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CROSS-GENDER LEADERSHIP: PRISCILLA, AQUILA, AND APOLLO

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Every narrative in the Bible provides stories of leaders and followers. However, limited academic Christian literature exists on leadership partnerships such as joint ventures between women and men. This article focused on Acts 18 as an exemplar of how Priscilla and Aquila worked as co-leaders, retaining their faith as they moved from Rome to Corinth to Ephesus to Rome. This pericope illustrated that couple made tents together and they conducted ministry together, while keeping their individual identities. This raised the question of whether their effectiveness could be attributed to authentic leadership since the duo expressed various traits of this organizational leadership theory. They chose to express accountability together by leaving Rome instead of abandoning their religious freedom; altruistic since they opened their home to Paul and to the local Ephesian church; fair in their behavior in engaging with small groups and in instructing Apollo; honest in earning their keep since they continued as tentmakers as they lived through their diaspora; kind on deciding when to engage aggressively and when to retrieve; optimistic in their newfound religious freedom and continued to share it; and they chose to trust Apollo.

Keyterms: Priscilla, authentic leadership, Acts 18.

I. INTRODUCTION

The Bible is replete with many examples of men who were leaders (the argument here is not about whether they led people towards something good or something bad). A non-comprehensive list included Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Moses, Elijah, Ahab, David, Isaiah, and the Apostles. While these names may be familiar to most, the Bible also has many examples of women who were leaders. These included Miriam, Noah, Rahab, Deborah, Delilah, Jezebel, Michel, Esther (Hadassah), Naomi, Magdalene, Lydia,

Rhoda, and Salome. However, the partnerships between men and women are in scant supply. One obvious partnership is that of Adam and Eve. They lived in Eden together and they were removed from Eden together; but this pairing is sub-optimal in the current context. While other pairings existed, even when the marital bond is not considered, little is known about them as is the relationship of Moses and Miriam. However, Acts delivered a rather unique example. Note that the article is not limited to women leading women but how effective leadership partners can co-exist across, that is, between women leading women, women leading men, and women plus men in a joint effort. This is the definition of cross-gender leadership referenced throughout this article.

Statement of the Problem

“He began to speak boldly in the synagogue, but when Priscilla and Aquila heard him, they took him aside and explained to him the way of God more accurately” (Acts 18: 26, English Standard Version).

This verse referred to Apollo who was an eloquent Jewish orator educated in Judaic law. However, the context introduced two other key players; Priscilla, and Aquila. Priscilla is a diminutive of Prisca, and in the New Testament either name appears with Aquila. The larger pericope delivered better context for the quoted verse. The interconnected stories started in Acts 18:1 and ended when the chapter does. Essentially, Priscilla and Aquila were living in Rome when Claudius Caesar ordered Jews to leave. They arrived in Corinth and continued working as tentmakers. Paul, being a tentmaker himself, chose to stay with them while he reasoned with the Jews in Corinth. After a series of events, Paul left with them to go to Ephesus and from there he went on to other parts of Galatia and Phrygia whereas the couple remained in Ephesus, where this fateful meeting with Apollo occurred.

Mukhongo, and Buteyo (2010) suggested that leadership was more about the actions a person took in leading a people. The leaders, Priscilla and Aquila, experienced the eloquence of Apollo and while he faithfully argued for Jesus being the Messiah, he was only aware of the baptism of John meaning that he did not understand the significance of the resurrection of Jesus and how that fulfilled the requirements of the Messiah. As such, the duo engaged with Apollo in a private setting and educated him on the rest of the lesson. Apollo listened and accepted what they said, and his oratory was refined later; but that is beyond the current scope. This dialogue and its resulting effects suggest a relationship existed between Priscilla, Aquila, and Apollo.

Kort (2008) argued that the relationship between a leader and a follower was of a social nature. As such, the relationship changed based on how each agent of the relationship behaved. The event between the couple and Apollo occurred in Ephesus. These people had not known each other prior to this setting. First, Priscilla and Aquila heard Apollo in public forum as he made the case with the local Jews for why Jesus was the Messiah. Then, they intervened discretely, and this indicated not just an exchange of ideas but an understanding of what each party spoke of in the context of Jesus as the Messiah. Paul was not mentioned in this discussion as he had already left Ephesus and so neither mediated nor influenced this setting. A key challenge in existing literature is that limited material is available on Christian women leaders, and even fewer on effective leadership partnerships between men and women.

