

# Marriage Series #1 - Aquila & Priscilla

by Don McClure

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*The sermon explores the shared life and unity of Aquila and Priscilla as a model for successful marriages.*

**Duration:** 42:27

**Scripture:** Genesis 12:1-3, Genesis 17:15-16, Genesis 22:1-18, Ruth 2:1, Matthew 1:23, Acts 18:26-27

**Topics:** "Marriage Ministry", "Discipleship"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of investing one's life into others and seeing the kingdom of heaven increase. He shares a personal story about his grandson and how his daughter-in-law sent him a picture, which his wife immediately confiscated. The speaker then discusses the story of Aquila and Priscilla taking in a young man named Apollos and instructing him in the ways of the Lord. He highlights the significance of couples sharing their lives in ministry and investing in the spiritual growth of others.

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## Transcript

tonight, chapter 18. We're gonna look for a few weeks at some character studies on couples and in marriages in the Bible. There's tremendous lessons just looking at the marriages.

There's a great tendency when we pick up the Bible, we'll, you know, to look at somebody, you know, like Abraham and be familiar with him, to study Sarah, be familiar with her, but oftentimes not look at the marriage. There's an awful, we know a certain amount of maybe about Joseph, and we know things about Mary, but we don't think about their marriage oftentimes. And you can look at, but there's so many studies that you do in the Bible.

You can look at Ruth and Boaz, but usually most studies that you'll hear or you read about, I one time noticed this when I was going through and just getting, I love doing character studies. One time I began to realize I couldn't find much about couples. They were always taken as individuals.

And so I want to look at, in the coming weeks, at marriages. I think there's a tremendous amount to learn just by looking at them. And one of the most wonderful and the simplest of them, I suppose, that we're going to look at tonight and learn from is that of Aquila and Priscilla.

The, it's a wonderful story to me of the power, what I've called it in just my own study at any rate, the power of a shared marriage. They're a wonderful couple. I think we'll see as we kind of look through the

scriptures on them and find out a few things about them.

Because they're a couple that obviously when you find out about them, you come to realize that they were not simply married in the technical sense of the word, which many, which every marriage is, but they were married experientially. In the sense that they were a couple, they just had this wonderful shared marriage. The couple, every time they're mentioned in the Bible, that there's six times that they're mentioned, three times it's mentioned as Aquila and Priscilla, three times it's Priscilla and Aquila.

They just seem to be, I mean their names are reversed, but six times, every mention of them, they're together. Every time, whatever it is that they're doing it, they were doing it together. And their lives were just wonderfully together.

And it stands out when you look at so many other people and studies in the Bible. But to see this couple, every time you see them, their names are there together. Many people, I think when they get married, they get married to run away from their problems.

They've got all sorts of tensions and problems and struggles and they find, and you get two people very commonly that they don't like where they're from and it's not working out there in their world and it's not working out at his house or his home or his world. And these two meet each other and decide let's get married. And the thought so often is, is that they're both running away from difficult circumstances and all they're doing is reproducing another difficult circumstances.

Oftentimes are people that live selfish lives and they're still quite selfish late in their teenage years or their early twenties or something. And life is uncomfortable, but they meet another like-minded selfish person oftentimes. Both of them are unhappy where they are, but they think let's get married and it'll solve all the problems.

So they think. All they do of course, as any of us that are married know that that, that can really produce more than it solves. And many people just intensifies their problem, but it's something to work because when you get married, it isn't long until you realize that you're sharing everything.

You're sharing each other's clock. Time is, belongs to both of you, money, debts, food, the temperature gauge, all the activities virtually of life, anything you're doing now involves somebody else. And life gets quite complicated.

I was talking to a couple this morning, they were walking in and he had, of course, this big bag on one side and I said, where are you running away to? And then his wife turned around the corner with a little baby. And I said, I'll say no more. And they're coming in late, you know, a little and just getting here.

And, uh, and I said, you remember the days before you were married when somebody just called you and said, let's go to the beach. And in five minutes you were packed and out the road and on the freeway. And you have to get married.

You want to go someplace. You got to start a checklist about a week ahead, you know, on to make the thing work and to make it work with the family and because everything, every decision, the ramifications, they multiply, they intensify all the problems trying to make it work. And in the most real sense in marriage, everything you have, it's community property.

It's something to where it belongs to both. And that's time, that's energy, that's effort, that's heart. And it's amazing on how it is.

