

Introduction (Acts 18:24-28)

How many of you have heard of Jimmy Walker? For those who don't know about him, he won the fourth major of the year last week, the PGA Championship. Jimmy shot fourteen under par at Baltusrol Golf Club in Springfield, New Jersey and he won by one shot over the number one player in the world, Jason Day. I want to give a little background information on Jimmy. He turned professional in 2001 and started playing on the Web.com tour. He got better every year and in 2004, he was the leading money winner on the Web.com tour. By doing so, he earned the right to play on the PGA Tour. He played a couple of years on the PGA Tour, but lost his card. He went back to the Web.com tour and then regained his PGA Tour status. He made steady improvement and won just over 4 ½ million dollars between 2009 and 2012. You have to be really good to make it onto the PGA Tour. They don't let just anybody on the Tour. You have to be a great golfer to become a Tour player. Jimmy was a great player. Then, something happened that took his game to another level.

In early 2013, Jimmy called Butch Harmon, voted by Golf Digest as the leading golf instructor in America. He has worked with players like Greg Norman, Tiger Woods, Phil Mickelson, Ernie Els, Fred Couples, Adam Scott, Dustin Johnson, and others. Jimmy and Butch began to work together, and as a result, Jimmy became much more consistent. In 2013, he had ten top-twenty-five finishes. Then, in 2014, he won three of the first eight tournaments of the year. He won two more tournaments in 2015. And, last week, he won his first major championship. What was it that turned a great player into major champion? It was his willingness to humbly receive instruction from a gifted teacher. I say humble, because it takes humility to ask others for help. It takes humility to realize that you need help. It also takes a desire for excellence. Jimmy knew that he could do better, and he wanted to improve. He was not happy with the status quo; he wanted to be the very best that he could be. So, he got help from one of the best instructors in the game, and he is now a major champion.

Our text today is very similar. Luke gives us a brief glimpse into the life and ministry of a Jew named Apollos. He was eloquent, mighty in the Scriptures, fervent in spirit, and was speaking and teaching accurately the things concerning Jesus. He was a powerful and polished preacher. But then, something happened that took him to another level. He received instruction from a very gifted teacher. This took his ministry to a whole different level. Apollos left Ephesus and went to Corinth, where he greatly helped those who believed. He powerfully refuted the Jews in public, demonstrating by the Scriptures that Jesus was the Christ. Apollos was willing to receive counsel and instruction from one of the best teachers around. It helped him become an even better minister of the gospel. We will look at Apollos' ministry before his encounter with Priscilla and Aquila. We will look at his encounter with them. Third, we will look at his post-encounter ministry. Let's read our passage together.

(Acts 18:24-28) "Now a Jew named Apollos, an Alexandrian by birth, an eloquent man, came to Ephesus; and he was mighty in the Scriptures. {25} This man had been instructed in the way of the Lord; and being fervent in spirit, he was speaking and teaching accurately the things concerning Jesus, being acquainted only with the baptism of John; {26} and he began to speak out boldly in the synagogue. But when Priscilla and Aquila heard him, they took him aside and explained to him the way of God more accurately. {27} And when he wanted to go across to Achaia, the brethren encouraged him and wrote to the disciples to welcome him; and when he had arrived, he greatly helped those who had believed through grace, {28} for he powerfully refuted the Jews in public, demonstrating by the Scriptures that Jesus was the Christ."

1. Pre-Encounter Ministry

While Paul was waiting for his team to join him, he preached the gospel in Athens. He was given an opportunity to preach at the Areopagus, the court of appeals. Dionysius, the judge of the court became a believer, along with Damaris and others. Then, Paul went to Corinth, where he met Aquila and Priscilla. They were tent makers, and since Paul was also a tent maker, he stayed with them. They had left Rome and come to Corinth when Claudius ordered all the Jews out of Rome. Paul stayed in Corinth for a year and a half teaching the word of God. All this time, he was also pouring into Priscilla and Aquila. Then, Paul decided to go to Syria, and he took Priscilla and Aquila with him on the first part of the journey. He left them in Ephesus, and he went on to Antioch, where he had been sent out from. So, our story takes place in Ephesus.

