

Better Together

Acts 18:18-28

Apollos gives us a good example to follow as well. I mean look at his resume! And these couple of tentmakers think they're going to teach him something? That's doesn't appear to be his attitude at all. He humbly received correction and adjusted his teaching.

And because Aquila and Priscila cared enough to engage, and Apollos was humble enough to receive correction, there is this beautiful result of more kingdom ministry being done in Ephesus and then in Corinth. The church in Ephesus could get behind and support Apollos in his desire to go to Corinth. And once there, God uses Apollos in powerful ways to strengthen the church in Corinth. Apollos was definitely better together with Aquila and Priscilla. Later, Paul would even remind the Corinthians, "I, (Paul) planted, Apollos watered, God gave the growth."

In a game, the huddle is not the play. The timeout on the bench is not the play. The huddle accomplishes nothing on its own. People don't watch sports to see a huddle. But they do want to see what difference the huddle or the timeout actually makes.

Our community doesn't need to see any more huddles by the body of Christ. They need to see the church of Jesus Christ scoring touchdowns for the kingdom of God.

There are some sports that you play as an individual without a team, but this that God has called us to is not one of them. This life in Christ that we have each individually been called to is one best done together.

As glorious as it is when a team works together and fights hard to victory, it is equally crushing when a team falls apart and suffers defeat. But it's not just the world of sports where we see this. We see this in business, in families, and even in the _____.

Rather than a sports team, Paul writes to the Corinthians that we are like a body. By design, as the body of Christ, we function better when we are together. We are supposed to work and serve with each other not against each other and also not off somewhere on our own.

4 Ways We Are Better Together

1. We are better together in _____ (18-20) .

Paul's ministry team which previously consisted of Timothy, Silas and himself, now has two new additions. These are not minor additions, as we'll see in a minute, Aquila and Priscila play a key role in ministering to the church in both Ephesus and Rome. A quick study of this couple in the New Testament, you will find they were a key couple in shepherding young churches. They even at one point somehow risked their lives for Paul and his ministry. Paul moves on from Ephesus, but Aquila and Priscila stay put and most believe they were actively involved in growing the church at Ephesus.

I wonder who are we taking along with us in our walk towards Christ?

Do we read our Bibles alone, pray alone, reach out to others alone, or struggle in these things alone, when it might be a richer experience and closer to what Jesus desired, if we would do them together with others? You may want to go visit someone shut in at home, or sick in the hospital, but not sure how you would approach that. Ask someone to go with you. Why in our Christian life and Christian service are we so bent on going alone? Let's go together!

Who is someone you could call up this week to invite to coffee and prayer? Or read the Bible together?

2. We are better together in _____ and unity (21-22).

We love to hear what God has been doing in and through your lives in the places he has you ministering. If you're asking yourself, what ministry?

You know what ministry. That classroom where you teach kids from all over the county. The workplace where you spend at least 40 hours a week. The home with your spouse and kids that see and know you at your worst and best. And at church, you do have a ministry in this church body, don't you? Yes, those places of ministry. Don't let us forget, we are all in ministry.

One could imagine as Paul is spending time with these home churches, there are times of accountability, times of mutual encouragement, times of counsel, times of prayer together over the churches that he had started, the setbacks and opposition he faced.

Do you need someone to pray for you and the ministry where God has placed you?

Are you discouraged by setbacks, or need accountability in an area where God is moving you?

Turn in here folks! This is what being the church is all about. We are at work in this world together.

3. We are better together for _____, growth, and maturity (23).

In verse 23, after having some down time, reconnecting with the churches, he starts to ramp back up again for his third missionary journey. The first thing he does is to circle back around and visit places he had been before to strengthen the disciples in the regions of Galatia and Phrygia.

It is apparent from the book of Acts but also from the rest of Paul's letters that we have in our New Testament, that Paul feels responsible for the growth and maturity of the churches he establishes. He doesn't run in somewhere, set up a church, and then run on to never be seen again. No, he circles back around to strengthen the disciples.

Our individualistic, separated world stands in stark contrast to how God has designed his body, the church. He has designed us in such a way to use you to speak truth to us, to strengthen those members of the body that are weak. Don't dismiss yourselves as old and out of touch with the younger crowd, regardless if we know it or feel it, we need you. We need you who have gone ahead to turn around strengthen us in our weakness. We will fail and falter otherwise. Strengthen those who are younger.

4. We are better together for a correct and _____, witness. (24-28)

Attributes of Apollos:

- a native of Alexandria
- an eloquent man
- competent in the Scriptures
- instructed in the way of the Lord
- fervent in spirit
- spoke and taught accurately the things concerning Jesus
- knew only the baptism of John
- speak boldly in the synagogue
- wished to cross to Achaia
- the brothers encouraged him
- he greatly helped those who through grace had believed
- he powerfully refuted the Jews in public
- showing by the Scriptures that the Christ was Jesus

Aquila and Priscilla didn't rebuke Apollos in public, they didn't go talk to anyone else, they went straight to Apollos, took him aside, sat down with him, and filled in the gaps that he was missing. What an example they have left for us. An example of unity, encouragement, not turning a blind eye to that which is missing but being willing to step in and teach to better equip a fellow brother in Christ for more effective ministry.