

Discussion Questions

May 5, 2024

Acts 4:32-37

Be Like Barnabas - the Son of Encouragement



1. Share a time when someone encouraged you or believed in you in such a way that it had a profound impact on your life.

2. Read Acts 4:32–37

Summarize how this passage describes the culture of the first church.

What did unity look like for them according to this passage?

What takeaways do you have from this passage in regards to generosity?

3. James broke the application into 4 different categories of Barnabas' generosity: Time, Talents/Service, Treasure/Finances & Encouraging.

How was Barnabas generous in each of these 4 areas as we saw in the book of Acts?

4. Read 1 Thessalonians 5:11

We are called to build up and encourage one another, yet often our humor is built upon teasing and cutting down. Discuss how we as followers of Jesus can walk the tension of humor/sarcasm while also ensuring we are building one another up.

5. How can we practically grow in intentionally encouraging the body of Christ in ways that move beyond just feeling better, but helping to genuinely build them up?

6. If you have time, pick someone in the group and take a few minutes to affirm them together.

Barnabas Generously Sacrificed for others:

Time

- Who am I generously pouring into or mentoring?

Talent/Service

- Where is the Lord asking me to use my gifts to serve others?

Treasure/Finances

- Are there areas where God is challenging me to be sacrificially generous towards others?

Encouragement

- Am I daily intentionally seeking to build up the body of Christ?
- Do the people around me feel built up by me on a regular basis?
- Am I building others up far more than cutting down, even in jest?

Acts 4:32-37 (NLT)

All the believers were united in heart and mind. And they felt that what they owned was not their own, so they shared everything they had. The apostles testified powerfully to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and God's great blessing was upon them all. There were no needy people among them, because those who owned land or houses would sell them and bring the money to the apostles to give to those in need. For instance, there was Joseph, the one the apostles nicknamed Barnabas (which means "Son of Encouragement"). He was from the tribe of Levi and came from the island of Cyprus. He sold a field he owned and brought the money to the apostles.

Dr. Dean Pinter - Acts: Story of God Commentary

[Like the early church,] "We may not often be "shaken" by the Spirit, but we have an unshakable quality that produces boldness and openhandedness with our time, our energy, our relationships, and our finances."

**Acts 9:26-27 (NASB 2020)**

When he came to Jerusalem, he tried repeatedly to associate with the disciples; and yet they were all afraid of him, as they did not believe that he was a disciple. But Barnabas took hold of him and brought him to the apostles and described to them how he had seen the Lord on the road, and that He had talked to him, and how he had spoken out boldly in the name of Jesus at Damascus.

Acts 11:20-24 (NLT)

However, some of the believers who went to Antioch from Cyprus and Cyrene began preaching to the Gentiles about the Lord Jesus. The power of the Lord was with them, and a large number of these Gentiles believed and turned to the Lord. When the church at Jerusalem heard what had happened, they sent Barnabas to Antioch.

When he arrived and saw this evidence of God's blessing, he was filled with joy, and he encouraged the believers to stay true to the Lord. Barnabas was a good man, full of the Holy Spirit and strong in faith. And many people were brought to the Lord.

Acts 13:1-4 (NLT)

Among the prophets and teachers of the church at Antioch of Syria were Barnabas, Simeon, Lucius, Manaen, and Saul. One day as these men were worshiping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, "Appoint Barnabas and Saul for the special work to which I have called them." So after more fasting and prayer, the men laid their hands on them and sent them on their way. So Barnabas and Saul were sent out by the Holy Spirit.

Acts 15:36-39(NLT)

"Let's go back and visit each city where we previously preached the word of the Lord, to see how the new believers are doing." Barnabas agreed and wanted to take along John Mark. But Paul disagreed strongly, since John Mark had deserted them in Pamphylia and had not continued with them in their work. Their disagreement was so sharp that they separated. Barnabas took John Mark with him and sailed for Cyprus.

What marked Barnabas' life?

- Understood God's generosity towards himself, so he could extend it to others
- Understood God's Grace towards himself, so he freely gave it to others.
- Humility
- Encourager

Bob Buford

"my Fruit grows on other people's trees."

1 Thessalonians 5:11 (NIV)

Therefore encourage each other and build each other up..

Am I daily intentionally seeking to build up the body of Christ?

Do the people around me feel built up by me on a regular basis?

Am I building others up far more than cutting down, even in jest?