

Minor Characters In Major Roles

Lesson 7 – Aquila and Priscilla

“For this cause a man shall leave his father and his mother and shall cleave to his wife; and they shall become one flesh.”

Gen 2:24

- Visitors, prayer requests, prayer

Acts and Facts

- “We moved from Rome to Corinth when Claudius ordered all Jews out of Rome.”
- “Some time later, we journeyed with Paul to Ephesus. He left, but we stayed behind.”
- “We helped Apollos by explaining to him the way of God more accurately.”
- “I remember making tents with Paul in Corinth.”

Paul, Aquila and Priscilla Timeline Handouts

- It's very interesting to study Aquila and Priscilla in light of Paul's life, since he was very interested in them, mentioning them often in his letters.
- Top line pertains to Aquila and Priscilla
- Bottom pertains to Paul

Paul meets Aquila and Priscilla in Corinth

1. <**Read Acts 18:1-3**>
 - a. Paul met Aquila and Priscilla (a.k.a. **Prisca**) on the **second missionary journey**
 - b. They are mentioned **six times** in the New Testament
 - c. **Catacomb** inscriptions indicate that Priscilla was from a **distinguished** Roman family
2. **Paul** came to Corinth **from Athens** (see Handout)
 - a. Corinth is **40 miles** from Athens
3. **Aquila and Priscilla** had come to Corinth **from Rome**
 - a. **600 miles** “as the crow flies” - a **major** journey
 - b. **Claudius** ordered Jews out of Rome in 49 A.D.
 - i. **Fourth** Roman emperor (41 - 55 A.D.)
 - ii. **Ironically**, some years earlier Claudius had given Jews the right to religious worship
4. **Corinth** is mentioned **often** in the New Testament
 - a. **Greek** port city to both Aegean- and Adriatic Seas
 - b. Very **wealthy, powerful** city, but also very **wicked**
 - c. Temple of **Aphrodite**—1000 “priestess” **prostitutes** (refined Greek **culture**?)
 - d. To “Corinthianize” = to practice **fornication**
5. Paul “found” Aquila and Priscilla when he arrived in Corinth
 - a. **Interesting** note: A&P always “**found together**” in the Scriptures
 - i. Sometimes Aquila is named first, other times Priscilla is first
 - b. We see them not as two, but **as one flesh**
 - i. Characteristics of a Godly **marriage** (from Eph 5:22-33):
 - (1) Wife **submitting** to/**respecting** her husband
 - (2) Husband **loving** his wife (**sacrificial** love!)
 - (a) Men, this is mentioned **three times** in Eph 5!
 - (3) Two become **one in Christ**, mutually agreeing to put Him **first**

6. Paul lived with Aquila and Priscilla while in Corinth (18 months)
 - a. This shows the **hospitality** of Aquila and Priscilla
 - b. All **Jewish** (Priscilla?), all **Romans** (Aquila?), all **tentmakers**
 - i. Jews, even **wealthy** and **learned**, had a **trade**
 - ii. Undoubtedly Priscilla was involved in the tent making business, too
 - c. After a while, Paul has **sharp disagreements** with Jews
 - i. Says “*From now on I shall go to the Gentiles!*” (v.18:6)
7. Scholars disagree on whether Aquila and Priscilla were Christians when they met Paul

Q: Why do you suppose Aquila and Priscilla choose Corinth?

Aquila and Priscilla go with Paul to Ephesus

1. <Read Acts 18:18-21>
2. Cenchræa (sen’-kree·a) was the **eastern (Aegean) port city** for Corinth
3. **Ephesus** was a large commercial, political and religious center
 - a. Great **temple** of goddess **Artemis** (Diana)
 - b. Remember **Demetrius?** (troublesome **silversmith**) (Acts 19:23-41)
4. Soon after arriving in Ephesus, Paul **continues** on his journey
 - a. Aquila and Priscilla **remain in Ephesus**
 - b. Before leaving, Paul said “*If God wills, I will return to you again.*”
 - i. He did, on the third missionary journey
 - c. Maybe A&P not the moving type
 - i. That’s OK—God uses us wherever we are!

Aquila and Priscilla teach Apollos

1. <Read Acts 18:24-28>
2. Apollos was from **Alexandria**, another great city, with an excellent **university** and **library**
3. “*An eloquent man... he was mighty in the scriptures*” (v.24)
4. Apollos taught **accurately** concerning Jesus, but he only knew of the baptism of John

Q: What was the difference between John's baptism and the Christian baptism?

A: John's Baptism: A baptism of **repentance** for the **forgiveness of sins** (Luke 3:3)

Christian Baptism: A baptism for the **forgiveness of sins**, but one which included **the gift of the Holy Spirit!** (Acts 2:38)

Q: How can someone teach **accurately** concerning Jesus, and not know/teach about Christian Baptism? How does this apply to us today?

5. Aquila and Priscilla “*explain the way of God more accurately*” to Apollos
6. Notice their **technique**, or style:
 - a. “**aside**,” “**explain**,” “**more accurately**”
 - b. They taught **together!**
 - c. They were **prepared** and **ready** to teach Apollos
7. With their help, Apollos was able to go back to Ephesus (where Paul had so much trouble with the Jews) and continue to teach them (v.28)

Paul returns to Ephesus and to Aquila and Priscilla

1. Third missionary journey (see Handout)

2. Paul returns to Ephesus
3. Finds Aquila and Priscilla **still working hard for the cause of Christ**
4. While in Ephesus (~56 A.D.), Paul wrote his first letter to the Corinthian church
 - a. Mentions Aquila and Priscilla <**Read 1 Cor 16:19**>
 - b. Note that the church was **meeting in their house**. Now that's **involvement!**

Paul mentions Aquila and Priscilla in his letter to the Romans

1. <**Read Romans 16:3-5**>
2. Note that **somehow** they had **saved** Paul's **life**, although we don't know how
 - a. Undoubtedly, this earned them the gratitude of all the church
3. Again, Paul mentions that the church was meeting in their **home**
4. *NB*: Some scholars believe that Romans 16 is actually part of an epistle sent to **Ephesus**
 - a. Look at the time line. If they did move back to Rome, they didn't stay too long (~8 years)

Last mention of Aquila and Priscilla

1. <**Read 2 Tim 4:19**>
2. Here, Paul writes from Rome to instruct and encourage **Timothy**, the young preacher who was working with the church at **Ephesus**
3. Still, after almost 20 years, Paul makes **special mention** of his “fellow workers” in Christ

Q: So, what major roles did Aquila and Priscilla play?

Characteristics of Aquila and Priscilla

1. Devoted to the Lord's work
2. Hospitable
3. Spiritual leaders
4. “Truth teachers”
5. Excellent example of “two becoming one”:
 - a. They were one in the **Lord**
 - b. They were one in their **marriage**
 - c. They were one in their **occupation**
 - d. They were one in their **friendship** with Paul
 - e. They were one in their **teaching** of Apollos
 - f. They were one in their **service** of the church