And I'm thinking, I remember just some dear friends of ours, a couple that had been married for a number of years, but one time they shared a little story that was so real on a marriage. They had gotten, they had on their bed these electric blankets. And, uh, one day she went and she changed the bed and, you know, put on clean sheets and everything.

And that night she went and put the bed, that's their second lookout. They put the blankets back on, but she didn't realize that when she made the bed again, that somehow or another she'd turned the blanket around and it got, and she laid it back there, uh, with the blanket reverse side. Well, they went to bed that night.

And when they're, uh, they fall asleep, he turns on his thermostat for his side of the bed at the temperature that he liked it. And she reaches over and turns on her, a little different bed, you know, two thermostats. And, uh, he's kind of realizing he's a little cold.

And so he kind of turns his up a little long, you know, it wasn't quite as warm as he likes it. And of course she's over there to where hers is a little warm. So she turns hers down a little notch.

And then he turns in his, it seems to getting colder. So he turns it up another notch and she keeps turning hers down. And he said one, they woke up one morning at two o'clock in the morning and he is absolutely frozen and she is burning up and they're wondering what in the world is going on.

And all of a sudden they, she realized what had occurred and they both had each other's thermostats. Well, that's marriage. When you get married in a way that you don't even realize you've got each other's thermostats and you've got control of each other's lives in a phenomenal way.

You can turn each other up and down the dial and you're sharing in the most dramatic way, uh, when you get married. And, uh, in order to do it well and do it effectively, it takes quite a spiritual life, uh, to make that happen. It's not a place for selfish people.

It's not a place for people that want to run their own lives and have their own space and have their own friends. It's something that, uh, do that and just live your life that way. Most marriage separations start with that.

We're in their thought and in their attitudes, they just simply kind of take their own controls and they try to, you know, keep their own life in its own form of regulation rather than in a real sharing and in a real, uh, giving up of their life and of their identity to one another. But this isn't so with Aquila and Priscilla. They're one of these types of couples.

Every time in the Bible, you see them together. Uh, they work together and share together, minister together. They, they apparently, they did it all together.

They're a couple that when you look at them, they were friends and, and mates and lovers and companions. And, and they were obviously quite willing through the years to be able to give away more than they took, uh, for a marriage like this to come along. Uh, you got to be this type of couple.

When I see them so many times in scripture and so many times always in the positive and always ministering and always caring and always doing it together and you see how well they did things together. I, they're probably about the only couple in the Bible that I think for sure could probably wallpaper together. I'm not sure, but there's somebody that honestly, I almost look into, I'll bet they wallpapered.

If there's one couple that probably even attempted that, it might be Aquila and Priscilla. But the, uh, they were a couple that to me like Jonathan, uh, and David, uh, is told in the story back in first Samuel chapter 18. Remember when they met that their hearts, the Bible says they were just, uh, united together in a wonderful way of where Jonathan went and he, he, with David, he came and he took his sword and he took his robe and he, uh, it was basically his whole, uh, identity.

Uh, of course the, it was, they were a military nation, Israel was, and everything from the sword, everything to the, uh, to, you know, the outfit, it all identified him as the heir to the throne. It identified him as a military captain. But when David and Jonathan met, you may recall that Jonathan, he looked at him and there he gave over his, his whole identity and he said, here, it's yours.

He gave him his throne, gave him his future. And when I look at Jonathan, I think of this phenomenal man who there heir to the throne and yet he was a man that he gave up his throne to give it to another as if to say here, this belongs to you. I was only a steward of it for a time.

It was only given to me to take care of until the person I'm to give it over to and share it with, and it comes along. And that's what Jonathan did for, you know, for David and how these two loved and ministered and cared and watched over each other in such a wonderful way. They were able to give up their identities, able to give up their thrones, uh, you know, for each other.

That's the secret as well, not only of a kingdom that's going to, uh, that's going to succeed, but it's also the secret of a marriage that's going to last into the decades of people that understand the very core of their being. They can look at the other person and realize that my life is theirs, my thermostat. In effect, it's theirs who I am, where I go and what I do.

I want it to be theirs above all other things. I think women know this, understand this better than men, uh, oftentimes, but it's something that in order for a marriage to work, it's got to be equal in the sense of that both parties really honestly understand what it is to give and what it is to care. And I think few couples, particularly in this day and age, uh, realize how much we need from each other for a marriage to work, how much they were designed to give, uh, to each other and to receive from each other.

