

## **Part 47 Apollos the Eloquent Man**

A sermon series by Pastor Byron Chesney Wednesday, Aug 23, 2016

### † Acts 18:24-19:7

24 And a certain Jew named Apollos, born at Alexandria, an eloquent man, and mighty in the scriptures, came to Ephesus.

25 This man was instructed in the way of the Lord; and being fervent in the spirit, he spake and taught diligently the things of the Lord, knowing only the baptism of John.

26 And he began to speak boldly in the synagogue: whom when Aquila and Priscilla had heard, they took him unto them, and expounded unto him the way of God more perfectly.

27 And when he was disposed to pass into Achaia, the brethren wrote, exhorting the disciples to receive him: who, when he was come, helped them much which had believed through grace:

28 For he mightily convinced the Jews, and that publicly, shewing by the scriptures that Jesus was Christ.

1 And it came to pass, that, while Apollos was at Corinth, Paul having passed through the upper coasts came to Ephesus: and finding certain disciples,

2 He said unto them, Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed? And they said unto him, We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost.

3 And he said unto them, Unto what then were ye baptized? And they said, Unto John's baptism.

4 Then said Paul, John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people, that they should believe on him which should come after him, that is, on Christ 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 Ghost came on them; and they spake with tongues, and prophesied.

7 And all the men were about twelve.

Last week we looked at Acts 18:12-23 which found Paul being put on trial before the Roman deputy, Gallio. We saw that Gallio wanted nothing to do with the Jews dealings and drove them away. After spending nearly 2-years in Corinth it was Paul's time to leave and he sets out toward Jerusalem. We covered the vow that he took, most likely a Nazarite vow, and we saw that after he went to Jerusalem he went back to his sending Church in Antioch and then set back out on his 3<sup>rd</sup> missionary journey.

We pick up tonight looking at the rest of Chapter 18 and the first 7 verses of Chapter 19, and we are introduced to a new man named Apollos.

24 And a certain Jew named Apollos, born at Alexandria, an eloquent man, and mighty in the scriptures, came to Ephesus.

"a certain Jew named Apollos, born at Alexandria." A few interesting things about Apollos. 1. He was born in Alexandria Egypt, which was not really a Jewish land but there were many Jews that migrated there. He obviously was born from Jewish parents. 2. His name, "Apollos" is not a Jewish name, it is a Greek name. It is the shortened version of "Apollonius."

"an eloquent man" this meant he was a very good orator or speaker. If you look through the Bible at the model preacher, Apollos is it. He has the knowledge, the education, the speaking skills, and the zeal needed to hold people's attention. The Apostle Paul while he had the knowledge, education, and zeal, his speaking skills were not as great as Apollos's. That is why Paul in speaking to the Corinthians said

this: **1 Corinthians 2:1-4:** And I, brethren, when I came to you, came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God. 2 For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified. 3 And I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling. 4 And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power: Paul relied on the Spirit and the power that was given to him by the Holy Spirit to preach.

"and mighty in the scriptures" Of all the things the Bible says about Apollos, that is the greatest, to be known as "mighty in the scriptures." This meant that he knew the Old Testament text. He had studied it probably all of his life. Growing up in Alexandria where all of the best schools in the world were, he no doubt had a very good education. He would have been well versed in the Hebrew text and history, much like Paul was.

"Came to Ephesus" It is not known why he came to Ephesus. We read nothing else about him except for here in the Book of Acts and some of Paul's writings in 1 Corinthians where he mentions him, and in Titus his name is mentioned once. But for whatever reason he was here, it appears he is going about teaching.

25 This man was instructed in the way of the Lord; and being fervent in the spirit, he spake and taught diligently the things of the Lord, knowing only the baptism of John.

"was instructed in the way of the Lord." This instruction probably came from both his parents and from the professors in Alexandria. He had been taught the correct doctrine of the promised Messiah and understood Christian doctrine as he learned from the Old Testament and the teaching of John the Baptist. "knowing only the baptism of John." His parents very well could have been disciples of John the Baptist in Jerusalem before moving to Alexandria.

26 And he began to speak boldly in the synagogue: whom when Aquila and Priscilla had heard, they took him unto them, and expounded unto him the way of God more perfectly.

Apollos was a preaching machine. He went into the synagogue and began speaking boldly, no doubt about the same message that John the Baptist preached and that was repentance and baptism unto the coming Messiah.

"when Aquila and Priscilla had heard" And now we hear from Aquila and Priscilla again. They had the advantage of getting instruction direct from the Apostle Paul when he stayed at their home for nearly 2-years in Corinth. They also worked with him making tents and he probably spent the whole work day teaching them about Jesus. They are going to put their knowledge to good use. They realize the potential of Apollos and he obviously was willing to take instruction from them because it says "they took him unto them, and expounded unto him the way of God more perfectly." This means that they taught him about Jesus that had come and fulfilled the promise of the Messiah, and how he was crucified, buried, and rose again. This would put everything into place for Apollos and he would be equipped to preach the Gospel to the world.

