

LESSONS THIS QUARTER

1) 03 Dec 2017	Acts 13	The Gospel Message
2) 10 Dec	Acts 14	Misguided Worship
3) 17 Dec	Acts 15:1-31	Available to ALL
4) 24 Dec	Luke 2	Christmas – The Promised One
5) 31 Dec	Acts 15:32-41 16:1-5	Strengthened
6) 07 Jan 2018	Acts 16	A changed Family
7) 14 Jan	Acts 17	The Unknown Known
8) 21 Jan	Ps 139	Sanctity of Life – Value ALL
9) 28 Jan	Acts 18-19	Incomplete Picture
10) 04 Feb	Acts 20-21	Delivered
11) 11 Feb	Acts 22-25	The Testimony
12) 18 Feb	Acts 26-27	Answering Critics
13) 25 Feb	Acts 28	Always on Mission

INTRODUCTION

- These two chapters introduce some new partners in the ministry – Aquila and Priscilla, Apollos, and the Corinthians and Ephesians
- How long should it take to ground believers solidly in their faith? Should it take Weeks, Months, Years, or Decades?
- And how would you handle a mob that was out to do you harm? Try to reason with them; Fight; Flee; or Surrender?

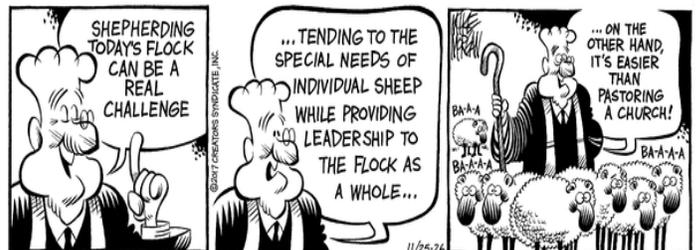
Passage	Comments
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Acts 18:1-3	<p>Bi-Vocational Tentmakers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aquila and Paul were “tent makers.” In all probability, tent, in this case, does not equate to a camping tent but to a Jewish prayer shawl that was used to cover the head of a person when they prayed. Since Paul attended a Levitical school, this would have been a suitable trade for him to learn. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Jewish men wore this garment called a, “<i>Talith</i>”, aka Jewish Prayer-Shawl, all the time, not just at prayer. “<i>Talith</i>” contains two Hebrew words; TAL meaning <u>tent</u> and ITH meaning <u>little</u>. Thus, each man had his own “<i>Little Tent</i>” ♦ Mat 6:6 – “Enter into your prayer closet” – for the Jew this occurred when the shawl was pulled over their head • BUT WAIT! If this was God’s work, why wasn’t God providing for their financial needs as He promised (Mat 6:33)? If God sends, doesn’t He provide? If God calls, doesn’t He equip? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Consider this. Those are nice clichés, but not 100% biblical. God promised Israel He would fight and remove their enemies from their Land, but Israel still had to go to war and watch friends die Deut 20:4-7 ♦ IOW, some might have to sacrifice & work bi-vocationally till the appointed time when God eventually bestows compassion and grace to His servants by answering their prayers and meeting their needs Ps 102:13, 17
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Who were Aquila and Priscilla / Prisca

- Aquila and Priscilla had been among the Jews expelled from Rome by the Roman Emperor Claudius in the year 49 as written by Suetonius. They ended up in Corinth. Paul lived with Aquila and Priscilla for approximately 18 months as they formed and grew the Corinthian church. The couple travelled with Paul when he proceeded to Syria, but stopped at Ephesus for 3 months in the Roman province of Asia, now part of modern Turkey.
- Paul described them as his “fellow workers in Christ Jesus” **Rom 16:3**
- They are mentioned 6 times in 4 different books of the New Testament, always listed as a couple and never individually. Of those 6 references, Aquila’s name is mentioned first 3 times and Priscilla’s name is mentioned first on 3 occasions. This may indicate their equal status.
- **Priscilla’s Prominence.** Some scholars believe Priscilla held the office of church elder. She is also thought by others to be the anonymous author of the Book of Hebrews. No substantive evidence exists for either position.
- **Acts 18:2-3:** Paul found a certain Jew named **Aquila**, born in Pontus, lately come from Italy, with his wife **Priscilla**; (because that Claudius had commanded all Jews to depart from Rome) and came unto them. And because he was of the same craft, he abode with them: for by their occupation they were tentmakers.
- **Acts 18:18:** Paul tarried there yet a good while, and then took his leave of the brethren, and sailed thence into Syria, with him **Priscilla & Aquila**.

