

FACE-TO-FACE
BIBLE STUDY SERIES

FACE-TO-FACE WITH
PRISCILLA AND AQUILA

BALANCING LIFE *and* MINISTRY

*Five Sessions for
Individuals, M&M'S (Mentors & Mentees, Friends, Family)
or Groups*

Includes

Leader's Guide for Facilitators

JANET THOMPSON

 **NEW HOPE**
PUBLISHERS
Birmingham, Alabama

New Hope® Publishers
P. O. Box 12065
Birmingham, AL 35202-2065
www.newhopepublishers.com
New Hope Publishers is a division of WMU®.

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Printed in the United States of America.

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Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Thompson, Janet, 1947-

Face-to-face with Priscilla and Aquila : balancing life and ministry : five sessions for individuals, m&m's (mentors and mentees, friends, family) or groups : includes leader's guide for facilitators / Janet Thompson.

p. cm. -- (Face-to-face Bible study series)

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN 978-1-59669-295-4 (sc : alk. paper)

1. Priscilla, Saint, 1st cent. 2. Aquila, Saint, 1st cent. 3. Christian women--Religious life--Textbooks. 4. Mentoring--Religious aspects--Christianity--Textbooks. 5. Bible--Textbooks. I. Title.

BS2520.P75T46 2011

226.6'092082--dc22

2010034530

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ISBN-10: 1-59669-295-2

ISBN-13: 978-1-59669-295-4

N114132 • 0211 • 4M1

A large, light gray decorative swirl graphic in the upper left corner, consisting of several overlapping loops and curves.

DEDICATED WITH LOVE

To

Dave, my beloved husband
and fellow worker in marriage,
work, ministry—life





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WELCOME

MY STORY

I began taking steps to start the Woman to Woman Mentoring Ministry while at my home church, Saddleback Church, in Lake Forest, California, pastored by Rick Warren. “Feed My sheep” was God’s call and challenge to me to go into full-time ministry. God quickly revealed that *feeding* was mentoring and *the sheep* were women in churches all over the world. In obedience to the call, I launched the ministry in my home in January 1996, and we quickly outgrew my living room. After receiving numerous requests from other churches wanting to know how to start this type of a ministry, I authored *Woman to Woman Mentoring, How to Start, Grow, and Maintain A Mentoring Ministry DVD Leader Kit* (LifeWay Press).

As I traveled throughout the United States and Canada, training and speaking on mentoring, I heard numerous requests for a Bible study depicting God’s plan for mentors and mentees—“M&M’S,” as we fondly call them. One morning, as my husband completed his quiet time with the Lord, Dave asked me if I had ever considered writing Bible studies based on mentoring relationships in the Bible. He knew that many M&M’S enjoy doing a Bible study together, and Dave felt that one focused on what God says about mentoring relationships would help answer many of the M&M’S questions.

After much prayer—and my husband’s prodding—I decided to look in the Bible to see how many mentoring relationships I could find. Before long, I had discovered 12. This was my confirmation to begin writing the “Face-to-Face” Bible study series (formerly known as *Mentoring God’s Way*). My passion and life mission is to help one generation of believers connect to the next generation and pass down God’s plan for the Christian life. I trust that the “Face-to-Face” Bible study series will help you do exactly that.

WHAT IS MENTORING?

I love Dee Brestin’s depiction of the informality of mentoring in *The Friendships of Women Workbook*: “It’s not to be a dependent relationship, but simply a friendship as you spend time with a woman who is

further down the road, at least in some areas of her Christian life. Win Couchman says, ‘Mentoring works very nicely over a cup of coffee.’”

For those who like more concrete and specific definitions, *Roget’s Super Thesaurus* provides this explanation of the root word of *mentoring*. It defines *mentor* as a teacher, guide, coach, or advisor. Most dictionaries define the word *mentor* as a trusted and wise counselor. To combine Dee’s and the reference definitions with the Christian perspective: a Christian mentor is a spiritually mature woman who is a trusted and wise teacher, guide, coach, counselor, advisor, and friend. Thus, a *mentee* is someone willing to be taught, guided, coached, advised, or counseled by a trusted, wise, and spiritually older woman friend. Christian mentoring is sharing with another woman the many wonders you have seen God do in your life, and assuring her that He will do them in her life, too, as you both discover God’s purpose and plan for your lives together.