How much a marriage is strengthened when it's a shared marriage. When God created Adam and Eve, he deliberately right there. It's, it's interesting in the Hebrew and it says in God, when he created Eve, it was for a help and then meet, it says M E E T for Adam.

But the interesting word in the Hebrew is it means it, it's, it's the same word, help and meet. They're both, it's reiterated twice. And it means that the word means the same, both help and meet.

They're the exact same Hebrew word. And it's essentially, if you literally translate it, he said, so that I might make a help help for you. And, uh, uh, he doubly intensified, not just a helper for you, you're, Adam, you need a help help, you know? And I mean, that's what it says in the Bible that when God created them, that there's two people that they, that they understand this.

They realize as they look at a marriage that there's something about them that above all else, that there is a person that when God created him and, and, and when Adam looked over at Eve and, uh, and she was beautiful to him and he said, behold, this is now bone of my bone and flesh of my flesh. He recognized there immediately though he didn't understand what had happened, the miraculous thing that she was literally bone of his bone. I'm sure he came to find it, but something there that this is my other self.

This is the completion of myself. I'm no longer complete. I think Adam, when he looked at Eve there, the thing of wanting to reach out and, and when he took her in his arm and he embraced her, he wasn't being sensual or sexual and in, in anything other than a wonderful sense of the word.

I think Adam, the thing that when a man would like to take his wife and embrace her and pull her right inside himself, he'd do that if he could, because that's where she came from. She was part of him. There was something missing.

There was the completion of himself. He now looked and here's another body, another being, another flesh, another uncle, you know, bones and being in life there. And yet at the same time, God is looking there and the ultimate thing is, is now to take their lives and blend them back together.

Now to have them, you know, come into where through life is that these two were, were once one, had become two, would now once again become one in such a total way that you couldn't even define one without the other, that they, that they require the presence of each other to identify and define their own identity again. That's what God created when he created marriage. He wanted something where the other one above all else, and that's not the, the rest of the world isn't that way.

You may have friends and you can have children and you can have parents and you can have all sorts of other things. But when, and as there is a marriage that occurs, it's something to where now there's somebody that you look and say, this is my help, help. You know, I don't know how you can figure, play with that word all night, I suppose, and how you want to phrase it and say it and think it, but, but in the finest sense of the word that there is two things that they will look and say here, I have made somebody that is now you'll require them, not just help if you need it, help if you want it or help if it might be there, but no, it's something there, Adam.

It'll be the most wonderful thing in my experience in all of life when you grow into it, when you understand it and what it is to, to love and to care and to commit of your heart, of your time, of your energy, of your effort to yourself to say here, help her. And to look at her and say, now you help him. And when that begins to happen, you've got a wonderful thing when you've got two people that are help mates to where they literally share back and forth their lives in such a wonderful way that I think to me, when you look at Aquila and Priscilla, and Priscilla and Aquila, their names are equal three times each where she's first three times, he's first the other three, but to where they're almost one person, one ministry, when you look at them in scripture, when you look at them serving, who is first or second made no difference, I don't think, to them or anyone else, who spoke or what was going on, I think it was something that they realized here are two people that their lives have just been poured into each other.

They share the same heart. They share the same direction. They share the same purposes together.

And when a couple realizes that many times when you get married, we're threatened by each other. Many times are very insecure, you know, and, and to admit the need that we have for one another, to admit the need that, you know, that there is to share our lives with one another, to many, many people that were,

were so insecure that we won't do it or we're afraid to do it. But, uh, it's got to happen, uh, for a marriage to be successful.

I know when we started dating and here I was sensing at the time, God may be calling me into ministry. I was a new Christian. I didn't know the Bible.

I was just beginning to study it, but come to find here, Jean was born and raised in the Bible. And, uh, she had every night, uh, their family would sit down and her mother and father would open up the word and they would read together and they would share and they would pray. And they were so mature by the time Jean was born there in their mid forties when she was born, uh, that, uh, there was such a wonderful godly home about it, that she was just nurtured in this wonderful place.

And then, uh, went to private Christian grammar school in high school and college. And then in the summer they had a cabin right over here at Mount Hermon. She worked there all the summers and would just listen to all this Bible teaching.

I was intimidated when I met her. We'd go out and start talking. She knew every Bible story.

I didn't even know the story was in the Bible, let alone what it was about. You tell me somebody's name. I didn't.

