

Acts 11:19-26

Barnabas: Ambassador and Encourager

Good morning - We continue to make our way through the Book of Acts here on Sunday mornings at CV.

A) Learning what the Holy Spirit can do with a group of people who are yielded to him

B) 120 Followers of Jesus meeting in an upper room are empowered by the Holy Spirit -

1) turned the world upside down.

C) As a church - How we study the Bible, how we worship - how we are to gather in community -

1) approach to missions - giving - leadership

We are Learning from this book

Tremendous Value to us personally as well.

A) Older woman - great grandma - Church - memorize scripture – Acts 2:38

“Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.”

B) On the way home - kept repeating it over and over.

➤ **Burglar - first thing comes out of her Mouth Stop - Acts 2:38**

➤ **AX and Two 38's**

New Section of the Book of Acts - A fresh outpouring and move of the Holy Spirit - Gospel goes to the Gentiles

A) Pivotal Time - 10yrs into the story - 10 yrs from the first outpouring on Pentecost

B) Today: Pivotal Place - and a Pivotal person.

C) Pivotal Place - Antioch - how do we get there

19 Now those who were scattered after the persecution that arose over Stephen traveled as far as Phoenicia, Cyprus, and Antioch, preaching the word to no one but the Jews only.

Recap verse: Luke is Bringing us back up to speed

A) Chapter 7 Persecution started Stephen - his death

B) CH.8 Church was scattered -

➤ Saw the work in Samaria - ch.8 -

➤ Then Chapter 9 focused on the Conversion of Saul of Tarsus -

➤ Chapter 10 - 11:18 Peter going to the gentiles

C) Luke is reminding us of where we have been - transitioning us from Jerusalem being the focal point to Antioch being the Focal point

1) Of this NEW MOVE OF GOD

D) Those scattered because of the persecution went out preaching they traveled as far as Phoenicia, Cyprus, and Antioch preaching the word to no one but the Jews only.

Still stuck in that - we are only focusing on the Jews frame of mind.

A) But that is about to change and it is going to originate from this city - called Antioch.

20 But some of them were men from Cyprus and Cyrene, who, when they had come to Antioch, spoke to the Hellenists, preaching the Lord Jesus. 21 And the hand of the Lord was with them, and a great number believed and turned to the Lord.

B) Antioch, was the capital of Syria.

1) This is now really stretching the scope of the advancing of the Gospel. This is 300 miles north of Jerusalem.

C) Now this Antioch is not to be confused with another Antioch mentioned in Acts 13:14, called - Antioch in Pisidia.

D) In fact, this Antioch in Acts 11 is one of at least 16 Antioch(s) in the ancient world.

1) Reason: the guy who founded these cities named each of them after his father whose name was Antioch.

2) He really loved his dad.

E) So every time he founded a city he named it after his dad.

At the time of Acts 11 this Antioch had a population of ½ a million people

A) making it the 3rd largest city in the Roman Empire behind only Rome and Alexandria.

B) A city of ½ million people was a massive city on that day and age.

C)Strategic City:- Antioch was a Destination city

1)People visited Antioch from all over the world

D)Cosmopolitan city - think of London, New York, Paris.

Antioch was a center of commerce, culture and luxury.

A)The architecture was so magnificent that it was nicknamed - *Antioch the Golden, Queen of the East.*

B)The main street was 4 miles long - get this: it was paved completely with marble. Can you imagine that?

C)Antioch attracted all kinds of people, including wealthy retired Roman officials.

1) And they would go there; and they would just spend their days in the Roman bathhouses

2)or at the race tracks, gambling and living a retired life of luxury.

A very wicked City

A)Home to three large pagan temples. One to the goddess Artemis and the other to the goddess Daphne,

B)And then there was what was called - the Pantheon,

1)The Pantheon was essentially a temple that was in the honor of any and all pagan deities,

C) there was also a basilica dedicated to the worship of Caesar,

1)because within the Roman empire - Worship of the Emperor was a big deal

D)So In Satan's war against the worship of the true living God on planet earth, Antioch was one of his crowning conquests.