Statement of the Purpose

The purpose of this article was to not only address the shortage in literature but to show Biblically how Christian women can be effective co-leaders. To better understand the leadership exemplified by Priscilla and Aquila, one must understand not only Acts 18 but also understand the world in which this pericope existed. Robbins (2012) posited that understanding the phenomena that existed forms the context in which the events were lived and in which they were written. Throughout this section, the conversation will traverse texture analysis to understand the data from the lens of organizational leadership. deSilva (2014) acknowledged that much of Acts focused on the shift of the gospel message from the Jews to the Gentiles. Acts 18 reinforced this since this is not the first time that Paul spoke of preaching to the Gentiles instead. Furthermore, this exchange suggested that others, beyond Paul, were also actively spreading the gospel. In doing so, they did not reach for leadership positions but the roles they played prescribed to them leadership in various capacities.

To understand the dynamics of this Scripture and its relevance in the post-modern world, one must also contend with contemporary leadership theory. Avolio, et al. (2004) discovered that leadership influenced follower attitudes through identification, hope, positive emotions, optimism, and trust. Does this explain the relationship between Paul, Priscilla, and Aquila? After all, the author of Acts recorded these sequences of events. Paul was a Roman citizen. Priscilla and Aquila were living in Rome until the order from Caesar. They were Jews who travelled as they believed in the message of hope. As Paul continued his missionary work elsewhere, the couple stayed in Ephesus and nurtured the local church. Van Droffelaar, and Jacobs (2017) analysis revealed that authentic leaders were intentional and that intentions fell into four (4) categories: self-awareness, living by an inner compass, careful listening, and transparency. Nichols and Erakovich (2013) reflected that authentic leaders influenced followers in an ethical manner using motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration. Puls, et al., (2014) indicated that authentic relationship was influenced by self-awareness, worldview, and balanced processing.

Yukl (2013) acknowledged that authentic leadership axioms were not developed yet but suggested that one fundamental theme of this leadership theory was that followers received a clear sense of what the leader valued because the leader's behavior reflected his/her words and this affirmed for the follower the perception that the leader was a good leader. While the public at large may not contend with various leadership theories regularly, people seem to have perceived notions of what makes a good leader. As such, this relationship became one of not just leading a following but also managing associated perceptions. This was illustrated in how Priscilla and Aquila connected with each other, their relationship with Paul, with the various local communities, and with Apollo.

II. ACCOUNTABILITY

Priscilla and Aquila were specifically mentioned six (6) times in the New Testament and were always mentioned together. Parker (2017) emphasized that while little was known of this couple, that neither Priscilla nor Aquila are ever mentioned

separately. This was also expressed in Acts 18 since they departed Rome together, they arrived and worked as tentmakers in Ephesus together, Paul found them together when he decided to work as a tentmaker in Ephesus, and together they instructed Apollos. An order by Claudius Caesar forced Jews to leave Rome, including Aquila and Priscilla. Hoerber (1960) speculated that since Josephus recorded Caesar granting Jews religious liberties, that this specific order was for Jews taking part in apparent wholesale propaganda, in this case, the volatility of declaring Jesus as the Messiah. If this speculation is true, then the couple left Rome because they had been involved in the Jesus movement in Rome at that time, and that they left their home, and all that was familiar, together.

According to Hedlund (2010), this story of Priscilla and Aquila form the fundamental narrative of Acts as Luke recorded their presence in Rome, Corinth, and Ephesus, at least. Since travel in the postmodern world is still difficult, the couple would have borne the burden of sea travel and living nomadic lives. White (2012) pontificated that through their various travels, they still maintained their occupation as tentmakers. This suggested a business venture that is portable and requiring a certain level of transparency for it to provide sustenance as they moved. This pericope did not segregate the role that Priscilla played in this tentmaking profession versus the role that Aquila made since tentmaking involved gathering raw materials, manufacture, and sale; among other matters of that trade.