I'd never heard Joshua. I don't know if I'd heard of Elijah or Elisha. I don't think I've heard it at the time of Jeremiah.

I was brand new, uh, right off the tulip truck, Christian kind of a thing. And, and here was somebody that had just been raised in all of this and so entrenched in it. And, uh, but it was, we would go out, I'd ask her, tell me these stories.

And she would tell me all these stories. And I was so intrigued. She got me an Edgar Myers Bible storybook.

Some of you probably get them for your kids. She got one for me. You know, it's a read them.

They had to be a little kid at night. You know, that's, but I so love the stories. I think that was the birth of why I love Bible character so much.

I love the stories, uh, of it all. It would minister to me so much, but it were people begin in a marriage. It's interesting out of that.

And as she would tell me these stories, all it did was enlarge my desire to retell the story. It all did was when I'd hear these stories and it was such wonderful stories. I realized I want to tell this story to somebody.

I want to share this with somebody. These are great stories. And, uh, so I began taking all the stuff I could get from her and then going out and sharing it with other people.

Next thing you know, I'm being called in ministry, but so much of it came from her and her sharing it with me. And, uh, then as time went on and, and I kept studying and teaching and ministry and sometimes she'd be doing something, I could give her some of it back. She'd forgotten.

She told me and, uh, whatever it was, but I'd tell her things back and we'd just share and share and share back and forth messages and thoughts, uh, and, uh, things so much. So I remember one time, I remember years ago, she was going to teach at something and she was struggling over a message. And I turned to her and I said, well, which one of my messages would you like to borrow? You know what she, she turns to me and she says, neither.

But the, uh, that's about how many were mine. The rest of them were hers. But the, uh, but the thing is, is that when people in a marriage, when you look there and in the whole desire in marriage is how can I share it in the realizing that when you get married, there's somebody there that your whole being, God says, help each other.

And it's again, when time goes on, oftentimes it's awkward because we aren't usually good at it, not at all by nature. Uh, we have, it's a learned thing and it's a spiritual thing once we really come to where God helped me become a helpmate at where we know what it is to help. Well, Ann and I, Sapphira, to me getting back to them, I got way off on other stuff, but to me that they're the power, the wonderful shared life together.

They all, they, they served, uh, let me get into the text here. They served others together. Uh, Acts chapter 18, I didn't even read this.

Did I just said turn to it, but it says in Acts 18 verse one, it says, after these things, Paul departed from Athens and went to Corinth and he found a certain Jew named Aquila born in Pontus who had recently come from Italy with his wife Priscilla because Claudius had commanded all the Jews to depart from Rome and he came to them. But an interesting thing here, Aquila and Priscilla, they met Paul at a time maybe of trial in their own life. They'd been shoved out of their world and their life and their comfort zone, moved over into another part of the world.

But here as they were thrown together, it was a wonderful thing that happened. But at any rate, they came together. Verse three, it says, so because he was of the same trade, he stayed with them and he worked for by occupation, they were tent makers.

And he reasoned in the synagogue every Saturday, uh, Sabbath, and he persuaded both Jews and Greeks. But here we see firstly, you know, when, uh, when Paul, uh, along his, in his missionary journeys, as he comes along, he met Aquila and Priscilla. And there for some 18 months, they took the apostle Paul into their home.

And as they brought him in, he imagined this 18 months that these two opened up their lives, shared their office, shared their business. They were tent makers, had something going there within it. And here is this wonderful couple came, they opened up everything, their business.

I mean, come on, work with us. We're of the same trade. We can, we'll put you to work here with us.

And, uh, uh, and in they moved together and in they imagined the thing that they maybe thought when they first met Paul, that they were just helping out some traveling preacher or something. But imagine what a blessing it probably was for them to have the apostle Paul in their home. They maybe thought they were doing it for somebody else, but usually it turns out this way.

Whenever anybody knows what it is to share their, not only their lives with each other, but their ministry with others, oftentimes God will see they get repaid in the most wonderful of ways. It was something there

that this relationship for 18 months as it began here, it went on. And because later over in the, in chapter 18 and in verse 18, it tells us there that, uh, so Paul still remained a good while and he took leave of the brethren and he sailed to Syria, uh, and Priscilla and Aquila were with him.

