



Rooted in Scripture - Pointing to Jesus

BIBLE FOUNDATIONS

Priscilla and Aquila

Faithful Partners in Gospel Ministry

The Short Answer

Priscilla and Aquila were a married Christian couple who became trusted coworkers in the early Church. They first appear in Acts 18 after being forced to leave Rome when Emperor Claudius ordered Jews to leave the city. They settled in Corinth, where Paul met them and worked alongside them because they shared the same trade. Their relationship with Paul soon became much more than a business arrangement. They traveled with him, helped strengthen believers, opened their home to churches, helped instruct the gifted teacher Apollos, and at some point risked their own lives for Paul. Paul eventually called them his “fellow workers in Christ Jesus.”

What makes Priscilla and Aquila especially significant is that Scripture never records either of them preaching to thousands, writing a New Testament book, or holding a famous public ministry. Instead, much of their influence happened through ordinary things placed at God's disposal: a marriage, a trade, a home, a table, biblical understanding, hospitality, courage, and faithful relationships. Their story demonstrates that Gospel ministry is much larger than a platform.

Acts 18:1-28 · Romans 16:1-16 · 1 Corinthians 16:19 · 2 Timothy 4:19

Opening Memory Anchor

A life placed at Christ's service can turn ordinary resources into Gospel opportunities.



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WELCOME

This guide is meant to send you back to Scripture

Priscilla and Aquila's story is told through a handful of New Testament passages rather than one continuous biography. Part One follows what Scripture clearly records about their work, travels, hospitality, partnership with Paul, and instruction of Apollos. Part Two addresses the historical and interpretive questions surrounding their story and then traces how their ordinary faithfulness served Christ and His Church.

Foundational truth

Faithfulness does not require fame. The study of Priscilla and Aquila should expand a reader's understanding of how Christ uses ordinary believers and ordinary resources in the life of His Church.

How to use this study

- Open and read the cited passages rather than relying only on summaries.
- Distinguish what Scripture explicitly teaches from historical reconstruction or theological inference.
- Use the Memory Anchors to retain major ideas.
- Where Scripture leaves mystery, do not manufacture certainty.

PART ONE

BEGINNER GUIDE

Start by reading: Acts 18:1-28; Romans 16:1-16; 1 Corinthians 16:19; 2 Timothy 4:19.

1. WHO WERE PRISCILLA AND AQUILA?

Priscilla and Aquila first appear in Acts 18:1-3. Paul had arrived in Corinth during his second missionary journey. There he met a Jewish man named Aquila, originally from Pontus, and his wife Priscilla. They had recently come from Italy because Emperor Claudius had ordered Jews to leave Rome. Paul stayed and worked with them because they shared the same trade. Acts describes them as tentmakers.

This began a relationship that would continue for years. Priscilla and Aquila later appear in Acts 18:18-28; Romans 16:3-5; 1 Corinthians 16:19; and 2 Timothy 4:19. These scattered references reveal an extraordinary Christian couple. They worked, traveled, taught, hosted believers, served alongside Paul, risked themselves for another Christian, and wherever they went their lives appear to have become part of the Gospel's advance.

2. IS HER NAME PRISCILLA OR PRISCA?

Both names refer to the same woman. Luke generally calls her Priscilla in Acts. Paul calls her Prisca in his letters. Priscilla appears to be a form of the name Prisca. This is not evidence that Scripture is describing two different women. Readers sometimes encounter similar name variations elsewhere in the Bible because people in the ancient Mediterranean world could be known by different forms of a name or by more than one name.

BIBLICAL LITERACY NOTE

A difference in the form of a biblical person's name does not necessarily mean a different person is being described.

3. WERE PRISCILLA AND AQUILA ALREADY CHRISTIANS WHEN PAUL MET THEM?

Scripture does not explicitly say when Priscilla and Aquila became followers of Jesus. Acts 18 introduces them after Paul arrives in Corinth but does not record their conversion. Some readers therefore believe they may already have been Christians when Paul met them. Others think they may have become believers through Paul's ministry in Corinth. The text does not settle the question.

What becomes unmistakably clear is that they became committed coworkers in the Gospel. It is possible to know a great deal about what people later did without knowing exactly when or how they first came to faith. Where Scripture does not tell the story, there is no need to invent one.

4. WHY WERE THEY LIVING IN CORINTH?

Read Acts 18:1-3. Aquila had been born in Pontus, but he and Priscilla had been living in Italy. Then Emperor Claudius ordered Jews to leave Rome. As a result, Priscilla and Aquila came to Corinth. Their move apparently was not simply a ministry strategy. They had been displaced. Their plans had been disrupted by an imperial decree.