Apollos was a Jew who was born in Alexandria, a large city in northern Egypt. It was founded by Alexander the Great in 335 B.C. There were more than a million people living there and there were three different ethnicities: Greek, Egyptian, and Jewish. They were careful to keep separate from one another, so it was very segregated. Alexandria had a sizable Jewish population in Alexandria.

(Acts 18:24) “Now a Jew named Apollos, an Alexandrian by birth, an eloquent man, came to Ephesus; and he was mighty in the Scriptures.”

Apollos’ name comes from the pagan deity Apollo, who in Greek mythology was the Greek sun god. Apollo was the son of Zeus, and he was also looked upon for music, poetry, light, medicine, and knowledge. It is unusual for a Jew to be named after a Greek god. Even though he was named after a pagan deity, his parents made sure he was well trained and educated in the Scriptures.

Apollos was an eloquent or learned man. The Greek word is *logios*, which comes from *logos*. It simply means a learned man. This particular Greek word is not used anywhere else in Scripture. Experts say it means a combination of learning and eloquence. The KJV also translates it as eloquent, but the NIV translates it as a learned man. I think either translation is fine. Apollos was a very eloquent speaker, but his content was also excellent. He had been well trained in the Scriptures. He was not just learned, but he was also mighty in the Scriptures. The Greek word for mighty is *dunatos*, which means strong, mighty, powerful. The root word for *dunatos* is where we get our English word, dynamite. He was dynamic. He was full of energy and enthusiasm. **Apollos was a powerful preacher of the Scriptures.**

Apollos had also been instructed in the way of the Lord. The word for instructed is *katecheo*, which means to teach by word of mouth. We get the English word catechism from it. In catechism, a series of questions and answers are given and a person memorizes both the questions and the answers. It is normally an oral teaching that is done over and over again until the person knows the content. This would have also been true for Apollos. He had become mighty in the Scriptures because he had been instructed in the way of the Lord by this repetitious learning process. He may have been given a Greek name after a pagan god, but he had been diligently and thoroughly taught the way of the Lord.

(Acts 18:25) “This man had been instructed in the way of the Lord; and being fervent in spirit, he was speaking and teaching accurately the things concerning Jesus, being acquainted only with the baptism of John;”

When Luke says that he had been instructed in the way of the Lord, he was not speaking of the way of the Lord as we may think of it. The way of the Lord was an Old Testament phrase. For example, in Genesis 18, the Lord and two other men met with Abraham. The three men were discussing what they were about to do to Sodom. Then, the Lord tells the other two men, “for I have chosen him (Abraham), so that he may command his children and his household after him to keep the way of the Lord by doing righteousness and justice.” The way of the Lord referred to living according to God’s principles. It referred to living a righteous and just life. Apollos had been instructed in God’s ways, His principles, His righteousness, and His justice.

(Gen 18:19) “For I have chosen him, so that he may command his children and his household after him to keep the way of the LORD by doing righteousness and justice, so that the LORD may bring upon Abraham what He has spoken about him.”

Next, Luke said that **Apollos was fervent in spirit**. The Greek word is *zeo*, which means to boil over or to be hot. We get our English word *zeal* from that word. Apollos was zealous. He was on fire for the Lord. He was not luke-warm like we read about in Revelations; he was so hot he was boiling over. He was not just eloquent, well learned, diligently instructed in the Scriptures and the ways of the Lord, he was on fire for the Lord.

Luke also said that he was teaching accurately the things concerning Jesus. **Apollos handled God’s Word accurately**. The Old Testament contained hundreds of Scriptures about the Messiah. Apollos had studied these passages and was teaching them accurately. The Greek word is *akribos*, which means with exactness. Apollos was not careless or sloppy in his study or in his preaching. He was thorough and precise. He taught accurately.