Passage	Comments
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acts 18:26: And he began to speak boldly in the synagogue: whom when Aquila and Priscilla had heard, they took him unto them, and expounded unto him the way of God more perfectly. • Romans 16:3-4: Paul sent his greetings to Priscilla and Aquila (fellow workers in Christ Jesus with him) and proclaims that both of them “risked their necks” to save his life. • 1Cor 16:19: The churches of Asia salute you. Aquila and Priscilla salute you much in the Lord, with the church that is in their house (it looks like they started up a new church plant). • 2Tim 4:19: Salute Prisca and Aquila, and the household of Onesiphorus. • Tradition records that Aquila and Priscilla were martyred together
18:4-6	<p>Time to Give Up on the Jews – Again</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is the 2nd time Paul gave the ultimatum – “From hence forth, I’m going to the Gentiles!” Acts 13:46 • Who are the hardest people to witness to? <input type="checkbox"/> Family? <input type="checkbox"/> Friends? <input type="checkbox"/> Co-workers? <input type="checkbox"/> Strangers? WHY? • When do you give up witnessing to someone? <input type="checkbox"/> Never <input type="checkbox"/> When they resist & blaspheme (or turn ugly) <input type="checkbox"/> Other? • What is your witnessing style? <input type="checkbox"/> None <input type="checkbox"/> Casual <input type="checkbox"/> Romans Road <input type="checkbox"/> Ephesians Walk <input type="checkbox"/> No fixed routine <input type="checkbox"/> Friendship Evangelism <input type="checkbox"/> Creation Evangelism <input type="checkbox"/> Evangelism Explosion <input type="checkbox"/> a mixture <input type="checkbox"/> Other?
18:7-11	<p>Corinthians – 18 months</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paul and his growing entourage (Silas, Luke, Timothy, Aquila, & Priscilla) seemed to have taken up residence in the home of Aquila and Priscilla, and for 18 months they founded and grounded the Corinthian church • vv9-10. Notice what the Lord directly conveyed to Paul <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Don’t be afraid (What would Paul be afraid of?) 2. Don’t be silent (Speak boldly and often to everyone) 3. I, the Lord, am with you (wasn’t the Lord with him?) 4. No one will hurt you (would this be a comfort to Paul?) 5. I, the Lord, have many people in this city <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Do we have such promises of protection today?
	<p>Was Paul a Bad Teacher or Were His Disciples Bad Christians?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For 18 months, the Corinthian church had Paul in their midst. Paul was known for bestowing the Holy Spirit (Acts 19:6), working countless miracles (Acts 19:11), and teaching the whole counsel of God (Acts 20:27) • Yet, the Corinthians, who came behind in no gifts (1Cor 1:7), were known for their divisions (1Cor 1:11), for their immaturity (1Cor 3:1), for their judgmental behavior (1Cor 4:5), for immorality (1Cor 5:1), for idolatry (1Cor 10:14), & even abusing church sacraments – i.e., communion (1Cor 11:30) • Paul also spent more than 3 years all total at Ephesus. Recall that Ephesus was the church noted in Rev 2:1-7 for leaving their 1st love. • Paul also spent considerable time with the Galatians and they swayed toward extreme legalism • What happened? Did Paul fail in some regard? Did he not train his disciples properly? Should he have spent more time with them? Did he pick poor elders or Sunday School teachers? • We can only surmise the problems were with the Corinthians, Ephesians, & Galatians. Every Church is only one generation away from apostasy! We must always take responsibility to be on the alert, be steadfast, and to grow up – IOW, “act like men” and take our faith seriously! 1Cor 16:24
18:12-17	<p>Another Mob</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Again, disgruntled Jews rose up against Paul and forcibly brought him to trial. Fortunately, the judge did not tolerate the Jews’ pettiness, so they beat up Sosthenes instead of Paul. It is uncertain if this Sosthenes is the same as in 1Cor 1:1. If he was one and the same, then Sosthenes, a Jewish synagogue ruler became a Christian and took Paul’s beating.