Mentoring is not a hierarchy; it’s always a two-way, mutually beneficial relationship where both participants learn from each other. Chris Tiegreen, author of my favorite devotional, *The One-Year Walk with God Devotional*, reminds us why it is always better to seek God’s ways together.

The Bible gives us solid wisdom on which to base our lives. But while it is absolute, its interpretation can vary widely. That’s where advice comes in. Never underestimate the body of Christ. He has crafted us to live in community. Wisdom usually comes not to godly individuals but to godly fellowships. Are you seeking direction? Know your heart, but do not trust it entirely. Measure it by biblical wisdom and the counsel of those who follow it well.
—June 27 devotional

The Bible also clearly instructs men to mentor men and women to mentor women. Titus 2:1–8 is the traditional “mentoring” passage.

You must teach what is in accord with sound doctrine. Teach the older men to be temperate, worthy of respect, self-controlled, and sound in faith, in love and in endurance. Likewise, teach the older women to be reverent in the way they live, not to be slanderers or

addicted to much wine, but to teach what is good. Then they can train the younger women to love their husbands and children, to be self-controlled and pure, to be busy at home, to be kind, and to be subject to their husbands, so that no one will malign the word of God. Similarly, encourage the young men to be self-controlled. In everything set them an example by doing what is good. In your teaching show integrity, seriousness and soundness of speech that cannot be condemned, so that those who oppose you may be ashamed because they have nothing bad to say about us.

First Peter 5:2–4 (NLT) could be addressing mentors.

Care for the flock that God has entrusted to you. Watch over it willingly, not grudgingly—not for what you will get out of it, but because you are eager to serve God. Don’t lord it over the people assigned to your care, but lead them by your own good example. And when the Great Shepherd appears, you will receive a crown of never-ending glory and honor.

A mentor doesn’t need to be an expert on the Bible or God, and she doesn’t need to have a perfect life. If that were the case, none of us would qualify. A mentor simply needs to be willing to share her life experiences with another woman and be an example and role model of how a Christian woman does life. And how do we learn to be a godly role model? Answer: “*Remember your leaders who taught you the word of God. Think of all the good that has come from their lives, and follow the example of their faith*” (Hebrews 13:7 NLT).

Mentoring is not *doing* a ministry: It is *being* a godly woman who follows the Lord’s command: “*One generation will commend your works to another; they will tell of your mighty acts*” (Psalm 145:4).

WHO ARE M&M'S?

In the Woman to Woman Mentoring Ministry, we lovingly refer to mentors and mentees as “M&M'S”—no, that’s not the candy, although we always have M&M's® candy at our events. And just like the candy, there are varieties of M&M relationships—no two are the same. M&M'S may be: friends, acquaintances, family members, workers, neighbors, members of a mentoring or other ministry, team members, women with similar life experiences, or any two women who want to grow spiritually together.

M&M'S AND MORE!

The “Face-to-Face” Bible study series has a variety of applications. You can enjoy this study in these ways:

On your own

As a mentor and mentee (M&M'S) in a mentoring or discipleship relationship

Between two friends

Between two relatives

As a small or large group studying together

As a churchwide Bible study

The Bible studies offer these three types of questions:

ON YOUR OWN—questions for doing the study individually

M&M'S—questions for mentors and mentees, two friends, or relatives studying together

ON YOUR OWN AND M&M'S—questions applicable to both individuals and those studying together

Groups answer all the questions, with a Leader's/Facilitator's Guide in each book.

STUDY FORMAT

There are five main sessions, comprised of five study days. Each day's study includes:

Scriptures and questions for you to study and answer

Face-to-Face Reflections—a discussion of the day's topic

Personal Parable—a story depicting and applying the day’s topic
Mentoring Moment—takeaway wisdom for the day

At the end of each session there is:

Faith in Action—an opportunity for life application of the lessons learned

Let’s Pray Together—my prayer of agreement with you

Following session five are Closing Materials:

- ◆ Let’s Pray a Closing Prayer Together
- ◆ Janet’s Suggestions—ideas for further study
- ◆ Leader’s Guide for Group-Study Facilitators and M&M’S
- ◆ Session Guide
- ◆ Prayer & Praise Journal

SUGGESTIONS FOR INDIVIDUAL STUDY

I admire you for seeking out this study on your own and having the desire and discipline to work on it by yourself. I like to grow in the knowledge of the Lord and His Word and have found that my most relevant insights from God come when I seek Him by myself in a quiet place. Have fun on your own, and share with someone all you are learning.

