

Acts: Beyond the Walls

Encouragement

Acts 11:22-30 (NIV) “News of this reached the church in Jerusalem, and they sent Barnabas to Antioch. ²³When he arrived and saw what the grace of God had done, he was glad and encouraged them all to remain true to the Lord with all their hearts. ²⁴He was a good man, full of the Holy Spirit and faith, and a great number of people were brought to the Lord. ²⁵Then Barnabas went to Tarsus to look for Saul, ²⁶and when he found him, he brought him to Antioch. So for a whole year Barnabas and Saul met with the church and taught great numbers of people. The disciples were called Christians first at Antioch. ²⁷During this time some prophets came down from Jerusalem to Antioch. ²⁸One of them, named Agabus, stood up and through the Spirit predicted that a severe famine would spread over the entire Roman world. (This happened during the reign of Claudius.) ²⁹The disciples, as each one was able, decided to provide help for the brothers and sisters living in Judea. ³⁰This they did, sending their gift to the elders by Barnabas and Saul.”

POWER OF ENCOURAGEMENT

1. Encouragement leads us to be generous.

Acts 4:36-37 (NIV) “Joseph, a Levite from Cyprus, whom the apostles called Barnabas (which means Son of Encouragement), ³⁷ sold a field he owned and brought the money and put it at the apostles’ feet.”

2. Encouragement gives hope we can change.

Acts 9:23-24 (NIV) “After many days had gone by, the Jews conspired to kill him, ²⁴but Saul (Paul) learned of their plan. Day and night they kept close watch on the city gates in order to kill him.”

Acts 9:25-27_a (NIV) “But his followers took him by night and lowered him in a basket through an opening in the wall. ²⁶When he came to Jerusalem, he tried to join the disciples, but they were all afraid of him, not believing that he really was a disciple. ²⁷But Barnabas took him and brought him to the apostles.”

Acts 9:27_b-28 (NIV) “(Barnabas) told them how Saul on his journey had seen the Lord and that the Lord had spoken to him, and how in Damascus he had preached fearlessly in the name of Jesus. ²⁸So Saul stayed with them and moved about freely in Jerusalem, speaking boldly in the name of the Lord.”

3. Encouragement helps us not give up.

2 Corinthians 7:4 (NIV) “I have spoken to you with great frankness; I take great pride in you. I am greatly encouraged; in all our troubles my joy knows no bounds.”

Philippians 1:6 (NIV) “being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.”

4. Encouragement helps us develop our potential.

Acts 13:2 (NIV) “While they were worshipping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, ‘Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them.’”

Acts 14:1 (NIV) “At Iconium Paul and Barnabas went as usual into the Jewish synagogue. There they spoke so effectively that a great number of Jews and Gentiles believed.”

5. Encouragement reminds us that failure isn't final.

Acts 15:36-38 (NIV) “Some time later Paul said to Barnabas, ‘Let us go back and visit the brothers in all the towns where we preached the word of the Lord and see how they are doing.’ ³⁷Barnabas wanted to take John, also called Mark, with them,

³⁸but Paul did not think it wise to take him, because he had deserted them in Pamphylia and had not continued with them in the work.”

Acts 15:39 (NIV) “They had such a sharp disagreement that they parted company. Barnabas took Mark and sailed for Cyprus”

II Timothy 4:11 (NIV) “Get Mark and bring him with you, because he is helpful to me in my ministry.”

TAKE AWAYS:

Hebrews 3:13 (NIV) “. . . encourage one another daily, as long as it is called Today, so that none of you may be hardened by sin’s deceitfulness.”

1. Encourage others with scripture.

Romans 15:4 (NIV) “For everything that was written in the past was written to teach us, so that through endurance and the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope.”

2. Encourage others with a compliment.

Proverbs 15:23 (NIV) “. . . how good is a timely word!”

Proverbs 12:25 (NLT) “. . . an encouraging word cheers a person up.”

3. Encourage others by praying for them.

1 Thessalonians 5:11 (NIV) “Therefore encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing.”