Frederick (2015) discovered that there was a high correlation between accountability and authenticity, as can be found in academic and popular literature. Frederick et al. (2016) further evidenced that 82% of variance in authentic leadership was predicted by responsibility, openness, and answerability. In this context, responsibility, openness, and answerability were elements that defined accountability. Consider that Priscilla and Aquila remained as tentmakers in different geographies, in different cultural settings, and with interacting with different people. It would be difficult to argue that they were the only tentmakers in Corinth when Paul found them. The narrative implied that Paul, as a tentmaker, Christ follower, and with a certain sense of transparency, would partner with people of similar ilk to continue the spread of the salvation message. Furthermore, when the couple first heard Apollos preach, they practiced accountability together because they educated Apollos together to ensure that the complete salvation message (John's and Spirit baptisms) were being preached. Consider also that when Priscilla and Aquila added to Apollos's message, their instruction aligned with Paul's message and that Paul had already left to go to the next mission area.

Integrated Principle 1

To have an effective cross-gender partnership, each partner must be accountable to self, to their partner, as well as to others that this partnership interacts with.

III. ALTRUISM

The order by Claudius Caesar was not the first time that Jews were told to leave Rome. Slingerland (1990) referenced Dio's report that Tiberius Caesar had erected a similar order which was implemented by force since the Jews of that previous time were converting the Romans en masse. With Claudius, no similar force is used (considering that this Caesar followed Nero). Even so, at least some Christ followers, including Priscilla and Aquila, opted to leave instead of stopping their missionary work. Also consider that the Bible did not record when and how this couple chose to follow Christ since none of the Apostles take credit for their conversion. They kept their profession and their faith while opting to uproot themselves.

Beare (1944) posited that this intersection between Paul and the couple happened at a time when Paul was traveling solo since Barnabas, Timothy, Silas or other followers are not mentioned in this exchange. Paul chose to work with them and stay at their home, that much was true but Acts 18 did not specify that Paul compensated the couple. This suggests that Priscilla and Aquila chose to open their home. Not only were they hospitable to Paul but they also opened their home to local gatherings when the Christian Jews could not congregate in the local synagogue (Green, 2016). Priscilla and Aquila maintained this hospitality even as they were refugees in a diaspora. First, the Christian Jews were made to leave Jerusalem. Then, they were made to leave Rome. The pericope did not indicate any conflict between Priscilla and Aquila in using their home in this manner.

Furthermore, Paul recognized their effective partnership for he called them cooperators, which is the same title he used for Timothy, and for Epaphrodite (Thériault, 1985). The title was applied to both and not just to one part of the partnership. This indicated that Paul saw both contributing equally to apostolic work. While the postmodern world may be more familiar with Timothy, calling Priscilla and Aquila cooperators, did not distinguish between this missionary work and the other workers nor did it distinguish between the gender of Priscilla and Aquila, and thus the value-add since the duo chose to cooperate with each other as well as other missionaries to be acknowledged as such. According to Pizzuto-Pomaco (2003), Rome eventually recognized the significance of this couple's work since it acknowledged where this couple used to live in Rome.

Wright (2015) defined altruism as valuing multiple perspectives, balancing intellectual quotient with emotional quotient, internal honesty and trust with others, and dedication to commitment and the courage to act. Priscilla and Aquila experienced Jewish and Christian cultures in different places. They hosted Paul while knowing of his reputation. When Paul engaged with the local Jews, they chose to stay in the background. When Christian Jews were rejected from the synagogue, this couple opened their home. They maintained their occupation and missional work in the face of adversity. And, they quietly instructed Apollo instead of confronting him in the public. They took initiative.

Integrated Principle 2

To have an effective cross-gender partnership, each partner must choose to tackle hardship by focusing on the benefit to others, and not of self or the partnership.

IV. FAIRNESS

Osiek (2012) established that while the New Testament made a big deal about Paul's Roman citizenship, it does not state the same for Priscilla and Aquila so that one cannot assume that this couple were Roman citizens. Furthermore, the Bible does not reveal their socio-economic status, beyond them being tentmakers. However, Kurek-Chomycz (2006) argued that Priscilla had excellent didactic qualities, and an outstanding education. This could be speculative but note that both Paul and Apollo were highly educated orators. Paul accepting their hospitality and companionship, and Apollo accepting their instruction illustrated that they were able to connect intellectually and theologically. This indicated that Paul and Apollo treated them fairly. In recording these events, Luke also expressed similar sentiment because their story is addressed first, before the narrative shifts to Paul's experience in Ephesus (Lee, 2004).

