

The Incredible Life of Two Very Common People

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[0 : 00] Acts chapter number 18 is where we're going to look at tonight. We are just a couple weeks out from our missions conference. I've been trying my very best to hold off on missions messages because that's really in my heart.

And we sing about it, we talk about it, we preach about it, we study about it. Just now, before we sung Happy Birthday, David and Charlotte sung a song about loving Jesus and wanting the whole world to hear something.

What they wanted the whole world to hear was that Jesus Christ died for them. And that is the desire of our heart. The meeting we had before the church, I shared something that I've shared with you before about the growth of the world, how fast the world is growing.

And one of the things that really blows my mind is that the country of India grows in population by the size of the population of Montana every 15 days.

That India grows in population by 2 million people a month. That's amazing. That's just incredible. 2 million people that I may never meet, but those are 2 million people this month that would be born that Jesus Christ knows, that He loves, and that He died for.

[1 : 13] And that even if I never meet them, I have a responsibility as a church to be pushing the gospel forward. Everybody that we meet, we want to share the gospel message with.

We want to share it with other people. And when you think about something like that, that is such a huge number. That is such a big task. How do we ever respond to something like that with the lives that we're given?

How can I do anything that's proportionate to that? When you hear that, you feel like the only, since the problem is just so gigantic that the response, what is it I can do with this normal everyday life that I've been given that can make a difference with such great a problem?

The Holy Spirit leads us and guides us of how to be involved. But I want to share the testimony of what I would call a common couple that lives just an incredible life tonight.

Let me pray, and then we're going to look at, spend our time in Acts chapter number 18. Heavenly Father, I thank You for an opportunity to gather once again tonight with Your people around Your Word.

[2 : 24] Lord, I pray that You would help us have understanding of what You are doing in this world, what You desire to do with us as Your believers to help make a significant and a real difference in the life of those who have never heard about Jesus Christ.

I pray that You'll take this example of this couple in front of us and make it very clear to us in the ways in which that we can be obedient and serve You.

In Jesus' name I pray, amen. If I was to ask you to think of a name of a couple in the New Testament, and just any two names in the Bible, I would imagine a lot of you would come up with Joseph and Mary, that would be a good place to stop, or Herod and Herodias, or Zacharias and Elizabeth, maybe Ananias and Sapphira, all right?

The couple that may be the ones that you would think of. Or maybe you would think of this couple on the screen here, which is Aquila and Priscilla. There's just two names that you always hear together.

Acts chapter number 18 and 19, and then again in Romans. When you hear of this couple, you always hear their names together. It's a beautiful thing that when God would do that, your names would just be heard being said together.

[3 : 40] They're just always linked. When you think about that person, you always say the other person's name. If I was to say Chuck, you always hear me say what? Chuck and Lisa. Some of our kids around here probably think that's one word.

Chuck and Lisa, all right? It's just some kind of thing, Chuck and Lisa, they're just always working together. It's a beautiful thing that God does in marriage. Grace and Greg are getting married in the spring.

Right now, it's just Greg and it's Grace. In a few decades, it will just be Greg and Grace, right? Together. Maybe Grace and Greg. I don't know who will get the first name on that. They're working through that right now. But it'll be Greg and it'll be Grace serving the Lord together.

Aquila and Priscilla are a couple that is like this. If you look at Acts chapter number 18, think about what you know about the book of Acts. It is, it's just got so many incredible things that take place in the book of Acts.

So many tremendous stories of God doing things. Earlier, I didn't warn you in here, Alex, he prayed for us in Spanish, all right? If you didn't know the language, just so you know, we don't create any languages around here that was in Spanish that he was praying in.

[4 : 44] So in the book of Acts, you have stories about people speaking in a language and being understood. They spoke in a language they didn't know, but the people that were listening to it heard it in their own language.

There's stories like that. God's doing incredible, what you call sensational things. They're in this transitional time in the history of the church.

And that's what you find most of the time on the book, in the book of Acts, or what you imagine that you remember. But if you look at Acts chapter number 18, almost the entire chapter, I'm going to report it to you.