When Paul wrote his second letter to Timothy, he told him to “be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, accurately handling the word of truth.” Apollos was a workman who had diligently studied and was a workman who handled the word of truth accurately. Our desire at the East Mountain Vineyard is to handle the word accurately. We take preaching seriously. The word of God must be properly and accurately taught. It takes time and effort to do this, but we are committed to handling the word of truth accurately.

(2 Tim 2:15) “Be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, accurately handling the word of truth.”

However, Luke also tells us that Apollos was only acquainted with the baptism of John. Some say that he had been a disciple of John the Baptist. The Scriptures do not tell us that. They only say that he was only acquainted with the baptism of John.

(Acts 18:25) “This man had been instructed in the way of the Lord; and being fervent in spirit, he was speaking and teaching accurately the things concerning Jesus, being acquainted only with the baptism of John;”

What was the baptism of John? In Acts 1, after gathering the disciples together, Jesus told them to wait in Jerusalem for what the Father had promised. Then, He said, “for John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now.” Apollos was only familiar with the baptism of John. He was not familiar with the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Pentecost occurred

in 33 A.D. Our account today happened around 51 A.D., eighteen years later. You would think that he would have been familiar with the baptism of the Holy Spirit, but he wasn't.

(Acts 1:4-5) "Gathering them together, He commanded them not to leave Jerusalem, but to wait for what the Father had promised, "Which," He said, "you heard of from Me; {5} for John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now."

Apollos was not alone; there were others who were only familiar with the baptism of John. Next week, Bill will be sharing on Acts 19, which takes place several months after our account today. Paul had gone to Antioch, and had made his way back to Ephesus. He found some disciples and he asked them, "Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?" They replied to him, "No, we have not even heard whether there is a Holy Spirit." So, Apollos was not alone. There were many people who were not familiar with the baptism of the Holy Spirit.

(Acts 19:1-2) "It happened that while Apollos was at Corinth, Paul passed through the upper country and came to Ephesus, and found some disciples. {2} He said to them, "Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?" And they said to him, "No, we have not even heard whether there is a Holy Spirit."

Personally, I doubt that Apollos had been a disciple of John. I say this because in Luke 3:16, people asked John if he was the Christ. He told them, "I baptize you with water, but One is coming who is mightier than I, and I am not fit to untie the thong of His sandals; he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire." John the Baptist clearly preached that Jesus would baptize us with the Holy Spirit. If Apollos had been John's disciple I think he would have been familiar with this.

(Luke 3:15-16) "Now while the people were in a state of expectation and all were wondering in their hearts about John, as to whether he was the Christ, {16} John answered and said to them all, "As for me, I baptize you with water; but One is coming who is mightier than I, and I am not fit to untie the thong of His sandals; He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire."

The baptism by John with water was a baptism of repentance. John had been called to prepare the way of the Lord. In Luke 3:3-14, John called the crowds a brood of vipers, and exhorted them to bear fruits in keeping with repentance. He told them not to count on their father Abraham for salvation, but to repent and get right with God. He told people to share their tunics and food with those who were needy. He told the tax collectors not to collect any more than they were ordered to collect. He told the soldiers not to take money from anyone by force, or to accuse anyone falsely. John's message was a message of repentance and righteousness. This is the message that Apollos knew.

(Luke 3:3-14) "And he came into all the district around the Jordan, preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins; {4} as it is written in the book of the words of Isaiah the prophet, "The voice of one crying in the wilderness, 'make ready the way of the Lord, make His paths straight.... {7} So he began saying to the crowds who were going out to be baptized by him, "You brood of vipers, who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? {8} "Therefore bear fruits in keeping with repentance, and do not begin to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham for our father,' for I say to you that from these stones God is able to raise up children to Abraham.... {11} And he would answer and say to them, "The man who has two tunics is to share with him who has none; and he who has food is to do likewise." {12} And some tax collectors

also came to be baptized, and they said to him, "Teacher, what shall we do?" {13} And he said to them, "Collect no more than what you have been ordered to." {14} Some soldiers were questioning him, saying, "And what about us, what shall we do?" And he said to them, "Do not take money from anyone by force, or accuse anyone falsely, and be content with your wages."

