

Series: Unlikely Heroes

MY HELPERS IN CHRIST JESUS

ROMANS 16:3 & OTHERS

Text: Romans 16:3

Romans 16:3

³ *Greet Priscilla and Aquila my helpers in Christ Jesus:*

Introduction:

A person cannot read through the Bible without encountering several wonderful families mentioned in its pages.

There is that little family in Bethany made up of Lazarus and his sisters Mary and Martha.

They were a great blessing to the Lord Jesus.

There is Timothy's mother and grandmother, Eunice and Lois and the great impact they made on young Timothy.

There is the family of Mary and Joseph where the Lord Jesus grew up and lived out His early years.

What a family that must have been!

In this passage we see another great family.

As far as we can tell that this family was made up of just a husband and wife.

This couple is one of the greatest families recorded in the Word of God.

They are mentioned 6 times in 4 books of the Bible.

Their names were Aquila and Priscilla.

We are introduced to this couple in Acts chapter 18.

Aquila and Priscilla was ordinary people but their willingness to be used by God enabled them to be a part of an extraordinary work.

They were personal friends and co-laborers of Paul.

Romans 16:3

³ *Greet Priscilla and Aquila my helpers in Christ Jesus:*

They were completely invested in the work of the Lord: using their home for a church.

1 Corinthians 16:19

¹⁹ *The churches of Asia salute you. Aquila and Priscilla salute you much in the Lord, with the church that is in their house.*

Note:

1. THEY WERE ENGAGED IN SERVICE (ACTS 18:1-3)

Acts 18:1-3

¹ After these things Paul departed from Athens, and came to Corinth; ² And found a certain Jew named Aquila, born in Pontus, lately come from Italy, with his wife Priscilla; (because that Claudius had commanded all Jews to depart from Rome:) and came unto them. ³ And because he was of the same craft, he abode with them, and wrought: for by their occupation they were tentmakers.

Note:

A. A Family of Distinction

Aquila whose name means “eagle” was a Jew that had been born in Pontus and who had migrated to Rome. So he is a Jewish man. Priscilla, on the other hand had a Latin name and was probably Roman by birth and possibly a Gentile.

B. A Family of Difficulties

Notice what the Bible says in verse 2. Claudius, the Roman Emperor, command that all Jews be expelled from Rome.

This decree forced Aquila and Priscilla to leave the city and find a new place to live.

Certainly this move placed great hardships upon this family.

Aquila and Priscilla were not alone!

Every family that I know anything about is a family that problems of some variety.

The average American family deals with problems related to economics, materialism, pagan influence, etc.

If there are children in the home, the problems are only compounded by the pressures they face in school from society and from their peers.

One of the greatest problems facing the families of our world is spiritual.

No family is without trouble and problems.

C. A Family of Destiny

What, on the surface, must have appeared as a tragedy was used of the Lord in a remarkable way. When this couple was forced to leave Rome, they traveled east toward Corinth. There, they met a man who had traveled from the east named Paul.

We are not certain how they met, but wherever or however it was it wasn't coincident.

When Paul discovered that this couple were of the same profession as himself, he formed a partnership with them, moved into their house and they worked together to provide for their needs.

May we never forget as we fight the battles of life that God is working all things out according to the good pleasure of His will.

What looks so bad at the beginning may well turn out to be a great blessing at the end.

Romans 8:28

²⁸ And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.

D. A Family of Devotion

Romans 16:3-4

*³ Greet Priscilla and Aquila my helpers in Christ Jesus: ⁴ **Who have for my life laid down their own necks:** unto whom not only I give thanks, but also all the churches of the Gentiles.*

They loved the Lord, the work of the Lord and the man of God.

They put their own lives in jeopardy for Paul and other believers.

John 15:13

¹³ *Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.*

Notice not only were “They Engaged in Service” but also:

2. THEY WERE ENCOURAGING SAINTS

It is no accident that the lives of these three individuals crossed at this particular time. Paul had arrived in Corinth following a very difficult time of ministry.

- In Acts 16, Paul was imprisoned and beaten severely in Philippi.
- In Acts 17:1-10 – Paul goes to Thessalonica where an angry mob besiege the home in which he is staying, in hopes of catching him to do him bodily harm but he escapes in the night.
- In Acts 17:10-14 – Paul goes to Berea where he has immediate success but soon trouble follows him.

- In Acts 17:15-34 – Paul is in Athens and again he is met with great difficulties Paul enters Corinth with numerous battle scars. He is tired. He is no doubt feeling the pressures of ministry. Unlike previous chapters, Paul is traveling alone. It is here that his path crosses this dear couple.
- In Acts 18 Paul again finds himself under great pressure but we find him not alone now according to verse 18:

Acts 18:18

¹⁸ And Paul after this tarried there yet a good while, and then took his leave of the brethren, and sailed thence into Syria, and with him Priscilla and Aquila; having shorn his head in Cenchrea: for he had a vow.

