

July 17, 2022

Encourage by Practicing Partnership
Dublin Baptist Church

Acts 11:20-26

²⁰ But there were some of them, men of Cyprus and Cyrene, who on coming to Antioch spoke to the Hellenists also, preaching the Lord Jesus. ²¹ And the hand of the Lord was with them, and a great number who believed turned to the Lord. ²² The report of this came to the ears of the church in Jerusalem, and they sent Barnabas to Antioch. ²³ When he came and saw the grace of God, he was glad, and he exhorted them all to remain faithful to the Lord with steadfast purpose, 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. ²⁵ So Barnabas went to Tarsus to look for Saul, ²⁶ and when he had found him, he brought him to Antioch. For a whole year they met with the church and taught a great many people. And in Antioch the disciples were first called Christians.

Front Line Folks: (20-21)

Some unknown men, Cyprus and Cyrene preached Jesus to Greeks and the Lord moved and many were saved. Jeremiah, “Your word is like fire shut up in my bones

These men just preached that Jesus was Lord. Not complicated deep theology, but a very real personal truth.

The Lord’s Hand is an OT reference

“Behold, the LORD’s hand is not shortened, that it cannot save, or his ear dull, that it cannot hear.” Isaiah 59:1

Turned to the Lord is a picture of turning from false gods to the one true God.

There have to be some front line folks who care about others knowing Jesus. They have something shut up in them that motivates them to share.

This past weekend, some front line folks went into prisons to share the hope of Jesus with inmates.

Secondary Support (22-24)

Word gets to the church at Jerusalem and they send Barnabas. They had heard that Samaria had come to the Lord.

“Now when the apostles at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent to them Peter and John” Acts 8:14

But Antioch was even further and a greater surprise

The nature of the church at Jerusalem is changing. The apostles are who were sent out (Philip) or deacons (Stephen). But now non-official leaders like Barnabas are being sent. Barnabas’ job is to confirm what is happening in Antioch.

Barnabas: name means son of encouragement.

“Thus Joseph, who was also called by the apostles Barnabas (which means son of encouragement), a Levite, a native of Cyprus” Acts 4:36

Barnabas saw what God was doing, he was gladdened by it, he encouraged the people, and had influence because of his character.

Barnabas saw the evidence of the hand of the Lord and Gentiles turning to God. He was glad and encouraged them. The word for exhort here is “parakaleo” It is used of the Holy Spirit and means to call along side. When things are beginning you need someone to come along side you. When you are saved the Holy Spirit comes along side. When you start growing, disciples come along side. When you start evangelizing, fellow evangelist come along side. Barnabas came along side these new Greek believers.

Barnabas called the believers to remain faithful to the Lord. They had turned from pagan gods to Jesus and Barnabas encourages them to remain faithful to God.

“For” can mean because. Why did these early believers listen to Barnabas? Why did they respond to his calling for faithfulness? Because of who he was

Good man: this is different that a righteous man or a devout man.

“For one will scarcely die for a righteous person—though perhaps for a good person one would dare even to die” Romans 5:7

He was a good man because he was full of the Holy Spirit and full of faith. The Holy Spirit changes us to be good. The Holy Spirit fills our spirit with faith in God.

There is a progression here of the hand of the Lord, turn to the Lord, and added to the Lord. A move from God working, people believing, the church being established and grown with a foundation.

Secondary support may not be the first there, but they move into to help support the front line folks. They encourage them in presence, character, guidance, and resources.

Multiplying Ministry Together (25-26)

Paul had been working with Greeks

“And he spoke and disputed against the Hellenists. But they were seeking to kill him. And when the brothers learned this, they brought him down to Caesarea and sent him off to Tarsus.” Acts 9:29

Paul had not been idle

“Then I went into the regions of Syria and Cilicia. And I was still unknown in person to the churches of Judea that are in Christ.” Galatians 1:21

It takes the whole church to be the church. This is not just one or two people, but a body that functions together.