**Apollos: “Mighty In The Scriptures”**

Prepared by Nathan L Morrison for Sunday February 10th, 2019

Text: Acts 18:24-28

Intro

1. We are introduced to Apollos in Acts 18:24–28 (NASB):
   1. A Jew, and from all indications a disciple of John the Baptist
   2. He was born at Alexandria which was a chief seat of Hebrew learning
   3. Apollos was an “eloquent” man
   4. He was “mighty in the Scriptures”
      1. There are many ways a person can be described, and “mighty in the Scriptures” is a good one, and one we should all aspire to be described as!
2. There are many lessons we can learn from him!
3. Apollos the Alexandrian
   1. Who was Apollos? (Acts 18:24-26).
      1. A Jew, and from all indications a disciple of John the Baptist (18:25)
         1. Apollos had heard only what John the Baptist had said about Jesus *(Luke 3:1-18),* so his message was not the complete story.
         2. John focused on repentance from sin, the first step. But the whole message is to repent from sin and then believe in and obey Christ through baptism *(Mk. 16:16).*
      2. He was born at Alexandria which was a chief seat of Hebrew learning (18:24)
         1. This Jew with a Greek name was from the second largest city in the Roman Empire.
         2. Alexandria was a seaport on the northern coast of Egypt. Founded by Alexander the Great, the city was very cosmopolitan. Egyptians, Romans, and Greeks all lived there; over a quarter of the population was Jewish.
         3. The Septuagint (Greek translation of the Hebrew Scriptures) had been produced in that city about 150 years before the birth of Jesus.
         4. The city was famous for its great library, which at one time had over 7,000,000 volumes, and was considered the cultural and educational center of the world.
         5. The school was similar to that of Gamaliel (Acts 5:34, 22:3).
      3. Apollos was an “eloquent” man (18:24)
         1. The word “eloquent” can mean either a man skilled in the use of words or one skilled in ideas and thinking.
         2. Some depreciate the value of a college education while others worship at the altar of advanced education.
         3. A secular education is a means to an end—it is not essential to being of service in the kingdom (Acts 4:13: Fishermen amazed the Sanhedrin!).
      4. He was “mighty in the Scriptures” (18:24)
         1. The O.T. Scriptures are meant here. His instruction was in the anticipation of the Messiah as revealed in the Old Testament.
   2. What was he doing at Ephesus? (Acts 18:24-25)
      1. Apollos was “fervent in spirit” (CEV: “with great excitement”) He was not merely “going through the motions.”
      2. He spoke and taught diligently the things of the Lord (II Tim. 2:15)
         1. The passage indicates he knew nothing of the baptism of the gospel of Jesus (Mt. 28:18-20; Mk. 16:16).
         2. Though he might have known something of the life and teachings of Christ, his knowledge was correct as far as it went, but it was incomplete.
      3. He knew only the baptism of John.
         1. John’s baptism was preparatory (Mt. 11:10; cf. Mal. 3:1).
         2. John’s baptism was commanded by God (Luke 7:29–30).
         3. Those who obey Christ’s baptism confess Christ (Acts 8:37); not so with John’s.
         4. Christ’s baptism in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit (Mt. 28:19) was for salvation (Mk. 16:16; Acts 2:38; 22:16); not so with John’s (Acts 19:1: Possible Apollos didn’t know about the Holy Spirit)
      4. Was Apollos re-baptized? A question for the ages. The text does not specifically say although it is likely (Acts 19:1–7: Disciples of John baptized!).
   3. He was taught a “more accurate” way (Acts 18:26)
      1. Apollos spoke boldly, yet inaccurately.
      2. He was taught “more accurately” (KJV: “more perfectly”) by Aquila and Priscilla.
         1. This further illustrates that Apollos lacked certain facts concerning Jesus.
         2. Priscilla & Aquila (“they”) taught him privately.
         3. Their actions shed light on I Cor. 14:34 and I Tim. 2:12: Women not to speak publicly during assembly but can teach privately.
   4. Apollos in Achaia (Acts 18:27–28)
      1. He must have been receptive to the “more accurate” teaching of Priscilla and Aquila – Further commending his character (not prideful to reject correction).
      2. Apollos was highly recommended, well-respected, and capable. *In spite of all other qualifications brethren might place upon a preacher, these are what matter.*
      3. He “powerfully refuted the Jews in public, demonstrating by the Scriptures that Jesus was the Christ” (Acts 18:28).
         1. The word “refuted” *(G1246)* does not mean he convinced them to convert, but only that he proved what he was saying.
         2. By strong arguments he wore down all arguments and in effect silenced the Jews – Used Scripture to prove (NAS: “refute”; KJV: “convinced”)
         3. Done publicly—either in the synagogue or in debate (Jude 3).
   5. Apollos was a man “mighty in the Scriptures” and became even more so because of the teachings of Priscilla and Aquila!

1. The Work Of Apollos
   1. Went to Corinth (Acts 19:1).
   2. Extremely popular and successful. Factions arose, through no fault of his own (I Cor.1:10–16; 3:4–8; 4:6).
      1. Maybe this is why he could not return (I Cor. 16:12).
         1. Paul had urged Apollos to go to Corinth, but Apollos didn’t want to go then, but Paul was confident he would return “when he has opportunity.”
      2. In some cases there is no desire for a preacher to return! The Corinthians wanted him to return!
      3. Apollos and Paul both labored in Corinth: Paul planted (Acts 18:1-18), and then Apollos watered (Acts 19:1) – I Cor. 3:5-9
      4. Apollos was successful in retaining the confidence of the brethren at Corinth.
      5. What a good remark about him! *A great commendation!*
   3. Apollos continued to work for the Lord & was a fellow worker with Paul in furthering the gospel! *(I Cor. 3:9)*

Conclusion

1. Apollos should cause us to reflect upon a number of things:
   1. Which is more important for a preacher—college credentials or a knowledge of the Word of God? (One can be eloquent without a degree)
   2. Am I fervent in spirit? *(II Tim. 2:15)*
   3. If others corrected me according to the Word, would I be as willing as Apollos to change my preaching/teaching?
   4. Would others recommend me to work and help others in furthering the gospel?
   5. Would they want me to return?
   6. Apollos was “mighty in the Scriptures” – Is that how I would be described as? *II Tim. 2:15*
2. Apollos was “mighty” but was also found to be lacking in some areas and was taught a “more accurate/perfect” way – We need to have the heart to be taught no matter our maturity level!
3. May we strive to be “mighty in the Scriptures” and ever learn (study) to “accurately handle the word of truth” (II Tim. 2:15)!
4. If not a Christian, need to be! Repent and be baptized for the forgiveness of your sins!
5. If a Christian in error, repent and be renewed!
6. Whatever your requests, let them be known ***NOW*** while we stand and sing!