Kingdom Men | Women
A Life God Uses • Message 4
Bryan Jones
October 25, 2026

Prayer Points for Prayer Time:

- **Pray that you will trust God when life doesn't go as planned.**
- **Pray that your words will build others up and bring life.**
- **Ask God to show you where He has placed you to make a difference.**

Worship Psalm:
Therefore, God elevated him to the place of highest honor and gave him the name above all other names, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue declare that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.
Philippians 2:9-11 (NLT)

Scripture Reading:
Paul stayed on in Corinth for some time. Then he left the brothers and sisters and sailed for Syria, accompanied by Priscilla and Aquila. Before he sailed, he had his hair cut off at Cenchreae because of a vow he had taken. They arrived at Ephesus, where Paul left Priscilla and Aquila. He himself went into the synagogue and reasoned with the Jews. When they asked him to spend more time with them, he declined. But as he left, he promised, "I will come back if it is God's will." Then he set sail from Ephesus. When he landed at Caesarea, he went up to Jerusalem and greeted the church and then went down to Antioch. After spending some time in Antioch, Paul set out from there and traveled from place to place throughout the region of Galatia and Phrygia, strengthening all the disciples. Meanwhile a Jew named Apollos, a native of Alexandria, came to Ephesus. He was a learned man, with a thorough knowledge of the Scriptures. He had been instructed in the way of the Lord, and he spoke with great fervor and taught about Jesus accurately, though he knew only the baptism of John. He began to speak boldly in the synagogue. When Priscilla and Aquila heard him, they invited him to their home and explained to him the way of God more adequately.
Acts 18:18-26 (NIV)

A. Introduction

We live in a culture that teaches us that if people don't see you, you must not be significant.

We count followers. We count likes. We count invitations. We notice who has the microphone, who is on the stage, whose name is on the flyer, and who gets recognized.

And if we're not careful, that same cultural mentality can creep into the Church.

See, culture tells us we are the center. We are the most important person. But here at Brookwood, we have a phrase: Jesus at the Center. Why?

Because you aren't the star of your story. God is. I am the supporting cast. And guess what? I don't always like it.

Here's the point: <u>You can't be full of yourself and God</u>.

You can have a platform, success, and tons of people following you, but if you aren't careful, you can get so full of yourself that God has no room in your life and heart.

Because what I didn't realize when I was younger was that my purpose was power and success wrapped up in spirituality. Because, simply put, I wanted to be the star of my life. I needed a platform to feel like I had done something meaningful with my life.

At one point, I suddenly found myself without a job, and I had three camps to lead. That summer, for crazy reasons, they all fell through. I couldn't get a job for a season. And yet, something profound happened in that season: I found real joy. To this day, I would tell you that some of the richest ministry and God moments happened behind the scenes.

See, I learned you don't need a spotlight or platform to have real Kingdom influence. And just because you have those things doesn't mean you do.

You don't need a stage, a platform, or a big following to be a Kingdom man or woman. But I'm telling you, if you get these principles from a behind-the-scenes couple in the Bible, it will change your life.

B. A Life God Uses

1. **Kingdom people look at <u>SETBACKS</u> as setups for God's work.**
   (Acts 18:1-3)

After this, Paul left Athens and went to Corinth. There he met a Jew named Aquila, a native of Pontus, who had recently come from Italy with his wife Priscilla, because Claudius had ordered all Jews to leave Rome. Paul went to see them, and because he was a tentmaker as they were, he stayed and worked with them.

Acts 18:1-3 (NIV)

Paul was preaching and stirring things up, so Christians had to leave Rome and move to Corinth…

Some of you really aren't going to like this point, but some of you are wondering: *Why am I single? Why is marriage so hard? Why am I in this job? Why am I in this situation? Why am I in this neighborhood or this community?*

This is exactly what Aquila and Priscilla had happen… they didn't want to move where they did… they had to move because of what was happening.

This wasn't their plan, but God used it… because it was in Corinth that they met Paul. What probably felt like an interruption became a divine introduction. They thought they were being displaced, but God was positioning them.

What felt like an interruption became a divine introduction…

So I love this: Paul worked with them and lived with them. God orchestrated all this so this couple could support, build up, and love on others…

God allowed a setback with Aquila and Priscilla so they could be set up to meet the Apostle Paul and be a blessing in his life…

I remember years ago, I was interviewing at a church in Mississippi, and it was clear that it wasn't the right fit a day in. But I remember thinking, *All right, God, we are here. Is there anything You want from us?*

While one of the staff members was interviewing, something happened that rarely happens. I asked, *Is everything okay?* And he just broke down. He told me his wife was leaving him, and he talked about his anxiety.

So the next day, I told him, *Let's meet at a holy place: the Waffle House*. For four hours, we chatted. I talked about my anxiety and how God met me in it.

Here's my whole point: God didn't bring me to Mississippi to interview. He brought me to Mississippi for that one person…

This could change your life if you get this today. Some of you are asking:

God, why did You let this happen?

Why did this door close?

Why did I have to leave?

Why did my plans change?

Why am I in this job?

And God may be saying:

Because there is somebody in the next place you need to meet, or something you may need to learn…

And sometimes you are in a season where your pain becomes your platform, and your mistake becomes your ministry…

Porn and anxiety have been some of my greatest tools…

See, just be faithful to learn, meet, and serve wherever you are…

Waiting seasons are never wasted seasons with God.