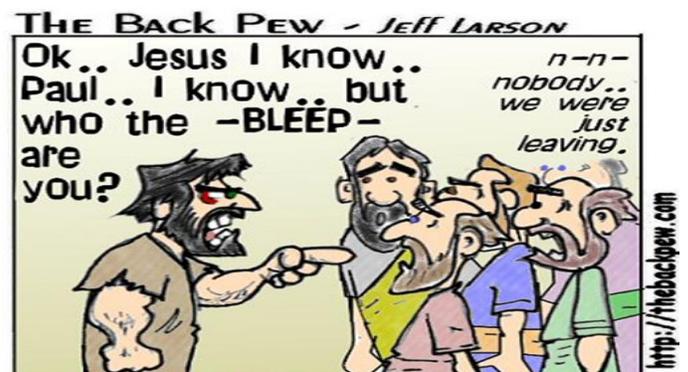


Passage	Comments
A Word on God's Promise for Protection	Scripture is replete with passages of protection for the Lord's righteous servants from both temporal and eternal harm. The most eminent passage is Psalm 91 , where in vs 9 it states, "No evil will befall you" (possible allusion to Jesus). Later in vss 11-12, Satan used these verses when He tempted Jesus with protection - angels will bear you up lest you step on a stone (Luke 4:10-11) – BUT Jesus ultimately died a cruel and excruciating death at the hands wicked sinners. We don't have contradictions in Scripture, so we must realize such precious promises for protection from temporal or physical harm is often of short duration for a specific purpose or had an eternal perspective. And such promises were never meant to be lifelong or for Name-It-And-Claim-It use.
18:18-23	Paul on the Move <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paul seemed to enjoy reaching new people groups • v19. And once again, Paul began witnessing to the Ephesian Jews within their synagogue. So much for giving up on them. • v23. Paul spent some time there. We'll see in Chapter 19, Paul spent 3 months in Ephesus
18:24-28	Apollos to the Rescue <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Notice Apollos' traits we should emulate: He was eloquent; he was mighty in Scripture; he was fervent in spirit; he was speaking and teaching accurately; he spoke out boldly. How can we develop these traits in ourselves & in others? • v25. Though Apollos was "instructed in the way of the Lord" he was missing something. His knowledge was incomplete. • Aquila & Priscilla did not challenge him in public, but took him aside privately & taught him more accurately about God • vv27-28. When Apollos received additional information about God he was able to accomplish much more for the Kingdom • Notice Priscilla was involved in teaching a man. Was this in violation of the command Paul gave that women should not teach a man or usurp a man's authority? 1Tim 2:11-15 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Consider this. Priscilla was not teaching a man 1-on-1. She was a co-teacher alongside her husband. For more on this see lesson on 1Timothy 2.
Prominent Role of Women in the Church	God would love every male and female to be spiritually mature as a church elder, whether they are qualified to be an elder or not. In fact, that is the goal of elders – to mature the body of Christ to be like Him. If men aren't doing the work, women have a tendency to fill the gap. After all, women have the God-given mothering and teaching instinct to care for family, especially the young in faith. And Scripture says in a non-flattering light that one day women would rule over men (Isaiah 3:12). Just look at how women, by more than 2:1, outnumber men on the mission field. And where would many, if not all churches be today without women doing the bulk of the work? MEN! Where Are You? Paul had no problems with women having prominent roles in the church. Besides acknowledging Priscilla's prominence, Paul acknowledged 10 women in Romans 16 out of a litany of 35 names who were on par with the renowned men listed with the exception of Phoebe, the 1 st person addressed. Paul held Phoebe in higher esteem above all others for her dedicated service as a servant/deaconess (diakonos) – Same Greek word was used of Christ being a servant..... Rom 15:8 The world is marching to a neutered society , but Paul and the rest of Scripture stress the need for defined gender roles (1Tim 2); Men teach men (1Tim 2:12); older women teach younger women how they should love their husbands (Titus 2:3-4); men are to be elders/pastors and deacons (1Tim 3 ; Titus 1); & this is for the benefit of the church. Yet, as we see with Mary Magdalene, Dorcas, Lydia, Priscilla, Phoebe, and others, God wants women to play prominently in the growth of His church – along with, not in lieu of men.
19:1-8	Ephesus – 3 months here, 3 years on his 3rd Mission trip <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Ephesians were not only missing some crucial facts, they were also missing the Holy Spirit. What's this look like? • Every time the Holy Spirit was given to a new people group, often with evidence of tongues, an Apostle was present (All the Apostles in Acts 2; Peter in Acts 8 & 10; Paul in Acts 19)
19:9-22	Asia – 2 years (...everyone heard the word of God) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • vv11-12. God worked "extraordinary miracles" by Paul, to include 100% healings by touching his handkerchiefs. These miracles were temporary, for soon, Paul wouldn't be able to heal Timothy, Trophimus, or Epaphroditus since the Holy Spirit would cease working supernaturally Heb 2:3,4