This tells, follows the story of the Apostle Paul, and inside of it brings up a couple named Aquila and Priscilla. And what we learn about this couple is something that every one of us can have in our own lives.

And we can all start in today. It's not something that requires an airplane ticket. It's nothing that requires great resources. But it's a couple that just understood what God was doing in this world, and they got involved in it.

[5 : 46] And at the end of their lives, God's testimony about them was they were heavily involved in it. The churches are grateful for those people. They set an incredible example for all of us in here.

I want to show that to you tonight. Look at verse number 1 of Acts chapter number 11. And he, this is Apostle Paul, continued there for a year and six months, teaching the word of God among them.

Three years and six months in one place, teaching the word of God among them. And when Galileo was the deputy of Archaea, the Jews made insurrection with one accord against Paul and brought him to the judgment seat.

People were mad. They're bringing Paul to court here. Paul is speaking about Jesus Christ.

He is saying that Jesus is the Messiah. He is saying that Jesus Christ came and died for us, that even though we were sinners, he died in our place. And they said that's contrary to the law. They're saying that the Bible teaches that we should work hard, and if we do good enough, then we can merit our salvation.

[6 : 54] And so they had a false understanding of what the Bible said. So now when Paul is teaching the great gospel, the glorious gospel, giving the good news, people are saying about him, this guy is persuading people to a lie, but he's actually sharing the truth.

Verse 14, and when Paul was not about to open his mouth, Galileo said unto the Jews, if there were a matter of wrong or wicked lewdness, O you Jews, reason with that I should bear.

With you. But if it be a question of words and names of your law, look ye to it, for I will no judge of such matters. He says, you guys need to handle this on your own, handle this among the religious, you Jewish people, because this isn't something that I want to be involved in.

Verse 16, and he draved them from the judgment seat. Then all the Greeks took Sothis, the chief religious synagogue, and beat him before the judgment. And Galileo cared for none of those things.

And Paul, after he had tarried there yet a good while, then he took his leave of the brethren. So he's leaving that place, probably good riddance, right? Ready to move on. This is where the couple, Priscilla and Aquila will show up in the story.

[8 : 09] And he sailed thence into Syria. And with him Priscilla and Aquila, having shorn his head in Syria, for he had a vow. We'll look at this funny haircut on another day, all right?

So here Aquila and Priscilla, they traveled with him. And he came to Ephesus and left them there. But he himself entered into the synagogue and reasoned with the Jews. When they desired him to tarry longer time with them, he consented not.

But bade them farewell, saying, I must by all means keep this feast that cometh in Jerusalem, but I will return again unto you, if God will. And he sailed from Ephesus. And he had landed at Caesarea and gone up and saluted the church.

He went down to Antioch. And after he had spent some time there, he departed and went over all the country Galatia and Phrygia in order, strengthening all the disciples. And a certain Jew named Apollos, born of Alexandria, an eloquent man and mighty in scriptures, came to Ephesus.

See, this man was instructed in the way of the Lord. Being fervent in the spirit, he spake and he taught diligently the things of the Lord, knowing only the baptism of John. 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.

[9 : 26] And when he was disposed to pass the okay of the brethren, the brethren wrote, exhorting the disciples to receive him, who when he was come helped them much which he had believed through grace. For he mightily convinced the Jews, and that publicly showing by the scriptures, that Jesus was Christ.

So if you'll notice here, as I said, the amount of time that is given in this passage. We introduced Aquila and Priscilla at the beginning, at a time where Paul's about to sail.

Before that, we learned that they had been part of this, caught up into this group that was learning about the Bible. But the last part of this chapter is a story about a guy who comes through a synagogue. He teaches a Bible lesson.

A couple says, I think we could help this young man. They invite him over to the house. They sit him down. They give him some advice. And then they send him on his way. This doesn't seem to be the kind of stuff that we typically think of as an action-packed scene.