1. A good way to stay consistent in your studying is to work a little each day, during your quiet time in the morning or evening.
2. Tell someone you have started this study, and ask him or her to keep you accountable to complete it.

SUGGESTIONS FOR M&M’S— MENTORS AND MENTEES, FRIENDS, AND RELATIVES

I hope the study of *Face-to-Face with Priscilla and Aquila: Balancing Life and Ministry* adds a new dimension to your M&M relationship.

Here are a few study tips:

1. Come to your meetings prepared to discuss your answers to the session's questions.
2. Or, you may decide to answer the questions together during your meetings.
3. If you don't live near each other, you can have phone or online discussions.
4. Remember, the questions are to enlighten and not divide; be honest and open as well as loving and kind.

SUGGESTIONS FOR GROUP STUDY

I love group studies because you get to hear other people's points of view, and lasting friendships often develop. Your meetings should be fun, informative, relevant, and applicable to group members' lives. Enjoy yourself with your fellow sisters in Christ, but remember that joining a group study *does* mean commitment. So please attend your scheduled meetings unless there is a real emergency. I suggest the following courtesies:

1. Put the meeting dates on your calendar.
2. Commit to doing your study and come prepared for the discussion. This honors the rest of the group, and you will get so much more from the sessions.
3. Ask questions—quite often, someone else has the same question.
4. Participate in the discussion, but be cautious of dominating the conversation. For example, if you have answered several questions, even though you know all the answers, let someone else have a turn. Try to encourage a less outgoing member to share.

5. Listen when others speak and give each speaker your full attention.
6. Arrive on time.
7. Keep in confidence the information shared in the group.

LEADERS AND FACILITATORS

When I lead and facilitate Bible-study groups, I value a complete and detailed Leader's Guide, so that is what I have provided for you. The "Face-to-Face" Bible study series has a Leader's Guide at the end of each book to provide the leader/facilitator with creative ideas for the following:

1. Guiding group discussion
2. Adding life application and variety to the sessions
3. Accommodating the varied learning styles of the group (visual learners, hands-on learners, auditory learners, and more)

TO YOU—THE READER

Whatever way you are doing this study, God has a message and a lesson just for you. Here are some suggestions I pray will enhance your experience studying *Face-to-Face with Priscilla and Aquila*.

1. Start each session with prayer and ask the Lord to speak to you through the Scripture readings, the prayerful answering of the questions, and the interaction with others.
2. Set your own pace. I provide breaking points, but make it comfortable for yourself and break as you need to do so.
3. If you're not sure how to answer a question, move on, but continue praying and thinking about the answer. Often my answers come quickly, but God's answers are the most fruitful.

4. Unless otherwise indicated, all the questions relate to NIV Bible passages. Lists of Scriptures are sequential, as they appear in the Bible. You will be looking up Scripture references in your Bible—an invaluable way to study and learn about the Bible.
5. Use the space provided to answer questions, but don't feel obligated to fill the space. However, if you need more room, continue answering in a separate journal.
6. A book effectively used for study should be underlined, highlighted, and comments written in the margins, so interact with this material in that way.
7. At the end of session five, you will find suggestions from me on books to read or activities, to delve deeper into what God may be teaching you about the biblical M&M relationship featured in *Priscilla and Aquila*.
8. Use the Prayer & Praise Journal starting on page 138 to record the mighty work God does in your life during this study. Journal prayer requests, and note when God answers.
9. Have some chocolate. After reading about M&M'S throughout the study, you'll be ready for some candy!

My heart, admiration, and encouragement go out to you with this book. I pray that mentoring becomes a vital part of your life. The “Face-to-Face” Bible study series is another way the Lord allows me to “feed My sheep.” And I hope that you will enjoy this and other “Face-to-Face” Bible studies and “feed” others as well.