2. Encounter With Priscilla and Aquila

Apollos was a powerful minister, and he was speaking out boldly in the synagogue. But, as powerful and learned as he was, **Apollos had gaps in his understanding.** It so happened that while he was speaking out boldly in the synagogue that Priscilla and Aquila heard him. Afterwards, they took him aside and explained the way of God more accurately. He was speaking and teaching accurately the things concerning Jesus, but he was missing some key things.

(Acts 18:26) "and he began to speak out boldly in the synagogue. But when Priscilla and Aquila heard him, they took him aside and explained to him the way of God more accurately."

I have been a Christian for forty-two years. Four years after becoming a Christian the Lord gave me a life verse. It is Ezra 7:10. "Ezra had set his heart to study the law of the LORD and to practice it, and to teach His statutes and ordinances in Israel." I set my heart on studying the law of the Lord, practicing what I studied, and teaching God's word to others. I call it the three P's: Prepare, Practice, and Preach. So, for thirty-eight years I have been diligently studying God's word. I also maintain a healthy reading program. For many years I read through the Bible every year. For the past couple of years I have read the Bible through at least twice a year. My objective was to have a better overall grasp of Scripture. Having said all of that, I stand before you today and tell you that I have many gaps in my knowledge of Scripture. I feel like I know very little; there is so much more to learn. Apollos was a powerful minister of the gospel, yet he had some gaps in his understanding and knowledge.

(Ezra 7:10) "For Ezra had set his heart to study the law of the LORD and to practice it, and to teach His statutes and ordinances in Israel."

There are some gaps in my life and ministry that weren't filled by studying or reading. There were gaps that were filled by people like Priscilla and Aquila, who poured into me. There was a man named Bob Schindler. He and his wife, Beth, had been with the Navigators. They poured into Karen and I. Then, there was a man named Jim Hiskey, who had been one of the founders of the PGA Tour Bible Study. He and his brother Babe had played for Houston, and then earned their tour cards. He spoke into my life about humility and not coming across smugly. Then, there was Kermit Zarley, who taught me how to use some Bible tools. Then, a pastor named Jim Elliff, who now is over a group of churches in Kansas City, spent time mentoring me. He taught me some different Bible study methods, and he also took me through a preaching class, using the same books that he used in seminary. Then, a pastor named David Loveless, poured into my life for several years. He filled in gaps in relational evangelism, small group ministry, and church leadership. I am grateful for all these Priscillas and Aquilas in my life. **We all need wise mentors to pour into our lives.**

We also need to take the things that we have learned and pour into other faithful people. That is what Paul told Timothy to do. He said, "the things which you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses, entrust these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also." You are going to hear more about this in months to come. Pastor Bill Bice is working on a corporate plan of discipleship.

(2 Tim 2:2) “The things which you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses, entrust these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also.”

When Priscilla and Aquila heard him at the synagogue, they picked up on one of the gaps that he had, and they explained to him the way of God more accurately. We all need people in our lives who will speak the truth in love to us. We need people in our lives who will speak into our lives and help us to be more complete and accurate in our doctrine. There are several things needed for this type of relationship to happen. First, **we must be around wise and knowledgeable people who are willing to sow into our lives.** Those people must be courageous and bold enough to share with us. **We must be humble and receive what they have to share with us.**

During my first year on the PGA Tour, I was at Pebble Beach for the Bing Crosby Clambake. While practicing my putting before the tournament, I heard another rookie complain about how badly he was putting. I watched him for a minute and then shared with him what he needed to do to correct his putting woes. That professional got extremely mad at me for offering unsolicited advice. I must have given him some good advice because he had the best tournament of his whole career that week. But, the response that he had for me when I offered some help to him cut off any further help. I never offered any help to him in the future. We must be willing to humbly receive counsel from others. We cannot be defensive or prideful when someone fills in some gaps in our understanding.

