

Barnabas, a Man Who Built In the Lives of Others Acts 4:36-37 and other scriptures

INTRO:

Today, we are going to look at a man who is known by his nickname. In fact, I could probably tell you his real name and you would not know who I am talking about. However, if I were to say his nickname, you would know him immediately.

His real name is Joseph, but his nickname is Barnabas.

I. Meeting Barnabas (Acts 4:36-37)

II. Barnabas and Paul (Acts 9:26-27)

I. Meeting Barnabas (Acts 4:36-37)

A. We first meet this man with the famous nickname in **Acts 4:36-37**.

“And Joseph, who was also named Barnabas by the apostles (which is translated Son of Encouragement), a Levite of the country of Cyprus, having land, sold it, and brought the money and laid it at the apostles’ feet.”

In the early days of the church, things were not easy for the infant church. The Apostles were dragged before the Sanhedrin and threatened and ordered to stop preaching in the name of Jesus.

1. The church responded by coming together and praying God would grant them great boldness to preach and not be intimidated by the Jewish authorities. God had answered their prayers. We live in an increasingly difficult time today, do we regularly pray for boldness to share our faith with others?

2. To survive in the face of the opposition, many folks in the church sold their possessions and gave the money to the Apostles to minister to the needy in the church. The man named Joseph, who the disciples had nicknamed Barnabas, willingly gave his land to meet the need.

B. Do you remember Andrew, Simon Peter's brother? We always see him bringing someone to Jesus. Barnabas was much like him. Barnabas was always found ministering. The Apostles named him Barnabas because he was an encourager. He had a ministry to people.

1. Our first glimpse of the man here shows us a man who is ministering to the needs of his brothers and sisters in the church at Jerusalem. He could encourage because he had a heart for God and for God's people. He loved the Lord and the Lord's people more than he loved his possessions. Are we there spiritually?

2. We could use more Barnabases in the church today. We do have a severe spiritual need. We need people to sell off their extra activities and give of their time to the ministry to people. Many churches have 90% of the work being done by less than 10% of the people. The tragedy of this is that only a few actually know the joy in serving Jesus. Much more outreach and much more real ministry could be done today if folks were more like Barnabas.

II. Barnabas and Paul (Acts 9:26-27)

A. Barnabas also had a ministry in the life of a newly saved disciple named Saul of Tarsus.

“And when Saul had come to Jerusalem, he tried to join the disciples; but they were all afraid of him, and did not believe that he was a disciple. But Barnabas took him and brought him to the apostles. And he declared to them how he had seen the Lord on the road, and that He had spoken to him, and how he had preached boldly at Damascus in the name of Jesus.” (Acts 9:26-27)

1. Saul was recently on a rampage, a one man persecution force against Christians. Suddenly, on the road to Damascus, Saul, the persecutor, met the Lord Jesus and nothing would ever be the same.

2. Saul returned from Damascus to Jerusalem to make contact with the church and the church's leaders. The only problem was that no one believed that Saul had indeed been converted. No one except Barnabas, the encourager, believed in Saul. Barnabas saw in Saul a new spirit, a real transformation. Barnabas built a bridge to bring Saul to the Apostles. What would have happened if he had not done that?

3. We need folks to reach out to the world out there in darkness so they might be saved and to help new babes grow in their relationship with the Lord. We need to help new believers become a part of the local church. Could you be this kind of Barnabas?

III. Barnabas and the Church at Antioch (Acts 11:19-26)

A. Barnabas also ministered in the life of a 'mission' church.' (Acts 11:19–26)

“Now those who were scattered after the persecution that arose over Stephen traveled as far as Phoenicia, Cyprus, and Antioch, preaching the word to no one but the Jews only. But some of them were men from Cyprus and Cyrene, who, when they had come to Antioch, spoke to the Hellenists, preaching the Lord Jesus. And the hand of the Lord was with them, and a great number believed and turned to the Lord. Then news of these things came to the ears of the church in Jerusalem, and they sent out Barnabas to go as far as Antioch. When he came and had seen the grace of God, he was glad, and encouraged them all that with purpose of heart they should continue with the Lord. For he was a good man, full of the Holy Spirit and of faith. And a great many people were added to the Lord. Then Barnabas departed for Tarsus to seek Saul. And when he had found him, he brought him to Antioch. So it was that for a whole year they

assembled with the church and taught a great many people. And the disciples were first called Christians in Antioch.”

1. When the unnamed folks who fled Jerusalem arrived at Antioch, they began to do what was almost second nature to them. They began to share the Lord of their lives with others, and the most remarkable thing happened. People started being saved and a church was born.

2. News of this soon spread to Jerusalem and the leaders of the church there wanted to check out what was happening in Antioch. Who do they send? They want someone with discernment. He has to tell them if this is a sound group or a cult or something that has sprung up. They also want to send someone who could be an encouragement and a help to the work there if this turned out to be a work of God's. That is why they sent Barnabas.

B. Look at the ministry that Barnabas had in the lives of the folk at Antioch (v.23).

“When he came and had seen the grace of God, he was glad, and encouraged them all that with purpose of heart they should continue with the Lord.”

Barnabas rejoiced to see God working in the lives of the people. He exhorted them that they hold on to their relationship with the Lord.

C. Look at how he exhorted these folks. He exhorted them that with purpose of heart they should cleave to the Lord. Don't give up hold fast to Him. Beloved, that is true encouragement. We have too many *“Keep your chin up and think positive thoughts about yourself,”* people around today. True encouragement comes only from our relationship with the true and living God. Don't overlook the results (v.24).

“For he was a good man, full of the Holy Spirit and of faith. And a great many people were added to the Lord.”

D. Barnabas had a further ministry that involved both Antioch and Saul of Tarsus who became Paul. Look at (vs.25-26).

“Then Barnabas departed for Tarsus to seek Saul. And when he had found him, he brought him to Antioch. So it was that for a whole year they assembled with the church and taught a great many people. And the disciples were first called Christians in Antioch.”

He had a ministry of finding opportunities for a man with a call from God to be a minister in this new church.

Are we encouragers for God or do we think our spiritual gift is to be a critic or a wet blanket? To be an encourager you must be growing in your relationship with Christ.

Do we have a ministry like Barnabas had? Are we encouragers in the work of God? If we aren't maybe we should be.