But here it's something to where now what had happened is, is that when Paul felt like God was moving him on this, the, this couple, they picked up stakes too and they went off with him and, uh, joined him as he went on now on to Ephesus. And, uh, then Paul later on, he left them behind in Ephesus and, uh, there they set up a church in their own home. It tells us in first Corinthians, uh, chapter 16 in verse 19, Paul, when he's writing there to him, uh, uh, he writes and he says, the churches of Asia greet you.

Aquila and Priscilla greet you heartily in the Lord with the church that is in their house. Here we meet him first, just a couple that came along and ministered to Paul. And then they ended up moving with Paul as he went on.

And then the next thing you know, you find this couple, the church is in their house. They're out ministering to other people. And, uh, something that is so wonderful as to me that when a marriage comes together and it is together, they've learned what it is to serve each other and to share their lives with each other.

First of all, that is something that in and of itself, it gives tremendous potential to now going on into further ministry. If somebody can have a happy marriage, somebody knows the secret of a helping marriage of a shared marriage, they've got far more potential in ministry than most of them even dream of. Most marriages to me, I find myself and I'm looking for leaders.

When I'm looking for people to, you know, to come and be a part of leadership in any way, I always look at their home. I always look at what goes on. Are there's two people that know what it is to give to each other.

And oftentimes I ask them if they'll get involved in leadership and say, Oh no, I'm not a leader. And I, I've, no one's ever seen that in me and no one's ever asked me and I've been around the church or I've been here or there or whatever, but I, I'm, I'm just a pucet or something and I'll help with this. I'll help with that, but I'm not a leader.

And I'll turn around and say, you are, when I look at your home and I look at the love that you have for your wife and the love that she has for you, I see the way that you two help each other. Obviously God has taught you and he's working wonderful things where you know what it is to treat each other as more importantly than yourself. That's a spiritual work.

That's a blessed work when that's happened. And when people understand that and they can do it in such close proximity as a home, they're ready far more than oftentimes they realize for ministry. They're, they're, they're prepared to serve in the most wonderful of ways.

And when you have a couple that just understands what it is to care for each other, and here's Aquila and Priscilla, they brought in Paul into their life and next thing you know, they're sharing their, not only lives with each other, sharing their business with Paul. And then the next thing you know, Paul goes off and they're, they go off with him. Well, let's go help you.

Let's see what we can do. And the next thing you know, they've got a, a ministry going on. And, uh, which to me is another great lesson because one of the things to me that I think is a great tragedy today is a lot of people think of a marriage as an end in itself.

It isn't. Marriage never was created to be an end in itself, but there's just this two people that just live happily. It's there for a purpose.

It's there for a reason. It's there as a tool of which ministry can be pouring out of it. And I see a lot of books, and I think the reason a lot of people are tired, I think a reason a lot of marriages, they've gone so far and now they sit around and, you know, and, uh, and stare at each other and they're bored.

It's because of the fact that they built their marriage and they got happy for a while, but you can't maintain it unless it's a vehicle through which other things are happening. When God created Adam and Eve, it wasn't something that was just there for themselves. They were helpmates for another reason and another purpose to go on and be fruitful, multiply, to reproduce, to minister to others way beyond themselves.

And, uh, they were helpmates for a far greater purpose. And here, uh, Aquila and Priscilla, they were that type of couple. They were there for a great purpose.

And they were there to look and, okay, we're here, we've fallen in love and we've cared, we've learned a lot of tools, but now let's implement these tools into ministry, into service, into something to where instead of just sitting around and starting to stare at each other or just, uh, try to be happy and comfortable and entertaining, uh, to ourselves, let's do something with our lives. And that's one of the things that is missing in a lot of people because they haven't picked up a passion to say, you know, once their lives and their marriage are together, how can we use this? And they begin to look, you know, whether here at Paul, you know, how can we serve? What can we do? And, you know, let's take our house. Can we make a church in this thing? Is there any way that it can be a ministry, a service? And wonderfully it was.

And if you don't do that, uh, you'll end up looking at each other. And then after you look at each other for a little while, I'll tell you, I mean, I look in our marriage and I think we've got, uh, a wonderful marriage. I probably think it's more wonderful than my wife does, but I think it's a great, but the, uh, she may have a few suggestions, but, uh, at any rate, uh, I mean, we have, I would honestly say a very wonderful marriage.

And yet at the same time, one of the things is, is God has always shown us that that marriage is to be used. It's to be going someplace, not just staring at each other. I don't know if you've ever otherwise, because when you just start staring and looking, next thing you know, you're nitpicking.