This looks like the kind of movie that my wife would like, you know? Where a man and woman are staring at each other on the front cover. She doesn't care what the name of it. She doesn't care what it's about. She's like, this looks like a good story, right?

[10 : 30] The story of Aquila and Priscilla seems like to be a good story because it's just a husband and wife here that get involved in the study of the Word of God. They get involved in the ministry.

They disciple some people around them. And God says, add all those things up. These people lived an incredible life and made a difference. That made a difference in many people's lives.

In the book of Colossians, it says that the whole world knew the gospel, much due to what happened during this time in the book of Acts. In Colossians 1.23, If you continue in the faith grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the gospel which you have heard, and which was preached to every creature which is under heaven, whereof I, Paul, am made a minister.

The gospel was going out around the world. People were hearing the good news of Jesus Christ. And it happens in a big way. A big difference is in Acts chapter number 19, the apostle Paul spends two years at a place, and he is teaching.

He's around a college campus, and he's teaching the gospel. He's teaching the Bible. And at night, he's working with his couple, Aquila and Priscilla. They're putting tents together. If you see the picture here, that is the occupation that they had.

[11 : 43] Aquila and Priscilla were tent makers. Paul, sometimes on his journey, would make tents with them. I can just picture them. It seems to be a great job for them because they're sitting down, and they are sewing and putting the things together.

Not really sure how you make a tent like this, but I imagine it allows you to sit down, have some conversation. And because of their business, the apostle Paul, working with them, had opportunity to continue in that ministry, and the word went out.

So there's no doubt that God used his family in a wonderful way. They yielded their lives and became faithful to a simple process of discipleship, and in return, they got to make a huge difference in this world.

First thing, verse number 11, And he continued there for a year and six months, teaching the word of God among them. You know, this is how the great stories of the Bible, or this is how the great stories of life almost always start.

It isn't when Harry met Sally. That isn't how a great story starts. What really becomes great is Harry meets Sally. They fall in love. But when Harry and Sally know Jesus and fall in love with him, that's where the story really takes place.

[12 : 54] This couple are spending time and studying God's word. And as it happens, God does something inside of their heart. They were there together working, putting tents together, working together, and then studying the word.

Not just working together, but the studying and letting the word work inside of their heart. So this couple spent time together. An example for all couples, but also an example for all individuals.

The first thing that we need to do in coming to know Christ, the vice that we've given Austin and we give others, is that the first thing you must do in coming to know Christ is to dig deep in the word of God.

It's to know him, to know his word, that we can know our heavenly father through the study of his word. So that's the first thing that we see with Aquila and Priscilla. And then that leads to this next thing in verse number 18.

And Paul, after he tarried there, he had a good while. He took leave of the brethren. He sailed. And it says, With Priscilla and Aquila with them, it opened up an opportunity. While they were meeting together, and while they were studying the Bible, an opportunity came.

[13 : 58] And so you could see them maybe having a discussion, right? If you are going to get on a boat with this guy that you met just a year and six months ago, right? And you're going to sail to another part of the world, you're probably going to have a discussion.

Can you imagine what that looked like? Could you imagine them trying to figure it out and consider if that's what God would have for them? And so Priscilla and Aquila decided they would take their tent-making business and they would decide that they would go and they would continue.

That was the opportunity that was given to them in front of them. And that's what God does. As we're in the Word together, asking Him to teach and guide us, opportunities will arise in ministry and He will direct their paths and let us know that this is where we can have the application.

There they were in the synagogue. They were learning. They had margins in their life. And then they took the opportunity that will ride in front of them. And sometimes a boat is required. Sometimes a boat isn't required.

But an opportunity comes when you're studying the Word of God and God says, the studying that you've been doing, here's your chance to put it in the practice. Aquila and Priscilla said, we want to continue.

[15 : 05] We want to sign up for that. You know, we have volunteers sign up for wanting so many things. I've yet to say, Stephanie and I are going to leave and we're going to be getting on a boat. Would any of y'all couples want to come with us, all right?

That was the kind of decision that Aquila and Priscilla had to make. And they did. And they were in agreement on this because they had been spending time in the Word. And then next, I want you to see believing in young people and enjoying and watching them move forward in the ministry.