About His Work,
Janet

SESSION ONE
FACE-TO-FACE WITH PRISCILLA AND AQUILA:
BALANCING LIFE AND MINISTRY



THEIR STORY

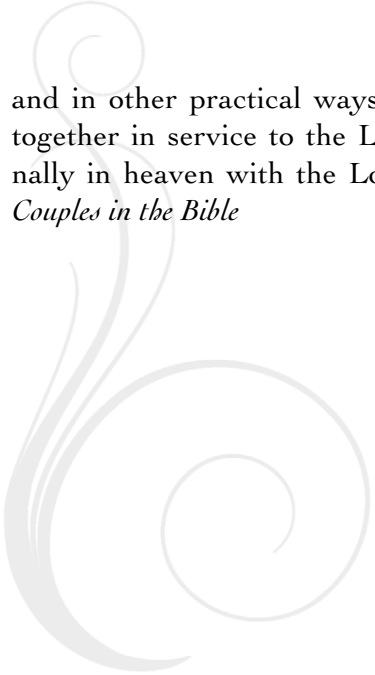

CAN YOU RELATE?

William Booth and Catherine Mumford were married in June of 1885. As newlyweds, they were out in the streets preaching, teaching, and praying among the poor and needy in London, England. They believed that to save people from evil and teach them about Christ, they needed to do more than just feed and house them. So, they formed a mission and organized it as if they were in battle against the enemy. Their leaders were known as ‘officers,’ Christians were ‘captives,’ and outreaches into new cities or countries were called ‘invasions.’ We know this organization as the Salvation Army.

“While raising eight children, and with no one place to call home, Catherine and William were a ministry team that few can surpass. Catherine was beside her husband in every aspect of the work, helping to forge this ‘army’ into the militant and triumphant Christian force it has become today.

“She designed the women’s uniform, including the ‘Hallelujah’ bonnet, and she preached the message of salvation to crowds. When she died of cancer in her sixties, it took five days for 50,000 persons to file past her casket in London’s Congress Hall where she lay in state wearing her bonnet, tunic and blouse, with her Bible in her hand and her flag by her side.

“William lived twenty-two more years, continuing the ministry of the Salvation Army. Before he died, he had traveled around the world and preached 60,000 sermons. Not only have hundreds of thousands been ministered to in food and housing



and in other practical ways, but, through this couple working together in service to the Lord, many thousands will live eternally in heaven with the Lord Jesus Christ.”—Sylvia Charles, *Couples in the Bible*



DAY ONE

HOW DOES PRISCILLA AND AQUILA'S STORY RELATE TO US?



Priscilla and Aquila are role models for balancing marriage, work, and ministry.

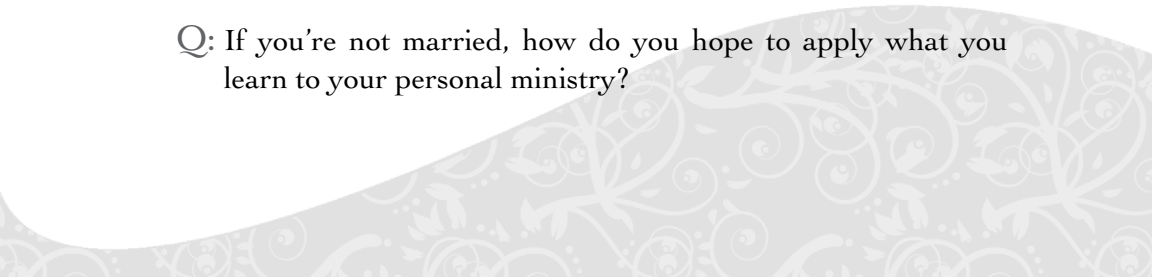
ON YOUR OWN AND M&M'S

Q: Read Priscilla and Aquila's story: Acts 18:2–3, 18–28; Romans 16:3–5a; 1 Corinthians 16:19; 2 Timothy 4:19. Identify their

- Work
- Ministry
- Mentoring

Q: If you're married, what would you like to learn from this study about serving as a couple?

Q: If you're not married, how do you hope to apply what you learn to your personal ministry?



