

Still Called, Still Sent (8)
A Life Still Worth Building
(Acts 11:19–26)

Introduction: Encouragement has the power to shape lives or leave deep voids when absent (Bill Glass).

Barnabas, whose name means "Son of Encouragement" (Acts 4:36), earned his nickname by lifting others up in the faith. This passage in Acts 11 shows us the lasting power of spiritual encouragement. God calls all believers, regardless of age, to build people, not monuments. Our greatest legacy may be the encouragement we give to those who follow after us in faith.

I. Barnabas modeled a legacy of encouragement (Acts 11:22–24)

A. Barnabas's spiritual profile

1. Acts 11:24: "*He was a good man, full of the Holy Spirit and of faith, and a great number of people were brought to the Lord.*" That one sentence speaks volumes.
2. His life was summarized by goodness, faith, and Spirit-filled encouragement. (I wonder what one sentence God might use to summarize our lives?)

B. Barnabas had a God-given gift for encouragement

1. "Barnabas" means "Son of Encouragement" (Acts 4:36). (Adrian Rogers: "God has cornered the market on encouragement. He is the source of all true encouragement")
2. He lived to lift hearts and point people to God as the ultimate encourager. Barnabas was a channel of God's encouragement to others. (The same spirit lives in us ready to encourage others through us.)

C. Barnabas's joyful perspective

1. Acts 11:23: "When he came and saw the grace of God, he was glad..."
2. He celebrated evidence of God's work rather than criticizing what was unfamiliar. He didn't approach these believers with suspicion or scrutiny, he didn't criticize Gentile worship but rejoiced in God's grace focusing on God's work in others.

D. Barnabas encouraged perseverance

1. Acts 11:23b: "*...he exhorted them all to remain faithful to the Lord with steadfast purpose.*"
2. Wiersbe: The phrase "cleave to the Lord" echoes Joshua 22:5—complete devotion.
3. Encouragement means urging others to cling to Jesus in love and obedience.

E. Barnabas had a fruitful impact

1. Acts 11:24: A great many were added to the Lord under his ministry.
2. He balanced edification (building up believers) and evangelism (reaching the lost).

Our churches today need this same balance and seasoned believers are the key!

II. Barnabas invested in younger leaders (Acts 11:25–26)

A. He sought out Saul

1. Acts 11:25: Barnabas traveled 100 miles to Tarsus to bring Saul to Antioch.
2. Acts 9:26–27: Barnabas had previously vouched for Saul in Jerusalem.
3. He remembered Saul's calling to reach Gentiles (Acts 9:15).

B. He showed humility and vision

1. Barnabas didn't seek the spotlight—he brought Saul in.
2. Chuck Swindoll: There was no competition between them, only shared purpose.
3. Acts 11:26: They taught together for a whole year. Their single minded goal was to magnify Christ!

C. His model of multiplication

1. D.L. Moody: "Better to put ten men to work than do the work of ten."
 2. Wiersbe: Mature believers enlist and encourage others for ministry.
 3. Barnabas's investment in Saul led to churches planted, New Testament books written, and leaders like Timothy and Titus trained.
- Moses raised up Joshua; Elijah mentored Elisha.
 - Elderly deacon "Brother Melvin" who discipled a rowdy teen into a pastor. (Psalm 71:18)

We should look for someone to encourage—a Saul, Timothy, or Titus. "Our greatest contribution to the kingdom might not be something we do, but who we raise."

Jack Graham: "Don't waste your life; invest it."

III. Barnabas's encouragement bears lasting fruit (Acts 11:26 & beyond)

A. Antioch: Birthplace of the Name "Christian"

1. Acts 11:26: With a faith so vibrant, "The disciples were called Christians first in Antioch."
2. Their Christlike identity grew under Barnabas's nurturing leadership.

B. Antioch Became a Missionary-Sending Church

1. Acts 13: Barnabas and Saul were sent out on the first missionary journey.
2. Their discipleship multiplied into global evangelism.
3. One act of encouragement started a worldwide ripple effect.

C. Redemption of John Mark

1. Acts 13:13: Mark deserted the mission.
2. Acts 15:36–39: Paul rejected Mark; Barnabas gave him a second chance.
3. 2 Timothy 4:11: Paul later called Mark "useful."
4. Mark eventually wrote the Gospel of Mark.

Psalm 78:4–7: Tells us we are the link to the next generation of God's works. Each believer is a link in God's chain of faith. You stand on the shoulders of someone; so now you can be shoulders for someone else. (Gal. 6:9; Haggai 2:4; Mt. 28:19; Ps. 145:4)

Conclusion: The influence of encouragement outlives your possessions. You are building something that lasts—a life and eternity worth building.

Together, let us keep building each other up until Jesus comes.