I am thankful for people like Aquila and Priscilla who are willing vessels to teach others. We need more of that these days. And I am thankful that Apollos was willing to be taught as well. A lot of people in his position may have taken offense to these two people pointing out his lack of wisdom concerning Jesus. But he obviously listened.

27 And when he was disposed to pass into Achaia, the brethren wrote, exhorting the disciples to receive him: who, when he was come, helped them much which had believed through grace:

Apollos decided to go to Achaia, which is where Corinth was located. No doubt he had heard of Paul's success there and the Church that had been planted and of the Jews that opposed him and he was determined to go there himself to take up where Paul left off, teaching them about Jesus.

"the brethren wrote, exhorting the disciples to receive him:" Apollos was sent to Corinth with letters of recommendation from the brethren in Ephesus.

Apollos apparently made a huge impact in Corinth and the people loved him because Paul mentions him in his letter to the Corinthians: **1 Corinthians 1:12-14: Now this I say, that every one of you saith, I am of Paul; and I of Apollos; and I of Cephas; and I of Christ. 13 Is Christ divided? was Paul crucified for you? or were ye baptized in the name of Paul? 14 I thank God that I baptized none of you, but Crispus and Gaius; 15 Lest any should say that I had baptized in mine own name.**

And again Paul mentions how the people felt about Apollos **1 Corinthians 3:4-6: 4 For while one saith, I am of Paul; and another, I am of Apollos; are ye not carnal? 5 Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers by whom ye believed, even as the Lord gave to every man? 6 I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase.** So, judging by these statements from Paul to the Corinthians, Apollos made a big impact on them. They were bragging that he was the one they were baptized under or taught by.

28 For he mightily convinced the Jews, and that publicly, shewing by the scriptures that Jesus was Christ.

"he mightily convinced the Jews," that means he preached boldly and with authority, standing up to any opposition to the Gospel without backing down. No one could dispute his preaching and evidence of Jesus being the Messiah.

"shewing by the scriptures that Jesus was Christ." And just like all of the New Testament preachers, he used the Old Testament scriptures as he guide, proving from the text that the Hebrew were all familiar with, that Jesus was Christ. That means that Jesus was their Messiah. This was the same method Stephen used, and Peter used, and Paul used to convince the Jews of Jesus.

**Acts 19:1** And it came to pass, that, while Apollos was at Corinth, Paul having passed through the upper coasts came to Ephesus: and finding certain disciples,

So, while Apollos is in Corinth, Paul shows up in Ephesus where Apollos just came from. He runs into some believers there who were much like Apollos was knowing only about the gospel of John the Baptist which taught repentance and baptism in believing of the coming Messiah that would be coming after him.

2 He said unto them, Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed? And they said unto him, We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost.

They only know about John's doctrine. They had never heard of the Holy Ghost or even of Jesus who had already come. They were believers the same as Abraham was a believer, they had faith in the Promised One and believed.

3 And he said unto them, Unto what then were ye baptized? And they said, Unto John's baptism.

Here is the proof that they hadn't heard of Jesus. They had only believed in He who would come and they repented and were baptized by John.

4 Then said Paul, John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people, that they should believe on him which should come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus.

This is the doctrine of John's teaching. Just as we have been saying. He preached baptism of repentance and believing on the coming Messiah. Paul identifies the Messiah as Christ Jesus. His office is Christ, the Christos, the Anointed One. His name is Jesus, Iēsous, Jehovah is Salvation.

5 When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.

So Paul convinced them that they should now publicly acknowledge Jesus Christ as the One that John prepared the way for and be baptized in His name. And that is what they did.

6 And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them; and they spake with tongues, and prophesied. 7 And all the men were about twelve.

Remember, the Book of Acts is a transitional period for the New Testament Church. Coming out of Judaism and the law and into Christianity and grace. These early New Testament believers were endowed with sign gifts of the Holy Ghost, speaking in tongues and prophesying. This was still necessary in the days when there was no New Testament scripture and when the Jews required a sign to believe, as Paul wrote in **1 Corinthians 1:22: For the Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom:**

Later on in Chapter 13, Paul explained the Corinthians that these sign gifts would go away: **1 Corinthians 13:8-10: Charity never faileth: but whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away. 9 For we know in part, and we prophesy in part. 10 But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away.**

He says that these sign gifts would cease "when that which is perfect is come." The prophecies, meaning the foretelling of future events on God's calendar, like the prophets and John the Baptist prophesied about future events would fail. That means fade away. And the tongues shall cease, that means end. All of this would happen when "that which is perfect is come." The question is, what is "that which is perfect?" I can only take it to mean that which is perfect is the complete Word of God.

They did not have the complete Word of God yet. All they had was the Old Testament. So they only knew in part. They didn't know the whole of it. So, until the New Testament was written and complete the sign gifts would still be in use. But after that there would be no reason for these sign gifts. The complete prophecy is written and the Jews would have the New Testament to believe in Jesus, the same as you and I have. We do not require prophecies because they are all already in our Bible. There is nothing else to prophecy about. God isn't revealing anything new, He has already spoken. He said not to add to or take away from His Word because it is final and complete. We don't require the sign gift of tongues to believe, we believe by faith in what God has written in His Word.

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† All Scripture from the Authorized King James Version of the Bible