

## **Be A Barnabas!**

We need more people like Barnabas! Barnabas was a man whose greatest recorded characteristic was encouragement (Acts 4:36). Vine defines the word “encouragement” as a “calling to one’s side.” “Encouragement” is also translated “comfort” and “exhortation” in various places. Exhortation carries with the idea of admonishment to pursue some some of conduct which is always prospective and looks to the future. On the other hand, comfort carries with it the idea of admonishment which is retrospective and looks to the past. An example of comfort would be someone who receives encouragement that has experienced a trial.

There are numerous examples of children of God encouraging each other in the scriptures: Joshua encouraged by Moses (Deuteronomy 1:38; 3:28); David encouraged by Jonathan (1 Samuel 23:15-18); the Levites encouraged by Hezekiah (2 Chronicles 30:22); the priest by Josiah (2 Chronicles 35:2); Christians encouraged by Paul and Barnabas (Acts 14:22); Christians encouraged by Paul and Silas (Acts 16:40); the Thessalonian Christians encouraged by Timothy (1 Thessalonians 3:1-3); and, Timothy encouraged by Paul (2 Timothy 1:2-6).

Both exhortation and comfort combine into the idea of encouragement. Encouragement can either be prospective or retrospective. Encouragement can yield itself to any circumstance. We need people of encouragement. We need people who can call each other to their side both in times of trouble and in times when we need to look to the future.

Too many times in churches there are Christians who are dejected and pessimistic and want to make sure that no one else feels good about the work the church is trying to accomplish. Those who cast a gray pall over Bible classes, gospel meetings, evangelistic endeavors, and worship services drag all the other members down with them. Discouragement is contagious!

The goal of our encouragement is very simple. Paul said in Colossians 1:28, “Whom we preach, warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom; that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus.” We need encouragement! We need more like Barnabas!

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