

F·R·I·E·N·D·S

A Summer Sermon Series
Gaston Community Church

Brief Review on this Sermon Series on Friends:

- *Jesus Calls Us Friends: The Disciples and Jesus*
- *Covenantal Love: Jonathan and David*
- *When Friendships Break Apart: Barnabas and Paul*
- *The Story of New Family Friends: Naomi & Ruth*
(How to keep being a witness to our families)

~ TODAY ~

The Marvelous Friendship & Ministry
of A Married Couple: *Aquila & Priscilla*

1 After this Paul left Athens and went to Corinth.

2 **And he found a Jew named Aquila, a native of Pontus, recently come from Italy with his wife Priscilla,** because Claudius had commanded all the

Jews to leave Rome. And he went to see them,

3 and because he was of the same trade he stayed with them and worked, for they were tentmakers by trade.

4 And he reasoned in the synagogue every Sabbath, and tried to persuade Jews and Greeks.

Aquila & Priscilla: A Biographical Sketch

- Aquila, a Jewish Christian; Priscilla is his wife
- First met Paul in Corinth. *Why are they in Corinth?*
- They Came from Italy as victims of Roman persecution under Claudius, because Aquila was a Jew.
- Aquila and Priscilla are in a “blue collar” trade: tentmakers.
- Paul is tentmaker himself, came to Corinth. Paul lived and worked with them while teaching in the Synagogue, teaching Jews and Greeks, and founding the Corinthian church.
- Aquila and Priscilla: a married couple united in faith and thought helped shape the direction of the early church

Aquila & Priscilla

“These two remarkable people belong in the pantheon of Christian heroes, and their ministry is both an encouragement and an example for us.”

(Gotquestions.org)

5 When Silas and Timothy arrived from Macedonia, Paul was occupied with the word, testifying to the Jews that the Christ was Jesus.

6 And when they opposed and reviled him, he shook out his garments and said to them, “Your blood be on your own heads! I am innocent. **From now on I will go to the Gentiles.**”

7 And he left there and went to the house of a man named Titius Justus, a worshiper of God. His house was next door to the synagogue.

8 Crispus, the ruler of the synagogue, believed in the Lord, together with his entire household. And many of the Corinthians hearing Paul believed and were baptized. 9 And the Lord said to Paul one night in a vision, “Do not be afraid, but go on speaking and do not be silent, 10 for I am with you, and no one will attack you to harm you, **for I have many in this city who are my people.**” 11 And he stayed a year and six months, teaching the word of God among them.

12 But when Gallio was proconsul of Achaia, the Jews made a united attack on Paul and brought him before the tribunal, 13 saying, “This man is persuading people to worship God contrary to the law.” 14 But when Paul was about to open his mouth, Gallio said to the Jews,

“If it were a matter of wrongdoing or vicious crime, O Jews, I would have reason to accept your complaint.

15 But since it is a matter of questions about words and names and your own law, see to it yourselves. I refuse to be a judge of these things.”

~ Note: The State is capable and constitutionally obligated to adjudicate and protect “freedom of worship.”

16 And he drove them from the tribunal. 17 And they all seized Sosthenes, the ruler of the synagogue, and beat him in front of the tribunal. But Gallio paid no attention to any of this.

Just to remind us: a culture of anarchy, sinister plotting, abuse of freedom, and physical abuse is not new to the Christian community.

18 After this, Paul stayed many days longer and then took leave of the brothers and set sail for Syria, and with him Priscilla and Aquila. At Cenchreae he had cut his hair, for he was under a vow. 19 And they came to Ephesus, and he left them there, but he himself went into the synagogue and reasoned with the Jews. 20 When they asked him to stay for a longer period, he declined. 21 But on taking leave of them he said, “I will return to you if God wills,” and he set sail from Ephesus.

In the Context of immense tension in their culture:
Priscilla and Aquila launch out onto the mission field: they set sail for Syria.

22 When he had landed at Caesarea, he went up and greeted the church, and then went down to Antioch.

The Third Missionary journey begins here:

23 After spending some time there, he departed and went from one place to the next through the region of Galatia and Phrygia, strengthening all the disciples.

*A Surprise in the Marvelous Ministry
of this Married Couple:*

Aquila & Priscilla

24 Now a Jew named Apollos, a native of Alexandria, came to Ephesus. He was an eloquent man, competent in the Scriptures.

25 He had been instructed in the way of the Lord. And being fervent in spirit, he spoke and taught accurately the things concerning Jesus, though he knew only the baptism of John.

Who Was Apollos?

- *Apollos* was “educated and eloquent”
 - *Apollos* from Alexandria in Egypt: **intellectual/academics**
 - *Apollos* was competent in the Scriptures (Old Testament)
(*Possibly studied under Philo*)
 - *Apollos* was instructed “in the Lord” so knew of Jesus
 - *Apollos* was a fervent, energetic speaker who spoke with conviction, not just out of theatrical performance
 - *Apollos* only knew of the baptism of John (a baptism unto repentance) but not a baptism of the Spirit (a baptism of regeneration.
- from: James Montgomery Boice*

The Surprise Ministry of Priscilla & Aquila

Acts 18:26 – “He began to speak boldly in the synagogue, but when Priscilla and Aquila heard him, they took him aside and explained to him the way of God more accurately.”

Some Practical Applications

- We need, and have, godly married couples who can mentor other people. (Both doctrine and demeanor are important)
- We need leaders as well as members of the congregation who can be humble enough to receive godly instruction and make changes in their lives.
- Education and Eloquence and Energy are not enough ... we need people with that, but who are also dependable in doctrine and delighting in Christ and His Church more than themselves and their spiritual gifts. (*J.M.B.*)

The Remarkable Result of this
CORD of 3 STRANDS MINISTRY
(Apollos, Priscilla, and Aquila)

- 27 And when he wished to cross to Achaia, the brothers encouraged him and wrote to the disciples to welcome him. When he arrived, he greatly helped those who through grace had believed,
- 28 for he powerfully refuted the Jews in public, showing by the Scriptures that the Christ was Jesus.

*A Few More Things To Highlight about This Married Couple:
Aquila and Priscilla*

- *They were married and they were living through persecution*
- *They were united in their faith in, and ministry with, Jesus*
- *They may not have been as educated as some people, but were mighty in the Spirit and the Scriptures*
- *They were not afraid to speak truth to the intellectuals*
- *A Church Started in their home (1 Cor.16:19) ~ “The churches of Asia send you greetings. Aquila and Prisca (Priscilla), together with the church in their house, send you hearty greetings in the Lord.”*
- *They were helping Timothy in Ephesus as well: 2 Timothy 4:19 – “Greet Prisca and Aquila, and the household of Onesiphorus”*

Conclusion

- May our married couples continue to be mentored, and be mentors of, other Christians
- May we be Spirit-filled and Scripture Strong in a Christian culture that is in many cases Biblically weak and perhaps becoming more emotionally driven than Holy Spirit driven.
- May we both listen carefully to and speak out graciously to others
- May we not look down on ourselves, but also not look down on others.