

## More Perfectly

Acts 18:24-28

- Today we discuss Apollos
- Which we find in Acts 18
- We may discuss Aquila and Priscilla just as much
- As they play a key role in this account
- All three disciples provide helpful insight
  
- Apollos is an example of someone gifted for ministry
- Equipped by God to do it
- Having the right attitude and disposition for it
- And engaged in the work
- But also lacking some key information
- In need of help
  
- Aquila and Priscilla notice all this
- They have the information he needs
- And they come alongside to explain things
  
- From Apollos we learn humility
- To understand we don't know everything
- That we sometimes don't know what we don't know
  
- From Aquila and Priscilla we learn sensitivity
- To keep our eyes, our ears, and our hearts open
- To be ready to help
  
- All of this from Acts 18:24-28
- On the theme "More Perfectly"
  
- Let's begin by reading this account
- Then we'll have a closer, verse by verse look...

Acts 18:24-28

24 And a certain Jew named Apollos, born at Alexandria, an eloquent man, and mighty in the scriptures, came to Ephesus.

25 This man was instructed in the way of the Lord; and being fervent in the spirit, he spake and taught diligently the things of the Lord, knowing only the baptism of John.

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.

27 And when he was disposed to pass into Achaia, the brethren wrote, exhorting the disciples to receive him: who, when he was come, helped them much which had believed through grace:

28 For he mightily convinced the Jews, and that publicly, shewing by the scriptures that Jesus was Christ.

- A lot of thoughts spring to mind reading this text
- I made note of a few
- If we examine the relationship between these three people
- I think we will find: we all have something to teach
- We all have something to learn
- That God is perfecting the saints using other saints
- And that the kind of people who are gifted for discipleship, also need discipleship
- Let's take a closer look at the text, which reveals these ideas...

Acts 18:24

24 And a certain Jew named Apollos, born at Alexandria, an eloquent man, and mighty in the scriptures, came to Ephesus.

- This man's name was probably a contraction of the full name Apollonius or Apollodorus
- He was a native of Alexandria in Egypt
- A Jew
- There was a large number of Jews in his home city
- Alexandria was famous for its schools
- Therefore, it's not a total surprise that Apollos was eloquent
- In addition to his natural abilities, He may have had access to these schools
- When it says he was eloquent, it means he was a "man of words" or a "man of ideas"
- It appears he was gifted, specifically, by God for his ministry
- He was also prepared to do service for God
- As this text is translated elsewhere, he was "competent in the scriptures" or "he knew the scriptures well"
- While we know he had gaps in his understanding, like all of us, he had a strong base of knowledge
- The text further says...

Acts 18:25

25 This man was instructed in the way of the Lord; and being fervent in the spirit, he spake and taught diligently the things of the Lord, knowing only the baptism of John.

- Beyond the study he had done himself, he had also been instructed by others
- He was literally catechized
- That phrase wouldn't have had the baggage it might have for us today
- It just means he was informed, instructed, and taught (by word of mouth) the way of Christianity
- He received an education in "the way"

- More than that, he had certain characteristics about him that are helpful in ministry
- He was "fervent in spirit" or zealous and ardent
- He had a certain boldness about him in regard to teaching and speaking
- It seems he was tempered for ministry
- He's also already active in ministry
- It says he was speaking and teaching
- Our translation says diligently, but it could also be rendered "accurately"
- No doubt relaying what he knew about scripture himself - and what he had been taught
- But there is a really key phrase at the end of the verse
- It says, he knew only the baptism of John
- This is not an insignificant gap in his understanding
- John's baptism was one of preparation for the Lord's coming
- It was a baptism of repentance
- But the new significance of baptism was the picture of Jesus' death, burial, and resurrection
- Critical details, not only for baptism, but for the gospel itself
- We're not clear on how deep the gap in his understanding may have been
- Did he know that Jesus was the Messiah, or just that the Messiah was definitely coming
- Based on what I read, there seems to be some debate
- Here's what we know for sure: he was lacking information
- We see that when he goes to speak in the synagogue...

#### Acts 18:26

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.

- The early part of this chapter introduces us to Aquila and his wife Priscilla
- They were tentmakers that had recently hosted the Apostle Paul at Corinth
- Apparently, they were temporarily settling in Ephesus
- We see greetings to them from Paul in Romans and in I Corinthians
- Paul calls them his "helpers in Christ Jesus"
- Obviously, they are in possession of the information about Christ (and baptism), that Apollos needs
- And when they heard him, they did something they were apparently in the habit of doing
- They received him, maybe even taking him into their temporary home
- And they expounded
- Or they exposed or set out or declared the way of God in a more accurate fashion
- It's likely Aquila and Priscilla saw many of the same things this text declares to us about Apollos
- They recognized his eloquence
- And how he knew the scriptures
- And saw how he had been instructed
- Taking note of his temperament

- And his active participation in teaching, even where they met him, in the synagogue
- Where Paul himself would begin to teach
- But he needed help
- And they set out to provide it
- This is so easy to overlook
- Certainly, in this time of transition
- This time of a special work of God in the world
- This kind of attention was needed
- But it's needed in our day too
- We must come alongside others and fill in the gaps
- Provide the details they are missing
- Whatever they said to Apollos, apparently he embraced it
- And he moved on...

Acts 18:27

27 And when he was disposed to pass into Achaia, the brethren wrote, exhorting the disciples to receive him: who, when he was come, helped them much which had believed through grace:

- The brethren in Ephesus sent word ahead to receive Apollos
- When he came to Achaia, he was a big help to the believers
- Whatever additional information he was provided by this gracious couple
- That he received graciously
- Made his ministry even more effective
- Because, now he knew
- He was fully informed
- And so he proceeded with the same spirit as before...

Acts 18:28

28 For he mightily convinced the Jews, and that publicly, shewing by the scriptures that Jesus was Christ.

- Whatever the case before, Apollos is now fully on board with Jesus being the Christ
- The One who died and was buried and rose from the dead
- He has the understanding he needs
- His doctrine is in order
- And this makes him a powerful witness
- He powerfully refuted the Jews
- And presented from scripture, Jesus as the Christ
- There seems to be application from several perspectives in this text

- We see a man that goes forth, proclaiming the God and the scriptures he knows
- We should be the same
- No one achieves a level of perfection in their knowledge before ministering to others
  
- We see a couple who sees a need and meets it
- They recognize a deficiency in someone trying to follow God
- And they don't expect someone else to step in
- They come alongside to help
  
- We see humility in someone tremendously gifted
- Someone tremendously educated
- Who is will to listen to tent makers
- And to be equipped with knowledge and details he could not attain on his own
  
- These are portraits of discipleship that are worth seeing
- Worth internalizing
- Worth passing along

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