Sex was worshipped in Antioch.

A)Through the worship to the goddess Daphne, hundreds temple **priestesses would hit streets every night - recruiting worshippers**

B)By encouraging men to engage in sexual intercourse with them.

1)A guy says to his wife -hey I am going to Church-temple tonight, - she knew exactly what that meant

C)So Antioch was home to hundreds of thousands of men and women were living for idols that couldn't give them life,

1)loving idols that didn't love them back, trusting in idols that always fail and always lie.

D)In a similar way NCS is home to hundreds of thousands of people who are also loving things - that don't love them back

1)Trusting in things that always fail and always lie

E)The result of that is brokenness and wickedness are a prevalent part of our culture.

The Bible says Romans 5:20 -"But where sin multiplied, grace multiplied even more." -

A)God had a plan for this city and the people of this city.

B)Throughout the rest of the book of Acts - **the Wicked city of Antioch** will replace Jerusalem as the focal point from where the **work of God originates and is sent out**

C)That should encourage us - that there is no person and no place that is beyond the reach of the work of God.

Another thing that should encourage us is a phrase in V.20 that is easy to pass over some of them

A)This work that was started in Antioch that ended up spreading all over the world was started by

B)Some men - just some NO NAME GUYS.

C)Who started the work in Antioch? I don't know - just some guys from Cyprus -

1)we don't even remember their names -just remember what they told us about - Jesus

D)I love this - day and age where everything is about name recognition -creating your brand

E)The Lord is reminding us that none of that is important - what matters is who Jesus is and what he does?

Have you ever experienced this: Someone else is given credit for something that you did? - How did you react?

A)I have several times - didn't react well - my flesh was offended! - what ?

B)Now outwardly - I kept my cool -didn't say anything - but inside - I was screaming -

1)THAT WAS ME - I DID THAT

C)Stories told - even a book written - Where I played a major role in the story - left out

D)Not even a mention -all the recognition was given to someone else

E)Really ? Not even a mention - **Lord says - why is that so important to you? PIERCED**

1)I saw that - I know the role that you played - I have a reward for you.

Why I love passages like this: Some men - Some guys! - Some Dudes

A)Goal - is not to make ourselves famous - Jesus Famous - YOU BE FAITHFUL

B)So God uses Some Men - some random no name guys

1)to penetrate one of the most wicked but influential places in the Roman WORLD with the Gospel

C)We will see in the remainder of our study in the book of Acts

1)how a Fresh work of God will flow from this city

The Next thing consider today is how God works not just through a pivotal place but also through a Pivotal Person.

22 Then news of these things came to the ears of the church in Jerusalem, and they sent out Barnabas to go as far as Antioch. 23 When he came and had seen the grace of God, he was glad, and encouraged them all that with purpose of heart they should continue with the Lord. 24 For he was a good man, full of the Holy Spirit and of faith. And a great many people were added to the Lord.

So the Apostles in Jerusalem hear about what God is doing in Antioch -

A)they say we need to send someone down there to Antioch to help the believers get grounded.

B)Now understand something - Antioch is 300 miles from Jerusalem

C)Today 300 miles not that big of a deal - 70mph car - 4.5 hrs

1)Southwest Flight - there in 50 minutes

D)First century - Middle East - 300 miles was a quite a journey -

So why was it so important to the apostles to send someone 300 miles away?

A)The Apostles understood - that sheep need a Shepherd

B)It's not a mistake that God refers to His people as sheep. Sheep are the dumbest of God's creatures.

1)One sheep will walk off a cliff to his death and the rest of the heard will follow.

C)Sheep will eat at the same spot of grass until it is all gone.

D)And then they'll look around and not know what to do next. - Now what do - Starve?

What is true of sheep in the natural world is also true of sheep in the spiritual world -

A)SHEEP need a SHEPHERD!

