

## Can You Be A Barnabas?

The early church in Jerusalem was blessed by the presence of a wonderful disciple named Josep. He was such a faithful and helpful disciple that the apostles named him Barnabas, the son of encouragement (Acts 4:36). Though he was not one of the twelve apostles, Barnabas was a person who could encourage both leaders and followers towards greater service to the Lord. He perfected in his life the command of God in Hebrews 10:24.

Barnabas is introduced in Acts 4:36-37 as one who sold property and gave the money to the needy saints. Barnabas was generous and self-sacrificing. His treasure was in heaven and he gave up the treasures of this life. As we read further, we learn that Barnabas could be counted on to carry out important duties. When more and more Gentiles were being converted in Antioch, the apostles confidently sent Barnabas to encourage and aid the work there (Acts 11:20-24).

Barnabas was honest and trustworthy. When someone was needed to carry aid to the poor saints in Jerusalem, Barnabas had such a sound character that he was one of those called upon to deliver the precious relief (Acts 11:30). What do we see in Barnabas? A man who could encourage the strong and the weak. A man who could exhort the saved and convert. A man of great generosity, honesty and trustworthiness. These traits alone make Barnabas a worthy example to follow.

There was even more about Barnabas that is worth imitation. He was able to see the potential in people, sometimes when no one else could. To me, the greatest testimony to his life is seen in what became of the men in whom he believed. When Saul began his preaching for the Lord with fervor -- after having persecuting the church for years, he came to Jerusalem and wanted to join himself to the saints. However, they were afraid of Saul. Barnabas intervened, carried Saul to the apostles, and vouched for Saul and his conversion (Acts 9:27). As a result of the intercession of Barnabas, Saul was accepted into the congregation.

Let us imitate that which is good in the lives of the people of the Bible and the people that are around us. None are perfect but the Lord. "*Beloved, follow not that which is evil, but that which is good*" (3 John 11). Josep, the son of encouragement, was not perfect. Yet he was a good man, and he had many great qualities that we would do well to imitate. If your example, words, and deeds are not a source of support and strength to other Christians, then you need to change and try to be a Barnabas.

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