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OPENING PRAYER

Thank You that we don't have to follow You alone. Thank You for the people You place around us — people who encourage us, challenge us, teach us, support us and help us grow.

As we talk tonight, help us to see our relationships differently. Give us wisdom to recognise where You are already at work, courage to build relationships with people who are different from us, and humility to learn from others.

Show us not only who is in our corner, but whose corner You are calling us to be in. Amen.

OPENING QUESTION^(OPTIONAL)

If you could build your ultimate team...

Imagine you had to put together a team of five people to survive a completely unexpected adventure — think Amazing Race meets Mission: Impossible. You can choose anyone: a celebrity, athlete, fictional character, family member, friend, historical figure — anyone!

Who would you choose, and what would each person bring to the team?

Follow-up: What makes someone valuable to a team — their skills, personality, experience, relationships, character, or something else?

WORD

1 After this, Paul left Athens and went to Corinth. 2 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, 3 and because he was a tentmaker as they were, he stayed and worked with them. 4 Every Sabbath he reasoned in the synagogue, trying to persuade Jews and Greeks. 5 When Silas and Timothy came from Macedonia, Paul devoted himself exclusively to preaching, testifying to the Jews that Jesus was the Messiah.

18 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. 19 They arrived at Ephesus, where Paul left Priscilla and Aquila. He himself went into the synagogue and reasoned with the Jews. 20 When they asked him to spend more time with them, he declined. 21 But as he left, he promised, "I will come back if it is God's will." Then he set sail from Ephesus. 22 When he landed at Caesarea, he went up to Jerusalem and greeted the church and then went down to Antioch. 23 After spending some time in Antioch, Paul set out from there and travelled from place to place throughout the region of Galatia and Phrygia, strengthening all the disciples. 24 Meanwhile a Jew named Apollos, a native of Alexandria, came to Ephesus. He was a learned man, with a thorough knowledge of the Scriptures. 25 He had been instructed in the way of the Lord, and he spoke with great fervour and taught about Jesus accurately, though he knew only the baptism of John. 26 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. 27 When Apollos wanted to go to Achaia, the brothers and sisters encouraged him and wrote to the disciples there to welcome him. When he arrived, he was a great help to those who by grace had believed. 28 For he vigorously refuted his Jewish opponents in public debate, proving from the Scriptures that Jesus is the Messiah.

Acts 18:1–5, 18–28 (ESV)

MAIN REFLECTION POINTS

1. DIFFERENT ROLES, ONE MISSION

Paul meets Aquila and Priscilla through their shared trade as tentmakers. Their relationship begins in the marketplace, not in a ministry meeting. Their work becomes a doorway into Kingdom partnership. Silas and Timothy later arrive and provide the support that allows Paul to devote himself more fully to preaching. Everyone contributes differently, but everyone contributes to the same mission. The Kingdom of God is not built only by people with microphones, titles or platforms. Our workplaces, campuses, homes, businesses, families and friendships can all become places where God's mission takes shape.

2. DISCERNING PEOPLE IN A SKEPTICAL WORLD

Acts 18 also reminds us that not everyone around us will share our convictions. Some will be passionate followers of Jesus, some will be sceptical, and some may simply be indifferent. Yet God can work through all kinds of people and circumstances. Paul learns to discern when to speak, when to stay, when to move on and when to trust God with the outcome. Relational leadership requires more than knowing what we believe; it requires learning how to read the people and the environment around us. We don't need everyone to agree with us before we can build meaningful relationships with them.

3. INVESTING IN PEOPLE COMING BEHIND US

Apollos arrives in Ephesus already gifted, passionate and knowledgeable, but his understanding is incomplete. Priscilla and Aquila don't compete with his gifting or publicly embarrass him. They invite him into their home and help him grow. Their private investment produces a public strengthening of Apollos' ministry. Discipleship is helping people grow in both spirit and skill — character and competence. Healthy leaders don't simply gather followers; they develop people. We are called not only to ask, "Who can help me?" but also, "Who can I help become who God has called them to be?"

CALL TO ACTION

WHO'S IN YOUR CORNER?

This week, identify **three people**:

1. Someone who has been in your corner

Someone who has supported, encouraged, protected or strengthened you.

Action: Thank them.

2. Someone outside your faith

Someone who doesn't necessarily follow Jesus but is already part of your everyday world.

Action: Move toward them relationally. Listen to their story. Share life. Don't make conversion the project — make relationship the priority.

3. Someone coming behind you

Someone who has potential, gifting or passion but is still developing.

Action: Invest in them. Give them your time. Share what you've learned. Create an opportunity.

Ask them a meaningful question. Encourage their gifting.

Help them grow in both spirit and skill.

ONE CHALLENGE FOR THE GROUP

Answer this question:

"What will I do this week to make someone else's Kingdom journey stronger?"

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Notice the Network

Paul's ministry involved people with very different roles — tentmakers, preachers, supporters, converts, leaders and emerging leaders.

What does this passage teach us about the different ways people can contribute to God's mission?

2. Faith Beyond the Church Building

Aquila and Priscilla's relationship with Paul begins through their shared profession. Where are the everyday spaces God has placed you — workplace, campus, school, family, sport, hobbies or neighbourhood — where Kingdom relationships could develop?

3. Different Doesn't Mean Divided

The people in Acts 18 have different cultures, professions, personalities, levels of influence and stages of spiritual maturity. What can a diverse group of people accomplish together that a group of people who are all alike might struggle to accomplish?

4. Relating to Skeptics

Not everyone we encounter will be interested in Christianity. Some may be sceptical, some curious and others completely indifferent. What does it look like to build genuine relationships with people who don't share our faith without becoming defensive, judgmental or passive?

5. Your Apollos

Apollos was gifted but still had room to grow. Priscilla and Aquila saw his potential and invested in him.

Who might be an "Apollos" in your life — someone with potential, passion or gifting who could benefit from encouragement, wisdom, correction or opportunity?

6. Becoming Teachable

Apollos was confident enough to speak publicly but humble enough to receive correction privately.

What makes it difficult for people to receive correction, and what does a genuinely teachable person look like?

7. The Two Questions

Throughout this passage we see people who supported Paul, challenged him, partnered with him, protected his mission and were shaped by those around them. Take a moment to consider:

Who has God placed around me?

Who are my Kingdom relationships?

What is one relationship God may be asking you to strengthen, start, or invest in during this season?

CLOSING PRAYER

Jesus,

Thank You that Your mission is bigger than any one person.

Thank You for the people You have placed around us — those who support us, challenge us, encourage us, teach us and help us become who You have called us to be.

Give us eyes to recognise the Kingdom relationships already around us. Help us to see our workplaces, campuses, homes, families and friendship groups as places where Your presence and mission can be lived out. Give us discernment in a world filled with scepticism and indifference. Help us know when to speak, when to listen, when to stay, when to move and when to trust You. And make us people who invest in others. Give us the humility of Apollos to remain teachable and the courage of Priscilla and Aquila to invest in people coming behind us. Help us build a community where different people can bring different gifts, cultures, experiences and perspectives — united around Jesus and His mission. **Show us who is in our corner, and show us whose corner You are calling us to stand in.**

Amen.