They were willing to talk with Apollos. 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.

This young man, they said, was eloquent in a speech. Like he could really captivate an audience. He knew many things. What he knew, he taught. And he taught well. He was gifted in this. But they knew that they could help him.

It was just a matter of discipleship. It wasn't a matter of rebellion in this young man's life. It wasn't a matter that he didn't want to know. He just didn't know what he didn't know. You know, that's the case with young people.

[16 : 08] They just don't know what they don't know until somebody teaches them, until somebody trains them, until somebody disciples them. And here's Apollos, and he just didn't know what he didn't know.

But this couple said, hey, let's invite him over. You know? Hey, could you add a little bit of water to the beans? Can you make the meal go farther? The meal that we're going to have for two people, can we make it for three people?

You've heard two can live as, for as cheap as one, right? Is that how we say it in marriage? Two can live as cheap as one, but only half as long, all right? So Aquila and Priscilla said, this will be fine.

You're just going to have to, we're going to have to both eat a little bit less. They decided, we'll take our meal for two, and we'll make it a meal for three here. We're going to invite this young man over to the house and speak with him and help him.

He had been instructed in the way of the Lord, his fervent in spirit, and he spake and taught diligently the things of God, knowing only the baptism of John. The doctrines regarding Jesus were accurate, but he wasn't complete.

[17 : 04] They were deficient. It means Apollos didn't know about the Holy Spirit's baptism, but the Christian baptism's picture of union with Christ, in his death, burial, and resurrection by the means of the spirit of baptism.

We don't know completely what it is that Apollos was lacking, what he didn't understand, concerning maybe the Holy Spirit, or maybe baptism, or what it was he didn't know, but what we do know is that Aquila and Priscilla knew that, and they said, we can help that young person.

Because remember when we were in that Bible study, like a year ago, it was on a Tuesday night, and Paul was teaching, and he taught on this lesson, and you still have the notes for it, don't you? Yeah, why don't you get those notes out?

I'm going to have this young person come over, and we're going to help them. He didn't do it. They didn't do it, obviously, in a way that would embarrass him, but they helped him. I've shared this story with you before, how when I was a young preacher at the age of 16, and I haven't told this in a while, Travis, you probably remember, my first message in the church was a story about the guy named Eutychus, all right?

And Eutychus sat in a window, and while sitting in a window, he fell asleep, and he fell out of the window. And so at the end of my message, I said, do you know why his name was Eutychus? And I said, because Eutychus too, if you fell out of a window, all right?

[18 : 20] And then I just looked at the pastor, like, I'm done, all right? And I walked up. I didn't, he's like, how am I going to have an altar call? I'm like, I don't know. I didn't plan for an altar call. I was, my message was prepared for a joke, you know?

That's what I was building up to. And so people would tell me, hey, you did a good job. That was really good. Good joke. Well, thank you. That's what I was going for, all right? And they would say that. But Mrs. Janice Miner, she knew me, and she loved me, and she knew the scriptures.

She wrote, she, when she listened to me preach, and then I would come back from school, and I would preach, she wrote me a note one day. She said she loved me, and I knew that she did. She knew, I knew that she loved the Bible, and she said, Trent, there's many things that you could teach and preach, but if you really have a heart to help people, just simply teach the Bible.

And I'll never forget that. She was as a Aquila and Priscilla in my life. She knew something that I needed to know. She communicated in a way that was not offensive to me, that knew that she loved me.

She helped me out tremendously. If I've ever taught the Bible, and it's helped you, Mrs. Janice Miner was involved in that. I still like the Eutychus joke, though, all right? And so even opening up their homes for them, being given the hospitality, opening up their lives, one of the greatest things that you can give in your life is to make yourself available.

[19 : 38] I meant to bring a sign that I keep in my closet that says, no vacancy. You might see this at times outside of a hotel that says that the hotel has no more room in it.