Next thing you know, you find out what you don't like about each other. And, uh, uh, we become, to me, I think as human beings, kind of like orangutans. I don't know if you've ever been to the zoo and stared at orangutans, but they're amazing things.

They're just sitting in these cages and unlike anything else, if you're ever at a zoo, watch them. Because what they'll do is they just nitpick at each other all day. They'll be, they go through each other's watch, they go through each other's hair, they sit there, you know, and start looking around and they find something in there and they pull, get this bug and pull it out and eat it.

It's gross. It's quite gross, but they do. They're just staring at each other, picking at each other, fiddling with each other all day because they have nothing else to do in life.

Well, I think that's the way a lot of marriages are. A lot of things, if you don't, is that funny? You got that picture in your mind, don't you? How could they eat that stuff? Well, we'll do that. If there isn't something to where we got some other project in life that's higher than our marriage, and that our marriage is just a

vessel, it's just a tool through which other things can come out of it.

And Aquila and Priscilla, they were that way. They not only had a shared lives together and a shared service and ministry together, they knew what it was to sanctify others together. Look over in chapter 18 of Acts and in verse 24.

It tells us now, a certain Jew named Apollos, 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 he began to speak boldly in the synagogue.

And when Aquila and Priscilla heard him, they took him aside and they explained to him the way of God more accurately. 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.

The amazing thing about this, if you're not familiar, well, in Acts chapter 1, you may recall, or in 1 Corinthians chapter 1, when Paul wrote, he looked there and to the church there at Corinth and he said, you know, you're split and you're divided and some of you say I'm Paul and some say I'm Apollos and some say I'm of Cephas. But this guy Apollos, he ended up ultimately being categorized, of course, as an apostle himself, right up there where the church looked and says, man, this guy is as great a guy as anything we ever got from Paul or from Peter. And yet he was a guy that he was met one day in a synagogue by this couple, Aquila and Priscilla.

They came in and they just looked at this guy, didn't know much. He just knew the baptism of John. And there was just what he'd heard from John the Baptist on repent, the kingdom of heaven is at hand.

Prepare ye the way of the Lord. As he's coming in there, sensing God's doing something, sensing that there's a whole new breaking forth of life. He didn't know what it was.

He hadn't the slightest idea at the time, but the spirit of God had stirred something up within him. But the wonderful thing is Aquila and Priscilla, this wonderful couple, they see this young man and they take him into their home. They brought him in, you know, like they'd taken in Paul.

Now they bring him in and they sat down and they instructed him in a more excellent way or they taught him the way more accurately. So he sat down with this guy and if you could just imagine him sitting there in the evenings around there telling him the full truth, telling him the wonder of it all. Let me tell you, you're talking about, you know, preparing the way of the Lord.

The way of the Lord has come. And having a policy. What? Yes, he's come.

Who? His name's Jesus. Going through the scriptures, saying here, you know, here he was born of a virgin, see this? And he came forth and wrapped in swaddling clothes of a virgin, as told in these scriptures here and as they taught him and taught him and taught him. Thereof now he was born of a virgin, a spotless life, the perfect offering of his life upon the cross for all the sins of the world and his victory over sin, death, hell and the devil, rising out of the tomb himself, ascending to heaven and then the outpouring of his spirit and listening to Apollos at night, watching him as he would just sit there taking it all in as this couple just took him.

They themselves, they probably never thought of themselves as pastors or as trainers or as disciplers or whatever else, but to think, here this couple, that just because of their shared lives with one another, their shared marriage, their love for God, that God used their home and their life to bring people in, such as the Apostle Paul, somebody quite mature, and then to bring in somebody completely immature and to have him be trained so that when he went on to minister they could write letters and say, accept him, this guy is ready to go, but he was taught, his life was set apart, it was sanctified. And how they could lead him into the power of God, how they could lead him into a knowledge of God and a depth in Christ and how to see this young man, Apollos, as he'd go out and share. Let me tell you, marriage, as wonderful as it can be with each other, but when ministry happens, when people know what it is to invest their lives, so often, again, our flesh and our selfishness says, oh, I want to do this with my time, I want to do this with my energy, I want to do this, I want to go vacation, I want to go spend my time here, here's how I'd like to do with my weekends.

