

BIOGRAPHIES OF BIBLE SAINTS

VI. Aquila And Priscilla: Biblical, Effective "Lay" Christian Ministers

C. Effectively Serving As "Lay" Ministers By Supporting God's People

(Romans 16:3-5; 1 Corinthians 16:19; 2 Timothy 4:19)

I. Introduction

- A. Ephesians 4:11-12 teaches that God uses the "starter" gifts of [today's] evangelists and pastor-teachers to equip the rest of the Church body to do the actual work of the ministry.
- B. Thus, it is edifying to study the development of Aquila and Priscilla toward effective "lay" ministries, and we continue by viewing how God used them greatly in the realm of supporting God's people (as follows):

II. Effectively Serving As "Lay" Ministers By Supporting God's People.

- A. Aquila and Priscilla had been discipled by Paul at Corinth and helped him and the Church at Ephesus in educating the gifted public speaker in Apollos to have an effective public ministry (Acts 18:1-28).
- B. After that, they appear in several of Paul's epistles with references to a wide array of services they performed in supporting God's people, be they fellow laymen or the Apostle Paul himself (as follows):
 1. Aquila and Priscilla first supported God's people at Ephesus where they had their first service assignment:
 - a. In 1 Corinthians 16:19, an epistle Paul wrote from Ephesus (1 Corinthians 16:8) in A. D. 56 (Ryrie Study Bible, KJV, 1978, p. 1619) five years after he had first preached the Gospel at Corinth in A. D. 51 (Ibid., fn. to Acts 18:12) notes that Priscilla and Aquila gave many greetings to the Church at Corinth.
 - b. They had thus developed deep relationships with the believers at Corinth who had trusted in Christ along with them. There they had come to know Christ under Paul's ministry only to be discipled by him (Acts 18:1-2, 3-18), so this couple had developed deep, heartfelt ties with fellow believers at Corinth where they had experienced the basic foundations of their spiritual transformation to Christ.
 - c. Of note, Paul reports that a congregation met in their house at Ephesus (1 Cor. 16:19), so Aquila and Priscilla had opened up their home in hospitality as a meeting place for believers in Ephesus just as they had first opened up their home at Corinth for Paul to live with them as he ministered there, Acts 18:1-3.
 2. Aquila and Priscilla then went to Rome to support believers in a city from which they were once expelled:
 - a. Romans 16:3-5, in an epistle written in A. D. 58 two years after Paul wrote 1 Corinthians (Ibid., p. 1593), notes how Aquila and Priscilla had moved from Ephesus to Rome from which the emperor had originally expelled them (Acts 18:1-2) where they had also used their home for believers, Romans 16:5.
 - b. In addition, in Romans 16:3-4 ESV, they are called Paul's helpers who had "risked their necks" to save his life, to whom not only Paul gave thanks but also all the churches of the Gentiles who still needed his ministry unto them. Aquila and Priscilla had thus ministered for the welfare of many Gentile churches by selflessly offering in some way to lay down their lives in martyrdom if the Lord had so willed!
 3. Aquila and Priscilla are last known to have returned to their initial place of ministry assignment at Ephesus to continue to help develop the body of Christ there:
 - a. In 2 Timothy 4:19 in A. D. 66, eight years after Paul's letter to Rome, as Paul was imprisoned in Rome awaiting martyrdom (Ibid., p. 1716), he directed Timothy who was at Ephesus (Bible Know. Com., N. T., p. 749) to greet Aquila and Priscilla, friends and fellow laborers who had stayed loyal to him to his death.
 - b. Aquila and Priscilla had thus moved from Rome back to Ephesus where Paul had initially left them in the Apostle's first ministry assignment for them, and they had returned to Ephesus to help build that ministry that later became the great Church that later existed there. (Zon. Pict. Ency. Bib., v. Two, p. 330)
 - c. Thus, their loyalty is seen not only to Paul, but to the body of Christ at Ephesus where the Apostle had first assigned them to minister as "lay" ministers for the Lord.

Lesson: *Aquila and Priscilla consistently, loyally supported local congregations in their homes, developing lasting relationships with believers wherever they went, and they sacrificially risked their lives for the Apostle Paul and the resulting welfare of all the Gentile churches when circumstances indicated that they be available to do so.*

Application: *(1) If called of God to serve Him as "lay" ministers, may we (2) consistently, (3) loyally (4) support God's people by (a) practicing hospitality, (b) sacrificially risking our lives as directed of the Lord for the welfare of God's people (cf. 1 John 3:16-18), (c) developing extensive relationships with fellow believers that we might better minister to them and (d) accepting new or difficult assignments as God leads, assignments like returning to places of hardship much as Aquila and Priscilla who returned to Rome from whence they were once expelled.*