This couple came along side Paul at a crucial time in his life.

When he needed them most they were there. God had divinely placed them together.

Encouragement comes in many ways. It might be a simple act of kindness. It might be a text message or an email just to let them know you are thinking of them and praying for them. It might be a card. It might be a word spoken just at the right time.

Note Proverbs 25

Proverbs 25:11

¹¹ *A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in pictures of silver.*

Proverbs 25:25

²⁵ *As cold waters to a thirsty soul, so is good news from a far country.*

Notice not only were “They Engaged in Service” and “Encouraging Saints” but also:

3. THEY WERE EQUIPPING SERVANTS (VS. 24-28)

Acts 18:24-28

²⁴ *And a certain Jew named Apollos, born at Alexandria, an eloquent man, and mighty in the scriptures, came to Ephesus. ²⁵ This man was instructed in the way of the Lord; and being fervent in the spirit, he spake and taught diligently the things of the Lord, knowing only the baptism of John. ²⁶ And he began to speak boldly in the synagogue: whom when Aquila and Priscilla had heard, they took him unto them, and expounded unto him the way of God more perfectly. ²⁷ And when he was disposed to pass into Achaia, the brethren wrote, exhorting the disciples to receive him: who, when he was come, helped them much which had believed through grace: ²⁸ For he mightily convinced*

the Jews, and that publicly, shewing by the scriptures that Jesus was Christ.

In these verses we are first introduced to a young man by the name of Apollos.

Apollos had come from Alexandria, he was well educated, articulate and gifted in his understanding of the Scriptures.

Apollos had heard and received the message of John the Baptist –but he had not heard the full story of Christ. His motive was pure. He possessed a genuine zeal but lacked a complete knowledge of the truth.

Notice how Aquila and Priscilla react to this young man in verse 26.

Acts 18:26

²⁶ And he began to speak boldly in the synagogue: whom when Aquila and Priscilla had heard, they took him unto them, and expounded unto him the way of God more perfectly.

They lovingly come alongside him and quietly instruct him. They take time to invest in him, to equip him for ministry. Unfortunately this is the exception and not the rule in many churches and Christian circles today.

We need people who will lovingly draw near to younger Christians and help them and encourage them in their walk and growth in the Lord.

As I stated not long ago if our motive in pointing out something in someone's life is to point it out then our motive is completely wrong.

We should follow the example of Aquila and Priscilla.

This is a ministry that everyone can be involved in.

Every Christian should have Timothy in whom they are investing their lives.

Note Titus 2:

Titus 2:1-8

¹ But speak thou the things which become sound doctrine: ² That the aged men be sober, grave, temperate, sound in faith, in charity, in patience. ³ The aged women likewise, that they be in behaviour as becometh holiness, not false accusers, not given to much wine, teachers of good things; ⁴ That they may teach the young women to be sober, to love their husbands, to love their children, ⁵ To be discreet, chaste, keepers at home, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God be not blasphemed. ⁶ Young men likewise exhort to be sober minded. ⁷ In all things shewing thyself a pattern of good works: in

*doctrine shewing uncorruptness, gravity, sincerity,⁸
Sound speech, that cannot be condemned; that he that
is of the contrary part may be ashamed, having no evil
thing to say of you.*

Remember:

Romans 14:7

⁷ For none of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself.

Each one of us is being influenced and influencing others throughout our life.

I am thankful for every person who has taken time to invest in me. I am thankful for every person who has been willing to pour a little of their own life in me.

Aquila and Priscilla could have written Apollos off and dismissed him completely. But their discernment saw great potential in this young man. They discerned in him a sincere heart. He did not have everything right, but he was doing the very best he could with what he had.

As a result they came along side Appollos and encouraged him in his walk with the Lord.

Close:

It's clear that this was a special family.

They demonstrated a burden for the Lord's work and were greatly used by the Lord.

They were so influential in Paul's life that when he was about to be put to death and he was making his final statements, he makes a special effort to greet Aquila and Priscilla.

2 Timothy 4:19

¹⁹ Salute Prisca and Aquila, and the household of Onesiphorus.

May the Lord help each of us to seek to be all we can be for His glory.

May our lives be like the lives of these two special believers.

Lives that God can use for His glory to make a difference in His kingdom.

May we all strive to be an encourager and not a discourager.

May we be willing to invest in a younger Christian; taking them under our wing and help them.