Daniels (2014) argued that Acts 18 showed Priscilla and Aquila as correcting a theological male orator, and no specific husband-wife role distinction is found here. Thus, it is less of which person contributed more significantly to Apollo understanding the totality of the good news, but the focus was on how the couple synergized and instructed an educated man so that actions were not gender-bound but based on the talent each party brought to the partnership. Kim (2002) debated this rather controversially that while Priscilla and Aquila were not outstanding leaders like Paul, that they collaborated to produce results. Just from this pericope, one can see that they were leaders even if none of the letters in the New Testament are ascribed to them. They were leaders because they chose to leave Rome and not abandon Christianity, they were leaders in engaging with the local community, and they were leaders in instruction. Together, they were consistent in their message, and were self-motivated. According to Polk (2017), Paul acknowledged their efforts at risking themselves on his behalf.

Akrivou, et al. (2011) proposed a leadership model along the action-reflection continuum as a pathway to executive trust and fairness in actions. They suggested that when executives take moments of reflection on the consequences of past actions and these feed into future actions, this pause in time allowed for future decisions and resulting actions that provide a fairer treatment. This was also illustrated in Acts 18 as this pericope started with Priscilla and Aquila leaving Rome and settling in into a new Mediterranean neighborhood. As they melded into the background, the synagogue leader became a Christian after Paul's harangue. As the Christian message shifted from the local synagogue to next door, Priscilla and Aquila again came into the forefront after Apollo's initial oratory.

Integrated Principle 3

To have an effective cross-gender partnership, the partnership needs to provide a collective front and not be confined to gender stereotypical roles, knowing when to push to the forefront together and when to retrieve into the background.

V. HONESTY

The fact remains that Caesar's order for Jews to leave Rome was the motivation for Priscilla and Aquila to live a diasporic life. Jiménez (2014) proposed that at that time Christian pilgrims were reaching Rome and since the public meetings were happening in Rome's synagogues, this caused a division which resulted in two groups, that is, traditional Pharisees, and the Messianic Jews. He indicated that the conflicts between these groups often became violent, which forced Claudius to make his proclamation. Acts 18 showed the volatility of these two Jewish groups in Corinth as well. When Gallio did not respond to the Jews complaint against Paul, the Jews turned on their synagogue leader and beat him; the Romans posted guards in Corinth did not engage in these brawls. Note that when Luke narrated this account, it is with a certain element of honesty.

Moody (1995) speculated that since there is no specific record of when and how Priscilla and Aquila chose to follow Christ, that they could have been exposed to this message by the Pentecostal pilgrims especially since none of the listed Apostles had visited Rome by that time. Furthermore, in Paul's time Corinth was a metropolitan city with people from different professions and backgrounds such as soldiers, businessmen, merchants, slaves, and sailors from different parts of the known world (Barbero, 2001). This was before the age of information technology so there would be different challenges in finding likeminded people. Szesnat (1993) reasoned that when Paul arrived in Corinth, he would have sought the tentmakers quarter and/or the Jewish quarter in Corinth to find work and accommodation. Of course, this brought up the question of why Paul chose not to stay in the religious quarter or with the Pharisees but that is less significant in this context.

What is obvious from this pericope is that Priscilla and Aquila arrived in Corinth before Paul, and that the party had not interacted with Paul previously. Deduction encourages that living as tentmakers and Christ-followers, they must have had a presence in Corinth for Paul to find them. After all, the Scripture did not say that Paul had any special vision or direction to specifically find this couple. Considering the metropolitan nature of Corinth, it is improbable that they were the only tentmakers in that city. Furthermore, being only tentmakers would not have been enough for Paul to live and work with them. Consider also that they chose to leave Rome so as not to deny the truth, indicating a certain honesty with which they lived and interacted with others. Adealbert (1928) reasoned on this front that Paul had a reputation of independence that that Priscilla must have with the honesty of courage to live her life and for Paul to work with them.

