

The Power of a Teachable Spirit

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Date: 08 December 2024

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[0 : 00] For those of us who lived before GPS, do you remember going on a trip and you leave and you forgot your map? Been there, done that, and then you stop at a gas station, you know the old gas stations, and you go to that wire rack, remember those wire racks?

And you take the map out and for some times you'd have to blow the dust off the map. And then you get in your vehicle and you take off with wild abandon.

Well, maybe not with wild abandon, but you take off and then you eventually open that map and it feels like it's about six feet wide and covers the entire windshield.

And you're going looking for road signs, looking for highway numbers. And before you know it, you don't know where you are. And then you finally realize that your map is out of date.

You have been trying to find your way and you've been trying to navigate with a map with insufficient data. Now, for those of you who rely on GPS, you're not out of the woods either.

[1 : 12] Because I can use a paper map and it doesn't need batteries. Right? And how many of you have ever tried to use a GPS and you went where you didn't want to go?

I always say you've got to know more. You've got to be smarter than your GPS. But here's the thing. When we think about our spiritual journey, how often do we find ourselves along our spiritual journey?

And we are going along with insufficient information. Maybe we don't know God's word as well as we think we know God's word.

Maybe we haven't spent the time to study the word of God as we should. And we're trying to make difficult decisions. We may be making life-altering decisions with insufficient knowledge of God, who he is, that he is all-powerful, or maybe what his all-powerfulness means to us, that he is always more powerful than any issue that we may come up against.

Now, for many, an insufficient knowledge could affect their eternity. Have you ever met someone who's going along and they think they know about God?

[2 : 38] They think they know about how to get to heaven? And you ask and they explain to you what they are depending upon to get to heaven. And you're thinking to yourself, they have insufficient information.

They don't really know everything they need to know to get where they think they're going. And that brings us to our section of Scripture this morning in the book of Acts, chapter number 18.

So this morning, what I want us to do is open our hearts and open our minds to the possibility that God wants to lead us into a deeper understanding of him, a deeper understanding of our Lord and our Savior Jesus Christ, the power of the Holy Spirit and his work in our lives.

And just like the man we're going to meet this morning, Apollos, we sometimes need others in our journey of faith to help fill in those gaps, help fill in those knowledge gaps.

It might be a mentor. It might be a Sunday school teacher. It might be someone that has been there before and has spent more time in God's Word that can help us to grow in our faith and our understanding.

[4 : 02] See, knowing God better only comes from knowing his Word better and surrendering to him as we go through every moment of every day and he helps us through our issues and our problems.

So let's see how we can grow this morning in our learning and our understanding. Let's turn our Bibles this morning to Acts, chapter 18. We'll start in verses 24 and 25 this morning.

In verse 24, Now a certain Jew named Apollos, I've lost my place. I'm sorry.

He was born in Alexandria. An eloquent man and mighty in the Scriptures came to Ephesus. This man had been instructed in the way of the Lord and being fervent in spirit, he spoke and taught

accurately the things of the Lord, though he knew only the baptism of John.

So the Bible tells us what about Apollos. It says in verse 24, He was a Jew and he was eloquent.

[5 : 17] So he was very well spoken. Then he goes on in verse 24, He was born at Alexandria.

Alexandria, by the way, was probably one of the second greatest provinces in that which was controlled by Rome and had about 600,000 people in it.

So he was very well educated. And it says he was mighty in the Scriptures. What Scriptures would Apollos have had at the time?

He would have had the Old Testament Scriptures. And so it says that he was eloquent. He was very well spoken. He was well educated. And he was knowledgeable.

He was mighty in the Old Testament Scriptures. So there was a lot of good things going for Apollos that we see. But there are some things where his information had gaps.

Obviously, all he knew about the Scriptures, all he knew what was going on was up to what? He'd been instructed in the way of the Lord.

[6 : 31] He was also fervent in spirit. So he had a lot of zeal. What else? He spoke and he taught accurately the things of the Lord.

But where did his knowledge end? Yeah, the baptism of John. So all he knew was John's baptism of repentance or John's teaching of repentance and that he was preparing the way of the Lord, preparing the way of the Messiah.