B)Without a Shepherd sheep get lost - sheep become unhealthy

C)So the guy they picked was Barnabas:

Who was Barnabas?

A)Luke introduced us to him back in -ACTS 4

Acts 4: "36 Thus Joseph, who was also called by the apostles Barnabas (which means son of encouragement), a Levite, a native of Cyprus, 37 sold a field that belonged to him and brought the money and laid it at the apostles' feet."

B)Now don't miss this - His real name was "Joseph".

C)But he was so well known for being an encourager that they gave him the name "Barnabas" -

1)which means - "son of encouragement".

Barnabas is a great picture for all of us who are dads and grandpas - to aim at

A) Lets consider what the Lord tells us about Barnabas here in the book of Acts

B) The first thing that the Holy Spirit wants us to see about Barnabas is that he was a generous man!

C) He was willing to use his assets to bless to bless others and the work of the ministry.

D) Generous people are beautiful pictures of the Lord - Our God is Generous

1) Never more like the Lord than when we are using what we have in order to bless others.

God gave us His very best - his only Son to purchase our redemption

A) Jesus came from a great distance - leaving heaven coming to earth in order to save us.

B) Here we see Barnabas going to extra mile - 300 miles to be exact

1) to come alongside these new believers.

C) How far are you willing to go to be a blessing and inspirations to others ?

D) Jesus said: It is more blessed to give than to receive -

1) Generous people understand that - Barnabas was that type of guys

The 2nd thing I want us to note about Barnabas is He saw Jesus in others V.23 When he came and had seen the grace of God, he was glad, and encouraged them

A) What did he see?

B) He saw men and women who used to be worshipping idols,

1) now worshipping the true and living God. That was all of grace.

C) God did something for them they didn't deserve.

1) And when he saw them worshipping the living God he was so glad.

Here is something that happens to many of us who have been around a while -

A) We have seen many people known people - accepted Jesus - only to see them walk away - months later

B) Breeds in us a Skepticism - How long is this going to last this time ?

C) Can I encourage you been around a while to resist that tendency -

1) and instead just rejoice with those new believers.

D) I love being around new believers - they are so excited about the Lord -

1) but can also be so Raw - cuss when they pray

Learn to see Jesus in others -

A) Paul said **I don't want to know anyone after the flesh** - see them in Jesus -

B) Don't focus on the flaws - we all have them -

1) focus on what you see of Jesus in them - encourage them in that

C) Barnabas is rejoicing in what God is doing in these new believers

1) But he also wasn't content to know that they were saved -

Next mark of an encourager - He Wanted to help others go further in their faith 23 When he came and had seen the grace of God, he was glad, and encouraged them all that with purpose of heart they should continue with the Lord.

A) **ESV and he exhorted them all to remain faithful to the Lord with steadfast purpose,**

B) The word "steadfast" is the word "*cardia*" - we get "*cardio*" from that word.

1) It's all about the heart - purposing in your heart.

C) The heart is the target of the exhortation

This is a message that needs to be preached today! - We need to speak it and model it

A) We need to be faithful to the Lord with a Steadfast purpose

B) What is our purpose? To honor God with our lives

1) To bring glory to Jesus by the way that we live!!!

C) As men We need to model that for our kids and grand kids

D) As older men in the fellowship who have walked with Jesus for a while -

1)we need to model that for younger men

So encouragers want to see you go further in your faith

A)The encourager comes to you and challenges you to stand up to the realities of living for Jesus in fallen culture,

B)An encourager is someone one who will lovingly challenge you to deal with your sin or a bad attitude

C)Encouragers are those who will tell you what you need to hear not just what you want to hear?

One of the things I learned from my dad was about giving advice.

A)When I would ask my dad for advice, most of the time he wouldn't straight out give me advice.

B)He would ask me - what are your options - So I would run down the options with him

1)He would respond by showing me - what each option might lead to.

2)Or what was the possible blessings or challenges of each option

C)We would talk about each option- then he would say ok - now you know how to pray.