Yet the disruption placed them in Corinth at the same time Paul arrived there. Scripture does not explicitly say, "God caused the expulsion so Priscilla and Aquila would meet Paul." That would go beyond the text. But readers can clearly see that God worked through circumstances they probably would not have chosen. What looked like displacement became part of a much larger story of Gospel ministry.

MEMORY ANCHOR

A disrupted plan does not mean God has stopped working.

5. WHAT DID PRISCILLA AND AQUILA DO FOR WORK?

Acts 18:3 says they shared Paul's trade. Traditionally, the Greek term is translated tentmakers. The word may refer more broadly to workers in leather or related materials, so the exact products they regularly made cannot be known with complete certainty.

It was a practical skilled trade that could be practiced in different cities and likely helped support a mobile life. That mobility may help explain how Priscilla and Aquila could relocate repeatedly while continuing to work and serve. It is difficult to assign them a precise social or economic status from the trade alone.

What matters most in Acts is that Paul and this couple shared a trade. Their work life and ministry life were not completely separate worlds. Their occupation helped bring them into relationship with Paul. Their home became a gathering place for Christians. Their travels repeatedly intersected



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with Gospel ministry. The New Testament does not divide Christian faith into sacred ministry versus meaningless ordinary work. Work can become one of the places where Christians meet people, serve faithfully, demonstrate character, build relationships, and create opportunities for Gospel influence.

6. DID THEY BECOME MISSIONARIES WITH PAUL?

In a meaningful sense, yes, although Scripture does not give them the formal title “missionaries.” Read Acts 18:18–19. After an extended period in Corinth, Paul left for Syria. Priscilla and Aquila traveled with him as far as Ephesus. Paul continued his travels, but Priscilla and Aquila remained there.

While in Ephesus, they encountered a gifted Jewish teacher named Apollos. Later, when Paul wrote 1 Corinthians from Ephesus, Priscilla and Aquila were still there and a church was meeting in their house. Still later, Romans 16 places them back in Rome. Their lives show unusual mobility: Rome → Corinth → Ephesus → Rome. And 2 Timothy 4:19 may place them again in connection with Ephesus later. Scripture does not explain why they made every move. Work, political circumstances, ministry, family considerations, or combinations of factors may have been involved. What is clear is that wherever they went, they continued serving Christ.

7. WHO WAS APOLLOS?

Read Acts 18:24–28. Apollos was a Jewish man from Alexandria. Luke describes him as eloquent, competent in the Scriptures, instructed in the way of the Lord, fervent in spirit, and accurate in what he taught concerning Jesus. That is an impressive description.

But there was a gap in his understanding. Acts says he knew only the baptism of John. Exactly how much Apollos understood about Christian baptism and the events following John’s ministry is debated. The text does not provide every detail. What it does tell readers is that Priscilla and Aquila heard him speaking boldly in the synagogue and recognized that his understanding needed further instruction.

8. HOW DID PRISCILLA AND AQUILA CORRECT APOLLOS?

Acts 18:26 says: “They took him aside and explained to him the way of God more accurately.”

Notice what they did not do. They did not publicly humiliate him. They did not treat him as useless because his understanding was incomplete. They did not appear threatened by his ability. And Apollos apparently did not refuse correction because he was already an effective speaker.

Instead, mature believers helped a gifted believer become more accurate. Afterward, Apollos went to Achaia and became a powerful help to believers there. He publicly demonstrated from the Scriptures that Jesus was the Christ. Priscilla and Aquila did not diminish Apollos’s ministry. They helped strengthen it.

MEMORY ANCHOR

Faithful correction does not have to destroy a person in order to strengthen the truth.

9. DID PRISCILLA TEACH APOLLOS?

Yes—in some meaningful sense, the text clearly presents her participating with Aquila in explaining God’s way more accurately to Apollos. Acts 18:26 says “they” took Apollos aside and “they” explained the way of God to him. Priscilla is not portrayed merely as standing nearby while Aquila taught. She is grammatically included in their shared action.

However, readers should also avoid making Acts 18 answer questions it was not specifically written to answer. The passage describes a husband and wife instructing Apollos in what appears to be a personal or less-public setting after hearing him in the synagogue. Christians who disagree about women’s roles in formal church leadership interpret the implications differently.