And I have this sign in my life to remind me to ask myself, am I living in such a way that there's not room for more people? If there's not room for more people, then there's no way that I get to be involved in the ministry in which God has called us to do.

We have to make room for people all of our lives. I won't ask you to raise your hand, but how many of you have a garage that you can't put your car in, right? How many of you have \$200 worth of junk keeping a \$20,000 car out of your hat?

All heads, every head bowed, every eye closed. We're going to have an altar call right now about our garages, right? You have this little bit of that. In the same way, we have, in our lives, we have so many things that are filling it.

They have some value to us, but they're not the most important. They're not the thing that we really want to do that have to be removed to make room for other people in our lives. That's what he has called us to do.

[20 : 41] And whenever you do that, then that ministry can make a real difference in people's lives, which means that the gospel can go forward, which is what we want. They help Apollos on his journey.

What a great example. Here in our church, we have a ministry called Yoke Fellows, and it's not just a family connected with a missionary family like on the back wall that is going, but as an entire church, we're supposed to be involved.

Justice and Olivia, in the Palm, in Nigeria, we should be people that are involved with them. In Acts 18, 27, after they helped Apollos, it says, They had written letters of recommendation for this guy.

We know him. We believe in him. Where he went, they said, we believe in this young man. That is something. People want to be believed in. People want to know that their lives can make a difference.

Looking somebody in the eye and letting them know that Jesus Christ, making them a new creature, that God can do something with them, it has an incredible power. It's amazing. So many other people might have that day listened and said, You know, Apollos seems to be doing pretty good, but he seems to be kind of lacking in this area, and they didn't do anything about it.

[21 : 57] Not Aquila and Priscilla. They said, We can believe in this young man. We can help this young man. And then he goes on. It says in 1 Corinthians 3, 4, and 6, that his name will be mentioned right there with Paul as somebody who had watered and give the increase.

There's no doubt that God used his life in a very significant way in all that he was sharing with them. As Paul would go into a place, some people would know Paul, and then other people would know the story of Apollos, even to the point that they were in contention, saying that they had come of Paul or of Apollos.

And this is the example that we are given all throughout Scripture. It's told that the older ladies would teach the younger, that we'd see Timothy training, or Paul teaching Timothy, that the older men should teach the younger men.

That's the whole story in the New Testament of the gospel going farther. It's somebody saying, Hey, you know, that thing you don't know, I once didn't know it as well, but I do.

Hey, could I invite you over for a meal and to tell you about it? And then you share that with them. It's not complicated, but it is a beautiful thing. And so how do you live a life for a cause like this?

[23 : 10] Not in a moment, but in a daily decision, just one meal at a time. You know, last night I had a great time. We went over to Alex Monterell's house and we made empanadas.

Where is he at? They were incredible, all right, back there. We had so much fun making empanadas and talking and sharing testimonies about what God has done, hearing about how Jesus Christ has made a difference in our family.

Several of us did not come from Christian families, but then we heard the gospel and it made a difference in our lives. It was special. It was no small thing.

And so you think, well, that isn't, you know, that's not a big deal, inviting people into your home, having empanadas. It's not a big deal that Apollos would, or Aquila and Priscilla would invite another person into their house.

But when you make a life of doing that, when you make a life of just opening up yourself to help other people, it can make a significant difference. Look what it says in Romans chapter number 16.

[24 : 14] Greet Priscilla and Aquila, my helpers in Christ Jesus. What a compliment Paul would say. These are my fellow laborers. They're just right there beside me in doing the work that God has for us to do.

And he says, in doing that, they have laid down their own necks unto whom I not only give thanks, but also the churches of the Gentiles. Likewise, greet the church that is in their house.

It says that Aquila and Priscilla here, they were helpers of Paul, but it says that they laid down their own necks unto whom not only I give thanks, but also the churches of the Gentiles.

You can give, there's famous stories that it should be known and loved and passed down of people that gave themselves as martyrs for the cause of Christ to make sure that people knew about Jesus Christ.

But there's another way in which you lay down your life where it says that you lay down your neck. It's where you do it daily. It's where you do it as a routine. It's where you open up your lives to other people.

