

Are You An Aquila or a Pricilla?

Text: Romans 12:9-13 Let love be without dissimulation. Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good. Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honour preferring one another; Not slothful in business; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord; Rejoicing in hope; patient in tribulation; continuing instant in prayer; Distributing to the necessity of saints; given to hospitality.

Acts 18:1- 3	After these things Paul departed from Athens, and came to Corinth; 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. And because he was of the same craft, he abode with them, and wrought: for by their occupation they were tentmakers.
Acts 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.
Acts 18:26	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.
Romans 16:3	Greet Priscilla and Aquila my helpers in Christ Jesus:
1 Corinthians 16:19	The churches of Asia salute you. Aquila and Priscilla salute you much in the Lord, with the church that is in their house.
2 Timothy 4:19	Salute Prisca and Aquila, and the household of Onesiphorus.

Intro: These Jewish Christians were a couple that serves as a model for us today. In their lives we see the above Roman Text Passage fulfilled repeatedly. For too long we have sermonized about Ananias and Saphira but today, let us learn positively about another couple from the verses of scripture. Upon reflecting on their attributes, you should be able to answer whether you an Aquila or a Priscilla!

1. Luke wrote thrice about them as well as Paul meaning three testimonies each from two witnesses, this is evidence of divine approval of the record concerning them -2 Cor 13:1, Hebrews 6:10
2. The couple were one! The scripture alternatively refers to them as "Aquila & Pricilla" as well as "Pricilla & Aquila." This shows that in the writers' minds as well as the Holy Spirit, this husband and his wife were one and the same. What one did the other was involved in. Compare with Lot's wife who was often unreferenced till her disobedience and was unnamed in scripture.
3. They were law-abiding citizens of the roman empire, even to the point of obeying Emperor Claudius decree banishing Jews from Rome (Acts 18:2). For Aquila born in Pontus of Italy, he might have claimed citizenship but preferred like Moses to "suffer affliction with the people of God." Today, some would prefer to be illegal aliens or stay beyond their visa permits in foreign countries. We are to obey governments whenever their decree does not violate the express will of God contained in the scriptures –Romans 13:1- 6.
4. Paul found them in Corinth, faithful in the Lord and diligent in their trade. They did not hide their [christian] identity. They were fervent in spirit and in secular business. 2 Thess 3:6-12
5. They were hospitable -Heb 13:1-2. They lodged Paul in their apartment and became his partners in tent-making.
6. They were fellow-labourers in the work of the Lord. They were not ashamed of Paul when he was beaten in Corinth. They even accompanied him on his missionary journey to Ephesus –Acts 18:18. How many of us come out individually or as a couple to general evangelism within Lagos?
7. They knew the truth and corrected people in love, they were not puffed-up, their knowledge benefited the oratory Apollos –Acts 18:26. They were silent achievers, no-one "followed" Aquila!
8. They sent greetings from Ephesus to Corinth via Paul's letter. While hosting the church at Ephesus, they still cared for and remembered the saints left at Corinth -1 Cor 16:19
9. After Claudius reign, they had opportunity to return to Rome and waxed stronger in the Lord there. A church was **again** meeting in their house! Many congregations have been helped by them despite their low social and material status –Rm 16:3-5. Do you let the brethren know your house? Are they welcomed individually or for collectively for house fellowship?
10. Later, they returned to Ephesus and Timothy was asked to greet them for they remained ever faithful -1 Tim 1:3; 2 Tim 4:19. In them were fulfilled also 1 Peter 3:3-8.

Conclusion: Look around you: there are saints needful of jobs and hospitality, churches needful of help with evangelism and house-fellowship centers, there are government tax and other laws requiring obedience for the good of the community. *Do not assume somebody else should fulfill these, you can if you sincerely desire to.* Aquila was not engrossed with making it money- wise and Priscilla was not obsessed with the latest fashion trends. Each was a helper to the other in serving the Lord, in business and in building their family. As we remember and celebrate this couple, ask yourself; Am I an Aquila or a Pricilla?

{{-THIS SECTION IS OBTAINED FROM A WEB DOCUMENT

1. More open hearts and fewer open mouths. All conduct proceeds from the heart. Prejudice closes the heart to a true consideration of the facts. If the heart was made right before the mouth was opened, most church problems locally and universally would cease to exist (James 3:5,6 / Proverbs 26:20).

2. More Appreciation and less complaints. .

3. More sound heads and fewer sore heads. Perhaps there has never been a time in the history of the church in which we have had a greater need for men sound in the faith and wise in judgment. Sometimes the voice of the wise goes unheeded and the voice of the foolish takes over (I Kings 12:6-8).

4. More seed slinging and less mud slinging. The task of sowing the seed of the kingdom is so great that it should leave no time for the slinging of mud at a brother. The fact that we have the whole world as our foe should draw us closer together (Proverbs 18:24). There should be no division in the Lord's camp (I Corinthians 1:10). One can never whitewash himself by slinging mud at another. He who tries gets his own hands dirty. The Great Commission demands that we busy ourselves in taking the gospel to others (Mark. 16:15). The Bible says, "...speak not evil one of another" (James 4:11). It is so much better to be busy doing good rather than evil

5. More sacrifice of self and less sacrifice of others. There are plenty of members of the church who are willing to sacrifice the other fellow's talent, time, money, and reputation. Sacrifice should begin at home (Luke 9:23).

6. More concern over direction than speed. This is the jet and missile age. Speed is being enthroned and multitudes bow before it. But in the Lord's work, the greater question is not, "How fast are we traveling?", but rather, "Which way are we going?" (John 14:6 / Matt. 7:13-14) All speed is not progress. On the other hand, neither is standing still.

-END OF REFERENCED SECTION}}

Early Church Characters: Who do you resemble?

1. Theophilus was a high ranking official who was interested in knowing the certainty of the gospel he had believed –Acts 1:1,Lk 1:1-4
2. Barnabas was a giver of extraordinary measure -Acts 4:36-37
3. Ananias and Saphira desired vain-glory and were pretentious about being generous givers, they conspired and lied and were punished for it Acts 5:1-ff
4. Stephen, full of wisdom and the Spirit spoke boldly and as the first Christian martyr prayed for his executors –Acts 7
5. Often when Phillip the Evangelist preached Christ and His kingdom, the listeners would end up rejoicing after entering the kingdom via faith and baptism –Acts 8
6. Simon was converted and later fell to temptation but this became a model for what is required when a Christian sins, namely 'repentance and prayer' –Acts 8
7. Ananias was an informed and cautious disciple who went to the 'lions den' (Saul) trusting the Lord. –Acts 9
8. Concerning Dorcas of Joppa it was testified that "this woman was full of good works and almsdeeds which she did." –Acts 10
9. Simon the tanner was a Christian given to hospitality, forever his name and the food preparation will be remembered whenever Peter's vision on the roof is recalled –Acts 10
10. Cornelius of Caesarea did not allow his profession to mould him into an extortioner or one who was too busy to serve God who remembered him in due season –Acts 10
11. Rhoda knew the apostle Peter's voice and was so joyful she left him knocking and ran off to break the news of his arrival –Acts 12:15-16