What the text clearly establishes should not be minimized: Priscilla participated in helping a gifted male teacher understand the way of God more accurately. What the text does not explicitly establish should not be assumed: Acts 18 does not identify Priscilla as an elder, overseer, or pastor. The safest approach is to let every passage say what it actually says.

10. WHY IS PRISCILLA SOMETIMES NAMED FIRST?

Sometimes Scripture says Aquila and Priscilla and other times Priscilla and Aquila. In several New Testament references, Priscilla—or Prisca—is named first. Some interpreters have suggested that Priscilla may have had greater social status. Others suggest she may have been especially prominent in ministry or theological instruction. Still others caution that ancient naming order does not always communicate rank or importance consistently enough to support a firm conclusion.

Scripture never explains why the order changes. Therefore, it is appropriate to notice the pattern. It is not appropriate to turn a possible explanation into a biblical fact. What Scripture clearly communicates is more important: Both Priscilla and Aquila were valued coworkers in the Gospel.

11. DID A CHURCH REALLY MEET IN THEIR HOUSE?

Yes. Paul writes in 1 Corinthians 16:19: “Aquila and Prisca, together with the church in their house, send you hearty greetings in the Lord.” Later, Romans 16:3–5 again refers to “the church in their house.”

The earliest Christians did not generally have church buildings resembling those familiar today. Believers frequently gathered in homes for worship, prayer, teaching, fellowship, meals, encouragement, and Christian community.

Homes like theirs could also become important relational and communication hubs. Travelers passed through. News moved between churches. Greetings were carried. Letters were shared. Believers connected with one another across cities. Priscilla and Aquila’s home therefore may have served not only as a meeting place but also as part of the wider network through which early Christian relationships and communication were sustained. Hospitality for them was not merely entertaining friends. Their household became part of their ministry.



MEMORY ANCHOR

God can use what is already in a believer's hands—including a home.

12. DID PRISCILLA AND AQUILA RISK THEIR LIVES FOR PAUL?

Apparently, yes. Read Romans 16:3–4. Paul calls Prisca and Aquila “my fellow workers in Christ Jesus” and says they “risked their necks for my life.” This was a strong expression indicating serious personal danger.

But Scripture never tells readers exactly what happened. Some connect Paul's statement with danger in Ephesus, perhaps during the intense opposition surrounding his ministry there. Others point to dangerous circumstances during the Corinth period, including the opposition that eventually brought Paul before Gallio in Acts 18:12–17. Neither proposal can be established from the text. Acts does not say Priscilla and Aquila intervened during the Gallio episode. It also does not say they rescued Paul during the Ephesian disturbance.

The safest conclusion is also the most powerful one: At some point, Priscilla and Aquila placed themselves in serious danger for Paul's sake. Paul never forgot it. He adds that not only he but “all the churches of the Gentiles” gave thanks for them.

13. WHAT IS THE BIG IDEA OF THEIR STORY?

Priscilla and Aquila demonstrate that Christian ministry can take many forms. They served Christ through work, hospitality, travel, friendship, biblical instruction, discipleship, courage, partnership, opening their home, and strengthening other believers.

Neither appears to have written a New Testament book. Acts does not preserve a sermon from either of them. Yet their names appear repeatedly because their faithfulness mattered. They helped Paul. They helped Apollos. They helped churches. They served together.

Their story challenges the assumption that the most visible ministry is necessarily the most important ministry. God measures faithfulness differently than people measure prominence.

PART TWO

WANT TO GO DEEPER?

INTERMEDIATE

Interpretive posture

Where Scripture speaks clearly, believe it. Where Christians draw inferences, identify them as inferences. Where history offers a reconstruction, label it accordingly. Where Scripture leaves mystery, trust God's character and obey what He has made clear.

14. WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT CLAUDIUS'S EXPULSION OF JEWS FROM ROME?

Acts 18:2 says Priscilla and Aquila had recently come from Italy because Emperor Claudius had ordered Jews to leave Rome. A Roman writer outside the New Testament appears to mention something similar.

The Roman biographer Suetonius, writing decades later in *The Lives of the Caesars*, says Claudius expelled Jews from Rome because they were continually causing disturbances at the instigation of someone he calls “Chrestus.”

Scholars disagree about the meaning. “Chrestus” was a known name, so Suetonius may have been referring to an otherwise unknown individual. Some scholars think he may have misunderstood disputes among Roman Jews concerning Christus—Christ. If so, conflicts surrounding claims about Jesus may have contributed to the disturbances. But that connection is a historical reconstruction. Acts itself does not explain why Claudius issued the decree.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT SAFEGUARD

Suetonius provides useful outside historical evidence for an expulsion associated with Claudius, but the identification of “Chrestus” with Christ is possible rather than certain.

