

Doing Ministry as a Husband-and-Wife Team

Micah Kennealy

One of the things we get asked about a lot is how we do ministry together. For some couples, one is a silent partner and the other shines in the spotlight. That just isn't either of us. Whether it's hosting podcasts together, tag team preaching, leading leaders, or operating a nonprofit ministry called *youngadultstoday*, we do life and ministry together as a husband-and-wife team.

Ministry—leading and serving people—is a gift and a calling from the Lord. This can be done well with your spouse. The primary biblical example we read about is Priscilla and Aquila who became two of Paul's most valued associates. According to Romans 16:3–4 (NIV), “Greet Priscilla and Aquila, my co-workers in Christ Jesus. They risked their lives for me. Not only I but all the churches of the Gentiles are grateful to them.”

We have an additional recording of their ministry, work and marriage in Corinthians. This couple put their lives on the line by planting churches, witnessing to Gentiles, traveling between cities, and making a difference for God's kingdom. We are called to build His kingdom, not our own. First Corinthians 16:19 (NIV) says, “The churches in the province of Asia send you greetings. Aquila and Priscilla greet you warmly in the Lord, and so does the church that meets at their house.”

Things to remember when you lead with a spouse:

1. You are on the same team even if you find yourselves on different pages at times. Ministry is beautifully challenging to begin with so make sure you don't start viewing yourself as the victim or your spouse as the villain. We already have an enemy who desires to steal, kill and destroy; let's not do his job for him.

2. Learn to understand and respect how each other is wired. Taking personality tests is a helpful tool to understand yourself as well as your partner. This is when you can call out greatness and help them unleash any untapped potential that has remained dormant. This is also a great way to become a better teammate and start asking better questions about strengths, weaknesses, blind spots, and so much more. We should be each other's biggest cheerleader and sharpen each other along the way.

3. Learn how to ride a tandem bike together. You both need to pedal at the same time, making sure you are heading the same direction and ready for an adventurous ride in ministry. One can't be pedaling while the other is slamming on the brakes because you will both go flying off the bike. If you are called to

ministry with a spouse, you should be in cadence with one another. Never leave each other in the ditch or try to drive the other one off the road. When both spouses are pedaling in unison, there's a dynamic synergy that is greater than $1+1=2$.

4. You are called to build God's kingdom, not your own kingdom. You are not called to labor in vain, but to be strong in the faith and become two of the most joy-filled people who have walked planet Earth. First Corinthians 15:58 reminds us, "So, my dear brothers and sisters, be strong and immovable. Always work enthusiastically for the Lord, for you know that nothing you do for the Lord is ever useless."

5. Like a Venn diagram, there is he, she, and we. Your marriage and your family come before any other ministry. In our case, each of us was called to ministry while we were single. For us, this just means that Josiah does some ministry of his own, and I have my own lane and unique calling. Of course, a majority of what we do is together. Ecclesiastes 4:9–12 highlights several reasons why two are better than one. We are better together and $we > me$.