



ZWTF

Zapping You Whenever Thoughts Flow

Volume 7, Issue 4

ROMANS ^{Part 140}

Chapter 16:3-5

Priscilla & Aquila, Part 5



Greet Prisca and Aquila, my fellow workers in Christ Jesus 4 (who, for the sake of my soul, jeopardize their own necks, whom not only I am thanking, but all the ecclesias of the nations also) 5 and the ecclesia at their house.

WHO SPIKES THE FOOTBALL?

Not everyone is what we would call “great” in the body of Christ. The body of Christ consists of people assuming many different parts and roles, just as there are many different parts and roles of the human body (1 Corinthians 12:12). Yet even the noblest parts of the human body—the brain, the eyes, the heart, hands, the mouth—depend on the most invisible and uncelebrated parts: the capillary system, the nervous

system, the kidneys, the small intestines, the membranes of the cells.

I think of a football team. Who gets the credit when a star running back breaks off a 60-yard run and scores the winning touchdown in the fourth quarter? The running back does. He spikes the football in the end zone and does the Jitterbug. He then jumps into the stands so that the fans can slap him on the back and the helmet; it’s a lovefest. But who ever mentions the key block by an uncelebrated lineman—the block that actually sprang the superstar—without which the superstar would have suffered an embarrassing two-yard loss? Every now and then an astute football commentator will slow down the film and replay the key block that was so brilliantly executed that you or I could have scored behind it. Does the lineman do the Jitterbug? No. Has anyone ever seen an offensive lineman jump into the stands for a lovefest? Never.

THE SECRET WORK

Priscilla and Aquila are great now only because God recorded their behind-the-scenes activity and showed this activity to us. They are great now because, in the sacred pages of Scripture, God offers behind-the-curtain peeks at essential men and women of faith, laboring backstage, without whom there would be no headliner and no production. The entire sixteenth chapter of Romans is a peek backstage at the “technicians,” “stagehands,” “gaffers” and “grips” who kept the apostle to the nations front and center with their friendship, encouragement, labor, money and prayers.

Yet at the time of their vital work, Priscilla and Aquila operated in relative anonymity. They lived undercover in the “second tier” of service. But the Master Producer and Commentator of the production (the production known as the Evangel of the Grace of God) has slowed down the film for us and shown us the essential roles of the tentmakers. With the assistance of these two

emissaries, God—through Paul—established ecclesias and teachers *for* the ecclesias.

FEW REAL-TIME REWARDS

Any labor for the evangel—then as now—must be done “as unto the Lord” (Colossians 3:23). As we live and breathe, there are few real-time rewards. We must wait until the film is reviewed at that Great Reviewing Booth in the Sky for all players to receive their proper due. Not one second of even the tiniest good deed done for the sake of the evangel—that is, for the sake of the truth and the heralding of it—is lost; not one. In some ways, there may be even more reward tendered to the relatively anonymous player, for—

...there are, indeed, many members, yet one body. Yet the eye can not say to the hand, “I have no need of you,” or, again, the head to the feet, “I have no need of you.” Nay, much rather, those members of the body supposed to be inherently weaker are necessary, and which we suppose to be a more dishonored part of the body, *these we are investing with more exceeding honor*, and our indecent members have more exceeding respectability (1 Corinthians 12:20-23).



MATT ROHRBACH

My friend Matt Rohrbach has been working in this evangel, with me, since I launched the full-time work in 1993. He received the truth via a book I handed him (*The Outcome of Infinite Grace* by Loyal Hurley) while we were both still working for the Postal Service in

Willard, Ohio. Matt still works for the Postal Service in Willard, Ohio. He generally hates it these days, but he puts in his time and collects his paycheck. And I can vouch to you that he uses that paycheck to assist others more than himself. He assists his family, and he has assisted me for twenty-four years.

