

“Faithful Troublemakers”
Cornerstone Church of Poway
Pastor Rich Sherwood
September 7th, 2025

Big Idea: God often uses people who stir things up—not for selfish ambition, but to advance truth and bring correction, healing, and growth to His people.

Acts 18:18–28

18 Paul stayed on in Corinth for some time. Then he left the brothers and sisters and sailed for Syria, accompanied by Priscilla and Aquila. Before he sailed, he had his hair cut off at Cenchreae because of a vow he had taken.

19 They arrived at Ephesus, where Paul left Priscilla and Aquila. He himself went into the synagogue and reasoned with the Jews. **20** When they asked him to spend more time with them, he declined. **21** But as he left, he promised, “I will come back if it is God’s will.” Then he set sail from Ephesus. **22** When he landed at Caesarea, he went up to Jerusalem and greeted the church and then went down to Antioch.

23 After spending some time in Antioch, Paul set out from there and traveled from place to place throughout the region of Galatia and Phrygia, strengthening all the disciples.

24 Meanwhile a Jew named Apollos, a native of Alexandria, came to Ephesus. He was a learned man, with a thorough knowledge of the Scriptures. **25** He had been instructed in the way of the Lord, and he spoke with great fervor[a] and taught about Jesus accurately, though he knew only the baptism of John. **26** He began to speak boldly in the synagogue. When Priscilla and Aquila heard him, they invited him to their home and explained to him the way of God more adequately.\

27 When Apollos wanted to go to Achaia, the brothers and sisters encouraged him and wrote to the disciples there to welcome him. When he arrived, he was a great help to those who by grace had believed. **28** For he vigorously refuted his Jewish opponents in public debate, proving from the Scriptures that Jesus was the Messiah.

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Notes:

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

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Read Acts 18:18–23.

1. What evidence do you see of Paul’s devotion to God's calling, even if it made him controversial or misunderstood?

Paul refused to stay longer in Ephesus when invited (**v.20–21**).

2. What does this tell us about his priorities, and how do you think that compares with how we make decisions today?

Priscilla and Aquila: The Quiet Troublemakers

Read Acts 18:24–26.

3. What do you notice about how Priscilla and Aquila corrected Apollos?
What can we learn from their example?
4. Why do you think it’s important to correct people in private rather than publicly? Have you ever had to do that—or receive it?

Apollos: The Academic Troublemaker

Apollos is described as “eloquent” and “mighty in the Scriptures,” but he didn’t know the full gospel.

5. What does his willingness to be corrected say about his character?

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After receiving instruction, Apollos became a great help to the church (**v.27–28**).

1.How can passion + teachability make someone powerfully effective for God?

Application & Reflection

2.Who do you most identify with in this passage—Paul, Priscilla/Aquila, or Apollos—and why?

3.Have you ever been in a situation where you had to “make trouble” for the sake of truth or correction? What happened?

4.When was the last time you allowed someone to correct your understanding of Scripture or theology? How did it go?

5.What “holy trouble” might God be calling you to cause right now—for truth, justice, or gospel boldness?