

PRISCILLA & AQUILA - THE POWER COUPLE OF EARLY CHRISTIANITY

Scripture References: Acts 18:1-3, 18-28; Romans 16:3-5; 1 Corinthians 16:19; 2 Timothy 4:19

If you want to see what a healthy Christian marriage looks like, look at Priscilla and Aquila. They're always mentioned together. Always serving together. Always working side-by-side in the mission of the gospel. They were tentmakers by trade, but their real work was building the church. Wherever they went, they opened their home, disciplined believers, and created communities of faith. They were the ultimate ministry power couple.

We first meet Priscilla and Aquila in Acts 18, when Paul arrives in Corinth during his second missionary journey:

"After this, Paul left Athens and went to Corinth. There he met a Jew named Aquila, a native of Pontus, who had recently come from Italy with his wife Priscilla, because Claudius had ordered all Jews to leave Rome. Paul went to see them, and because he was a tentmaker as they were, he stayed and worked with them." (Acts 18:1-3)

Priscilla and Aquila had been forced to leave Rome because of an edict from Emperor Claudius expelling all Jews from the city. This was likely due to conflicts between Jews and Christians in Rome (Christianity was seen as a Jewish sect at the time) So Priscilla and Aquila relocated to Corinth and set up their tentmaking business. When Paul arrived and discovered they shared the same trade, he moved in with them. This wasn't just a business arrangement. Priscilla and Aquila became Paul's ministry partners. They worked together, worshiped together, and advanced the gospel together.

Here's something interesting; In most of the references to this couple, Priscilla's name comes first. "Priscilla and Aquila." In the ancient world, the husband's name almost always came first, but in four out of six mentions of this couple in the New Testament, Priscilla is listed first.

Why? We can't be certain, but it's possible that: Priscilla was from a higher social class than Aquila, or Priscilla was the more prominent or influential of the two in ministry, or the writers simply wanted to honor her contributions. Whatever the reason, it's clear that Priscilla was not a background figure. She was a coleader with her husband, respected and valued by Paul and the early church.

One of the most significant moments in Priscilla and Aquila's story happens in Ephesus. After Paul left Corinth, Priscilla and Aquila traveled with him to Ephesus, where they stayed while Paul continued his journey. While they were there, a man named Apollos arrived. Apollos was impressive. He was "a learned man, with a thorough knowledge of the Scriptures." He was "fervent in spirit" and taught about Jesus accurately.

But there was a problem: "He knew only the baptism of John" (Acts 18:25).

In other words, Apollos understood that the Messiah had come, but he didn't fully understand the work of the Holy Spirit or Christian baptism. His theology was incomplete.

So what did Priscilla and Aquila do?

"When Priscilla and Aquila heard him, they invited him to their home and explained to him the way of God more adequately." (Acts 18:26)

They didn't embarrass him publicly. They didn't criticize him in front of the congregation. They didn't post a blog calling him a heretic. They invited him to their home and disciplined him privately. This is a masterclass in gracious correction. Apollos was a gifted teacher, but he needed more training. Priscilla and Aquila saw his potential and invested in him, and it worked. After being disciplined by Priscilla and Aquila, Apollos went on to become one of the most influential preachers in the early church. He powerfully defended the gospel in public debates and helped strengthen the believers in Achaia. All because Priscilla and Aquila took the time to disciple him.

Priscilla and Aquila had a pattern: Wherever they went, they opened their home for the church. When Paul wrote to the Corinthians from Ephesus, he sent greetings from "Aquila and Priscilla" and "the church that meets at their house" (1 Corinthians 16:19). When Paul wrote his letter to the Romans, he again mentioned "Priscilla and Aquila" and "the church that meets at their house" (Romans 16:3-5).

In Corinth, Ephesus, and Rome, Priscilla and Aquila hosted house churches. They didn't just attend church - they were the church.

This kind of hospitality required sacrifice. It cost money. It took time. It meant opening their lives to people who were messy, broken, and needy, but Priscilla and Aquila did it anyway, because they understood that the church isn't a building - it's a community, and communities are built in homes.