15. HOW WERE THEY ABLE TO RETURN TO ROME LATER?

Acts places Priscilla and Aquila outside Rome because of Claudius's decree. Yet Romans 16 later places them back in Rome. Claudius died in AD 54. His expulsion order was no longer being enforced under the next emperor, Nero, and Jewish residents were able to return to the city.

This historical change helps explain how Priscilla and Aquila could again be living in Rome by the time Paul wrote Romans. Scripture does not tell readers exactly when they returned or what motivated their decision. But the political obstacle that had forced them out was no longer operating in the same way.

Their movements illustrate something easily missed: political decisions could directly reshape the lives and locations of ordinary Christians. The early Church did not grow in a protected environment. Believers lived inside real governments, economies, social tensions, and changing imperial policies.

16. WHAT DOES THEIR STORY TEACH ABOUT PROVIDENCE?

The word providence describes God's ongoing care and His sovereign working through events to accomplish His purposes. Priscilla and Aquila provide an interesting example. They left Rome because of a political decree. They arrived in Corinth. Paul arrived in Corinth. They shared a trade. A relationship formed. They later traveled to Ephesus. There they met Apollos. Churches later met in their home. Political conditions eventually changed, and they could return to Rome. Paul eventually said churches among the Gentiles were grateful for them.



Rooted in Scripture - Pointing to Jesus

Looking backward, readers can see an extraordinary chain of circumstances. But biblical caution remains important. Scripture does not reveal every reason God permitted each event. Christians should therefore be careful about claiming to know exactly why God allows a particular hardship.

Providence does not mean every painful event is good. It means evil, suffering, political upheaval, displacement, and human decisions do not place history outside God's ability to accomplish His purposes. Priscilla and Aquila could not control the emperor. They could control whether they remained faithful wherever they found themselves.

17. WHAT CAN PRISCILLA AND AQUILA TEACH ABOUT MARRIAGE?

Priscilla and Aquila are one of the New Testament's clearest examples of a married couple repeatedly serving Christ together. Scripture presents them as partners in work, travel, hospitality, discipleship, theological instruction, relationships, risk, and church ministry.

However, their story should not become a burden placed on every Christian marriage. Scripture does not teach that every married couple must share the same occupation, ministry assignment, spiritual gift, or public role. Nor does Scripture provide enough information to reconstruct the private dynamics of their marriage.

What their story does show is that marriage can become a partnership placed at Christ's service. For Christian couples, an important question is not, "How can every couple imitate Priscilla and Aquila exactly?" It is: "How can this marriage honor Christ with whatever God has entrusted to it?"

18. DOES PRISCILLA SETTLE THE DEBATE ABOUT WOMEN IN CHURCH LEADERSHIP?

No single passage should be expected to settle every aspect of a larger biblical debate. Acts 18 provides important evidence. Priscilla clearly participates in theological instruction, and Paul calls Prisca and Aquila together his fellow workers in Christ Jesus. This means Priscilla's ministry contribution should not be minimized or erased.

At the same time, Acts 18 does not identify her as an elder or overseer, nor does it describe the Apollos encounter as an assembled-church sermon.

Complementarian Christians typically believe Scripture permits and encourages extensive ministry by women while reserving certain governing or authoritative teaching offices in the gathered church for qualified men. Egalitarian Christians generally believe qualified women may serve in all church leadership and teaching roles. Both groups appeal to Scripture, although they interpret how the relevant passages fit together differently.

Acts 18 contributes meaningfully to that discussion. It should neither be ignored nor forced to answer more than Luke actually tells readers. For a broader treatment, see 3Nails Study #202 — Paul: From Persecutor to Apostle.

PASTORAL SAFEGUARD

Whatever position a Christian holds concerning church offices, Scripture never permits using gender or spiritual authority to justify contempt, coercion, abuse, exploitation, or treating another believer as spiritually insignificant.

19. WHAT MAKES THEIR CORRECTION OF APOLLOS SO IMPORTANT?

Apollos was already gifted. He knew Scripture. He spoke boldly. He was fervent. And Luke says he taught accurately concerning Jesus. Yet his knowledge was incomplete. A person can be gifted and still teachable. A person can be knowledgeable and still have something to learn.