But let me tell you, when a couple that knows what it is to share their life in Christ and know what it is to love one another, and they've got something to where they can just begin to wrap, you know, young people and young couples into their arms and take them into their home and say, let me tell you the way. They, you know, let me tell you, there's no country in the world you'll ever fly to, I don't care first or second class, I don't care five-star hotel, you'll never come back with an experience as phenomenal and as wonderful to the soul and as enriching and as thrilling to somebody as when they realize, I've actually poured something of my life into somebody else. I'm actually seeing the kingdom of heaven increasing.

I'm seeing somebody equip their life to think to go on, and I'm going to become a grandma and a grandpa through Apollos, as he goes out and leads people to Christ. This week I got a picture that my daughter-in-law mailed me. It was to me, it was addressed to me.

My wife immediately confiscated it, I'll tell her to give it back. But the thing is that my grandson, she sent him up and she immediately came over, grabs the whole thing, I told her you can borrow it if you can't take it off the office, she immediately took it out and went and had duplicates made. But at any rate, the thing is, as I look there, there's something about a grandchild.

Now you've all got nice kids and they're cute and all that, but they don't touch my grandchild. You know it's funny, when I drive by these cars and I'll see somebody with one of these little bumper or license plate frames that says, my grandchild is cuter than yours, I want to pull him over and say, you're crazy, you've never seen mine, there's something wonderful about it. Well it's true in the spiritual world.

When there is something to where you're pouring your life into somebody, and seeing them grow, and seeing them go on to reproduce, you're a grandmother, you're a grandpa. And it may take some time, it may take some effort, but the reward of it is absolutely wonderful, it's fantastic. Taking people in, loving and caring, and the fruit of it.

And Aquila and Priscilla, obviously they were this type of a couple. There was somebody there as you see them again and again in Scripture, the only thing you know about them is they love the Lord, and they love the church, and they love people, all the way ultimately until their very death. In Romans chapter 16, in verse 4, Paul writes about Aquila and Priscilla, he says, I greet Priscilla and Aquila, this time her name is first, my fellow workers in Christ Jesus, who risk their own necks for my life, for whom not only I give thanks, but also all the churches of the Gentiles.

Look at this couple. Here is Paul writes them, as he says, by the way, say hi to Priscilla and Aquila. And he says, my fellow servants, you know, workers in Christ, and he looks at them and he says, they risk their very necks for me.

They put their own neck on the line for me, as he looks at it, for my life. He looks there as if to say any fruit that went on in my life after a certain point, he says, heaven and earth can credit Aquila and Priscilla for it, for their love, their ministry. What they did for me was a great blessing.

And he says, not only do I give them thanks, but also all the churches of the Gentiles. Here was something that the churches all over, the whole Gentile church knew Aquila and Priscilla, though we never know of them ever standing in a pulpit. We never know of them at all in a lot of the conventional things of what a lot of people would call leaders.

But they're somebody that they're marriage. They knew what it was to love the Lord. They knew what it was to love each other.

And they knew what it was to take full advantage of it in such a way as they could bring people right into their home, into their lives, and minister to them in the most wonderful of ways. And you look there and you realize this couple, they did. History tells us they more than risked their necks.

The Catholic church actually celebrates July 8th, is the day that this couple was martyred together for their witness for Christ. History about Aquila and Priscilla, they were given sainthood for their lives. But how accurate it is, who knows? We do know that though they moved from Rome to Corinth to Ephesus, and then they ultimately moved back to Rome.

And you go through the scriptures and follow them. But it's something their lives were absolutely mobile. Their lives were, they'd say, God, where do you want us to go? They'd look there and what do you want us to do? Just send us.

You want us in this town? You want us over there? We're needed over here. Whatever it is that we can help. Whatever it is that we can serve the church.

You see them sharing and serving and sanctifying. Until ultimately, as tradition has them about them in Fox's Book of Martyrs, one day this couple was led out of Rome together outside the city. And there together they were beheaded.

There this couple there for their witness for Christ is together. The amazing, wonderful thing about them. And to me, I think wonderful is the right word as well.

But there is the blade dropped on their heads together. And there they were united together in marriage. They were united together in service.

They were united together in sanctifying, you know, the body of Christ and ministering in it. And they were united together in appearing before the Lord Himself. And they're a wonderful story to me.

And many times people don't realize the power of their home. They don't realize the power of their marriage. There's a couple here.

I won't embarrass them because, well, Lee and Paul aren't the type that like to be talked about. But the thing is, is that they, this summer, they had a, he was telling me the other day on how, well, I went over,

we had dinner with them one night and they had a couple of girls, swimmers, Olympic swimmers that stayed with them for a few months in their home. And we had dinner with them one night.