Now, I was a PGA Tour professional when I gave that advice. However, I was a rookie, and not that great of a PGA Tour player at that time. I was not a Butch Harmon. In our account today, Apollo received instruction from someone like Butch Harmon. I want to talk just a minute about Priscilla and Aquila. They had come from Rome. The Jews in Rome had been expelled by Claudius (Acts 18:2). Historians cannot agree upon an exact time this happened, but the window of time is between 41 AD and 49 AD. Historians say that Paul went from Athens to Corinth in the summer of 50 AD, and Aquila and Priscilla were already in Corinth when he arrived. Because they were tentmakers like Paul, he stayed with them in Corinth. Paul stayed and taught in Corinth for eighteen months, so they were able to sit under Paul’s teaching and ministry all during that time.

(Acts 18:1-3) “After these things he left Athens and went to Corinth. {2} And he found a Jew named Aquila, a native of Pontus, having recently come from Italy with his wife Priscilla, because Claudius had commanded all the Jews to leave Rome. He came to them, {3} and because he was of the same trade, he stayed with them and they were working, for by trade they were tent-makers.”

When Paul left Corinth to go to Syria, he took Priscilla and Aquila with him, but he dropped them off in Ephesus, which is where our account today took place. While in Ephesus, they planted a church. We know this because in Paul’s first letter to the Corinthians, which he wrote while he was in Ephesus, he told the Corinthians that Priscilla and Aquila greeted them, and the church that was in their house.

(1 Cor 16:19-20) “The churches of Asia greet you. Aquila and Prisca greet you heartily in the Lord, with the church that is in their house. {20} All the brethren greet you. Greet one another with a holy kiss.”

That was not the only church that they planted. Two years later, in 58 AD, Paul wrote a letter to the Romans. In his letter to them, he greeted Prisca and Aquila and the church that was in their house. After leaving Ephesus, they had moved back to Rome and planted a church there. Claudius died in 54 AD and the Jews were free to move back to Rome. **Priscilla and Aquila were church planters and pastors.** Aquila and Priscilla are regarded by some scholars as apostles. I would agree with that view. In Romans 16, Paul also called them his fellow workers. The KJV calls them his helpers. The Greek word is *sunergos*, which means workers that are joined together. Paul did apostolic work, and they were joined to Paul in apostolic ministry. They did not just work under Paul; they worked autonomously. They planted churches. They raised up leaders in churches and moved to their next assignment. They did not always travel with Paul; they were his fellow workers doing their own apostolic work. Paul also said that they risked their own necks or lives for him. They were courageous ministers who suffered for the sake of the gospel. Some scholars attribute the book of Hebrews to Priscilla. They say that her name was left off of it so that it would not be suppressed because of the female authorship. I do not see any Biblical evidence showing her authorship, so I feel that this is speculation. I have always leaned towards Paul as the author of Hebrews.

(Rom 16:3-5a) “Greet Prisca and Aquila, my fellow workers in Christ Jesus, {4} who for my life risked their own necks, to whom not only do I give thanks, but also all the churches of the Gentiles; {5} also greet the church that is in their house....”