But that's pretty much where his knowledge ended. He knew nothing of Calvary, knew nothing of the resurrection of Christ or the coming of the Holy Spirit, obviously.

So he was only teaching up to a certain point. He had zeal, but he lacked knowledge. Reminds me of Romans 10, verses 1 through 4.

Now, Paul was talking about Jews that didn't know Christ as their Savior. But he said they have a lot of zeal, but they lack knowledge.

[7 : 35] And it's a dangerous thing to have zeal without knowledge. So what does this tell us? I believe we need to work to grow in our understanding, to work to grow in our understanding of God, God's Word, and His truth.

Now, why is this important for us? Well, Apollos' story tells us that even though we have a strong foundation, I believe we always have room to grow in our understanding about God.

How many of you know everything about God there is to know? I don't. And I know you don't. So the thing is, God's Word says about itself that it's living, right?

It's living, it's powerful, it's sharper than a two-edged sword, it's able to pierce to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit. So what does a living Word of God mean?

It's just as relevant today as the day that it was written. And God's Word is so full that you and I will continue to be learning about Him, will continue to be learning about what He wants us to know until the day that we end up with Him in glory.

[9 : 00] So there's never a reason for us to stop learning and stop growing. So Apollos didn't know what to do with everything he had.

He was teaching with the knowledge that he had, but he didn't have all the ingredients, if you will.

Some of you ladies, how many of you, did any of you end up with this situation?

You had maybe your recipe, but you ended up with not enough ingredients, and you had to go back to the store? Well, it's like Apollos was teaching, but he didn't have all the ingredients.

So he wasn't able to make the cookies that he should have been making. He didn't have, he wasn't able to make a full meal.

Why? Because he didn't have all the ingredients. He didn't have all the knowledge that he needed.

So he was preaching with zeal, and I think it's important that we understand God's Word.

[10 : 02] Now, you may have learned a lot about the Bible. You may have memorized verses, but I think God invites us to understand the bigger picture of His love and His plan for us.

Proverbs 4, verse 7 tells us, So this means pursuing a deeper knowledge of God's Word, God's will, is something that we should always be striving for, something we should always be working at.

I think God calls us to be students of His Word and always continually learning, continually growing. So take a moment and let's think, are there gaps in our spiritual knowledge?

Are there things about God maybe that we've taken for granted or maybe that we haven't learned for ourselves? Maybe it's learning more about who Jesus is, maybe the work of the Holy Spirit, or maybe how the Old Testament fits with the New Testament.

There are a lot of believers today that think we just should just kind of throw out the Old Testament because it has nothing for us. Doesn't Scripture say that all Scripture was given to us for inspiration, to teach us?

[11 : 21] So we can learn from Old Testament characters. We can, and we also know that the picture of salvation started in the book of Genesis. All the way from the book of Genesis, all the way to the book of the Revelation, we have, and it's been called different things, the crimson thread, the blood, an animal had to die so that Adam and Eve could be clothed.

There's a picture of eventually the Lord Jesus Christ having to die, His blood being shed for our sin on the cross of Calvary. And so we need to be learning.

We need to be growing in order to become all that God wants us to be. So, Apollos has some gaps in his knowledge.

Now let's see how Apollos responds when he's confronted with that knowledge gap. Let's go on, verse number 26. So, verse 26 says, He began to speak boldly in the synagogue.

Now you remember these two, we see them again. In verse 26, when Aquila and Priscilla heard him, notice what they did. They took him aside and explained to him the way of God more accurately.

[12 : 39] Apollos is boldly speaking in the synagogue, sharing what he knows with great enthusiasm. And when Priscilla and Aquila hear him, they had been taught by whom? They had been taught by Paul the Apostle.

And so they got it directly from him. And Paul, we believe, got it directly from the Lord Jesus Christ himself. And so Paul knew what he was talking about.

He had seen the resurrected Lord. And so they know about the resurrection. They know about Jesus being the Messiah.