It was a wonderful evening together. But just being there, and it was so wonderful because, I mean, just the prayer and the talking and sharing openly, just talking about Jesus and who He was and what He was doing. And these two girls, of course, coming from Russia, knew nothing of the gospel, knew nothing at all about any of it.

Coming to church here and so sweet and graceful they were and so warm and friendly. But as they left, one of the things that they said to Lee, or that I don't know who they said it to, I just heard it second or third hand, but that they commented on how that when they went home they wanted to get married. They had never wanted to get married before.

They grew up in a world where the home, the marriage, the idea, the concept of it was just so miserable. And how the thought that they had decided just being in a place to where just the power of a marriage and the power of how it can touch people's lives. And to me, when somebody realizes it, you can talk and talk and talk, but when you can live.

In Aquila and Priscilla they lived. The Bible says one shall chase a thousand and two a great nation. Or in another scripture that one shall chase a thousand and two ten thousands.

It's like there's a multiplication factor. You can take a man or you can take a woman and send them off alone and have them do something, they can do something. But when their lives are together and blended and they're in love with the Lord and they're in love with each other and they love serving and they love bringing people in, there's something that there's a multiplication factor, there's a power and a dimension to it that we can't fathom it on how it touches and blesses other people.

But oh, when we just learn, God. Maybe you know, for those of us that are married, to be able to say, God make us an Aquila and Priscilla. If we are selfish or we don't, you know, we're messing with each other's thermostats all the time or we're, you know, playing with each other's heads.

We don't know what it is to care. God humble us. Help us, you know, know that when we know what it is to esteem each other is more important than ourselves.

When we know what it is to want to genuinely care for each other. Give away our throne. Then is, you know, when we end up having one in the most wonderful way.

And then when you do it there in your home, you now have a tool that now God can use in the most wonderful ways. Few Christians, few Christians to me ever know it. Ever know what it is.

I remember the year that we spent in England when we were young married couple and we used to sit at night around the table with Alan and Marjorie Redpath and different times other people, you know, over there. But they didn't realize them at all, but on how at that age you're just watching them so much. Not that you've seen their staring at them, but you are.

You're watching attitudes. You're watching how they think and how and watching them on how they care. And of course, in England, you know, everything is darling, you know, and but that's kind of wonderful, you know, on how that and talking in the way that they would care and say and be interested and serve one another.

And out of that, I mean, then when you watch people as they speak or they minister, but when you realize they truly love each other, it's a wonderful thing. And if you're married, may God take your marriage and do something wonderful. If you haven't discovered the potential of it, what you can do of taking people into your life and ministering to them.

We're in such a selfish generation where we think our lives are our own. We think our marriages are our own. We think our homes are our own.

But we look there and realize, God, how can you take this, whatever it is we have, and use it, open it up and have it touch people's lives where we pour something in them or may take a little time, may take a little energy, may cost us a little something over here with an evening there or something with this or that. Take them in. But God, when we can do this, there's some way you can use it and have at it.

And if you're not married, there's still phenomenal potential with all of us with our lives. When we look there and say, how can I take and minister? You don't have to be married, obviously, to minister. That's for sure.

But the wonderful thing is when we realize the power of our lives and service and how God can use them. Well, let's pray. Father, we just thank you, Lord, for your Word.

We thank you, dear Lord, for your wonderful goodness to us. And Lord, I pray that in the evenings as we would just look at marriages, Lord, that there wouldn't be one of us that would be content with our marriage. That every married couple here, there would be something to say, God, speak to me.

Teach me. If there's any way that I've thought or conceived, even of my own marriage, as wonderful as it may be or as many needs as it may have, but to say, God, help me. If there's some way that I can become a better helpmate, help me.

Humble me. Teach me. Lord, that we can grow and in such a way that our lives can bear fruit, children, grandchildren, in the most eternal sense of the word.

So God, take us, use us, teach us, help us. Thank you for your Word. May the thoughts, Lord, of it tonight just go into each one of us and encourage us.

Lord, not that we would find ourselves struggling with what maybe we don't have or are upset that we want, but maybe the other doesn't seem to, but God, we can just know what it is to pray and say, Lord, set us where you want us, teach us and help us. Strengthen us all. For Father, we ask it in Jesus' name.

Amen.

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