[25 : 20] Aquila and Priscilla were people that opened up their lives. They were people that said every time that our garage gets full, we're going to empty it out so we can fit something into it. Every time that my life gets full, I'm going to make room in my life so that I can invite Apollos over into it.

They're the type of people that says we're going to study the Word and when we learn something, we're going to look around and say, hey, did you not know what we just learned? It's incredible. Come over to the house. We want to share it with you.

And in sharing it with them, it went further and went on. That's the story we see in the book of Acts. If you study all the times that it says they or them, this started off where it says Paul was teaching for a year and a half among them.

Aquila and Priscilla were just part of the them. All through the book of Acts, you hear them and you see they and the gospel is being moved forward with people that are saying, God, we're just a common couple but we're going to be obedient to you.

We're just going to study the Word. We're going to share it with other people around us. And then God tells at the end of a life like that, well done, my good and faithful servants. I share that with you tonight as we consider as we get ready for a missions conference and we think about the book of Acts and we look through all this and we have testimony where God would take a significant portion of Scripture from the book of Acts that would just say, I want to share with you a story about a couple one day that invited a young person over to their house for a meal and they shared a Bible lesson.

[26 : 47] If the God of heaven thinks that's so important that He's going to put it in the perfect inspired Word of God to be kept for us all these years, then who are we to say that that is not a valuable use of our lives?

I pray that every one of you would make that commitment. Every one of you says, individually or as a couple, I can be in the Word looking for opportunities to serve and when they come I will take them and as I take those opportunities I will look for people that I can include into my life to share with them the things that have been shared with me.

Would you pray with me and then we'll end with singing tonight. Heavenly Father, I thank you for this opportunity together around your Word. I thank you for all the people that have shared in my life, that have shared a meal with me, that have shared something in which they have been taught and let me know.

It did not make me feel less than them but wanted to share with me what the Bible said and I thank you for them. With every head bowed and every eye closed, tonight we saw in the picture of baptism, we saw a picture of Austin who was buried in the likeness of the death of Christ and raised the walk in newness of life, recognizing that he was a sinner, put his faith and trust in Jesus and now he lives a new life.

If you're in here tonight and you saw that picture but it doesn't resonate with you, that's nothing that you've ever experienced in your own life, you don't have that understanding, would you allow us the opportunity?

[28 : 22] All we are are people that learned something a little bit before you. We're not better, we're just like Aquila and Priscilla somebody taught us, we didn't know it before but now that we know it, we want to share it with everybody.

If there's somebody in here today and say I want to know more about that message, I want to know more about what caused Austin to follow and baptism, why he says that Jesus is Lord. If that's you tonight, I want to extend an invitation.

Come to my home for dinner, come to another home for dinner, let's sit down, let's talk about it. God showed us something from the Bible and we want to show you. Now everybody in here calls this place your home, could you make it a commitment in your life?

I can do that. The example shown of Aquila and Priscilla, yeah I can do that. I can be in the word looking for opportunities and opening up my life and I want to be part of those plural pronouns in the Bible.

I want to be part of the them. I want to be part of the they. I want to be part of getting this gospel message moving forward. I want to use my home. I want to use my life. I want to use what you have taught me to share with other people.

[29 : 29] I pray that you would make that commitment tonight. It's no small thing. It makes a world of difference. Heavenly Father, I thank you for this opportunity tonight to see so clearly a picture.

Lord, forgive me when I've said that I did not have the opportunities, I did not have the resources, I did not have the time to make any difference. Thank you for showing me a couple who just took some time to teach a Bible truth and Father, remind me, I can do that.

I can take what you have taught me and I can share it with some other people. Lord, I pray that my brothers and sisters in here will join me. I thank you for the example that had been set, that we honor the night of John and Sandy Pearson as they have done that.

Lord, they know that they are not alone. We're not alone in this. Lord, I pray that you would give us a church filled with people like the example of Aquila and Priscilla. In Jesus' name I pray.

Amen.