

# The Leader Barnabas

Series: The Early Days

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One of the spiritual gifts according to Romans 12:8 is encouragement. Our good brother Clay Landes was an encourager. Growing up, and even into adulthood, one of my greatest encouragers was Coach Jon Hazelip. He coached basketball at GCS, and became the school principal. Many times he inspired me to believe in myself and in God, and to accomplish what I did not think was possible. He encouraged me to keep going when I wanted to quit.

Our leader from the early days today is Barnabas. Unlike Dorcas who was only given a few lines in Scripture, we have much information about Barnabas. Here are some highlights:

Acts 4:36-37, 36 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. **BARNABAS THE GIVER**

Acts 9:26-27, 26 When 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. 27 But **Barnabas** took him and brought him to the apostles. He 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. **BARNABAS THE FRIEND**

Acts 11: 19 Now those who had been scattered by the persecution that broke out when Stephen was killed traveled as far as Phoenicia, Cyprus and Antioch, spreading the word only among Jews. 20 Some of them, however, men from Cyprus and Cyrene, went to Antioch and began to speak to Greeks also, telling them the good news about the Lord Jesus. 21 The Lord’s hand was with them, and a great number of people believed and turned to the Lord. 22 News of this reached the church in Jerusalem, and they sent **Barnabas** to Antioch. 23 When 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. 24 He was a good man, full of the Holy Spirit and faith, and a great number of people were brought to the Lord. 25 Then **Barnabas** went to Tarsus to look for Saul, 26 and 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. 27 During this time some prophets came down from Jerusalem to Antioch. 28 One 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.) 29 The disciples, as each one was able, decided to provide help for the brothers and sisters living in Judea. 30 This they did, sending their gift to the elders by **Barnabas** and Saul. **BARNABAS THE TRUSTED EMBASARY**

Acts 12: 25 When **Barnabas** and Saul had finished their mission, they returned from Jerusalem, taking with them John, also called Mark.

Acts 13: 1 Now in the church at Antioch there were prophets and teachers: **Barnabas**, Simeon called Niger, Lucius of Cyrene, Manaen (who had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch) and Saul. 2 While they were worshiping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, "Set apart for me **Barnabas** and Saul for the work to which I have called them." 3 So after they had fasted and prayed, they placed their hands on them and sent them off. **BARNABAS THE MISSIONARY**

Acts 13: 4 The two of them, sent on their way by the Holy Spirit, went down to Seleucia and sailed from there to Cyprus. 5 When they arrived at Salamis, they proclaimed the word of God in the Jewish synagogues. John was with them as their helper. 6 They traveled through the whole island until they came to Paphos. There they met a Jewish sorcerer and false prophet named Bar-Jesus, 7 who was an attendant of the proconsul, Sergius Paulus. The proconsul, an intelligent man, sent for **Barnabas** and Saul because he wanted to hear the word of God. **BARNABAS THE TEACHER**

After this Saul became Paul, and Barnabas began to fade into the shadows and becomes a "companion of Paul."

Acts 15: 1 Certain people came down from Judea to Antioch and were teaching the believers: "Unless you are circumcised, according to the custom taught by Moses, you cannot be saved." 2 This brought Paul and **Barnabas** into sharp dispute and debate with them. So Paul and **Barnabas** were appointed, along with some other believers, to go up to Jerusalem to see the apostles and elders about this question. **BARNABAS THE DEBATER**

Acts 15: 25 So we all agreed to choose some men and send them to you with our dear friends **Barnabas** and Paul— 26 men who have risked their lives for the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. 27 Therefore we are sending Judas and Silas to confirm by word of mouth what we are writing. **BARNABAS THE MESSENGER**

Acts 15: 35 But Paul and **Barnabas** remained in Antioch, where they and many others taught and preached the word of the Lord.

Acts 15: 36 Some time later Paul said to **Barnabas**, "Let us go back and visit the believers in all the towns where we preached the word of the Lord and see how they are

doing.” 37 **Barnabas** wanted to take John, also called Mark, with them, 38 but 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. 39 They had such a sharp disagreement that they parted company. **Barnabas** took Mark and sailed for Cyprus, 40 but Paul chose Silas and left, commended by the believers to the grace of the Lord. 41 He went through Syria and Cilicia, strengthening the churches. **BARNABAS THE FAITHFUL MENTOR**

If Barnabas had not lived some poor disciples in Jerusalem would have suffered.

If Barnabas had not lived it may have taken Paul a lot longer to be accepted by the disciples.

If Barnabas had not lived the strategic church in Antioch may have not been accepted by the disciples in Jerusalem.

If Barnabas had not lived many churches would not have been planted throughout Asia Minor.

If Barnabas had not lived those who tried to change the gospel may have led many more astray with their hearsay.

If Barnabas had not encouraged and mentored a young man named Mark, giving him a second chance, we might not have the Gospel of Mark.

Barnabas never wrote a book of the Bible (unless he wrote Hebrews) but he encouraged two men who did—we remember Paul and we remember Mark, and we would do well to remember the one who stood by them when no one else would, our spiritual ancestor Barnabas. We sure need more men and women like Barnabas today.