

Priscilla's Teaching

A Jew named Apollos, a native Alexandrian, an eloquent man who was powerful in the Scriptures, arrived in Ephesus. This man had been instructed in the way of the Lord; and being fervent in spirit, he spoke and taught the things about Jesus accurately, although he knew only John's baptism. He began to speak boldly in the synagogue. After Priscilla and Aquila heard him, they took him home and explained the way of God to him more accurately. When he wanted to cross over to Achaia, the brothers wrote to the disciples urging them to welcome him. After he arrived, he greatly helped those who had believed through grace. For he vigorously refuted the Jews in public, demonstrating through the Scriptures that Jesus is the Messiah. - Acts 18:24-28 HCSB



In AD 49, the Emperor Claudius¹ expelled the Jews from Rome. Two tiny figures in this mass exodus were named Aquila and Priscilla. Aquila was a Jewish man from Pontus and his wife, Priscilla, was probably an Italian Gentile. They settled briefly in Corinth and set up shop as tentmakers. Around AD 50, they met the Apostle Paul² there. He was also a tentmaker by trade so he worked with them until he determined it was time to move on. By then, his relationship with them was so good that he convinced them to accompany him to Syria.³

When they arrived in Ephesus, Paul left Priscilla and Aquila there while he went on to evangelize the Galatian territory and Phrygia.⁴ Over the years, Paul spent time with them both in Asia and in Greece.⁵ They apparently moved back to Rome by AD 57, because Paul mentioned them in his letter to the Roman believers.⁶

It's interesting that while the Apostles had wives, and Jesus' half brothers had wives, and they took them with them when they preached,⁷ the names of their wives are never given in Scripture. Priscilla's is.

Priscilla and Aquila must have been a great team because you never find one mentioned without the other. Around AD 54, they started a church in their house in Ephesus⁸ and three years later in Rome, started another church. By AD 65, they had returned to Ephesus. They were such a dynamic force in the early church that the Apostle Paul considered them as his "fellow workers."⁹

Many today teach that there is no room for female leadership in the church. However, the Bible not only honors women who are wives, mothers and homemakers¹⁰ but women who team-teach in house churches like Priscilla and apostles like Junia.¹¹ J.D.G. Dunn suggests that Andronicus and Junia were husband and wife giving us yet another couple team-teaching in the early church.

Gender equality does not necessitate sameness of roles. Women, who generally regard relational success as greater than career success, do not have to fill the same jobs as men to be empowered. Priscilla took a great man (Apollos), explained things to him and left him a better servant. Would that more women would take on this role.

¹ The date is recorded by the historian Suetonius in *Claudius* 25.4

² Acts 18:2

³ Acts 18:18

⁴ Acts 18:23

⁵ Acts 18:1-3, 18-19, 26; cp 1 Corinthians 16:19; 2 Timothy 4:19

⁶ Romans 16:3-5

⁷ 1 Corinthians 9:5

⁸ 1 Corinthians 16:19

⁹ Romans 16:3-5

¹⁰ Proverbs 31; 1 Timothy 5:9-10, 14

¹¹ Romans 16:7