I want to mention a couple of other facts about Priscilla and Aquila. It was normal to mention the man's name first. In our culture today, it is still normal to say Bill and Karen Murchison, rather than Karen and Bill Murchison. When Luke introduces them in Acts 18, he said that Paul met Aquila, and that he had a wife named Priscilla. In Acts 18:18, when Paul left for Syria, Priscilla and Aquila accompanied him. I believe she was the primary one helping Paul in his ministry. In 1 Corinthians 16:19, Aquila is mentioned before Priscilla. In that case, I believe that Aquila was leading the church that they planted in Ephesus. In Romans 16, Paul mentions Priscilla first and the church that is in their house. I believe she was mentioned first because she was leading that church in Rome. I believe that they functioned as a team. Both of them were ordained ministers of the gospel. I believe that Priscilla was the primary teacher. I believe that is why she is mentioned first. In our account today, Priscilla and Aquila took Apollos aside and taught him a more accurate way. Priscilla is mentioned first because she was the primary one teaching Apollos.

Some people say that women are not to ever instruct or exercise authority over a man. I think that is a misunderstanding of Scripture. In 1 Timothy 2, Paul says that a woman should not teach and usurp authority over man. The Greek word is *authenteo*, which means to usurp authority. A person who is not under proper authority is a dangerous person. Priscilla was under her husband's authority. He was right there with her, backing her up, but she is mentioned first because she was doing the instructing. Apollos was humble and he received instruction from a very anointed woman of God.

What did Priscilla and Aquila instruct Apollos about? Well, since he was only familiar with the baptism of John, I think it is a safe guess to say that they instructed him about the baptism of the Holy Spirit. In our passage next week, Paul came back to Ephesus and also found some disciples that were also only familiar with the baptism of John. Paul laid hands on them and they were filled with the Holy Spirit. I believe this is what happened to Apollos, but our text does not say that. The emphasis in our passage today is that Priscilla and Aquila explained to Apollos a more accurate way, and his ministry went to a higher level.

(Acts 19:1-6) “It happened that while Apollos was at Corinth, Paul passed through the upper country and came to Ephesus, and found some disciples. {2} He said to them, "Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?" And they said to him, "No, we have not even heard whether there is a Holy Spirit." {3} And he said, "Into what then were you baptized?" And they said, "Into John's baptism." {4} Paul said, "John baptized with the baptism of repentance, telling the people to believe in Him who was coming after him, that is, in Jesus." {5} When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. {6} And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Spirit came on them, and they began speaking with tongues and prophesying.”

Before moving on, let me say that some people do not believe that women have a place in ministry. I would welcome the opportunity to speak with any of you that have questions about women in ministry. The passage today is an example of a woman in ministry. She helped plant churches. She had an amazing grasp of Scripture. She was able to speak into other people and help them grow in their knowledge and ministry. She was a courageous minister of the gospel. But, women in ministry is not the main point of this passage. The main point is how Apollos, who was a mighty minister, received some instruction from Priscilla and Aquila, and became an even more powerful minister of the gospel.

3. Post Encounter Ministry

After Priscilla and Aquila had instructed Apollos, he decides to go across to Achaia. Achaia was a region in what is now Southern Greece. It included both Athens and Corinth. We don't know if he went to both places, but we do know that he ended up in Corinth. He pastored the church that Paul had planted. In Paul's first letter to the Corinthians, he said, “I planted, Apollos watered, but God caused the growth.” There was a division in the church at Corinth that developed. Some said they were of Paul and others said they were of Apollos. In Paul's first letter to the Corinthians, he brought correction to them. He said that God was the one who caused the growth in Corinth, and he and Apollos were just servants that had been given an opportunity by God to sow into them.

(Acts 18:27a) “And when he wanted to go across to Achaia...”

(1 Cor 3:6) “I planted, Apollos watered, but God was causing the growth.”

One principle that we can glean from this verse is on how God leads us. Luke records that Apollos wanted to go across to Achaia. God places desires in our hearts. That is one of the ways that He leads us. Sometimes he gives dreams or visions. He used a vision of a man asking for help to get Paul to go to Macedonia (Philippi). Sometimes, He sends an angel to give us a message. **Sometimes, God leads us by placing a desire in our heart to do something.** In our Membership Form, we ask people about their desired areas of ministry. We want to help people find the place in their lives where God wants them to serve. It is important to pay attention to the desires God gives you. One year CNN did a special on our family. In the televised special, Jim Huber asked me about my golf future. I told him that I was “right smack in the middle of God's will for my life, and if He has something else for me to do, He will change the desires of my heart.” I believe if you are seeking God with all your heart, and delighting yourself in the Lord, He will give you the desires of your heart. I believe that because I think He will put desires in your heart.

