

Title: Barnabus, The Encourager

Series: Teaming Up With Christ

Text: (Acts 4:32-36)

My In-Laws were the Parents I wanted to grow up to be on Christmas.

Apostle Paul

Is He your Ideal Church Member?_

Would you love to have Paul in the congregation?

Personally hate to have a congregation full of Paul's.

You talk about being intimidated when you preach.

But I just don't believe I'd enjoy preaching to a congregation of Pauls.

Simon Peters.

Can you imagine what that guy would be like in a business meeting?

I love Peter.

I'm glad God made Peter.

I believe God made one b/c we needed him, but only one b/c he could only stand one.

Thank God for Simon Peter. He's a great guy, but I just don't believe I'd like a church full of Simon Peters.

We First See Him with Peter the Disciples after the Pentecost. (Acts 4:32-37)

I. Barnabas Was an Encourager

Consolation~ Comfort, Alleviation of Misery, One that supports, Strengthens, and Encourages.

Consolation~ "paracleteos."

The Holy Spirit is called by, the comforter.

Barnabas lives up to that name

What would your Spiritual Nick name Be?

Bitter Spirit? - No One Good Enough?

Wet Blanket?

If there's anything that people need today it's encouragement.

There's so many folks who are discouraged.

So many people are so low they could sit on the curb and dangle their feet.

They walk around with the same face on their DMV License Pic.

Discouragement is the dark room where the negatives of failure are developed.

Now if you are discouraged the devil is on your trail.

If you are encouraged you can do almost anything.

Most are discouraged and they need to be encouraged.

ENCOUR'AGE, verb transitive enkur'rage. *To give courage to; to give or increase confidence of success; to inspire with courage, spirit, or strength of mind; to embolden; to animate; to incite; to inspirit.*

(II Cor1:3) God is called: *“the a God of all comfort.”*
It's this same word, the God of all consolation, the God of all encouragement Friend, if you are discouraged God didn't do it, the devil did it. The devil wants you discouraged b/c, if you are discouraged, he has you set for failure.

The Ministry of Encouraging, is helping people find real hope by pointing them to promises and character of God.

In the Football Hall of Fame in Canton OH. There's a helmet that belonged to Bobby Lane *"Bobby Lane never lost a football game, time just ran out."*

Here's a man who just believed that it could be done and he was a man that kept the fires of encouragement in his heart and therefore he was able to encourage other team members.

Thank God for people who have the gift of encouragement, who know how to encourage people.

(1 Thes 5:4) *"Comfort the feeble minded."*
Not those who are weak minded, senile, or Mentally Handicapped.

The word feeble minded there means *the small souls*.

Those people who are discouraged.
He is saying encourage the discouraged.

If there is anything that we really need in this day and time it is those who know how to encourage other people.

And that's the gift that Barnabas had.
Barnabas has the gift of encouragement.
He was a great encourager.

(Acts 4:36b) *“a Levite, and of the country of Cyprus.”*

One of the tribe or family of Levi; a descendant of Levi; more particularly, an officer in the Jewish church, who was employed in manual service, as in bringing wood and other necessaries for the sacrifices.

The Levites also sung and played on instruments of music.
They were subordinate to the priests, the descendants of Aaron, who was also of the family of Levi.

2. Barnabas was a Need Meeter!

(Acts 4:37) *Having land, sold it, and brought the money, and laid it at the apostles' feet.*

He was all in.

Land was part of his Inheritance.
Land was part of his Identity.

Land was part of Income.

That there was a great distress in the land of Jerusalem at that time.

Revival had broken out and many people wanted to know what was happening and they just poured into the city of Jerusalem.

Many of them became Christians and they decided to stay and to learn more and more about their faith.

They had no home to sleep in. There were no hotels. They were not a wealthy people, just many of them just common ordinary people.

Persecution arose immediately.

Many of these people had no place to go, nothing to eat.

It was just turmoil.

There was a great need for financial resources and immediate needs.

Barnabas had some property. *"I know what I can do. I've got a piece of land.*

It's a valuable piece of land.

I can sell it easily."

He sold the land and just gave it to the apostles and he said, *"Here, this ought to help."*

He saw a need and he moved in to meet that need.

That's what an encourager is.

"Well I don't have any property to sell."

You don't have to have property to Meet a Need.

Maybe you have love that you can give.

Maybe you have wisdom that you can give.

Maybe you have advice that you can give.

Maybe you have time that you can give.

Maybe there's a mother next door that's got a sick child.

Maybe there's somebody that you know that has an elderly parent whose mind is leaving.

