, they would leave with Paul and travel to Ephesus. In verse 19, a short time later, Paul would leave them in Ephesus and continue his missionary journey. Priscilla would move from disciple to teacher.

In **Acts 18:24**, a Jew named Apollos would journey to Ephesus. He is a very learned man and knows the scriptures very well. The Bible gives us confirmation of his knowledge by mentioning that he originates from Alexandria. Alexandria is located in Egypt and is known for its Great Library, a place for great commerce and learning. It is also the location for one of the largest Jewish populations in the ancient world. In verse 25, we learned that though he knows the scriptures well, he has only been taught about Jesus' baptism by John the Baptist. He knows nothing of the many miracles Jesus performed. He knows nothing of Jesus' death on the cross. He knows nothing of Jesus' resurrection. He has a very incomplete knowledge of Jesus. In verse 26, what he does know, he speaks very boldly about Christ.

Here is where Priscilla goes from disciple to teacher. This is important for all of us, we should learn about Jesus, so that we can pass on our knowledge to others. We should grow from disciple to teacher. Disciples make disciples who make disciples. This is how the Gospel was spread then and is spread today. This is the multiplication of the ministry of Jesus Christ.

Notice how Priscilla and Aquilla go about teaching Apollos correctly about the entire life, death, and resurrection of Jesus. They do not confront his teaching in the synagogue, with all the people gathered around him. They do not make a scene, but instead show hospitality and invite Apollos to their home. In their home, out of the limelight of everyone else, they teach him that Jesus is the fulfillment of the Hebrew scriptures that he knew so well. They also explain to him that John's baptism of Christ was a preparation for a person to receive Jesus. That Christian baptism is a natural consequence of us accepting Jesus into our hearts. It is a profession of faith that a person wants to surrender their life to Jesus and follow Him all the days of their lives. Priscilla and Aquilla would not have had this knowledge if they had not spent that time with Paul. I love gathering with you on Sunday morning and worshipping God, but we need to be involved in Bible Study each week to gain knowledge from each other. This is needed so that we continue to grow in our knowledge of God so that we can grow closer to God and pass on our knowledge to others. Anyone is welcome to join us on Sunday mornings at 9am. We are currently studying the Book of Revelation.

The effect of Priscilla and Aquilla taking the time with Apollos is found in verse 28. He became even bolder in the faith and challenging those that they did not believe that Jesus was the Messiah.

The faith of Aquilla and Priscilla did not stop growing. In **1 Corinthians 16:19**, we learned that they turned their home into a house church in Ephesus. Because of their occupation of being tent makers, they could travel around. At some point, I suspect the prompting of the Holy Spirit, they left Ephesus and returned to Rome. In **Romans 16:3-5**, they must have used their home in Rome to become a house church. They stay in Rome was most likely very short, because of Roman Emperor Nero and his hatred of Christians. They return to Ephesus.

The last mention of them in the Bible is found in Paul's last letter to Timothy. In 2 Timothy, Paul is in a Roman jail and awaiting his execution. He writes a final letter to Timothy would be ministering in Ephesus. Paul is thinking about his dear friends, Priscilla and Aquilla, whom he had met 16 years ago. He writes in **2 Timothy 4:19**.

The marriage of Aquilla and Priscilla is one that lives out the marriage covenant found in **Genesis 2:24**. If you had noticed in the scriptures the order of the names of Aquilla and Priscilla keep changing. One time, the names are in the order of Aquilla and Priscilla and the next time they are in the order of Priscilla and Aquilla. Paul does this to show that they are of one flesh. I hope and pray that all of us who are married, will act as one flesh. Now this does not mean that we all have to agree on everything. It means that treat each other with love and respect.

The marriage of Priscilla and Aquilla provides a biblical model of an equal partnership defined by deep spiritual unity and teamwork in both work and ministry. Priscilla is frequently named first, showing that she held a prominent and respected role in their shared ministry. They viewed each other as true soulmates and co-workers in the faith. They did not separate their secular work from their faith. Their workplace became a place for building relationships and ministry. They opened their home to host local church gatherings. They provided a safe place for traveling ministers, such as Paul. They mentored Apollos and others in the faith. They risked their own lives for the faith.

I would like to say that they lived happier ever after, but that is not the case. According to church tradition, they were martyred together.

Priscilla and Aquilla are examples to us all of what a faithful marriage is. They listen to God and were obedient to Him. We should also listen to God and do what He says. Amen.