(Ps 37:4) “Delight yourself in the LORD; And He will give you the desires of your heart.”

For many years I had a desire to move closer to my parents. I wanted to be there for them as they got older. I wanted to honor my parents. In 2005, I did not get a prophetic word to move to Albuquerque, I received an offer from my parents to come manage their company. The job offer lined up with the long-time desire I had to be near my parents. Both Karen and I had a desire to live in the East Mountains. We had no desire to live in Albuquerque. I believe it was God's will for me to come here, and I believe it was God's will for me to plant a church in the East Mountains. Apollos had a desire to go to Corinth, and I believe this was how God directed him to move to Corinth.

Not only did God use a desire to direct Apollos to Corinth, He confirmed it through the brethren. When they heard that he wanted to go there, they encouraged him. The normal Greek word for encourage is not used here. Instead, protrepo is used. It means to urge forward. This was not just an encouragement; it was an urging for him to go there. I think that it is good to run our plans through friends who can help us discern the will of God. I think it is also good for us to listen to our friends when they have a check about something we want to do.

(Acts 18:27) "And when he wanted to go across to Achaia, the brethren encouraged him and wrote to the disciples to welcome him; and when he had arrived, he greatly helped those who had believed through grace,"

Apollos had a humble heart that was submitted to the counsel of the brethren. Solomon said one of the keys to being victorious is listening to counselors. Like Jimmy Walker, Apollos listened to wise counsel and it helped him become a better minister of the gospel.

(Pr 11:14) "Where there is no guidance the people fall, But in abundance of counselors there is victory."

Moses, the great man of God, listened to the counsel of his father-in-law. He was trying to do everything himself. Jethro told him, "now listen to me; I will give you counsel, and God be with you." He told him to appoint others to help him settle the disputes of the people. He told him that he was going to wear himself out if he continued to judge all the disputes by himself.

(Ex 18:19) "Now listen to me: I will give you counsel, and God be with you. You be the people's representative before God, and you bring the disputes to God,"

Solomon also said that "the way of a fool is right in his own eyes, but a wise man is he who listens to counsel." Apollos was not right in his own eyes in his preaching, and he was not right in his own eyes when it came time to discerning the will of God. He wisely accepted the counsel of others.

(Pr 12:15) "The way of a fool is right in his own eyes, but a wise man is he who listens to counsel."

The disciples did more than urge Apollos to go; they wrote to the disciples to welcome him. When I moved here from Atlanta, I had our pastor write a welcome letter for me. I handed that letter to the pastor of the church that we joined. It was meant to vouch for my proven ministry and to open up doors of ministry here. They essentially gave a letter of reference for Apollos to the church at Corinth. I think reference checks are important in the church, and also in the business world.

A couple of years ago I wanted to hire a young man in Houston. He talked a great game, and was very enthusiastic about working for us. Unfortunately, his background check showed that he had been arrested for shoplifting, had a fight with the police, and had been a drug user. Using a background check saved us from hiring the wrong person.

When Paul went from Damascus to Jerusalem, he tried to join the church there. He was not allowed into the church. Then, Barnabas took him to the apostles and vouched for his conversion, and told how he had boldly witnessed in Damascus. Then, the apostles took Barnabas' word and allowed Paul to move about freely in the church.

After Apollos arrived in Corinth, he greatly helped those who had believed through grace. How did he help them? He helped them with their evangelistic outreach. He powerfully refuted the Jews in public, demonstrating by the Scriptures that Jesus was the Christ.