1)Too be honest - at first I hated his approach - but I learned to love it –

2)taught me how to pray through important decisions

But there was one time where he came close to giving me some advice on a crucial decision in my life -19 Called to Ministry - Baseball Scholarship

A)What do I do - quit now - what until the end of the year - 4 yrs?

B)He said: You are not going to be happy until you are doing what God wants you to be doing! BOOM

C)QUIT THAT WEEK!

MY Dad passed in Feb of 20/20 - The last time he was in the hospital close to the end - private moment

A)He was telling me how proud he was of me - how he enjoyed how God was using me -

B)learned a lot from me - teaching the Bible

C)And I said: Remember what you told me - started it all -

1)trying to figure out how to respond to the call - quit now or later

D)You told me - I was not going to be happy until you are doing what God has called you to be doing.

1)Remember that?

Yea and you know what - I wanted to tell you to keep playing ball - I thought you could have made it to the pros.

A)What 38 yrs went by and he never told me that - until he was on his death bed.

B)I am so thankful -he choose to encourage me in God's calling upon my life and not what was his dream for my life.

C)Encouragers tell you what you need to hear - not what you want to hear

1)Some men never grow up -because they don't have someone in their life who will do that -

2)or because they don't want to hear it

**Barnabas was a Generous man
Saw Jesus in others**

**He wanted to help others go further in their faith/
grow in the Lord**

**He was a good man full of the Holy Spirit and faith
V.24**

A)He was a good man - what made him a good man ?

B)He was full of the Holy Spirit -

1)Man who was led by the Spirit - walked after the Spirit - his life manifested the fruit of the Holy Spirit

Galatians 5: "22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, 23 gentleness, self-control;"

C)Because the word "fruit" is singular there, there are those Bible scholars who believe that "love" is the fruit;

1)and these other things are character traits of love.

"Joy is love's rejoicing."

"Peace is love's stability." Think about it - Peace is the opposite of chaos and confusion; so - "peace is

love's stability."

"Patience is love suffering long."

"Kindness is love's grace." It's being kind towards those who don't deserve your kindness.

"Faithfulness is love's dependability."

"Gentleness is love's meekness." Now a lot of people hear the word "meek"; and they think - weak.

A) Meekness is not weakness; because Jesus said, "I am meek"; and Jesus was anything but weak.

B) Meekness is power under control. It means having the power to avenge yourself but never doing it.

"Self-control is love's discipline."

"Goodness is love's generosity" - pouring itself out for others to profit and benefit them.

Being Full of the Holy Spirit means the fruit of Love was widely evident in his life!

A) Good man because he was full of the Holy Spirit

B) And because he was Full of Faith -

C) Encouragers are those who are able to see the Lord in every situation.

D) Encouragers are those who are able to see something by faith that others really aren't seeing.

They're able to see the Lord in a situation.

A) They're able to see the hand of the Lord in a circumstance.

B) In the time of trial or adversity, while others are stumbling or falling apart because all they can see is the immensity of the problem,

1) They are responding to the immensity of the problem in light of their own limitations

C) The encourager in Faith sees the problem in light of the immensity of their God!

When others see A Giant –

A) The person who is Full of faith sees a Ginormous God.

B) Others see a Storm – Encouragers see the stiller of THE STORM

C) Those who are full of faith - always believe that God can do great things

D) They see God as the one who desires to show himself strong on our behalf.

E) They live with a certain degree of expectation – Lord what are you going to do next!

Harvest Crusade is coming July 1-2 0- you know how the Harvest Crusade got started?

A) Greg Laurie was doing a Bible study at CCCM on Monday nights - God was moving - Sanctuary sat 2,000

B) Place was packed with young people - Overflow into the Gym and fellowship hall

1) 100's were coming to faith in Jesus ever week.

C) It was an amazing time - God was doing such a great thing

And one day Pastor Chuck Smith called Greg Laurie into his office, and said, "Greg, here's what I'm thinking.