And so what they do, instead of criticizing Apollos publicly, they bring him aside and they fill in his gaps in his knowledge.

Now, there are, like many preachers, what Apollos said was true, but what he left out showed his incomplete understanding.

[13 : 42] It showed that he didn't fully understand everything. So we can assume that he had no idea of the coming Holy Spirit. He had no idea of the things where Priscilla and Aquila filled in his gaps.

So what do we see in Apollos? Because we go on and we see that he goes on and he teaches. He continues on. I think it teaches us in verse 26.

We haven't gotten to verse 27 yet. But in verse 26, it says that they took him aside and they filled in his gaps.

I think it teaches us we need to be humble and we need to be teachable. We need to be humble enough to know that we don't know everything that there is to know.

Apollos, despite being well-educated, Apollos, despite being well-spoken and passionate, was open to correction, but also open to learning more about and learning more from someone who had learned more.

[14 : 45] And it takes humility to accept that we don't have all the answers. Not a single one of us has all the answers to Scripture. Because God's Word is living, it's powerful, and we'll never understand everything there is to know.

Because what if we could understand the Bible fully, completely, 100%? We'd be like God. And so why would we need the Holy Spirit? The Holy Spirit is there to teach us.

And He's teaching us new things every single day. How many of you have had this experience?

You've had a verse, you've read it probably 100 times before. 200 times before.

And you read it one morning, and all of a sudden, God shows you, yes, bang, Holy Spirit shows you something that you had never seen before in that verse.

It's not new knowledge, but it's maybe a fuller understanding of what God wanted. Or maybe it's a new application of what God wants you to know in order to make a good decision about something.

[15 : 49] So He was humble. He was teachable. And it takes humility, especially when we're confident in what we think we know. And when someone says, you know, I think we need to look into this a little further.

And then when we're able to say, you know, I think you're right. That takes humility. And it takes a teachable spirit to be able to be willing to listen and to learn from others, even when it challenges

our own perspective.

James 1, verse 19, reminds us that everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak, and slow to wrath or slow to get angry.

What happens when someone confronts us, even if it were like Priscilla and Aquila? They take us aside and they say, you know, I don't think that you've got this quite right.

Humanly speaking, our first response often is to react instead of simply respond. Okay, well, let's talk about it. So He responds.

[16:57] Obviously, positively in humility. So the question is, who are the Priscilla's and the Aquila's in your life? I don't care how long we've known Christ.

I don't care how much you know. I don't care if you could, if you could, if you've memorized the entire Bible and could recite it. There's probably someone who has more experience with walking with God than you do.

I think we all need a mentor. I think we all need someone that we can go to when we have something where, you know, what do I do with this? What do I, where do I go?

I need to have a decision that I need to make or I have a question about something. We all need a mentor. So, who are the Priscilla's and the Aquila's in your life?

Let me also look at the flip side of that same coin. Who can you be a Priscilla or Aquila to? Is there someone that you can mentor? Is there someone that you can be that person for?

[17:59] You know, by doing so, we allow God to deepen their understanding, but we also learn more when we teach others as well. So, what if you could be the guide for someone else?

Let's, let's take a look at verses 27 and verses, and verse 28. Verse 27, And when he desired to cross to Achaia, the brethren wrote, exhorting the disciples, to receive him.

And when he arrived, he greatly helped those who had believed through grace, for he vigorously refuted the Jews publicly, showing from the Scriptures that Jesus is the Christ.

So, what does Apollos do? He uses his newfound knowledge to make a difference. In verses 27 through 28, we see Apollos moving on to Achaia, where he goes there to help others, and he becomes a big help to those in Achaia with his more complete understanding of the Gospel.

He powerfully refutes the Jews in public, and, excuse me, proving from the Scriptures that Jesus is the Messiah. So, he takes what he learned from Priscilla and Aquila, and his growth didn't just benefit him, it benefited those around him.

[19:12] So, that's why God uses others to teach us, so we can, in turn, teach others also, not just for our benefit, but for the benefit of others.

So, what do we learn? Main point number three, use your gifts to strengthen others, use your knowledge to teach others, use what God has shown you.