(Acts 18:27b-28) "... and when he had arrived, he greatly helped those who had believed through grace, {28} for he powerfully refuted the Jews in public, demonstrating by the Scriptures that Jesus was the Christ."

Apollos went on to have a very powerful ministry in Corinth. How powerful? We get an idea of that by the division that occurred in Corinth. In Paul's letter of correction to them, he quoted something that he had heard. Some of the people were saying they were of Paul. Others said they were of Apollos, Peter, or Christ. That is pretty good company to be listed among. Paul tells them to think of them as servants to whom God had given opportunity. God does not like division and strife, so taking sides was not good. But, if Apollos had not been an outstanding minister, he would never have been included in that group. Eventually, Apollos left Corinth, and joined Paul in apostolic ministry. Our account today is just a glimpse at the humility that he had in receiving wise instruction and counsel from Priscilla and Aquila.

(1 Cor 1:11-12) "For I have been informed concerning you, my brethren, by Chloe's people, that there are quarrels among you. {12} Now I mean this, that each one of you is saying, "I am of Paul," and "I of Apollos," and "I of Cephas," and "I of Christ."

Conclusion

As we come to a close this morning, who is pouring into your life? Who is filling in the gaps in your life and ministry? On the other side, who are you pouring yourself into? Who is the young Apollos that you are helping to become more successful?

Our mission is not just to preach the gospel. The mandate that God gave the church is to make disciples. We need others to fill in the gaps in our lives, but we also need to fill in the gaps in others. We are channels. God wants to pour into us so that we can pour into others.

Let's pray.

Introduction (Acts 18:24-28)**1. Pre-Encounter Ministry** (Acts 18:24)

- Apollos was an _____ or _____ man.
- Apollos was a _____ preacher of the Scriptures.
- Apollos had also been _____ in the way of the Lord. (Acts 18:25, Gen 18:19)
- Apollos was _____ in spirit.
- Apollos handled God's Word _____. (2 Tim 2:15, Acts 1:4-5, 18:25, 19:1-2, Luke 3:3-16)

2. Encounter (Acts 18:26, 19:1-6)

- Apollos had _____ in his understanding. (Acts 18:26, Ezra 7:10)
- We all need wise _____ to pour into our lives. (2 Tim 2:2)
- We must be around _____ and knowledgeable people who are willing to sow into our lives.
- We must be _____ and receive what they have to share with us.
- Priscilla and Aquila were church planters and _____. (Acts 18:1-3, 1 Cor 16:19-20, Rom 16:3-5a)

3. Post Encounter Ministry (Acts 18:27-28, 1 Cor 3:6, Pr 11:14, 12:15, Ex 18:19, 1 Cor 1:11-12)

- Sometimes, God leads us by placing a _____ in our heart to do something. (Ps 37:4)

Introduction (Acts 18:24-28)**1. Pre-Encounter Ministry** (Acts 18:24)

- Apollos was an _____ or _____ man.
- Apollos was a _____ preacher of the Scriptures.
- Apollos had also been _____ in the way of the Lord. (Acts 18:25, Gen 18:19)
- Apollos was _____ in spirit.
- Apollos handled God's Word _____. (2 Tim 2:15, Acts 1:4-5, 18:25, 19:1-2, Luke 3:3-16)

2. Encounter (Acts 18:26, 19:1-6)

- Apollos had _____ in his understanding. (Acts 18:26, Ezra 7:10)
- We all need wise _____ to pour into our lives. (2 Tim 2:2)
- We must be around _____ and knowledgeable people who are willing to sow into our lives.
- We must be _____ and receive what they have to share with us.
- Priscilla and Aquila were church planters and _____. (Acts 18:1-3, 1 Cor 16:19-20, Rom 16:3-5a)

3. Post Encounter Ministry (Acts 18:27-28, 1 Cor 3:6, Pr 11:14, 12:15, Ex 18:19, 1 Cor 1:11-12)

- Sometimes, God leads us by placing a _____ in our heart to do something. (Ps 37:4)