



Links Players

RESCUED FROM DEATH 5: REAL-WORLD DISCIPLES

Paul went to see [Aquila and Priscilla], and because he was a tentmaker as they were, he stayed and worked with them. (Acts 18:2-3, NIV)

TODAY'S DEVOTION IS FIRST BEING PRESENTED ON GOOD FRIDAY, the day Christ's people come together to honor and proclaim their Savior's death. This day may not be like you remember as a child, when businesses shut down for the afternoon, and golf was out of the picture. Those were the days of Sunday blue laws and quaint deference toward, if not full faith in, the practice of faith.

How faith fits with culture has always been a question worth considering. If we are people with eyes on another kingdom, what do we dare spend our time doing here? Some of the earliest disciples sold their land and possessions, giving the proceeds to those in need. That's a big commitment, though maybe not so much if you are banking on Jesus coming back any day now, as many of them presumed.

Jesus still could come back any day now—and we should certainly be looking for him to do so!—but most of us are more likely to follow the path of Priscilla and Aquila rather than that of the divesting disciples.

The Corinthian couple Priscilla and Aquila were tentmakers. Unless there is a camping equipment factory where you live, you won't meet many actual tentmakers today. However, you will meet working people of many other kinds: restaurateurs, contractors, physicians, bankers, techies, investors, printers, insurers, pool cleaners, chemists, social workers, architects. I'll stop. But here's what I don't want you to miss: Whatever these people *do*, one thing they can all *be* are women or men of God. Their affections are set on Christ, even as their attentions must often be set on their work.

The same is true, you know, in our many other roles as moms and dads and elders and deacons and Sunday school teachers, as neighbors and customers and soccer coaches. While we are the followers of Christ, we might say that he goes with us wherever we go. This makes us real-world disciples.

You can talk if you'd like of separation of church and state, or of one's "private faith" or monastic seclusion, but life lived in Christ is life lived in the open. We work as those around us do, mow our lawns, stop at red lights, bring soup to an ill friend. Christ is in us, and by and by he comes out—but it's so much easier for others to see this when we go out and live among them.

Written by Jeff Hopper ©2019 Links Players International. An introductory video for this study is available at <https://youtu.be/4zpdTtHOcRE>.

Opening questions Who is one of the more interesting people you have met through their line of work? Did you get any sense of who they were, including their possible faith, beyond their job?

READING Matthew 5:13-16; Acts 18:1-5; 1 Thessalonians 4:11-12

Out in the open (Matthew 5)

How do Jesus' words call us to a public faith? Does this kind of openness scare you in any way? How can this be done with tact and balance?

Partners in life (Acts 18)

We often speak of our partnership (or fellowship) with others in faith endeavors, but what might be some advantages of partnering with other believers in work or community involvement?

Impacting the world (1 Thessalonians 4)

To what traits does Paul call believers in this passage? What difference does he see this making to those around us?