M&M'S

Q: Ask God to help you apply principles in this study to your M&M relationship.

FACE-TO-FACE REFLECTIONS

As a married couple, Priscilla and Aquila worked together making a living and ministered together changing lives. They were humble tentmakers collaborating with Paul in ministry and in work and remained friends with him throughout his lifetime.

This study explores principles we can learn from this couple that are applicable to anyone wanting to learn God's plan for balancing life and ministry.

PERSONAL PARABLE

The late Pastor Ray Ortlund and his wife, Anne, were a modern-day Priscilla and Aquila. Ray was a senior pastor in churches of various sizes and locations and Anne ministered beside him. As a couple, they formed Renewal Ministries and devoted their senior years to individually mentoring groups of men and women, and together mentoring couples serving in ministry. The majority of the mentoring and counseling took place in their home, and I had the privilege of participating in one of Anne's mentoring groups.

Until Ray's death, Ray and Anne traveled wherever God called them to serve, including the underground church in China when they were both well beyond getting a senior discount!

Anne, author of *Disciplines of a Beautiful Woman*, continued Renewal Ministries on her own for several years before passing the torch to their son. Like Ray, Anne seems determined to serve the Lord until she takes her final breath.



Mentoring Moment

“One man or woman called to God is worth a hundred who have elected to work for God.” —Oswald Chambers



DAY TWO

PRISCILLA AND AQUILA MEET THEIR MENTOR

It's not surprising that a friendship developed between the Apostle Paul and his contemporaries, Priscilla and Aquila.

ON YOUR OWN AND M&M'S

Q: Where did Priscilla and Aquila first meet Paul (Acts 18:1–2)?

- What nationality were Priscilla, Aquila, and Paul (Acts 18:2; 21:39)?
- What was their shared trade (Acts 18:3)?
- Why did Priscilla and Aquila leave Rome (Acts 18:2)?
- How was Paul treated in Athens, before traveling to Corinth (Acts 17:17–18, 32a)?

Q: How might commonalities help Paul locate Priscilla and Aquila in Corinth, a city of more than 200,000 people known for immorality and worship of the goddess Aphrodite?

Q: Describe a time when you were new in an area and trying to locate people with whom you had something in common.

Q: If you work outside the home, have you met fellow Christians at your workplace? Has being Christians in the same profession formed a bond or friendship? Explain why or why not.

Q: If you work in the home, where have you met people who share your faith and interests?

M&M'S

Q: What commonalities do you share, and how have they helped you bond?

- If you can't think of any, who is "the one" you have in common and how can you build from there?

FACE-TO-FACE REFLECTIONS

Jewish Aquila and his wife, Priscilla, had to leave Rome when Emperor Claudius expelled all Jews—possibly, because the Jews disagreed among themselves regarding Christ as the Messiah. Commentators agree that the couple believed in Jesus and became Christians in Rome before moving to Corinth and establishing a new home and tentmaking business.

When Paul arrived in the large, thriving, pagan city of Corinth, he had just left Athens, where he faced opposition to his Christian message. Luke, the author of Acts, mentions Paul meeting Priscilla and Aquila as Paul's first significant experience upon arriving in Corinth. Jewish Christians probably congregated together in a

section of the city, much like ethnic groups do today in large cities, which would help the couple and Paul meet. The three of them shared ethnicity, exile, rejection, relocation, profession, and most importantly, Jesus: a basis for a long and fruitful friendship, ministry, and working relationship.

PERSONAL PARABLE

When I attend Christian writers conferences, I always make new friends because I'm among fellow authors who understand the unique trade of writing, and more importantly, who love Jesus like I do. Often, I've roomed with women I've never met, but there's an instant connection because we share commonalities that others don't usually appreciate. Paul must have felt the same when he was new in town and learned that fellow Jewish Christian tentmakers lived there.

Mentoring Moment

“Life’s best revelations flash upon us while we abide in the fields of duty. Keep to your daily breadwinning and amid your toils you shall receive great benedictions and see glad visions . . . the shop or office or warehouse may become as the house of God. Do thy work and do it diligently: In it, thou mayest find rare soul fellowships, as did Aquila and Priscilla.”

—Dinsdale T. Young, *Neglected People of the Bible*