

Acts 4:32-35 Barnabas – Son of Encouragement

Good Morning to you and thank you for letting me speak to you. We have just shared over the last few weeks both Lent and Easter.

During lent we had the time to look at ourselves and maybe made decisions as to how we could improve our relationship with God.

During Easter we remember Jesus sacrifice on Good Friday and the elation we felt on Easter day after the resurrection. A week as gone

by and we are reminded of the disciples locked away in that upper room until they were baptized with the holy spirit and began to

preach the good news to all the people. They were together

supporting and encouraging one another. You may remember the

bible says that Peter filled with the Holy Spirit spoke to the people so powerfully that about 3000 people were Baptized in one day.

The bible calls these people the **fellowship of the believers**. The

reading today from Acts today takes about this fellowship of

believers sharing and encouraging each other, and in verse 36 we are

introduced to Joseph a Levite from Cyprus who the apostles called

Barnabas which means son of encouragement.

From this first mention of Barnabas, we learn several important

things. We learn that he was generous. Just like Jesus, he put others

before himself. When Barnabas sold his land, he didn't keep the

money to buy what he wanted. He gave it to the apostles to share

with the other believers. We see that his parents named him Joseph,

but he was such an encourager that those who knew him started

calling him by the nickname of Barnabas - Son of Encouragement.

Application: Does anyone here have a nickname? If you had red hair you may have been called Bluey I don't know why. If your name was White, you could have been called Chorky .My nickname used to be Winnie the Poo .My daughter used to have a Winnie the Poo T Shirt

Encouragers always want others to do well. In this case, Barnabas wanted the other believers to follow Jesus with all their heart ([Acts 11:23-24](#)). Everything he did and said was done to help others to follow Jesus.

Application: Think of a time when someone encouraged you. Maybe your mom or dad helped you learn to ride your bike, telling you that you could do it. Maybe a friend said that he liked one of your drawings, or maybe your teacher said they believed you could do well on a test. Encouragement can make all the difference for someone who thinks that what they do is unimportant.

I want to tell you a true story about a boy who grew up about 100 years ago. When he was a child, Walter loved to draw, though his parents did not really praise him for this. But Walter's aunt encouraged him by buying him drawing pads and pencils. Walter also had a neighbor, "Doc" Sherwood, who encouraged his talent. The neighbor "hired" Walter to draw pictures of his horse when Walter was only 7 years old. Doc Sherwood and his wife told Walter how wonderful his drawings were. Of course, you all know what became of Walter or **Walt Disney**. He grew up to bring us Mickey Mouse, Donald Duck, and a host of other characters, theme parks, and lots of fun.. A little encouragement can go a long way!

As Christians, the most important thing we can do is to encourage each other as we go about our daily is **to follow Jesus**, just as Barnabas encouraged his friends to do. Encouragement is so important that the Bible actually commands that we do it.

So encourage each other and build each other up, just as you are already doing. - [1 Thessalonians 5:11](#) NLT

The Bible says that believers must meet together, like we do here at church, so we can encourage each other ([Hebrews 10:25](#)). We should encourage in good times and especially in difficult times.

Barnabas Speaks Up For Paul ([Acts 9:26-31](#))

Let's see how Barnabas' encouraging words made a HUGE difference in building God's kingdom.

Paul had met Jesus on the way to Damascus. When Paul was filled with God's Holy Spirit, he preached boldly that Jesus is the Son of God. Barnabas saw and heard Paul's love for the Lord when Paul preached in Damascus. Paul's big change of heart made his preaching even more amazing. Many people were talking about Paul's teaching. The Jewish religious leaders in Damascus did not like this at all. They did not want people to follow Jesus. They planned to kill Paul, so Paul had to leave Damascus. He went to Jerusalem.

The believers in Jerusalem were in a difficult situation. When Paul came to town, they were afraid of him. This must have been a difficult time for Paul as well. How could he make the believers understand that he was now one of them? He was not going to harm them. He had changed from the inside out!

Barnabas took (Saul) to the apostles. He told them about Saul's journey. He said that Saul had seen the Lord. He told how the Lord had spoken to Saul. Barnabas also said that Saul had preached without fear in Jesus' name in Damascus.

So Saul stayed with the believers. He moved about freely in Jerusalem. He spoke boldly in the Lord's name. He talked and argued with Jews who followed Greek practices. But they tried to kill him. The other believers heard about this. They took Saul down to Caesarea. From there they sent him off to Tarsus.

*Then the church throughout Judea, Galilee and Samaria enjoyed a time of peace. The Holy Spirit gave the church [believers] strength and boldness. **So they grew in numbers.** And they worshiped the Lord. - [Acts 9:27-31](#)*

Because of Barnabas' encouragement, speaking truth to the believers, the other believers accepted Paul.

What do we learn from this encouragement of Barnabas? No matter how we see people who always seem to have it all together we all need encouragement. There is always someone who needs an encouraging word.

There are many things to be done to keep our Church up and running. Rosters, Pew Sheets, cleaning, scripture, mainly music, messy church. Simple words of encouragement goes a long way to show you care. There may be times when you don't see eye to eye with what someone is doing. Negative feelings don't help. Better to talk to them and get to know them better. You may be surprised. This doesn't stop at the church. Our mission statement

To love God and to love our neighbors, and become an increasingly relevant presence in our community. When we encourage others we

ourselves take on a more positive feeling. We feel part of what is happening around us. In closing I would like to share with you something I remember from a Walt Disney film. It was a song sung by Jimminy Cricket. You've got to accentuate the positive, eliminate the negative hang on to the affirmative and don't mess with Mr. in-between. Amen