2. **Kingdom people <u>BUILD</u> <u>UP</u>, not beat down.**
   (Acts 18:24-26)

Meanwhile a Jew named Apollos, a native of Alexandria, came to Ephesus. He was a learned man, with a thorough knowledge of the Scriptures. He had been instructed in the way of the Lord, and he spoke with great fervor and taught about Jesus accurately, though he knew only the baptism of John. He began to speak boldly in the synagogue. When Priscilla and Aquila heard him, they invited him to their home and explained to him the way of God more adequately.
Acts 18:24-26 (NIV)

So Paul was there. Then, all of a sudden, they got this new preacher. They didn't necessarily want this new preacher. They wanted to work with Paul, but he left, and now they are here. But here's what they did: they built him up. They didn't complain or tear him down.

The average person complains 30 times a day. And some of you knocked out 15 before you even got to church!

I want to address something. Two weeks ago, I sat down with Perry, our founding pastor, and I apologized to him. I said something unwise, foolish, and hurtful, and I sat down with him and apologized. As soon as I tried to apologize, he cut me off and said, *You don't need to.*

And I said, *I do*. I told him that's not my heart. I want to build people up, and I want my words to bring life.

And the thing that struck me is that he and Leigh Ann spent three hours building me up, not saying, *Why did you say this?* but, *Hey, here's what we learned.*

They were doing exactly what Aquila and Priscilla did.

Proverbs 18:21: The tongue has the power of life and death.

One of those people who encouraged me was a guy named Rob Dempsey **[show photo].** I met Rob in April of 2023. We met at the Starbucks in Five Forks. In my first five minutes, I was struck by his energy. In fact, he ordered a venti coffee, and I thought, *Do you really need more coffee? Perhaps a juice would be sufficient!*

I was also struck by his love for people. About 20 minutes into the conversation, we realized we had a mutual friend, so he pulled out his phone, scooted his chair around to the other side, threw his arms around me, pulled out his phone to take a selfie, and told me to smile. I felt violated, but I did what he said!

What Rob didn't know was that, being new to this church, I had told a friend*, I know that as soon as I come here, I will be 'pastor' in title, but I know it will take years to earn the right to be called pastor.*

Once Rob scooted over to his side of the table and left a little room for Jesus between us, I saw the text. He simply said, *This is my pastor.*

He was the first person who called me pastor.

He could have crossed his arms. He could've complained or had a wait-and-see mentality. But Rob, like Aquila and Priscilla, had a calling to build others up.

So many of you are like this. And let's remember: anyone can tear down, but only a spiritually mature person can build up.

See, Aquila and Priscilla had a gifted leader. But did you notice where it says he only knew about the baptism of John? That's not saying he was a false prophet. It's saying his heart was really good, but he still had some things to learn.

Aquila and Priscilla didn't create a prayer request in their small group to pray for this young preacher- oh, and spoiler alert: that's also called gossip.

They didn't talk badly about him in the community.

They didn't say, *Man, I think we need to find a new church so I can be fed like I was with Paul.*

They stayed… and they chose to build up and serve this man… and they coached him.

And this man, Apollos, goes on to be a powerhouse for the Gospel. Paul mentions him multiple times and compares his ministry with his and Peter's. He even calls him a better preacher.

3. **Kingdom people are faithful to do <u>ORDINARY</u> things, not just extraordinary things.** (Acts 18:3)

Aquila and Priscilla weren't big-time names.

They didn't write a book of the Bible.
They weren't pastors.
They didn't have a big stage or microphone.
They weren't widely known around Corinth outside a small Christian community.
We don't have a recorded sermon from either one of them.

Yet, when you follow their story, they were faithful in ordinary moments.

They helped Paul.
They discipled Apollos.
They opened their home.
They helped establish churches.
They risked their lives.

And years later, we are still talking about them.

They teach us something every Kingdom person needs to know: **you don't need a spotlight to have Kingdom impact.**

And because he was a tentmaker as they were, he stayed and worked with them.
Acts 18:3 (NIV)

They were just faithful. Notice they were working in vocational ministry, but they used their resources and their jobs as ministry.

See, I find that most people are looking for something so extraordinary in their lives that they struggle to be faithful in the little things, the ordinary things.

"We do not need the grace of God to stand crises, human nature and pride are sufficient, we can face the strain magnificently; but it does require the supernatural grace of God to live twenty-four hours in every day as a saint, to go through drudgery as a disciple, to live an ordinary, unobserved, ignored existence as a disciple of Jesus."
- Oswald Chambers

They didn't wait for some great thing. They just served faithfully in the season they were in.

Think about this: Has anyone ever been impacted by 1 or 2 Corinthians? They funded the church in Corinth. Or what about Ephesians, which is one of the richest books of theology and the Kingdom of God? When Paul penned the letter to the church in Ephesus, the address he put on it was Aquila and Priscilla's house.

If you have been impacted by any of those books of the Bible, and millions of people have, it's because of the ordinary, day-to-day faithfulness of this couple.

I love this verse: *Whatever gifts you have, use them*. Don't believe the lie that you have to be a preacher or missionary to have a mission. You can use your words, or you can serve. Do it unto the Lord. You can be Paul or Priscilla. Just use whatever you have.

Have you thought about your home, your resources, and your neighborhood as a mission field, as a couple or an individual?

People like Aquila and Priscilla opened their homes and cared for those around them.

If you're a stay-at-home mom, invite other moms to your house. If you're working, pick a night once a month and invite coworkers over to get to know them. Don't just hurry past others as you go on a walk or work in the yard. Pause to see people.

Get to know the people at your work. God has placed you there. Just be faithful in the ordinary days and watch, at the end of your life, how God uses it all.

Communion