We Need More Aquila & Priscilla People

(Kent Heaton)

Examples of great men and women abound in the New Testament as the early church struggled to its feet. Those were difficult days as the nature of the Kingdom of God was being built by the hands of devout disciples. Among the early disciples was a husband and wife named Aquila and Priscilla. Role models are important for learning and the example of these two saints of the Lord serve as a needed pattern for the church today. What we know about Aquila and Priscilla is found in Luke’s history of the early church (Acts 18) and Paul’s letters to Rome, Corinth and young Timothy.

When Paul arrived in Corinth on his second missionary journey, he found “a Jew named Aquila, a native of Pontus, having recently come from Italy with his wife Priscilla, because Claudius had commanded all the Jews to leave Rome. He came to them, and because he was of the same trade, he stayed with them and they were working, for by trade they were tent-makers” (Acts 18:2-3). Paul enjoyed the blessing of a godly home that welcomed preachers to stay and work with them. The apostle had learned tent making in his youth and now enjoyed a common bond with these saints of God. Their home was a wonderful haven of spiritual truth.

Paul continued preaching in Corinth for a “year and six months” as he “reasoned in the synagogue every Sabbath, and persuaded both Jews and Greeks” (Acts 18:11, 4). Finally being opposed at the synagogue he went to the house of Justus and taught there. One can only imagine the wonderful discussions enjoyed by Aquila and Pricilla as they studied with Paul and talked of the day’s events. One of the great blessings families can enjoy in the church today is the hospitality of faithful men of God in their homes.

After some time, Paul left Corinth and Priscilla and Aquila went with him. Now we have a husband and wife who are willing to travel the world to help a gospel preacher in his work. We refer to these journeys as Paul’s missionary journeys but they were journeys of many people who traveled with him – many times suffering under the same conditions of the apostle Paul. The church needs more husbands and wives who are willing to make these journeys to help gospel preachers in their work.

Aquila and Priscilla stayed in Ephesus while Paul continued on his way to Syria. While in Ephesus, Aquila and Priscilla were in the synagogue and heard “a Jew named Apollos, an Alexandrian by birth, an eloquent man … he was mighty in the Scriptures. This man had been instructed in the way of the Lord; and being fervent in spirit, he was speaking and teaching accurately the things concerning Jesus, being acquainted only with the baptism of John; and he began to speak out 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” (Acts 18:24-26). This husband and wife were bold to approach a man such as Apollos to correct him in the truth but their love of the truth guided them to seek his salvation. May their tribe increase for boldness to teach the gospel to every man, no matter their station in life.

In Paul’s letters to Rome and Corinth, he commends this couple as being his “fellow workers in Christ Jesus, who for my life risked their own necks” and mentions “the church that is in their house” (Romans 16:3-5). These were not passive members of the Lord’s church. They were workers in the kingdom, even in the face of adversity. How fitting that Paul closes his last recorded letter with mention of their name (2 Timothy 4:19). Aquila and Priscilla are valuable examples of what we can do for the Lord today.