Passage	Comments
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • vv13-20. The sons of Sceva (Jewish exorcists) found out the hard way not to treat God as a lucky rabbit's foot or for magical incantations. Yet, unbelievers took notice of the true workings of God that Paul was doing, and many believed <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Why doesn't God still perform supernatural wonders today to have similar effect on people? ♦ Consider this. God wants people to believe on Him out of love for who He is and not for what He can give to them
Are Demon-possessed People Easy to Spot?	<p>Though, several demon-possessed cases involved homeless and/or uncontrollable individuals, such as the Gerasene demoniacs who lived in the tombs (Matt 8:28-34), others exhibited less disruptive characteristics. We even see evidence of demonically-possessed people living with other family members, though, often in less than desirable circumstances. For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mark 1:23-26 tells the story of a demoniac in church – possibly someone in good standing in both the synagogue and in the community – after all, he went to church • Mark 7:25-30. A demon-possessed daughter lived at home • Mark 9:17-29. A demon-possessed son lived at home • Luke 13:11-17 tells the story of a woman afflicted by Satan for 18 years. She more than likely lived in a home • Acts 16:16-19. The girl with a "spirit of divination" made good money for her clientele, and probably a good living for herself • Acts 19:13-16 tells the story of how the sons of Sceva tried to perform an exorcism on a demon-possessed man who lived in a house, presumably with family members. <p>So, not all demon-possessed people are wandering around acting maniacal, or are destitute and homeless. Some live with family, go to church, and even make a good living. Notice the purpose of satanic affliction or demonic possession was not for sexual deviance (in these cases), but for mental, socio, and physical anguish to make them fruitless, virtually useless, and possibly harmful to them & others. Satan and his demons have a lot of tricks.</p>
19:23-41	<p>One More Mob</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • v23. "...there arose no small disturbance concerning the Way." This was Luke's polite way of saying that all Hell was breaking lose over Paul's effective witnessing • v24. "Demetrius was bringing no little business to the craftsmen." Again, this was Luke's polite way to say Demetrius was making tons of money till Paul arrived • v26. Paul's Impact → "In almost all of Asia," Paul persuaded many to believe in the one true God, and he was about to crash the economy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ People are more concerned about their bank accounts than their spiritual state. How can we stay focused on the true riches God offers, the eternal Bread of Life, than on the temporal food that perishes? John 6:27 ♦ Consider this. Do we treasure God's word more than food (Job 23:12), more than money (Ps 119:127), more than anything else (Ps 73:25)? Do we readily obey God's word, or do we waffle? IOW, where is our heart?

CONCLUSION / APPLICATIONS / CONSIDERATIONS

- We need more couples like Aquila and Priscilla and individuals like Apollos! It takes commitment to be sold out to Jesus and to be in His word and in prayer more than into comfort or possessions.
- Are we willing to risk our lives for the Gospel and for God's people as Aquila and Priscilla did? What would it take to get us there?



"...and the demon-possessed man jumped on the sons of Sceva and whooped them so bad they fled out of the house naked and wounded." [Acts 19:16](#)