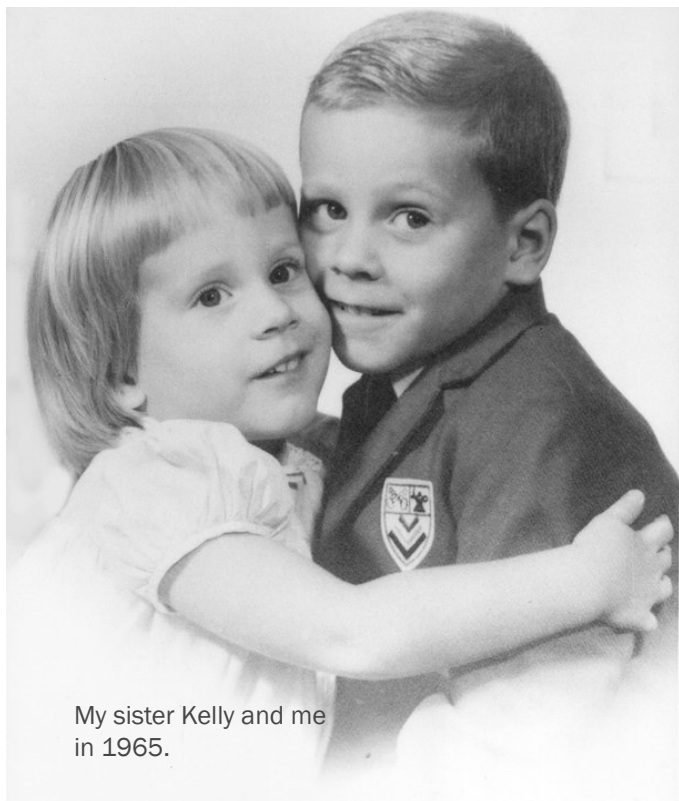
You see his name at the bottom of this page as my proofer. He has performed this necessary duty since June of 1994, when I published my first newsletter, “The Idle Babbler Illustrated.” These days, Matt keeps many dumb mistakes from creeping into the ZWTF.

Matt has suffered for the evangel, in his own way, just as I have. Yet I am celebrated as a herald of the truth, and he is not. He would be the first to tell you that he wouldn’t want my job. He has told me that many times. Matt—like the rest of us—barely hangs on some days. Yet he does hang on, and he keeps contributing in so many ways to this work, and thus to you.

Matt is always telling me that he can’t wait to see me get my rewards at the dais of Christ. He says that he hopes he’s not behind me, because I will be up there for a really long time getting feted by Christ. Okay, Matt. I turn this on him, because I know the truth. I realize the truth that those who are rarely heralded now—and yet who have worked humbly and without fanfare behind the scenes for the sake of the entire body of Christ—will receive more exceeding honor at the dais of Christ (1 Corinthians 12:23) than other, more prominent members. I have thus told Matt, “No, sir. I can’t wait to see *your* presentation at the dais,” and I mean it. Matt is not in this for awards or rewards, yet this is just what he’ll receive whether he likes it or not. Paul says that we will all be receiving applause from God (1 Corinthians 4:5). I can’t wait to see and hear the fanfare surrounding Matt’s presentation.

KELLY STOKOE

My sister Kelly is another patient laborer, working behind the scenes to make sure that you get this newsletter and my “Return to Zender” video show. She also proofreads the ZWTF and, right along with Matt, saves me from dumb mistakes. This is on top of the work that she does for the website. If it weren’t for Kelly, there would be no website. There would be no www.martinzender.com. She hates technology as much as I do; it’s not like operating a website is her forte or her dream come true. It’s not like it’s really fun for her. But she sweats her way through it like a real trooper. Because nothing looks good on the website, or on the videos or on the newsletters, by accident. Kelly makes it happen.



My sister Kelly and me
in 1965.

She also loves the truth, this kid. She exited organized religion before I did (she gave up on the Catholic church around 1980; it took me until 1981), yet God used me to bring her Paul's evangel, the sovereignty of God, and the salvation of all—the greatest honors of my life.

When I was probably ten years old (Kelly would have been eight), I wrote a book called *Tuff Stuff*. It was a hodgepodge collection of poems, stories and hand-drawn illustrations. I literally bound the 15-page book with yarn. Kelly loved it. I remember that she would knock trepidatiously on my bedroom door and say, "Hey, can I read *Tuff Stuff* again?"

She has always been my biggest fan.

So where would I be without my little sister? Lost and miserable. She is the last of my family left. I can't wait to see the honor and applause that Kelly receives at the dais of Christ, for all the work that she has done on behalf of the body of Christ; on behalf of you; on behalf of me. She is a Priscilla without an Aquila. She pushes me out to the front and happily celebrates my successes as she publishes truth from the anonymity of the little desk in her living room in Canton, Ohio.

TRAVIS AND CELINA

Travis Penner, of Vancouver, BC and Celina Suprenant, of Massachusetts, got "The Revelation Series" to you from

2014-2017—first Travis, then Celina. Between them, they titled, formatted, and processed all the shows. Unheralded saints, these two, and yet now heralded by me and even more heralded by Christ in the day when those who have worked practically anonymously in the shadows come forth into the glorious light of the raised platform that is the dais of Christ, to receive their just due for labors rendered.