Maybe you have somebody that you know who,

whose sick child who needs somebody to babysit

Maybe there's somebody that you know who has just lost their job and needs somebody loan them a car or something like that.

You see, we all have something to give.

If we'll just think about it there's somebody that we can say, *"Look, have you got a need? I believe I can help you."*

Wouldn't it be wonderful just to be in a church full of people who want to encourage somebody helping them by Meeting a Need?

That's what this man Barnabas did.

He, he just had land and he sold it.

By the way, listen, Barnabas knew the difference between ownership and stewardship.

A lot of us think we own what we own.

We don't own it - We're only stewards.
And it needs to be available to the Lord if the Lord if
the Lord wants to use it.

*"Well Barnabas lost what he had." **No he didn't.***

As a matter of fact he still has it because the only
thing we carry to heaven is what we've given away.
Barnabas still has it.

True wealth, when it's divided, multiplies.

Tithing: We think of God Blessing the 90%.
Seed left in the Barn/eaten doesn't produce anything.
Its the Seed you plant, you get to Harvest.
Its the 10% you invested in God that brings the return.

3. Barnabas was a Good Finder:

Barnabas encouraged people by accepting them as he
found them.

*(Acts 9:23) "And after that many days were fulfilled
the Jews took counsel to kill him."*

To kill whom? To kill Paul.

Why did they want to kill Paul?

They felt that Paul was a traitor, a turncoat.

Paul had been persecuting the church and now he
lined up with the church.

They thought of him as a turncoat and they are going
to kill him.

*(Acts 9:24) "But there, laying, laying awake was
known of Saul and they watched the gates day and
night to kill him. Then the disciples took him by night
and let him down by the wall in a basket."*

Can you see this once proud Pharisee hovered in a
wicker basket, going down over the wall of
Damascus, trying to escape the city for his life?

(Acts 9:26-28)

*26 And when Saul was come to Jerusalem, he assayed
to join himself to the disciples:(Join what? the
Church, FBCJ)*

*but they were all afraid of him, and believed not that
he was a disciple.*

Now here he is.

His former friends want to kill him.

The Christians in Jerusalem & they are afraid of him.

They are suspicious of him.

They don't think he's really been saved.

He's in no man's land.

He is a man without a country.

*27 But **BARNABAS** took him, and brought him to the
apostles, and declared unto them how he had seen the
Lord in the way, and that he had spoken to him, and
how he had preached boldly at Damascus in the name
of Jesus.*

*28 And he was with them coming in and going out at
Jerusalem.*

Here was a man who needed a friend.
Barnabas went out and found him and became a
friend to a very lonely new disciple.
There are a lot of new Christians who need somebody
to find them and to be a friend to them.
There are a lot of people who need an encourager.
Do you know what the new Christian needs?
If anybody needs encouragement it is a brand new
Christian.

Many times they feel like it's so hard to break into our
churches and specially if they come from a different
background, a different culture, a different socio-
economic status.

They feel like, "Oh, I'd love to be a part of that group.
I'd love to go to that party, I'd love to be in that class.
I'd love to stand around and just laugh and tell stories
& jokes like these guys do. How could I get in?"

The most important year is that first year when a
person comes to know Christ.
When he's a babe in Christ.
Our church needs to be filled with Barnabases.
People who will find the good & embrace that friend
& bring him in to the fellowship.

How do you find the Good?

Everybody starts with a clean slate with Barnabas.
People are messy.
They have a messy life.
They have a messy past.

Paul was a mess.
Paul had a messy life.
Paul had a messy past.

*God loves us as He finds us, but He loves us too much
to leave us in the condition He finds us in.*

Paul got to start with a clean slate with Barnabas.
Barnabas encouraged Paul in his spiritual growth in
the Lord.

Hence, Paul was able to grow and to serve because
Barnabas didn't judge his past, Barnabas only saw his
future.

4. Barnabas is a Disciple Maker: (Acts 11:25)
*"Then departed Barnabas to Tarsus, for to seek Saul:
26 And when he had found him, he brought him unto
Antioch. And it came to pass, that a whole year they
assembled themselves with the church, and taught
much people. And the disciples were called Christians
first in Antioch.."*

He looks around and he says, "My goodness, look
what is happening here. These folks need to be taught.

They need somebody to develop them. I mean we've got to get some wine skins to put this new wine in. I know just the fellow, it's that guy Saul."

He doesn't see with the eyes we see, it's not the apostle Paul that he sees, it's just that new convert that he sees right now. That's all we see.

He says, "I wonder where that fellow is.

