

Apollos

An Eloquent Christ Convert at Rome



Compiled By Dr. Harold Bollinger

APOLLOS

An eloquent, Christian convert at Corinth

[Acts 18:24-28](#)

Meanwhile, a Jew named Apollos, an eloquent speaker who knew the Scriptures well, had just arrived in Ephesus from Alexandria in Egypt.

He had been taught the way of the Lord and talked to others with great enthusiasm and accuracy about Jesus. However, he knew only about John's baptism. When Priscilla and Aquila heard him preaching boldly in the synagogue, they took him aside and explained the way of God more accurately.

Apollos had been thinking about going to Achaia, and the brothers and sisters in Ephesus encouraged him in this. They wrote to the believers in Achaia, asking them to welcome him.

When he arrived there, he proved to be of great benefit to those who, by God's grace, had believed. He refuted all the Jews with powerful arguments in public debate. Using the Scriptures, he explained to them, "The Messiah you are looking for is Jesus."

Apollos Teaches at Ephesus and in Achaia

Apollos taught in the gospel of Christ, as far as John's ministry would carry him, and no further.

We cannot but think he had heard of Christ's death and resurrection, but he was not informed as to the mystery of them. Though he had not the miraculous gifts of the Spirit, as the apostles, he made use of the gifts he had. The dispensation of the Spirit, whatever the measure of it may be, is given to every man to profit withal.

He was a lively, affectionate preacher; fervent in spirit. He was full of zeal for the glory of God and the salvation of precious souls.

Here was a complete man of God, thoroughly furnished for his work.

Aquila and Priscilla encouraged his ministry, by attendance upon it. They did not despise Apollos themselves, or undervalue him to others; but considered the disadvantages he had laboured under.

And having themselves got knowledge in the truths of the gospel by their long working with Paul, they told what they knew to him.

Young scholars may gain a great deal by converse with old Christians. Those who do believe through grace, yet still need help.

As long as they are in this world, there are remainders of unbelief, and something lacking in their faith to be perfected, and the work of faith to be fulfilled.

If the Jews were convinced that Jesus is Christ, even their own law would teach them to hear him. The business of ministers is to preach Christ. Not only to preach the truth, but to prove and defend it, with meekness, yet with power.

[Acts 19:1](#)

While Apollos was in Corinth, Paul traveled through the interior provinces. Finally, he came to Ephesus, where he found several believers.

Knowing only the baptism of John. Whether he had heard John, and been baptized by him, has been made a question, and cannot now be decided.

It is not necessary, however, to suppose this, as it seems that the knowledge of John's preaching and baptism had been propagated extensively into other nations besides Judea, Acts 19:1-3.

The Messiah was expected about that time. The foreign Jews would be waiting for him; and the news of John's ministry, doctrine, and success, would be rapidly propagated from synagogue to synagogue into the surrounding nations.

John preached repentance, and baptized with reference to him that was to come after him, Acts 19:4; and this doctrine Apollos seems to have embraced.

[1Corinthians 1:12](#)

Some of you are saying, "I am a follower of Paul." Others are saying, "I follow Apollos," or "I follow Peter," or "I follow only Christ."

Paul and Apollos both were faithful ministers of Jesus Christ, and helpers of their faith and joy; but those disposed to be contentious, broke into parties.

So liable are the best things to be corrupted, and the gospel and its institutions made engines of discord and contention.

Satan has always endeavoured to stir up strife among Christians, as one of his chief devices against the gospel. The apostle left it to other ministers to baptize, while he preached the gospel, as a more useful work.

[1Corinthians 3:4-7](#)

When one of you says, "I am a follower of Paul," and another says, "I prefer Apollos," aren't you acting like those who are not Christians?

Who is Apollos, and who is Paul, that we should be the cause of such quarrels? Why, we're only servants. Through us God caused you to believe. Each of us did the work the Lord gave us.

My job was to plant the seed in your hearts, and Apollos watered it, but it was God, not we, who made it grow. The ones who do the planting or watering aren't important, but God is important because he is the one who makes the seed grow.

The most simple truths of the gospel, as to man's sinfulness and God's mercy, repentance towards God, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, stated in the plainest language, suit the people better than deeper mysteries. Men may have much doctrinal knowledge, yet be mere beginners in the life of faith and experience. Contentions and quarrels about religion are sad evidences of carnality.

True religion makes men peaceable, not contentious. But it is to be lamented, that many who should walk as Christians, live and act too much like other men. Many professors, and preachers also, show themselves to be yet carnal, by vain-glorious strife, eagerness for dispute, and readiness to despise and speak evil of others.

The True Servants of Christ Can Do Nothing without Him

The ministers about whom the Corinthians contended, were only instruments used by God. We should not put ministers into the place of God. He that planteth and he that watereth are one, employed by one Master, trusted with the same revelation, busied in one work, and engaged in one design.

They have their different gifts from one and the same Spirit, for the very same purposes; and should carry on the same design heartily.

Apollos refuses to return to Rome

[1Corinthians 16:12](#)

As touching our brother Apollos, I greatly desired him to come unto you with the brethren: but his will was not at all to come at this time; but he will come when he shall have convenient time.

Timothy and Apollos Commended

Timothy came to do the work of the Lord. Therefore to vex his spirit, would be to grieve the Holy Spirit; to despise him, would be to despise Him that sent him.

Those who work the work of the Lord, should be treated with tenderness and respect.

Faithful ministers will not be jealous of each other. It becomes the ministers of the gospel to show concern for each other's reputation and usefulness.

Exhortation to Watchfulness in Faith and Love

A Christian is always in danger, therefore should ever be on the watch.

He should be fixed in the faith of the gospel, and never desert or give it up.

By this faith alone he will be able to keep his ground in an hour of temptation.

Christians should be careful that charity not only reigns in their hearts, but shines in their lives. There is a great difference between Christian firmness and feverish warmth and transport.

The apostle gave particular directions as to some who served the cause of Christ among them.

Those who serve the saints, those who desire the honour of the churches, and to remove reproaches from them, are to be thought much of, and loved.

They should willingly acknowledge the worth of such, and all who laboured with or helped the apostle.

Paul writes Titus about their journey

[Titus 3:13](#)

Bring Zenas the lawyer and Apollos on their journey diligently, that nothing be wanting unto them.

Christianity is not a fruitless profession; and its professors must be filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God.

They must be doing good, as well as keeping away from evil. Let "ours" follow some honest labour and employment, to provide for themselves and their families.

Christianity obliges all to seek some honest work and calling, and therein to abide with God. The apostle concludes with expressions of kind regard and fervent prayer.

Grace be with you all; the love and favour of God, with the fruits and effects thereof, according to need; and the increase and feeling of them more and more in your souls.

This is the apostle's wish and prayer, showing his affection to them, and desire for their good, and would be a means of obtaining for them, and bringing down on them, the thing requested.

Grace is the chief thing to be wished and prayed for, with respect to ourselves or others; it is "all good."

Some are ever learning, but never able to come to the knowledge of the truth. Apollos is an exception in this matter. When he learned the whole gospel, he accepted and taught the complete message of Christ and salvation through the cross of Christ.

To ask Jesus to come into your heart please pray this Prayer:

Dear Lord Jesus, I believe you are the Christ, the Son of the Living God. I ask you to forgive me of my sins and coming into my heart. I accept you as savior and will follow you as Lord. Amen.

References:

Verse Concept: Matthew Henry's Concept Bible Commentary.