CRAZY PAUL AT THE DAIS

Paul is the greatest apostle. God gave this message to him. He suffered more than any of us ever have or will for the sake of this truth, and for the sake of us *getting* this truth. Being a giant among men, Paul nevertheless counted himself but a slave of Christ (Romans 1:1). But never mind that. Who among us doesn't want to see Paul get his due? Who among us doesn't want front row seats for the moment when the great apostle is called before his Lord at the dais, to receive his long awaited wreath of righteousness? 2 Timothy 4:8—

Furthermore, there is reserved for me the wreath of righteousness, which the Lord, the just Judge, will be paying to me in that day; yet not to me only, but also to all who love His advent.

But let me tell you what just may happen. I know this guy, and this is what just may happen.

**"I know this guy, and
this is what just
may happen."**

Paul's time to step up will at last arrive—obviously he will be first in line—but just as he stands and all eyes are upon him, he will say something completely ridiculous and unexpected, something like, "Thank you, my Lord. You are a great and gracious Savior, a rewarder of those who labor in the Word. I have anticipated this moment for many years, as You know, and here it finally is. But let me tell you something, Lord—and I say this in front of all of you (he gestures to the crowd) from the bottom of my heart—what I'd *really* like to see, before anything else gets started here, is Martin Zender stepping up here—come on up, Zender—I'm telling you, this guy fought the good fight at the *end* of the eon,



at the *end* of the time of the nations, during the *worst* parts of this thing, when the apostasy was full-blown and the entire world had gone practically mad. I mean, *that's* impressive. What I started, this man finished. So please, let's have a large round of applause for Martin Zender—an incredible performance,” and then he will sit down. *The great apostle to the nations will sit down.*

MY TURN

Holy heck. Good God. Jesus H. Now, I guarantee you that, should something crazy like this occur, I would be shocked, embarrassed, slack-jawed. A dozen or more immortal saints would have to pull me up out of my seat just to unfreeze me. And there I would stand, dumb-founded. “Say something,” the great apostle would say as he sat himself among the crowd. What could I *possibly* say? Well, possibly this:

“My Lord, my dear apostle, esteemed guests: I hardly know what to say—and you know that this is an amazing thing for me. (*Ripples of laughter.*) I don't even belong in the same room with this great man, let alone at the same dais. In fact, I see a couple thousand people here, at least, who are more worthy than I to be noticed in this way by our great Paul. These words, by our apostle, border on the absurd, and yet there they lay.

And so—here I am.

“I would never have even stood, except I know this man (*I would gesture to Paul at this moment*) and I know of his pure delight at putting others before himself, for here is one of the truest marks of the spirit of God residing in a person, that he or she would put others before him or her self. (*And then I would quote Paul in Philippians 2:1-3, saying*)—

“If, then, there is any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any communion of spirit, if any compassion and pity, fill my joy full, that you may be mutually disposed, having mutual love, joined in soul, being disposed to one thing—nothing according with faction, nor yet according with vainglory—but with humility, *deeming one another superior to one's self.*”

I already know what *your* reaction would be, my dear friends. You, like Matt, would be content to sit in the wings, anxious to see me lauded and feted by Christ. But I would have a surprise for you. For these would be my next words—

YOUR TURN

“My brother Paul, I am both humbled and honored by your gesture—to have been called here to step up ahead of you. It dumfounds me. And yet I recognize it for what it is,

a window into your own heart and the spirit of God that operates so richly in you. Your life, on Earth—subsequent to your reception of this great message—was a living letter of the spirit and the grace of God and the spirit of Christ operating in you. I know without a doubt, my brother and fellow-laborer, that you are as sincere as can be in your delight to see me, Martin Zender—of all people—awarded ahead of yourself. But now, if I may be so bold as to speak to you, Paul, and to You, Christ, and to you, citizens of heaven; for I have *this* to say:

“I did not do this alone. Behind me was an army of humble, uncelebrated men and women who had no desire for personal glory, themselves, but who only wanted me to succeed in my labors because they saw in me a man as enthusiastic and as honest and as sincere as you, Paul, in the proclamation of this great truth. Like Priscilla and Aquila and so many others who helped, patronized and prayed for you, these unheralded men and women pushed me forward in the work—even in the extremity of the great apostasy of which you, yourself, prophesied. They have sent me money to live, Paul, some of them giving the widow’s mite. They have prayed for me. They have written me hundreds of encouraging emails and texts—I’ll explain to you later what ‘emails’ and ‘texts’ are—they have visited me at my home, they have sent me cards and gifts in the mail. Why, in the final days of the eon, I even received a box of fine cigars from a believer in Missouri—that’s in the United States—because he knew that these would be a comfort to me.

