

St. Barnabas, Apostle – 2023

Saturday, 6/10 at 4:00 & Sunday, 6/11 at 9:00

How Is the Lord...



Text: Acts 11:19-30; 13:1-3 NAS 1995

Introduction: Dear friends in Christ: All who trust in Jesus as Savior and Lord are Christians. *To **instruct and encourage** ordinary people like you and me*, our church body has chosen 22 days throughout each year to remember certain extraordinary Christians. Sunday, June 11 is the day that was chosen for **Barnabas**.

Today, *as we consider some aspects of the life of Barnabas*, let us be **encouraged** to live lives that are ✦faithful to God, ✦powered by the HS, and ✦an eternal blessing to others!

Some Barnabas-related events leading up to today's text:

- **Acts 4:36-37:** We first learn about Barnabas: ✦His name means *Son of Encouragement*, ✦Jesus' apostles knew him, and ✦he supported the Church by selling some property and giving the money to the apostles.
- **Acts 9:** Paul ✦was converted and ✦told others about Jesus, but Paul was not trusted by Jesus' disciples – *until Barnabas stood up for Paul*.

1. **Scattered and Speaking:** **Acts 11:19** **So then those** [believers] **who were scattered because of the persecution that occurred in connection with Stephen** [being put to death] [7:57-60] **made their way to Phoenicia and Cyprus and Antioch, speaking the word to no one except to Jews alone.** ²⁰ **But there were some of them, [believing] men of Cyprus and Cyrene, who came to Antioch and began speaking to the Greeks also, preaching the Lord Jesus.** ²¹ **And the hand of the Lord was with them, and a large number who believed turned to the Lord.**

- a. **Scattered:** As a result of Stephen being put to death, possibly 25,000 ordinary believers left Jerusalem (8:1-4; Lenski) – ***not to hide but to tell others about Jesus!***
- b. **Antioch:** It was a large city of about 500,000 – including foreign-born Jews and Greeks. By the HS, *many heard and believed!* Since many in today's world are lost, ***let us speak God's truth in love and point people to Jesus!***

2. **Barnabas Is Sent:** ²² **The news about** [the new Gentile believers] **reached the ears of the church at Jerusalem, and** [the apostles who directed the Church] **sent Barnabas off to Antioch.** ²³ **Then when he arrived and witnessed the grace of God** [that Gentiles had been brought to trust in Jesus], **he rejoiced and began to encourage them all with resolute** [firm, unwavering] **heart to remain true to the Lord;** ²⁴ **for [Barnabas] was a good man, and full of the Holy Spirit and of faith** [like Stephen, 6:5]. **And considerable numbers were brought to the Lord.**

- a. **Obedient:** When Barnabas was asked to go, he willingly accepted the assignment – *even though he would have to walk about 300 miles* (about 20/day for 15 days) *from Jerusalem to reach the city of Antioch.*

b. New believers: When believers are new, *they are weak and at risk*. So, the HS used Barnabas to **encourage** and **instruct** them. As we think about others, let us help them grow in knowing ✦Jesus and ✦the Bible.

3. **Barnabas Seeks Help**:²⁵ **And he left for Tarsus to look for Saul;**²⁶ **and when he had found him, he brought him to Antioch. And for an entire year** [*either in 43 or 44*] **they met with the church and taught considerable numbers; and the disciples were first called Christians in Antioch.**

a. Getting help: Since Barnabas had so many to teach, he found Saul, *a.k.a. Paul*, and took him to Antioch to assist with the teaching. Even here at Bethlehem we have various people who are active in teaching.

b. Names: Those who trust in Jesus are called by various terms, for example: ✦disciples, ✦brothers, ✦saints, and ✦believers. In Antioch they were called **Christians**:

i. “Christ” is Greek for “The Anointed One.”

ii. The “ian” suffix means “belonging to.”

Since as **Christians** we **belong to Christ**, let us
✦remember to whom we belong and ✦act accordingly.

4. **Barnabas Is Trusted**:²⁷ **Now at this time** [*in the year 43 or 44*] **some prophets came down from** [the higher elevation of] **Jerusalem to Antioch.**²⁸ **One of them named Agabus stood up and began to indicate by the Spirit that there would certainly be a great famine all over the world. And this** [famine] **took place in the reign of Claudius** [*who reigned from 41 to 54*].²⁹ **And in the proportion that any of the disciples** [*believers*] **had means, each of them determined to send a contribution for the relief of the brethren** [*their fellow Christians*] **living in Judea.**³⁰ **And this**

they did, sending it in charge of Barnabas and Saul to the elders [pastors].... // The believers in Judea needed food, so ♦the need was made known, ♦the money was collected, and ♦Barnabas and Saul carried the money to Jerusalem.

5. **Barnabas Is Set Apart:** [Since the end of chapter 11, about five years had passed:] **13:1** **Now there were at Antioch, in the church that was there, prophets and teachers** [men who understood the Bible well and were able to teach it to others]: **Barnabas, and Simeon who was called Niger, and Lucius of Cyrene, and Manaen** [Ma-na'-en] **who had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch, and Saul.** ² **While they were ministering to the Lord and fasting** [a self-imposed custom followed by the believers], **the Holy Spirit said, “Set apart for Me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them.”** ³ **Then, when [the others] had fasted and prayed and laid their hands on [Barnabas and Saul – ordaining them, setting them apart for this work], they sent them away.** // Paul was converted in 35; then, *after 14 years of preparing and waiting*, the HS sent Barnabas and Paul on their first missionary journey. What should we do?

- a. Remain open and obedient to the HS.
- b. Keep learning and living the Bible.
- c. Keep caring and praying for others.
- d. Keep pointing everyone to Jesus.

Let Us Pray: Dear HS, *TY for the good example of Barnabas!* Help us to remember that – **as Christians** – we belong to Jesus; then, *help us to follow Your lead in our daily lives!*

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