Boy, he'd make a dandy teacher.

Boy he's got the gift, he's got the ability.

With his background I know what he could do.

I wonder where he is."

"Oh some folks say he's down in Tarsus."

"Well you stay right here, I'm going down to Tarsus.

Have you seen Saul?

Have you seen Saul? Oh there he is.

Hey Saul. Hey buddy, come over here.

Saul man let me tell what has happened.

Man revival has broken out in Antioch.

I mean-there are folks there hungry.

Thousands of them are getting saved.

Saul, they need a teacher and buddy you're the guy who can do it.

I've already seen you.

God has given you an uncanny insight into the word of God.

You have the ability.

Hey Saul, come on buddy, I want you to go on back there and I want you to teach those folks.

You can do it."

Saul goes back, he becomes such a proficient teacher of the word that people are first called Christians at Antioch because he so infuses them for Christ.

Now what this man did was he finds a disciples and finds hidden talent and buried gifts and he develops them and brings them out.

Now you see in every church there are people like that.

There are people who need to be found, they need to be discovered, they need to be encouraged, they need to be developed.

They have gifts and they have abilities.

But it takes a Barnabas to find those people.

Now Barnabas, he just plays second fiddle.

You don't hear much about Barnabas.

Some of you have never heard about him until I began to preach about him today. Paul wrote 13 books in the New Testament.

And later on I'm going to show you another man that Barnabas influence who wrote 1 book in the gospel of Mark.

More than half of the books in the New Testament are there through the influence of this man named Barnabas. Isn't that wonderful.

Now he just kind of playing second fiddle, but yet he's a man who knows how to encourage people.

He's a man who can find talent.

I thank God for those who encouraged me.
Listen, I've had people encourage me.
When I was first a young man I would not consider myself a preacher.

I remember when somebody called on me to lead in prayer in public and I just said, "I'm sorry I can't do it."

I was embarrassed and they were embarrassed.
But I thank God for people who put their arms around my shoulders and said you can.
And they encouraged me.

Barnabas was faithful to His Ministry of Encouraging and Disciple Making

(Acts 13:1-3)

5 Tips that Encourage Others

1. Become genuinely interested in other people.
People don't care how much you know until they know how much you care.

2. Be a Good Finder: Everybody knows what a rotten sinner they are.

The Devil is constantly beating them over the head to keep them discouraged.

They already assume you are judging them as a sinner.

Find something Good & Praise them for Good Character

3. Smile. *If you want to draw others to you, light up your face with a smile.*

4. Remember names. Kingdom Work is about People not Programs. *A person's name is the sweetest and most important sound to that person.*

5. Be a good listener. *Encourage others to talk about themselves.*

6. Talk in terms of the other person's interests. *Treat others the way they want to be treated.*

4. Barnabas was a Restorer of the Backslid:

(Acts 12:25) *25 And BARNABAS and Saul returned from Jerusalem, when they had fulfilled their ministry, and took with them John, whose surname was Mark.*

(Acts 13:5) *And when they were at Salamis, they preached the word of God in the synagogues of the Jews: and they had also JOHN to their minister.*

Paul and Barnabas are missionaries.

1st missionary journey that they are going on

Barnabas says,

"I have a nephew who would like to go, he's interested in missions."

Paul said, *"Fine, bring him along."*

Well when things got started Mark quit.

He dropped out, don't know why he dropped out.

Maybe it was too hard on him.

Maybe he was afraid.

Maybe he was home sick.

Maybe he was spiritually discouraged.

Maybe he was backslidden. I don't know.

In the Process of serving, John got discouraged.

(Acts 13:13) Now when Paul and his company loosed from Paphos, they came to Perga in Pamphylia: and JOHN departing from them returned to Jerusalem.

Barnabas worked to restore Mark to ministry.

(Acts 15:34-40) 35 Paul also and BARNABAS continued in Antioch, teaching and preaching the word of the Lord, with many others also.

36 And some days after Paul said unto BARNABAS, Let us go again and visit our brethren in every city where we have preached the word of the LORD, and see how they do.

37 And BARNABAS determined to take with them John, whose surname was Mark.

38 But Paul thought not good to take him with them, who departed from them from Pamphylia, and went not with them to the work.

39 And the contention was so sharp between them, that they departed asunder one from the other: and so

BARNABAS *took Mark, and sailed unto Cyprus;*

40 And Paul chose Silas, and departed, being recommended by the brethren unto the grace of God.

Barnabas did not give up on people, or write them off when they messed up.