See, we can even use, or God can even use, the difficult things in our lives. Second Corinthians talks about that, that God takes the sad things, the hurtful things, the sorrowful things we've been through, so he comforts us, whereby we could then comfort someone else.

So we can, in turn, help someone else. So, please, let's not leave today without getting this. God equips us not only for our own benefit, but he equips us for the benefit of others as well.

Each of us has unique gifts, each of us has unique talents, each of us has knowledge where God has taught you along your spiritual journey, and someone else. It's like, it's like climbing a mountain, it's like going up Mount Everest, or one of the mountains where you need a guide, in some places they call them a Sherpa, and so you need to find a Sherpa.

[20:36] And what's true about them? They've been up before. They know how to get up there. They know the dangers. They know the areas not to go.

They know the places where there may be an avalanche. They know the dangers, and they know the best route to get up there. And depending upon your area or your level of difficulty, if you were a beginning climber, they'll take you a certain route.

If you were a, kind of a middle of the road, they'll take you a different route. If you were an advanced climber, they know the advanced routes. So they've been there. They've been up, they've down, they've been back, and they've gone again.

So you find someone who's been there, and we can be that for someone else. Use your gifts, use your knowledge to help someone who hasn't been there yet and bring them along.

1 Peter 4, verse 10 says, As each one has received a gift, minister it one to another as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.

[21 : 43] If you've been given a gift, if you have learned from God's Word, learned from His Holy Spirit, teach someone as well. Whether you're gifted in teaching, whether you're gifted in serving or mentoring, use those gifts to strengthen the body of Christ.

The thing is, we need each other. We need everyone that's here. If you know the Lord Jesus Christ as your Savior, if you have the Holy Spirit residing within you, you have knowledge that someone else here may not.

You have an experience that someone else here may not. And when they go through that same experience, we can come alongside them just like the Holy Spirit, that Greek word paraclete, one called alongside to help, we can come alongside and say, here, let's walk it together.

And we can help them through it. And that's exactly what Priscilla and Aquila did for Apollos. They took him aside. They filled in his knowledge gap. And then he goes on and he becomes even more powerful in proclaiming the Word of God to those who needed to know it.

So, let's ask ourselves, how can we use what we've learned to help others? Maybe it's leading a Bible study. Maybe it's being involved and volunteering in some kind of ministry or simply being there for someone who needs encouragement.

[23 : 08] But just like Apollos, we need to step out in faith and use what God has given us, learn from one another, and we can become a powerful force that God can use to make a difference in the lives of others.

See, God doesn't want us to settle for surface-level faith. We have way too many people in the world today who know just enough of the Word of God to get to heaven.

And they never grew. They never learned. They never spent time wrestling with the Word of God, wrestling with, well, God, what does this mean?

Or, there are many who come and either on TV or the radio or in person listen to a message and never open up God's Word other than that.

We need to spend time ourselves. ourselves. It's like, it's like eating. If all we have to do is, if we need to wait on someone to feed us, then that's, there's something wrong with us.

[24 : 22] And not that it's a bad thing because there are some people who need others to feed us. We have to grow to the point where we can feed ourselves. But we need to be able to spend time in God's Word, read, and learn.

He invites us to go deeper, explore the richness, riches of His Word, and then let that knowledge transform us. And as we grow, use that in turn to support, to teach others as well.

We have the opportunities to impact our families, impact our communities, impact our workplaces with the Word of God as well. So let's go out with confidence knowing that God is at work in us.

if there is someone around you who doesn't know God's Word as they haven't grown as much as you have. Let's take them and let's help them along the way.

Let's pray. Father, we thank you. We thank you for your goodness. And we thank you, Father, that you bring others around us to help us to learn you better, to be shown your way.

[25 : 36] Father, we pray that we might be like Priscilla and Aquila to Apollos to someone else. So, Father, we thank you for what you're going to do. We thank you for teaching us. Help us to learn.

Help us to grow. Help us to be humble and teachable. And, Father, we thank you for what you're going to do in our lives this week. We pray in Jesus' name.

Amen. Amen.