A) We ought to take what you're doing on Monday nights that God is blessing so much that it's just overflowing,

B) I think we should go and rent the Pacific Amphitheatre, and you do there for a few nights what you do here every Monday night?"

C) And here was Greg Laurie's response - "Well, Chuck, that's a really big place."

1) And Chuck's answer was - "Well, Greg, we have a really big God."

D) And that was the beginning of the Harvest Crusades.

1) Nothing too big for God

One more thing we learn about Encouragers from this Barnabas -

A) Encouragers see Potential when others see problems

25 Then Barnabas departed for Tarsus to seek Saul.

26 And when he had found him, he brought him to Antioch.

B) This is amazing: When last saw Saul of Tarsus after his conversion in Acts 9 -

1) gets saved - starts preaching in Damascus

C) They try to kill him - he flees - goes to Jerusalem - the believers there don't know what to do with him

D) Paul is trying to share - he is arguing with the Hellenist - they try to kill him too.

E) Ends up out in the Desert - Alone time with Jesus - after that he has been living in obscurity in Tarsus - for years

No one knows what to do with SAUL - former Terrorist and Christian Killer now saved

A) But Barnabas was there in Jerusalem when Saul showed up - he remembered him

B) Barnabas is there in Antioch watching things grow and thinking - I need some help

C) Who can I get to help me that isn't too far away - I know that Saul guy

Encouragers are willing to stick their neck out for those they see Potential in.

A) Encouragers Champion the underdog

B) He jumps on the band wagon when everyone else is jumping off

Barnabas is probably thinking. We have a mix of Jewish people, Greek people, and Roman people.

A) Who would be the best guy to bring to this city? He thought, I know.

B) That guy, Saul, who's over in Tarsus, not far away.

C) Saul was Jewish to the core Hebrew, a Hebrew of the Hebrews,
1) knew all the traditions/ rituals of rabbinic Judaism.

D) But he was also Greek by culture

Saul was a Hellenistic Jew, Greek-speaking, Greek-culture Jew, living in that part of the world.

A) But on top of all that - Saul was a Roman citizen - The trifecta

B) Barnabas saw Saul of Tarsus as the perfect guy to help out the ministry in Antioch

C) Encouragers see potential where others only see a problem

D) Other might give up on us - But God never does!

So it was that for a whole year they assembled with the church and taught a great many people. And the disciples were first called Christians in Antioch.

A) Barnabas and Saul and teaching the word - lives are being impacted and changed

B) Something remarkable happened - the People in Antioch started referring to the Jesus followers as Christians

C) Christians was sort of like saying "Jesus-ites," or "Jesus People,"

1) Christlike - they remind us of Jesus

In the first century the soldiers who served under the Caesars would refer to themselves as a Caesarian

A) Caesar is who my allegiance belongs to

B) In a similar way - as Jesus followers our allegiance belongs to Jesus - Christian

C) Eusebius, the famous early church historian, described a believer named Sanctus from Lyons, France, who was tortured for Jesus.

D) As they tortured him cruelly, they hoped to get him to say something evil or blasphemous.

They asked his name, and he only replied, "I am a Christian." "What nation do you belong to?" He answered, "I am a Christian."

A) "What city do you live in?" "I am a Christian."

B) His questioners began to get angry: "Are you a slave or a free man?" "I am a Christian" was his only reply.

C) No matter what they asked about him, he only answered, "I am a Christian."

D) This made his torturers all the more determined to break him, but they could not,
1) and he died with the words "I am a Christian" on his lips.

Wiersbe on Christian -

A)Unfortunately, the word Christian has lost a great deal of significance over the centuries

B)Too many Americans identify with the term

C)I wonder if we could bring it back - started living more like Barnabas

People who are Generous because God has been so Generous to us

People who see Jesus in others

People who want to see others - go forward in their faith

People who are Full of the Holy Spirit and Full of faith

People who see Potential where others only see problems