Priscilla and Aquila recognized the gap without dismissing the man. They did not appear to compete with Apollos. They helped him. And when Apollos later became influential, Paul resisted attempts by Christians to create rival camps around different leaders. Read 1 Corinthians 1:10–13 and 3:4–9. Paul rejected the rivalry: Paul planted. Apollos watered. God gave the growth.

They strengthened a man whose ministry would become prominent without needing his success to become their platform.

MEMORY ANCHOR

Mature discipleship helps others become fruitful without needing credit for their fruit.

20. WHAT DOES THEIR STORY TEACH ABOUT WORK AND MINISTRY?

Priscilla and Aquila challenge a common modern assumption: that ministry belongs primarily to people employed by churches or Christian organizations. Their story does not support that narrow definition.

They had a trade, a home, traveled, developed relationships, and those ordinary parts of life repeatedly became settings for Gospel service. This does not mean every workplace conversation must become a sermon. Nor does it mean ordinary employment is valuable only when it produces an obvious evangelistic opportunity. Work itself can honor God when done faithfully.

Priscilla and Aquila did not have to leave ordinary work behind in order to become useful to Christ. God used them in the middle of it.

21. WHAT DOES THEIR HOME TEACH ABOUT HOSPITALITY?

The repeated reference to a church meeting in their home suggests hospitality was not incidental to their ministry. In the ancient world, opening a home could carry substantial cost. It required space, food, time, inconvenience, and sometimes risk. For early Christians, hosting believers could also make a household publicly identifiable with the Christian movement.

Their home may also have functioned as a communication point within the wider Christian network. Traveling believers could meet there. News could be exchanged. Greetings could move from one church to another. Apostolic letters could be received, read, copied, and discussed within networks of believers. The New Testament does not give a detailed description of Priscilla and Aquila managing correspondence, so this should be understood as historical context rather than an explicit statement about their household.



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The principle is not: Every Christian must host a house church. The principle is: Whatever God has entrusted to a believer can be considered in light of His kingdom.

22. WERE PRISCILLA AND AQUILA CHURCH LEADERS?

They were unquestionably significant Christian workers. Paul calls them “my fellow workers in Christ Jesus.” Churches met in their home. They instructed Apollos. They traveled in connection with Paul’s ministry. They risked themselves for Paul.

However, Scripture never explicitly gives either one the title elder, overseer, or pastor. Calling them influential leaders in the early Christian movement is reasonable in a broad sense. Assigning them a specific church office that Scripture does not name is less certain.

Priscilla and Aquila’s ministry was significant whether or not readers can attach a modern job title to it.

23. WHY DID THEY MOVE SO MUCH?

The New Testament provides pieces rather than a complete travel diary. Their known movements appear roughly like this: Rome → Corinth (Acts 18:1–3) → Ephesus (Acts 18:18–26; 1 Corinthians 16:19) → Rome (Romans 16:3–5) → apparently associated with Ephesus again (2 Timothy 4:19).

Scripture does not tell readers why Priscilla and Aquila relocated each time. Their trade may have made mobility possible. Ministry may have influenced some decisions. Political circumstances clearly caused at least one move, and—as discussed in Q15—the death of Claudius eventually made a return to Rome possible.

Their location changed. Their commitment to Christ did not. Wherever readers encounter them, they seem to be serving.

24. WHAT DOES ROMANS 16 REVEAL ABOUT PAUL’S MINISTRY NETWORK?

Romans 16 is easy to skim because it contains many names. But those names matter. Priscilla and Aquila appear within a remarkable network of people Paul greets and commends. The chapter also mentions believers such as Phoebe, Andronicus, Junia, Mary, Urbanus, Tryphena, Tryphosa, Persis, and many others. Several of the women named are specifically commended for their labor in the Lord.

Romans 16:7 describes Andronicus and Junia with language connected to the apostles. The phrase has been translated and interpreted in more than one way—commonly along the lines of either being “outstanding among the apostles” or “well known to the apostles.” The precise meaning remains debated, so this verse should not be made to settle the broader question of women and church office by itself.

The exact roles of every person in Romans 16 are not fully explained, and some passages have generated interpretive debates. But the larger picture is unmistakable: Paul did not carry out ministry alone. The Gospel moved through a wide network of men and women who traveled, hosted, labored, supported, served, carried messages, opened homes, and strengthened churches. Priscilla and Aquila were important members of that network, but they were not isolated exceptions.

The early Church advanced through many faithful people, not only through its most famous leaders.

