

Title: Barnabas: A Man of Example

Scripture: Acts 4:36-37, Acts 9:26-28, Acts 11:22-26, Acts 15:36-41

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Acts 4:36-37 *“And Joses, who by the apostles was surnamed Barnabas, (which is, being interpreted, The son of consolation,) a Levite, and of the country of Cyprus, 37 Having land, sold it, and brought the money, and laid it at the apostles' feet.”*

Acts 9:26-28 *“Then the disciples took him by night, and let him down by the wall in a basket. 26 And when Saul was come to Jerusalem, he assayed to join himself to the disciples: but they were all afraid of him, and believed not that he was a disciple. 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.”*

Acts 11:22-26 *“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. 24 For he was a good man, and full of the Holy Ghost and of faith: and much people was added unto the Lord. 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.”*

Acts 15:36-41 *“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. 41 And he went through Syria and Cilicia, confirming the churches.”*

Something to think about: How many of us could say to a church body, just as you see me do, do it? What kind of example are we setting for those who watch us and are in our lives?

Barnabas' name means son of consolation or son of comfort. There are several qualities in Barnabas that we can see in ourselves:

- 1. Barnabas discovered the joy of being a giver:** He made a sacrificial investment in doing the work of the Lord. He didn't keep back any money – he sold his property. He brought that money and laid it at the apostle's feet because there was a great need. They were doing their best to take care of widows and other people who needed it. He learned that you cannot out give God. There are two different kinds of giving in the scriptures:
 - a. Financial:** Barnabas wasn't greedy. He was ready to give. He possessed three qualities that we need to have in ourselves: generosity, kindness, and unselfishness. God does not measure the amount, he measures the heart. Mark 12 gives the parable of the widow who gave all she had. Jesus took note of her more than of the rich people who gave because she gave everything.
 - b. Service:** Romans 12:1 says *“I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.”* God's not asking any more from you than what he deserves. He says “reasonable service”. Barnabas offered himself as a servant for God as well as his money. God is not impressed by how many times you come to church every week. He is moved by what we do outside of church because it requires a sacrifice. God wants ALL of us. Not just parts.
- 2. Barnabas was a peacemaker:** In Acts 9 we see that he had the capacity to see beneath the surface to see what God was doing. He was tolerant enough and sensitive enough to know that God had done something to Saul (the apostle Paul) and he needed help. The other apostles and disciples wouldn't have anything to do with him. They were afraid of him because of what they had heard about him and his persecution of Christians. Barnabas searched out Saul and brought him to the apostles. He knew that God had changed this man's life. Even after the contention between Barnabas and Paul, Barnabas prayed for the relationship between John Mark and Paul

to be healed so that John Mark could have another experience in the mission field. Galatians 6:1 says *“Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted.”* Barnabas had the quality – the ability to see the best in others even though it might have been difficult. Can we see the best in those around us rather than seeing Satan magnify their faults?

3. **Barnabas was willing to play second fiddle:** Being second fiddle is a blessing. When Barnabas heard what was going on (God was doing a great work, saving people), he went to investigate. This is when Barnabas searched out Saul of Tarsus and brought him back there. From this point on, Saul became the first fiddle, and Barnabas was second fiddle. Barnabas was a servant. It is a blessing to be called a servant – to be in the situation where we can see without evaluating and comparing ourselves to others. We shouldn’t be concerned with being the leader or the follower. We are all supposed to work together. I Corinthians 3:5-9 *“Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers by whom ye believed, even as the Lord gave to every man? 6 I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase. 7 So then neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase. 8 Now he that planteth and he that watereth are one: and every man shall receive his own reward according to his own labour. 9 For we are labourers together with God: ye are God's husbandry, ye are God's building.”* In this scripture it means that although there are different jobs in the church we are all working together to benefit the kingdom of God.
4. **Barnabas was full of the spirit:** In Acts 11:24, it says *“For he was a good man, and full of the Holy Ghost and of faith.”* Ephesians 5:18 says *“And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit;”* and I Thessalonians 5:19 says *“Quench not the spirit”*.
5. **Barnabas was full of faith:** He saw things that others didn’t. He saw a substance. Hebrews 11:1 gives the definition of faith. He knew that Paul would stick with his conversion because he had faith. We don’t read anywhere in the Bible where Barnabas had any regrets about what he did. He trusted God and had that faith in God that he would fulfil his promises. All of the promises that Barnabas believed in are still true today for us.

Barnabas’ life was full of service. Can God call us servants? Are we willing to do what the master asks us to do? Are we giving the right examples to others?