Dasgupta (2018) elucidated that honesty is the hallmark of an authentic leader since an honest person chooses not to dupe others. In the case of Priscilla and Aquila, they chose to live honestly, even when it forced them to live away from Rome. They did not compromise on their belief on Jesus being the salvation for all. Tang, and Liu (2012) used honesty and integrity synonymously and found that when leaders showed a higher level of honesty, this improved ethical behavior in secular people to a greater effect than followers who had some religious foundation. Note again that Priscilla and Aquila chose to behave in an honest way, within their partnership, and with others. They had certain similarities with Paul in that they stayed honest in living their beliefs and continuing

missional work. There is no intent at deceit as was the case with Ananias and Saphira (another partnership contrast). When they heard Apollo's oratory, they were compelled to complete the narrative, not with a motivation to manipulate, but to ensure that the message relayed was complete for Apollo's future audiences.

Integrated Principle 4

To have an effective cross-gender partnership, the partners must be honest in motivations since this affects actions since motivations and actions transcend gender.

VI. KINDNESS

Of the six times that Priscilla and Aquila are mentioned in Scripture, Maloney (2003) proposed that she is mentioned twice before Aquila, and this should portray her significance in missional work. This perspective can readily be refuted since the author claims the church being primitive at that time such that the underlying assumption may be that in a patrilineal society the male should be mentioned first as the male would have a more significant role in a marriage and/or partnership. As such, this author pontificated that the New Testament authors expressed acts of kindness by mentioning her first in some of the passages. However, the church, even in its infancy was counterculture such as appealing to people who were either outcasts or in lower socio-economic standing. One can argue that who is mentioned first is irrelevant, that they are presented together speaks more of cross-gender partnership than of stereotypical gender roles, or some overcompensation, thereof.

Stenschke (2009) posed the potential that the Jews in Ephesus were more open to the Christian message because Priscilla and Aquila were less abrasive than Paul in connecting with the local community. This potentiates a certain extent of reciprocity since Priscilla and Aquila were kind in their expression of faith and they contributed to the local economy directly as tentmakers, that the Ephesian Jews responded in a similar kindness. After all, they wanted Paul to stay longer with them. Based on this pericope, reason encourages that the absence of Priscilla and Aquila from the violent Jewish conflict in Corinth as an act of kindness. Note that the recorded violence was within the local Jewish community. Neither Gallio the proconsul, Paul, nor Priscilla and Aquila took part on either side of that conflict. The couple remained in the local community for a certain length of time after this violent eruption before departing for Syria. Note that the Christian minority in Corinth would need encouragement in the aftermath. Therefore, it can be argued that the extended stay was an act of kindness towards this minority community. During this Corinthian rift, instead of continuing to contend with the Jews in their synagogue, Paul transferred the debate to the home of Justus, who lived next to the synagogue (Goodspeed, 1950). It could be argued that this was an attempt at de-escalation and therefore an act of kindness by Paul in providing a safer environment for the minority and a kindness from Justus in opening his home for such conversation.

When Priscilla and Aquila travelled to Ephesus, they eventually met Apollo after Paul left for Caesarea. Preisker (1931) eluded that Priscilla and Aquila recognized the passion with which Apollo preached his message and that they responded based on

that initial impression. Kindness came to the forefront here as well because after they had heard Apollo's argument with the Ephesian Jews, they took him aside to instruct him in the fullness of the gospel message. Again, they engaged with Apollo together to reason with him in private conversation instead of in public forum. Consider that if no Jew opposed the Christian message in Ephesus, then there would be no need for Apollo to debate with them on Jesus being the messiah so that in this case, their kindness was to complete his instruction so that he could make a stronger case for Jesus with the Ephesian Jews. Since Priscilla and Aquila were tentmakers in Rome and in Corinth, it is logical that they would remain tentmakers in Ephesus as well. The scripture is not specific in that regard. Smith (2014) indicated that during his stay in Ephesus, Paul retained his occupation as a tentmaker. Priscilla and Aquila had travelled with him from Corinth to Ephesus so their act of kindness of his staying and working with them would continue. Of course, this kindness extends to the congregation as the missionaries did not need to live on the donations of the congregations.