25. WHAT DOES “THE CHURCH IN THEIR HOUSE” TELL US ABOUT THE EARLY CHURCH?

The earliest Christians often met in homes. The New Testament mentions house gatherings connected with several believers, including Priscilla and Aquila. This reflects the social and practical circumstances of the early Christian movement.

It also reminds modern readers that church in the New Testament fundamentally refers to God’s gathered people rather than a building. Church buildings can be extremely useful, but a building is not what creates the Church. Christ does. The believers meeting in Priscilla and Aquila’s house were no less the Church because they lacked a dedicated church building.

BIBLICAL LITERACY NOTE

The Church is first a people belonging to Christ, not a structure belonging to Christians.

26. WHAT HAPPENED TO PRISCILLA AND AQUILA LATER?

The New Testament does not record their deaths. The final biblical reference generally associated with them appears in 2 Timothy 4:19, where Paul says: “Greet Prisca and Aquila...”

Later Christian traditions developed concerning their continued ministry and, in some accounts, martyrdom. The details vary, and the surviving traditions come from later sources. They therefore should not be treated with the same certainty as Scripture.

It is possible that Priscilla and Aquila eventually died as martyrs. It is also possible that some later details reflect traditions that grew over time. Scripture simply does not tell readers how their earthly lives ended. What it does preserve is enough. They were remembered as faithful coworkers who served Christ, strengthened believers, opened their home, instructed others, and courageously stood beside Paul.

27. WHAT CAN CHURCHES LEARN FROM PRISCILLA AND AQUILA?

Their story expands the picture of what meaningful Christian ministry looks like. Churches need pastors and teachers. They also need people who open homes, know Scripture, notice developing leaders, correct gently, work faithfully, welcome others, support missionaries, are willing to relocate, are willing to stay, encourage gifted believers, and take risks for one another.

Romans 16 shows that this kind of ministry was never limited to one couple. The early Church was strengthened by a broad network of men and women whose labor often happened outside the spotlight. Much of the Church’s strength throughout history has depended upon Christians whose names were never widely known. Priscilla and Aquila happened to have their names preserved in Scripture. Their kind of faithfulness continues wherever ordinary believers place ordinary resources in God’s hands.



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PRISCILLA AND AQUILA AND THE BIGGER BIBLICAL STORY

Their story takes place during one of the great transitions recorded in Acts. Jesus had commanded His followers to be His witnesses: Jerusalem → Judea → Samaria → to the ends of the earth. The Gospel was moving into the Gentile world. Paul played an enormous role in that mission. But Paul did not do it alone.

The New Testament repeatedly names coworkers. Some traveled. Some hosted. Some taught. Some carried letters. Some provided financial support. Some planted. Some watered. God gave the growth. Romans 16 provides a remarkable glimpse of this larger ministry network.

Priscilla and Aquila remind readers that the spread of Christianity was not the accomplishment of a handful of famous apostles acting alone. God worked through a body. Their story fits the larger New Testament picture: Jesus builds His Church through many faithful members serving under one Lord.

HOW DO PRISCILLA AND AQUILA POINT TO JESUS?

Priscilla and Aquila do not point to Jesus because every detail of their lives symbolically represents Him. They point to Jesus because Christ was the center of the ministry they shared.

Paul calls them “my fellow workers in Christ Jesus.” They helped Apollos understand “the way of God more accurately.” Their home welcomed Christ’s Church. Their lives supported the proclamation of the Gospel. Their courage protected another servant of Christ. Their significance came not from building their own reputation but from participating in what Jesus was doing through His Church.

Jesus remains the center. Paul was not the center. Apollos was not the center. Priscilla was not the center. Aquila was not the center. Christ was.

PUTTING IT INTO PRACTICE

1. PLACE ORDINARY RESOURCES AT GOD'S DISPOSAL.

Priscilla and Aquila had a trade and a home. God used both. Christian service does not begin by wishing for someone else's resources. It begins with faithfulness toward what God has already entrusted.

2. DO NOT ASSUME DISRUPTION MEANS GOD IS ABSENT.

Their departure from Rome was forced upon them. Yet God continued working through their changed circumstances. Christians should not pretend hardship is easy or automatically know why it happens. But unwanted change does not place a believer beyond God's care or usefulness.

3. KNOW SCRIPTURE WELL ENOUGH TO HELP OTHERS.

Priscilla and Aquila recognized that Apollos needed greater accuracy. That required biblical understanding of their own. Helping others grow begins with continuing to learn God's Word.