In Romans 16:3-4, Paul writes:

"Greet Priscilla and Aquila, my co-workers in Christ Jesus. They risked their lives for me. Not only I but all the churches of the Gentiles are grateful to them."

We don't know the details, but at some point, Priscilla and Aquila put their own lives in danger to protect Paul. Maybe they hid him from a mob. Maybe they helped him escape during a riot. Maybe they stood between him and his attackers. We don't know. But Paul never forgot it. And he made sure the churches knew about their courage.

Priscilla and Aquila were willing to risk everything - their safety, their business, their lives - for the sake of the gospel and for their brother in Christ.

The last time we hear about Priscilla and Aquila is in 2 Timothy 4:19, when Paul sends his greetings to them near the end of his life. They were still faithfully serving. Still opening their home. Still investing in the kingdom. Priscilla and Aquila never wrote a book of the Bible. They never preached to thousands. They never planted dozens of churches.

But they were faithful. They used their home, their business, and their lives to advance the gospel.

And that's a legacy worth emulating.

One of the beautiful things about Priscilla and Aquila's story is that they did everything together. They weren't competing with each other. They weren't trying to outdo each other. They were partners - in marriage, in business, and in ministry.

In discipleship, we need partnerships like that. We need people who will walk alongside us, serve with us, and hold us accountable. Maybe it's a spouse. Maybe it's a ministry partner or small group. Maybe it's a mentor or discipleship relationship.

Whoever it is, find someone who will partner with you in following Jesus. Someone who will encourage you, challenge you, and remind you that you're not alone. Discipleship isn't a solo sport. Neither is the Christian life.

The most effective ministry happens when believers work together, combining their gifts and supporting each other's weaknesses. We need each other—for encouragement, accountability, and the strength that comes from bearing one another's burdens.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS - CHAPTER 8: PRISCILLA & AQUILA

1. Priscilla and Aquila are always mentioned together, serving as a team. What does their partnership teach us about healthy relationships and ministry? How can couples serve God together?
2. When they heard Apollos teaching incomplete theology, Priscilla and Aquila corrected him privately and graciously. How can we correct others without embarrassing or shaming them? Why is this important?
3. Priscilla and Aquila opened their home for house churches in multiple cities. What would it look like for you to use your home (or your resources) to build Christian community?
4. Paul said Priscilla and Aquila "risked their lives" for him. What does it mean to be willing to risk everything for a brother or sister in Christ? Have you ever had to do that?
5. Priscilla is often listed before Aquila in Scripture, which was unusual in the ancient world. What does this tell us about the value of women in ministry and leadership?
6. **DISCIPLESHIP FOCUS:** Priscilla and Aquila modeled the power of partnership and teamwork. In discipleship, we often say "iron sharpens iron." Who are your partners in following Christ? How can you cultivate deeper partnerships that help you grow in faith and obedience?

Faithful Lord,

Thank You for Priscilla and Aquila, the husband and wife team who served You together with one heart. Thank You for their generous hospitality that opened their home to the church. Thank You for their courage

that risked their lives for Paul. Thank You for their gentle wisdom that mentored Apollos. Thank You for their example of partnership in marriage, ministry, and mission.

Father, forgive us when our homes are closed to others and when we value our comfort over kingdom hospitality. Forgive us when we sit silently rather than gently teaching those who need instruction. Forgive us for marriages and partnerships that are divided rather than unified in purpose.

Give us hearts like Priscilla and Aquila—willing to sacrifice, eager to serve, ready to invest in others. Help us to see our homes not just as private retreats but as ministry centers. Teach us to disciple others with patience and grace, correcting what needs correcting while building up and encouraging.

For those who are married, help us to serve You together, supporting rather than competing, building up rather than tearing down. For all of us, help us to work well with others in kingdom partnerships. Show us who needs mentoring, who needs hospitality, and who needs our support.

May our lives and homes be marked by generous, sacrificial love for You and others.

In Jesus' name,
Amen.



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