

## **Risking Your Neck for the Cause of Christ**

Romans 16:3-5a

There are several phrases in writing that are “idioms” or expressions that convey a thought in a vivid or graphic manner. Paul uses an idiom in our text in describing two of his dear friends, Priscilla and Aquila. He says of them, “*who have for my life laid down their own necks*” (v. 4). The NIV says, “they risked their lives,” but Paul literally uses the word neck. We have seen in recent months several beheadings. This manner of death was not uncommon in Paul’s day. Priscilla and Aquila put themselves in harm’s way for others. Let’s examine their lives and commitment to Christ in order to evaluate our own.

### **I. Priscilla and Aquila were generous in their resources.**

(Read Acts 18:1-4). Aquila was originally from a Roman province called Pontus. But after being expelled from his homeland, he went to Rome. We are not sure when Aquila was converted or when he met Priscilla, but they ended up in Corinth where they became friends with Paul. They were what we know as “homebuilders” (tentmakers). They were probably middle class, not rich, but not poor. And together –  
**(A). They supported a church financially . . .** “*greet the church in their house*”(v.5).  
**(B). They supported missions abroad . . .** “*all the churches of the Gentiles*” (v.5).

### **II. Priscilla and Aquila were gracious in their relationships.**

(Read Acts 18:18). Paul and Aquila became fast friends and when it came time for Paul to leave Corinth to go to the Middle East, Aquila went with him. There is some disagreement over who “shaved his head,” but the Syrian manuscripts suggest both Paul and Aquila shaved their heads “to become all things to all people.” Their ministry was taking them to a place where the custom was to shave the head. If we could learn how to receive people as they are, and focus more on the message, we’d do better.

### **III. Priscilla and Aquila were gentle in their rebukes.**

(Read Acts 18:24-26). Apollos seems to be someone zealous for the things of Christ. Yet his theology is not quite right. He has yet to see the significance of the work of the Messiah in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Priscilla and Aquila pull Apollos aside and explain to him the person and work of Christ gently and clearly.

### **IV. Priscilla and Aquila were glad in their religion.**

(Read II Timothy 4:10). Paul tells young Timothy to salute Priscilla and Aquila. Think with me. Priscilla and Aquila hosted a church in their home in Corinth. We find them in Rome ministering to the church there. They were in Ephesus gently teaching Apollos. Aquila goes with Paul to Syria. They disciplined Timothy and were influential in “all the Gentile churches.” They were busy, but glad in their work.

### **V. Priscilla and Aquila were grounded in their Redeemer.**

(Read Romans 16:3). They were “*helpers in Christ Jesus.*” In Christ! The joy in the hearts of Aquila and Priscilla that led them to “risk their lives” was Christ!