

## **Biblical Model: the Romans 16:3-5 expression of basic church-life**

When Paul wrote “*Greet Prisca and Aquila, my fellow workers in Christ Jesus,...also greet the church that is in their house*”, he (and God through him) was obviously affirming this little band of believers as the Body of Christ, the church, in their tiny slice of the world.

How enlightening it is to mentally picture that church in their 1st Century environment. Obviously they had no pulpit or pews. There was no separate classroom for the teens or children. Much of the New Testament had not been written yet and nobody had gone to Bible College! So, how did they live-out the elemental basics of church life together?

Consider discussing these questions with your own “gathered” church:

~ How did Prisca & Aquila make a living? (Acts 18:3)

~How big was their house? What was the furniture like?

~ How many people fit in their home?

~ How did they Worship? Disciple people? Evangelize? Do Ministry for others? Have Community together? ...all very basic and elemental, but still a simple expression of church!

~ Did anyone prepare, train, or “certify” their leader other than Paul? (2 Tim. 2:2, Acts 18:2-3)...by the way, how old do you suppose Peter, James, and John were when Jesus spoke Matthew 28:19-20 into their lives?

~Who gave them permission to transform their neighborhood by planting a simple but sincere expression of church there?

~Did they have deacons? If so, how were the deacons identified....were they selected or simply appreciated by everyone while God “gifted” & motivated them to serve people? Did deacons in the Bible ever meet, or just serve others?

~Did they have elders or was their pastor/leader/mentor the same thing as an elder (a spiritually mature person who daily follows the Lord and nurtures others to do the same)? 1 Timothy 5:17

~Where did they baptize? Did the person who was best friends with the new believer get to baptize that person?

~How did they observe the Lord's Supper?

~ What did they do with their offerings?

~ How much did the gathering cost?

~ How long did this specific expression of church-life last in this location?

~How much good did it do?

We don't know the detailed answers to these questions but the simplicity of that church is both apparent & somehow refreshing!

This same simple elemental style of church has changed lives throughout 2000 years in every culture, sub-group, social class, and political environment imaginable.....home churches in China, riverbank churches in Africa, apartment churches in urban America, and how about those early Christians driven to gather in the catacombs!

It has been well said,

**“If a group of Christ-followers is doing everything a church is supposed to do, why not call it a church.”**