4. CORRECT WITHOUT HUMILIATING.

Truth matters. So does the way truth is communicated. Faithful correction aims at restoration, understanding, and growth—not embarrassment.

5. DO NOT COMPETE WITH PEOPLE YOU HELP.

Apollos became an influential teacher. Nothing in Scripture suggests Priscilla and Aquila resented his success. Healthy discipleship celebrates when someone else becomes fruitful.

6. LET YOUR HOME SERVE CHRIST IN WHATEVER WAY IS POSSIBLE.

Not everyone can host a church. But hospitality can take many forms: a meal, conversation, spare room, gathering space, practical help, or welcoming presence.

7. SEE YOUR WORKPLACE AS PART OF YOUR CHRISTIAN LIFE.

Work is not spiritually meaningless simply because it is not church employment. Faithfulness, integrity, relationships, generosity, and Gospel opportunities can all exist within ordinary work.

8. VALUE THE WHOLE BODY OF CHRIST.

Romans 16 reminds readers how many people contributed to Paul's ministry. Christian service is not a solo achievement. Learn to notice, appreciate, encourage, and work alongside believers whose names may never become widely known.

9. SERVE CHRIST TOGETHER WITHOUT NEEDING RECOGNITION.

Priscilla and Aquila appear repeatedly in the New Testament but never become the center of the story. They strengthened others. And Jesus received the glory.

REVIEW AND RETENTION

1. Where do Priscilla and Aquila first appear in Scripture?

Acts 18, when Paul meets them in Corinth.

2. Why had they left Rome?

Emperor Claudius had ordered Jews to leave Rome.

3. What occupation did they share with Paul?

They worked in the trade traditionally translated tentmaking.

4. Does Scripture tell readers when Priscilla and Aquila became Christians?

No.

5. Are Priscilla and Prisca different women?

No. They are forms of the same name.



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6. Who was Apollos?

A gifted Jewish teacher from Alexandria who knew the Scriptures and taught concerning Jesus but needed more complete instruction.

7. How did Priscilla and Aquila respond to Apollos's incomplete understanding?

They took him aside and explained the way of God more accurately.

8. Did Priscilla participate in instructing Apollos?

Yes. Acts describes Priscilla and Aquila together explaining God's way to him.

9. Why is Priscilla sometimes named before Aquila?

Scripture does not explain the reason.

10. Where did churches meet in connection with Priscilla and Aquila?

In their home.

11. What did Paul call them in Romans 16?

His fellow workers in Christ Jesus.

12. What had they done for Paul?

They had risked their lives for him, although Scripture does not tell readers exactly when or how.

13. What possible settings have been suggested for the danger Paul mentions?

Some suggest Corinth and others Ephesus, but Scripture does not identify the incident.

14. What does Suetonius contribute to the historical background?

He records an expulsion of Jews under Claudius associated with disturbances involving someone he calls "Chrestus," though whether this refers indirectly to Christ is debated.

15. What historical change helped make their return to Rome possible?

Claudius died in AD 54, and his expulsion policy was no longer enforced under Nero.

16. What does Romans 16 reveal about Paul's ministry?

Paul served within a broad network of male and female coworkers rather than carrying out ministry alone.

17. What interpretive question surrounds Junia in Romans 16:7?

Christians and scholars debate whether the phrase means Andronicus and Junia were outstanding among the apostles or well known to the apostles.

18. Does Scripture tell readers how Priscilla and Aquila died?

No.

19. What is one central lesson of their lives?

God can use ordinary work, homes, relationships, knowledge, hospitality, and courage in extraordinary ways for the Gospel.

KEY TERMS

Apollos — A gifted Jewish teacher from Alexandria whom Priscilla and Aquila helped understand the way of God more accurately.

Claudius — Roman emperor during part of the first century. Acts says his decree caused Aquila and Priscilla to leave Rome.

Corinth — Major Greek city where Paul met Priscilla and Aquila and worked alongside them.

Ephesus — Important city in Roman Asia where Priscilla and Aquila remained after traveling there with Paul and where they instructed Apollos.

Fellow Workers — Paul's description of Prisca and Aquila in Romans 16:3, emphasizing their partnership in Gospel ministry.

House Church — A gathering of Christians meeting in a private home. Churches are specifically mentioned as meeting in Priscilla and Aquila's home.

Hospitality — Welcoming and serving others. In the early Church, opening a home could provide an important setting for Christian fellowship, travel, communication, and ministry.