Caldwell, and Ndalamba (2017) defined kindness as treating people as individuals and not as objects, or merely relegated to the organizational construct. Paul had a healthy reputation by the time he crossed paths with Priscilla and Aquila in Corinth. Like them, he chose to work as a tentmaker, funding his mission work. He was not just a renter but worked with them and that Corinthian experience. They hosted him for an extended stay, not just as a fellow tentmaker but as a fellow Christian. Furthermore, Luke records Priscilla and Aquila by name, not just the name of the collective household, which aligned with how Paul treated them since marriage does not remove individuality from the partnership. Paul treated them as fellow workers in Christ which expressed the kindness of not seeing them as hosts but at the individual level. Similarly, Priscilla and Aquila, together, did not reach for Paul to grasp at Paul as an avenue to fame but as fellow sufferers in their diaspora.

Integrated Principle 5

To have an effective cross-gender partnership, each partner must exude kindness towards each other recognizing individuality and the collectivity of their experiences.

VII. OPTIMISM

Nguyen (2013) posited that Priscilla and Aquila left Rome after the Claudius edit in 49 AD and travelled to Corinth, then to Ephesus and finally returning to Rome in 54AD after the death of Claudius. This meant that the couple were optimistic in their decision to leave Rome but not their faith where faith provided a peace that they were compelled to share even as they lost their home. This would afford others the opportunity of religious freedom, especially in Corinth and Ephesus. Another optimism in this cycle is that when the duo decided to do the right thing and maintain their faith, that they had hope that they would be able to return home, after all, they did not have to return to Rome, especially considering the Christian reception in Ephesus. Förster (2014) posed the possibility that Roman legal practice made it possible that the Claudius edict was not enforced. This is a key difference between the Tiberius Edict,

which was enforced, with this latter possibility that it might not have been. If indeed the Claudius edict was not enforced, this makes the optimism of returning to Rome more reasonable.

During their stay in Corinth, Paul's harangue convinced Crispus, the synagogue leader to believe in Jesus Christ as the messiah (Wire, 1986). Priscilla and Aquila were present when this conversion and its aftermath took place. Apart from his former role, another important thing to note is the name change of the ex-synagogue leader since Crispus meant unsteady and Sosthenes meant steady strength. When this person became a believer, he was severely beaten by his former compatriots. Acts recorded that the Romans took no part in this religious squabble) and it does not record Sosthenes recanting his newfound freedom. Even after this incident, Priscilla and Aquila stayed in Corinth for a little while before leaving. They were Jews living in Rome at one point so them staying in Corinth in this volatile situation put their own lives at risk again, which Paul acknowledged later. This speaks to optimism of immediacy since they did not pack up their bags immediately and set sail. They were the religious minority and this tragic event did not convince them to abandon Christianity as they pursued similar interactions in Ephesus.

Notice also the behavior in Ephesus. While the Ephesians were more receptive of this new belief system, Paul expressed a certain optimism in parting ways with Priscilla and Aquila (Wolter, 1987). By contrast, Pilette (1992) affirmed that Paul neither recruited them as co-workers nor did he give them orders. Paul, Priscilla, and Aquila were living in Corinth during the Jewish riot so that reputation between them would have been established enough for them to also travel to Ephesus together. This indicates that when Paul left them in Ephesus to continue to the next leg of his missionary journey, that he was optimistic enough to move on without providing them specific instructions of how to build on the work that was done. Similarly, when Priscilla and Aquila heard Apollo's oratory in Ephesus, acted on optimism when they chose to instruct him on the complete gospel. This optimism is further bolstered by Oh (2002) with the suggestion that the Bible presented no evidence of the theological background of Priscilla and Aquila while records indicated that Paul and Apollo were theologically educated; the couple instructed Apollo and he received their instruction.

Stander et al. (2015) research showed that even in under-resourced and non-mature organizations, optimism existed at higher levels in the context of authentic leadership. Consider the context of this pericope, and how this couple responded to the challenges. Priscilla and Aquila left their home because of a Roman edict, having no idea when they would return home. They were Christian Jews, who were the minority in Rome, in Corinth, and in Ephesus. In those challenging situations, they retained their newfound faith and continued practicing their occupation as tentmakers. They maintained a presence in each of these locations such that Paul did not provide them with specific instructions. As such, their optimism shows in such austere conditions for surely they were under-resourced and Christianity was still in infancy; and yet, they continued to share their faith, chose to be associated with Paul and the perils that came with that, and they instructed Apollo.

