

Priscilla and Aquila: Playing Second Fiddle

Sept 6, 2020

Based on Acts chapter 18

A: Hey, wife, I heard a good riddle in the market today. What is the hardest instrument to play? Second fiddle! Ha, Ha, get it? Second fiddle. I thought that was funny.

P: Well, old man, you should know all about second fiddle. You have had plenty of practice.

A: Here now! What do you mean? I can't even play a Jews Harp, let alone a fiddle.

P: Oh, come on; you know what I mean. You are bright and capable, but you always seem to be someone else's side kick these days, never the star.

A: I know ONE area that I didn't play second fiddle –When it comes to having the best wife, I play second fiddle to NO man! I remember when we first met. You were the most classy woman I had ever met: I'd never met a woman so educated and witty, who was still very kind and loving – AND you had -& still have- the incredible bonus of being absolutely beautiful! Yep, when it comes to choosing a wife, I played second fiddle to NO man!

P: You old flatterer! But, seriously, Paul was a pretty demanding fellow. Things had to be just right. Shall we say he wasopinionated?

A: Ah! I see – Yes, “Paul, the Star”! He was pretty intense, wasn't he? He was a bit like an electric eel – shockingly intense!

P: (chuckles) you have such a way with words! Remember when we met him? We were still somewhat new in Corinth. It wasn't very long after Emperor Claudius ordered all of the Jews out of Rome. (Now that I think about it, that turned out to be NOT such a bad thing, though. In Rome, you were an apprentice to old Gaius, and, although he was a good person, who knew HOW long he would

have made you serve under him. Here, though, you were able to set up your own shop; and we've done well! Then Paul came, and, well, there just wasn't room for 2 bosses.

A: When we had to leave Rome, I was worried that I (we?) wouldn't be able to be successful in a shop of my (our) own.

P: You were worried? I was worried, too. I didn't want to say anything to you...

A: You know what helped? I kept thinking about Father Abraham and the Promised Land. The Pharaoh "let God's people Go". They were kicked out of Egypt. When Joseph was still in Egypt, for as long as people remembered Joseph, life was good for them in Egypt. And, life changed horribly for them when people who knew Joseph were gone. But Egypt was not what God had in mind for us; we were not in the land God had promised to Father Abraham. Emperor Claudius "let God's people go", and we were being kicked out of the home we had come to know, too. But we didn't have to cross deserted wilderness, like they did.

P: And, Abraham, Jacob, Joseph, and Moses – NONE of them had everything go the way they expected. But, God remained with each of them. So, we kept praying. And God was with us! God put the people and the ideas and the abilities that we needed to build a shop of our own.

A: And I was the head of the shop, and your talents and abilities were part of the "behind the scenes stitches" that the shop needed to succeed. I was a master tentmaker. And God has been faithful to us. Paul came looking for a job, and I gave him one. Paul worked for ME.

P: True, but, he was pushy. I will always be grateful to him for helping us to see that the Messiah had come in the person of Jesus, the Christ. Soon, we were following him into the mission field, spreading the Gospel. That sure was exciting! We were a part of bringing the Gospel to others. But, sometimes it felt like some flip flop happened, and the employee was telling US what to do, and we were spending as much time working at spreading the Gospel message as the time

we spent making tents!

A: I was his leader in the shop, and he was OUR leader in spreading God's good news. (Holding his hand up to stop Priscilla from responding yet) And before you say anything, yes, I know what you're getting at. Yes, it was sometimes hard to allow the ideas I had get shot down. Sometimes it felt like he didn't think I knew ANYTHING! We had worked hard to have this business, and I liked being the one making the decisions! But, whenever I felt envious, I would remember just how important the work of spreading the Gospel is...how important it is to God. And I remembered what Old Gaius used to say about the tents: "The flash of the fabric may catch the eye, but it's the stitches underneath that keep you dry." The non-flashy work of those of us who are behind the scenes, it is OUR work that strengthens the outcome of our ministry.

P: Old Gaius did have a bit of wisdom! And, I know that it was OUR decision to accept God's call & to follow Paul's leadership; but, sometimes, we really don't know how difficult those choices will be.

A: THAT is a true statement! But, it's also true that we learned a lot from Paul. And, as hard as it is for me to admit, I wasn't ready to be the leader of the ministry. And you and I had made a commitment to God. We did what we believed God wanted us to do.

P: That is very true. I have to say, it is pretty exciting to have church in our home. But, then Paul left. And, instead of the leadership role going to you, flashy Apollos came! He jumped ahead of you! It was your turn to lead! It was like he took away your turn to lead.

A: Yes, well, that did sting a bit. But, you have to admit, that boy could preach! I tell you, that guy could sell dust in a sandstorm!

P: He was talented, but he didn't know everything that he needed to know.

A: True, he needed help understanding about the baptism of the Holy Spirit and what it means to be IN Christ. You and I both tried to talk to him about it. But, you were able to get **through** to him! He listened to you.

P: God's Holy Spirit used my words to finally reach him. But God used your words to prepare him, (pause) "to till the soil" so that he was more open to receive the Truth that God wanted him to know. And I was glad that God was able to use my words to help him understand. But, I guess that is what really worries me the most. Did you ever feel like you were playing second fiddle to ME? Did your friends ever make fun of you because of me? (holding up her hand to stop Aquila from responding yet) And, this is what you've been saying this whole time, isn't it?! God calls people with different strengths and weaknesses, needs and abilities, to fit the work of the moment.

A: (Aquila moves to Priscilla and gives her a hug). Yup; it's why Paul used to call Christians

P & A together: **the Body of Christ!**

P: and all Christians play second fiddle –

P & A together: **to GOD!**

AMEN