“The men and women of whom I speak generally thought of any way possible, while we were on the Earth, to encourage me, to keep me in the faith, to keep me heralding the Word, opportunely and inopportunely. They saw me as a light in the darkness of Eon 3—and I can only credit You for this, my Lord, Jesus Christ. They knew that they, themselves, were not called to frontline battle in the defense of the truth, but they recognized a front-line warrior in me, and they would have done anything to keep the message going forward around the world. It is *they* who finished this great work, my esteemed listeners, not me. *They* did it. For without their love, their prayers, their gifts, and encouragement, I’d have been nothing.”

Therefore, I wish to call to this podium, in my stead, the many men and women who, in the shadows of anonymity and without expectation of fanfare, kept me alive against all odds during the final years of the most wicked eon there has ever been. It is my joy and honor, today, to see that these humble servants and fellow-slaves of Christ shall no longer endure the anonymity that was theirs upon

the Earth. And so, may I present to you, ladies and gentleman—the *final members of the body of Christ*.”

The ensuing applause would deafen both heaven and earth.

In the glorious frenzy, I would call you up to the podium, just as Mike Eruzione called his U.S. Olympic hockey teammates up to the podium for the gold medal ceremony at the 1980 Olympic games. Except, in this case, I would vacate that podium to leave *you* there. For my greatest glory, then, would be to take my seat next to Paul and to applaud you—you great and uncelebrated saints—as you receive the appreciation that is your rightful due. It will be the appreciation of every celestial tongue—and the smile of Christ Jesus Himself. —MZ
(*To be continued.*)

POSTSCRIPT

Please watch the following video of the U.S. Hockey team’s gold medal game against Finland in the 1980 Olympic Games in Lake Placid, New York. It is a five-minute highlight reel. The Americans had beaten the Russians a couple of nights earlier in one of the most celebrated performances in the annals of sport. The Americans, wildly unproven amateurs, beat an “unbeatable” Soviet Union team of hardened, experienced professionals. Against all odds the Americans won, and advanced to the gold medal game against Finland.

The video that you are about to watch is allegorical. The game is the final day of this eon. The Finns are the Adversary. (I’m sorry if anyone reading is from Finland; this is allegorical.) The cheering crowd is the celestial world in attendance, watching one of the most amazing displays of “grace versus adversity” that they have ever witnessed. The Americans are us, the body of Christ. The goals scored by the U.S. are us bringing the last members of the body of Christ into the fold against every opposition of Satan; it the last thing that he wants—more members of the body of Christ. The Finnish goals represent our Adversary killing yet another citizen of Earth with religious hopelessness.

This is our last day on Earth, and yet we are still fighting. Fighting like hell. We are underdogs. Suspense reigns, as no one on Earth thinks that we can win. Even some in heaven must doubt.

But then, against all odds, we conquer. The last member of the body of Christ enters! (The final goal of this game occurred with the Americans at a one-man disadvantage due to a penalty. Jim McKay, calling the



game, referred to it as “an intensely anxious moment.”) We, ourselves, conquer sin, death, doubt and spiritual oppression through Jesus Christ our Savior. The “gold medal” is our snatching away. (“Five seconds to the gold medal! This impossible dream comes true!”) We are snatched away into the heavenlies, into the arms of victory and applause.

One of the most poignant moments in this video is after the game, when America goalie Jim Craig says, “Where is my father?” Capitalize the “F,” and these will be our words precisely: “Where is my Father?”

Watch past the national anthem. The national anthem of the United States represents a new song that we will all sing among the celestials (“through the perilous fight”). The podium represents the dais of Christ. Don’t stop watching, because the best is yet to come.

Team captain Mike Eruzione knows that he does not deserve to stand at that dais alone. The game could not have been won without his teammates. In fact, it was his teammates who won the game. Though Eruzione scored

the winning goal against the Russians, he scored not a single goal against the Finns.

At the end of the anthem, Eruzione calls for his teammates to join him at the dais. This is Paul calling us to him; or it is me calling you—take it any way you like. It is the *corporate* celebration of the body of Christ, each member aware that none of us could have made it without the other.

In the end, “There was something so wonderfully pure about it all. They had not come planning for glory or for later financial reward. They had just come to try as hard as they could. And when they won, they popularized words like ‘hope,’ and ‘dedication,’ and ‘faith,’ and ‘love.’ Nothing is impossible, they have proven.”

You are watching our last day upon Earth—our last day of struggle, “through the perilous fight.” Watch, especially, the reception that awaits us in heaven. See how fervently we embrace one another; see how we love one another.

I love you for the eons and beyond,

—Martin

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w1bbyeifs-I>