Integrated Principle 6

To have an effective cross-gender partnership, each party must choose to remain optimistic for the struggle that they find themselves in.

VIII. TRUST

Torrey (1911) argued that the primitive Christian congregation consisted of predominantly females. While this can be contested since no gender has monopoly on religion and the concept of primitive church borders on naive, he posed that women formed the backbone of the early church and this has some semblance of truth since the New Testament mentions many women by name. This means that even from the very beginning, women formed a core part of the Church Universal. Consider that Mary (the mother of Jesus) was visited by the angel before God told Joseph. If nothing else, this shows that God trusts women and men; prime examples being Priscilla and Aquila. Men and women limit themselves when they specify gender stereotypical roles instead of God-specific roles.

Ward (1959) focused on chronology noting that Paul arrived in Corinth from Athens in 50AD and leaving with them to Ephesus in 52AD. He also noted that Paul left Ephesus, but Priscilla and Aquila remained. Coffelt (2007) recognized that Paul, being male, affirmed other females as well such as Phoebe, and Junia. This indicates that Paul looked beyond gender to understand how people contributed to the work of Christ. Maness (1998) reasoned that Priscilla and Aquila functioned efficiently, regardless of Paul's presence. They were successful tentmakers for if they were not, their occupation would not be as portable as it was. One can argue that it took them as a pair to be effect but remember that often paired with others, and rarely did solo work.

Horton (1932) posited on the level of trust since Paul had already lived and worked with them so was aware of their sound judgement and mature character. Again, no distinction is made segregating Priscilla from Aquila (or vice versa). He reminisced that sufficient trust was established between the duo and Paul such that Apollo accepted instruction from them. This speaks volumes to trust in at least three directions in this rather delicate and austere time for Christianity; Paul trusting the couple (after all he lived and worked with them), Priscilla and Aquila trusting Paul even when he was abrasive, them trusting Apollo to take instruction and Apollo trusting that he was receiving correct instruction. In contrast, note that the Bible in its current form did not exist at that time in history. Cenac (2011) claimed that the Holy Spirit is given to emergent leaders to give them extraordinary faith, boldness, and power for the good of the people. It seemed to be the case for Priscilla and Aquila. While the Bible does not reveal that they practiced glossolalia, or that they were theologians or philosophers, but they spent time with the likes of Paul and Apollo which suggests an unexpected boldness. That they used this boldness, together, effectively also indicates God trusting them and them trusting God.

Integrated Principle 7

To have an effective cross-gender partnership, one must be willing to trust. Building and maintaining trust takes time so this is a long-term investment in moving towards an objective.

IX. SUMMARY

This article was about cross-gender partnership and women in leadership from the Acts 18 pericope. Luke started the narrative with the edict from Claudius Caesar which motivated the Jews in Rome to leave. As part of that diaspora, Priscilla and Aquila set up their tentmaking business in Corinth. When Paul arrived in that city, he stayed with the couple, earned his keep as a tentmaker, and debated with the local Jews at their synagogue which started a religious riot as the synagogue leader converted. Roman soldiers stationed there did not intervene. After some time, Paul travelled with Priscilla and Aquila to Ephesus, where the reception was much warmer. Again, he stayed and worked with them. While the Ephesian Jews wanted him to stay, he left for his next missionary journey while Priscilla and Aquila stayed, which gave them the opportunity to educate Apollos on the completeness of the Christian message.

From a contemporary leadership theory perspective, literature indicated that scholars do not still have a consistent definition of authentic leadership, but certain aspects seem to percolate (listed here in alphabetical order): Accountability, Altruism, Fairness, Honesty, Kindness, Optimism, and Trust. Furthermore, the actions of the leader need to match their words as this forms the perception of the followers. Therefore, the lens of authentic leadership was applied to the behavior depicted by Priscilla and Aquila in exploring cross-gender leadership during the infancy of Christianity.

This passage encourages that successful cross-gender partnership and leadership requires accountability within and without the partnership, leveraging altruism because hardship should be expected, fairness of the talents that each person brings regardless of their gender identity, expression of honesty in intent, motivation, and action, kindness in stepping into delicate situations to provide corrective action, optimism in continually evolving situations, and finally trust within the partnership understanding that trust itself is fragile; taking a long time to build and easily ruined.

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