

## THRU THE BIBLE EXPOSITION

### Acts: The Continuing Earthly Ministry Of Our Lord Jesus Christ

#### Part VI: The Ministry Of The Universal Church In Its Spread To The Ends Of The Earth, Acts 8:26-28:31

##### E. Christ's Use Of The Apostle Paul To Spearhead Worldwide Outreach, Acts 14:4-28:31

##### 18. Christ's Use Of Ordinary People Paul Discipled To Disciple Another Church Leader (Acts 18:23-28)

###### I. Introduction

- A. One of the amazing facts about discipleship is God's **power** to *USE ANY* believer to *disciple* others well!
- B. Such was the case in Acts 18:23-28, and we view it for encouraging insight (as follows):

###### II. Christ's Use Of Ordinary People Paul Discipled To Disciple Another Church Leader, Acts 18:23-28.

- A. Priscilla and Aquila were a married couple Paul met in Corinth as fellow workers in the business of tentmaking. It is unclear whether they were already believers when Paul met them, but surely they were more fully discipled by him at Corinth, Acts 18:1-2; Zond. Pict. Ency. of the Bible, v. One, p. 232.
- B. They grew enough in Christ in their exposure to Paul's ministry at Corinth that he left them at Ephesus when he returned to Jerusalem to do a preparatory work there in case God willed he return, Acts 18:18-19.
- C. Now, Aquila was a Jew according to Acts 18:2, but his wife, Priscilla, was possibly a proselyte to Judaism who was saved; Acts 18:2 noticeably omits reference to her ethnicity though mentioning Aquila's heritage, and as her name is three times given in Scripture before her husband's (Acts 18:18; Rom. 16:3; 2 Tim. 4:19), she may have been his superior in social standing as a member of an old Roman family, *Ibid*.
- D. Thus, when Paul left the couple at Ephesus, they met a Jew named Apollos, an eloquent, devout Jew of Alexandria who was mighty in the Scriptures, and who ministered God's Word unto others, Acts 18:25.
- E. However, regardless of his assets, Apollos knew only of the teaching of John the Baptist (Acts 18:25c), and this ignorance seriously hampered his discipling work because it did not lead to people believe in Christ and be filled with the Holy Spirit and inducted into the Spiritual Body of Christ, cf. Acts 19:1-3.
- F. Priscilla and Aquila wisely handled this need in Apollos to edify and not publicly harm him, 18:26-28:
  - 1. After hearing Apollos speak so boldly in the synagogue, but remain limited in his effectiveness due to his ignorance of Christ, Aquila and Priscilla wisely chose not to confront Apollos publicly lest they undermine his authority and personal confidence before his listeners, Acts 18:26a,b.
  - 2. Rather, after he had ministered God's Word, they privately took him aside to expound unto him more fully the way of God regarding faith in Christ the Messiah for salvation, Acts 18:26c,d; 19:4.
  - 3. Of interest to us is the fact that the private tutelage of Apollos was apparently headed not by Priscilla, but by Aquila, for his name is mentioned before hers in this Acts 18:26 personal discipling effort! This would fit the cultural and Biblical guidelines, for Apollos, a Jew, came from a patristic culture, so Aquila would have taken the lead over Priscilla so as not to offend Apollos and hurt the discipling process. Nevertheless, the high social rank of Priscilla would have aided Aquila well in this process!
  - 4. Apollos apparently thought it wise that he leave Ephesus, for continuing to minister at that time where he had taught only partial truth, though it had been in ignorance, could have undermined his credibility to his hearers who might have thought he was deceptive. So, he left for Achaia with letters of reference from believers in Ephesus for the Church there to receive him as God's servant, Acts 18:27a.
  - 5. Once in Achaia, Apollos greatly helped the Church there, using his great motivation, skills, polish and knowledge of Scripture as an Alexandrian Jew to promote God's truth, Acts 18:27b-28 with 18:25.
  - 6. Indeed, Apollos later became a great influence with other Churches, including the Church at Corinth (1 Corinthians 1:12; 3:4-6 et al.) and even later at Ephesus again [cf. 1 Corinthians 16:12 with 16:8 where we learn Apollos was with the Apostle Paul at Ephesus when he wrote the 1 Corinthian letter!]

***Lesson:*** *Though Paul was absent then, his earlier DISCIPLING of Aquila and Priscilla in CHRIST'S power was so EFFECTIVE, GOD USED it to DISCIPLE Apollos to be an EFFECTIVE LEADER!*

***Application:*** *(1) May we realize that our usefulness to God is never hindered by our station in life (Aquila), by our gender (Priscilla) or by our lack of a leadership role (Aquila and Priscilla), for our discipling effectiveness comes from God! (2) May we like Aquila and Priscilla be considerate of the reputations and feelings of others in discipling that we not hinder, but help the work of God!*