Paul says, "Come on Barnabas, let's go check on the churches. "

Barnabas says: "*Fine, I'll get Mark.*"

Paul says, "*No you won't.*"

"No, we're not taking Mark, Mark's a quitter. I'm not going to be encumbered with Mark.

You can't count on Mark.

We're not taking Mark."

"Paul I believe we ought to take him."

"We're not taking Mark."

"Well alright, but I tell you what Paul, there's some good in that boy."

"He's a failure, he's a quitter."

"Yeah, but there's some good in him."

"I don't care, we're not taking him."

And they agreed to disagree.

The Bible says the contention was sharp.

Do you know what happened?

Barnabas said, "*Alright, I'll take Mark and you take somebody else.*"

And so Paul and Silas went their way.

Barnabas and Mark went their way.

I mean these were brothers.

They just agreed to disagree.

I mean and it, they really felt strongly about it.
Good men do differ
Barnabas takes this failure, this backslider & he reaches down, lifts him up, puts his arm around him Finds the Good in him, and says, "*Come on John Mark, you've got good stuff in you son. You can do it.*"

I want to tell you that was the same John Mark who later wrote the gospel according to Mark.
Thank God for that.

Because of his compassion, Mark returned to ministry.

*(2 Tim 4:11) I Only Luke is with me. Take **MARK**, and bring him with thee: for he is profitable to me for the ministry.*

Isn't that wonderful?
The one man in all the world Paul wanted when he was in prison, he said, "Bring Mark. Bring Mark."

People could mess up and Barnabas would work to restore hope in them through Encouragement in God's promises and Character.

Aren't you glad, aren't you glad there was somebody who found failure, fixed it, & salvaged it?

There's a boy whose daddy died when he was five years old.
This boy dropped out of school when he was 16.
He had already lost two jobs by the time he was 17.
By the time he was 18 he got married.
By the time he was 19 he had a little baby.
By the time he was 20 he and his wife were separated.

From that time on he tried to make a living.
He tried to be a railroad conductor. He failed.
He got in the army and he washed out of the army.
He applied to law school. He couldn't make it.
He tried farming. Couldn't grow a thing in the world.
He tried to be an insurance salesman. Failed.

Finally he got a job as a dishwasher and a cook.

He couldn't do anything else.
He finally talked his wife into coming back to him.
And together in a little cafe they cooked and washed dishes.

When this man got to be 65 years of age he retired and he got his first social security check for \$105.00.

On the day that check came he looked at that check and it so discouraged him he said, "Now I've been a failure all of my life, a dishwasher, I can't do anything.

I can't make anything work.

And now the government is going to have to take care of me.

And he decided he would commit suicide @65. He went out in the backyard of his house and sat under a shade tree and began to write out his will.

And then he got to thinking, "Why should I be such a failure? Is there anything I can do.

Isn't there anything I know how to do."

"I can do better than most folks, I can cook."

And an idea came to him.

He went down to the local bank and borrowed 87 dollars against his next social security check.

And he went down to the supermarket and bought some chicken and some boxes.

And he began to fry that chicken the way only he could fry it and he went from door to door in Harlan, Kentucky, and in Corbin, Kentucky selling that chicken.

You've already guessed. Colonel Harlan Sanders, Kentucky Fried Chicken king.

At 65 a failure. Ready to commit suicide.

Couldn't do anything.

Immediately successful.

Known the world over. After he was 65.

What I'm trying to tell you is this, listen to me, that man wasn't a failure when he decided he wasn't.

Have you decided that you're a failure?

What you probably need is some Barnabas to tell you you're not.

To put his arm around you.

Thank God for a Barnabas who found a John Mark and a man that even Paul wouldn't have anything to do with and said, "Come on son, we love you. We're going to give you another chance."

Barnabas was an Encourager.

(Acts 19:22-24)

*22 Then tidings of these things came unto the ears of the church which was in Jerusalem: and they sent forth **BARNABAS**, that he should go as far as Antioch.*

23 Who, when he came, and had seen the grace of God, was glad, and exhorted them all, that with purpose of heart they would cleave unto the Lord.

"Encouragement is like peanut butter the more you spread it around, the better things stick together."

24 For he was a good man, and full of the Holy Ghost and of faith: and much people was added unto the Lord.

Barnabas Encouraged others use their gifts and talents to serve.

(Acts 19:25-26)

25 Then departed **BARNABAS** to Tarsus, for to seek Saul:

26 And when he had found him, he brought him unto Antioch. And it came to pass, that a whole year they assembled themselves with the church, and taught much people. And the disciples were called Christians first in Antioch.