

## Great Stories of the Bible— 08/3/22

### Barnabas the Encourager

**TEXT – Acts 4:36** *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,*

**INTRO – Saul on the road to Damascus has every intention to find Christians and drag them from their homes and deliver them to prison.**

**Acts 9:1-2** *And Saul, yet breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord, went unto the high priest, And desired of him letters to Damascus to the synagogues, that if he found any of this way, whether they were men or women, he might bring them bound unto Jerusalem.*

But on the way something happened on that road. He was converted and his life changed immediately. God gives a vision to Ananias to accept Paul and he restored his sight. Paul immediately joins himself to the disciples and begins preaching in the synagogue. A plot to kill him is found out and Paul is let down in a basket and heads to Jerusalem. When he arrives at Jerusalem the disciples there know nothing of his conversion and suspect he has a plan to deceive them and do them harm. But one of the disciples comes to the aid of Paul, named Barnabas.

### I. The Son of Consolation

**Acts 4:36** *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,*

**Barnabas, which is ...** - This word properly denotes “the son of prophecy.” It is compounded of two Syriac words, the one meaning “son,” and the other “prophecy.” It means exhortation, entreaty, petition, or advocacy. It also means “consolation or solace”

**A Levite** - One of the descendants of Levi employed in the lower services of the temple. The whole tribe of Levi was set apart to the service of religion. It was divided into priests and Levites. The three sons of Levi were Gershon, Kohath, and Merari. Of the family of “Kohath” Aaron was descended, who was the first high priest. All the others of the tribe of Levi were called “Levites,” and were employed in the work of the temple

**Of the country of Cyprus** - Cyprus is the largest island in the Mediterranean; an island extremely fertile. The Jews were very numerous in that island. Barnabas and Paul, were born in pagan countries, though by descent Jews; and as they were trained in pagan lands, they were well suited for their special work.

**The meaning of consolation** - We see from this definition that encouragement has a two-fold emphasis: to comfort or reassure, and to

challenge or admonish. To encourage someone is to comfort or challenge them with the Word of God in such a way that the person is motivated to lead the Christian life and continue in the Lord's service.

Christians need encouragement and challenge!

Gabriela Andersen-Scheiss was a ski instructor in the U.S. state of Idaho when she represented Switzerland at the 1984 Olympics. Twenty minutes after the winner, Joan Benoit, crossed the finish line, the 39-year-old Andersen-Scheiss staggered into the stadium, suffering from heat prostration. Her right leg was stiff and her left arm was hanging limply by her side. While spectators gasped in horror, but realizing she was determined to finish they stood and began applauding. That encouragement helped her finish the race.

There are many people that need encouragement.

**A friend of mine brought into his home a number of young people that needed help. One morning a young girl he and his wife had brought to their home met him one morning and he said good morning sunshine. I hope you have a wonderful day. She left and went back up stairs to her room only to return again to which he repeated good morning sunshine. She once again left the room and went back upstairs. Again, a third time she returned and he once again stated good morning sunshine. Before she could leave the room, he asked why do you keep leaving the room and returning again? She replied, “In all my life no one has ever said anything nice to me. I wanted to hear you say those words again.”**

**There is a power in encouragement!**

### II. The Co-servant With Paul – Served the Lord together

#### **A. He defended Paul before the Jerusalem believers**

**Act 9:27** *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.*

**God can bring special people into our lives so that we might serve the Lord together.**

#### **B. He brought Paul to Antioch**

**Acts 11:19-22** *Now they which were scattered abroad upon the persecution that arose about Stephen travelled as far as Phenice, and Cyprus, and Antioch, preaching the word to none but unto the Jews only.*

**A year in Antioch - Acts 11:25-26** *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.*

**Sent to bear an offering to Judean saints**

**Acts 11:30** Which also they did, and sent it to the elders by the hands of Barnabas and Saul.

**C. Barnabas wants to bring his nephew John Mark with them**

**Acts 12:25** And Barnabas and Saul returned from Jerusalem, when they had fulfilled their ministry, and took with them John, whose surname was Mark. Barnabas was always looking for someone whom he could encourage to serve the Lord.

**Galatians 2:9** And when James, Cephas, and John, who seemed to be pillars, perceived the grace that was given unto me, they gave to me and Barnabas the right hands of fellowship; that we should go unto the heathen, and they unto the circumcision.

### **III. The Commissioning of their Ministry**

**A. They were chosen of God and confirmed by the leaders**

**Acts 13:1-3** Now there were in the church that was at Antioch certain prophets and teachers; as Barnabas, and Simeon that was called Niger, and Lucius of Cyrene, and Manaen, which had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch, and Saul. 2 As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them. 3 And when they had fasted and prayed, and laid their hands on them, they sent them away.

**B. Their first stop was Cyprus – Barnabas home**

**They preached in the synagogues at Salamis and Paphos.**

**Acts 13:6-12** And when they had gone through the isle unto Paphos, they found a certain sorcerer, a false prophet, a Jew, whose name was Barjesus:

**C. They sail to Perga where John Mark leaves them**

**They continue to a series of cities in Galatia and though many are saved they receive great persecution.**

**They preached the word of God.**

- ◆ **The primacy of preaching. They didn't have a movie night or a gospel quartet or any sort of entertainment. They preached Jesus.**

### **IV. The Contention Between Paul and Barnabas**

**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. . . .

**A. Barnabas continued to believe in John Mark**

**Colossians 4:10** Aristarchus my fellowprisoner saluteth you, and Marcus, sister's son to Barnabas, (touching whom ye received commandments: if he come unto you, receive him;)

**2 Timothy 4:11** Only Luke is with me. Take Mark, and bring him with thee: for he is profitable to me for the ministry.

**CONCL – Evidently Barnabas was able to help John Mark and mentor him to maturity.**

**It is important to mentor our children and others God leads our way.**