Junia — A believer greeted in Romans 16:7 with Andronicus. The wording concerning their relationship to "the apostles" has been translated and interpreted differently.

Nero — Roman emperor who succeeded Claudius. Claudius's earlier expulsion order was no longer operating in the same way under Nero, allowing Jewish residents to return to Rome.

Prisca / Priscilla — Two forms of the name used for the same Christian woman. Paul generally uses Prisca; Acts generally uses Priscilla.

Providence — God's ongoing care and sovereign working through history and circumstances to accomplish His purposes.

Romans 16 Ministry Network — The many men and women Paul greets or commends in Romans 16, illustrating the broad network of believers involved in early Christian ministry.

Suetonius — A Roman biographer who recorded an expulsion of Jews from Rome under Claudius and referred to disturbances associated with "Chrestus." The exact meaning of that reference is debated.

Tentmaker — The traditional translation for the trade shared by Paul, Aquila, and Priscilla's household. The underlying term may include broader leatherworking or related craftwork.

FINAL MEMORY ANCHORS

- A life placed at Christ's service can turn ordinary resources into Gospel opportunities.
- A disrupted plan does not mean God has stopped working.
- Faithful correction does not have to destroy a person in order to strengthen the truth.
- God can use what is already in a believer's hands—including a home.
- Mature discipleship helps others become fruitful without needing credit for their fruit.
- Their location changed. Their commitment to Christ did not.
- The Church is first a people belonging to Christ, not a structure belonging to Christians.
- Paul did not minister alone. The Gospel moved through a body of faithful coworkers.
- Jesus builds His Church through many faithful members serving under one Lord.

A SCRIPTURE PATH FOR CONTINUED STUDY

Acts 18:1–3 — Paul meets Priscilla and Aquila in Corinth

Acts 18:4–17 — Paul's ministry and opposition in Corinth



Rooted in Scripture - Pointing to Jesus

Acts 18:18–21 — Priscilla and Aquila travel with Paul to Ephesus
Acts 18:24–28 — Priscilla and Aquila instruct Apollos
Acts 19:1–41 — Paul's later ministry and opposition in Ephesus
1 Corinthians 1:10–13 — Christians begin forming factions around Paul and Apollos
1 Corinthians 3:4–9 — Paul planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the growth
1 Corinthians 16:19 — A church meets in Priscilla and Aquila's house
Romans 16:1–16 — Paul greets a broad network of coworkers, including Priscilla and Aquila
Romans 16:3–7 — Priscilla and Aquila, Andronicus, and Junia within Paul's ministry network
2 Timothy 4:19 — Paul's later greeting to Prisca and Aquila

CLOSING THOUGHT

Priscilla and Aquila never become the center of Acts. Perhaps that is one reason their story is so valuable.

They were not apostles. Scripture records no dramatic conversion story for either of them. No biblical book bears their names. No sermon from either one has been preserved. Yet wherever the New Testament briefly opens a window into their lives, they seem to be serving.

They worked beside Paul. They traveled. They opened their home. They listened carefully enough to recognize that a gifted teacher needed help. They knew God's truth well enough to help him. They corrected without humiliating. They strengthened someone whose ministry would become more visible than their own. They hosted believers. They endured displacement. They moved repeatedly. They risked themselves for a friend. And Paul remembered them with deep gratitude.

Romans 16 also reminds readers that they were part of something much larger. Phoebe served. Andronicus and Junia were remembered among early believers. Mary labored. Tryphena and Tryphosa worked in the Lord. Persis labored much. Urbanus was Paul's fellow worker. And many others contributed to the life and mission of the Church. Paul's name became famous. But Paul did not work alone.

Their story offers a different picture of significance. The kingdom of God does not advance only through the person standing in front of the crowd. It also advances through the couple opening the door, the worker building relationships, the believer studying Scripture carefully, the friend willing to speak truth graciously, the mentor helping someone else become stronger, the household making room for God's people, the coworker carrying news between churches, and the Christian willing to stand beside another when doing so becomes costly.

Much of that ministry may never become widely known. Priscilla and Aquila remind readers that it does not have to. Faithfulness does not require fame. It requires lives available to Jesus.

A trade can serve Him. A home can serve Him. A marriage can serve Him. Knowledge can serve Him. Hospitality can serve Him. Courage can serve Him. And when ordinary believers faithfully place what God has entrusted to them into His hands, their influence may reach farther than they ever see.

The home belonged to them.
The work belonged to them.
The abilities had been entrusted to them.
But their lives belonged to Christ.