

# Make Me a Barnabas

(Compiled by Paul R. Blake)

## Introduction:

### A. Heb. 10:23-24; Eph. 4:15-16

1. Ever say something special about one of your children or grandchildren to brother Better Than You only to hear him tell you how much better his own children or grandchildren are?
2. Ever tell sister Sorrowful about the nice sunny day only to have her warn you of melanoma cancer, or say that we needed the rain and have her reply that it could cause flooding down by the creek, or mention how beautiful the snow is and have her come back with how many people might get killed on the snowy roads?
3. Do you know brother Righteous Rebuker who seldom has a good thing to say about your efforts, but is quick to tell you when you made a mistake? Don't let them get you down; you won't see them in heaven.
4. These are not encouragers; their words are not encouragement

### B. How do great Bible characters motivate a nation to serve God soundly and from the heart?

1. 2Chron. 30:18-20, 22-23, 25-27, 32:6-8

### C. What is a Barnabas? - Acts 4:36-37, 11:22-26

### D. The rest of the world understands the power of encouragement.

1. "Instruction does much, but encouragement everything." (Goethe)
2. "Treat a man as he is and he will remain as he is. Treat a man as he can and should be and he will become as he can and should be."  
(Stephen Covey)

### E. Their advice is Biblical

1. "How would your life be different if you walked away from gossip and verbal defamation? Let today be the day you speak only the good you know of other people and encourage others to do the same." (Steve Maraboli)

### F. God wants us to use our ability to speak to bless others - James 3:9-10

1. "The tongue is the strongest muscle in the human body; you can use it to knock someone down or to pick someone up."

## I. ENCOURAGEMENT IS VITAL TO LOCAL CHURCHES

### A. Christians live in a warzone - Eph. 6:10

1. Satan is a relentless adversary; we are outnumbered and in enemy territory - 2Cor. 4:4; Eph. 2:2
2. Even the strongest, bravest soldiers sometimes deal with battle fatigue; but, Christians don't have a limited deployment. The battle is for life.
3. Every Christian will eventually need encouragement. No exceptions

### B. Nothing good comes from discouragement

1. It causes some to forsake the faith and return to the world.
2. It causes some to develop a negative attitude which impacts others.

3. It causes many to become inactive - Luke 11:23 - "he who does not gather with Me scatters"
- C. Discouragement often infects entire local congregations - Gal. 5:9
  1. They become comfortable with inactivity.
  2. They take no joy in worship or fellowship
- D. Christians assemble to build one another up - 1Cor. 14:26; Heb. 3:13

## II. HOW TO BECOME A BARNABAS

- A. Maintain a daily relationship with God
  1. Pray daily - 1Thes. 5:16-18
  2. Meditate on God's word daily - Psalm 119:9-16
- B. Avoid discouragers
  1. Some people are so negative they are a dark cloud. These are not people who will respond to encouraging; they nurture misery in their hearts and enjoy misery. They can see a problem in the in the very best of experiences.
  2. You are not responsible to give them an opportunity to drag you down.
    - a. Jesus shut Peter down - Mark 8:33
    - b. Pearls before swine; they won't change, but they can change you
  3. The news is discouraging and can give us a warped view of the world
  4. Some entertainment is discouraging and morbid; it can change us
- C. Seek spiritually uplifting, life affirming materials and experiences.
  1. No one grows on the basis of the things he eliminates from his life.
    - a. Luke 11:24-26 - Evil must be replaced by good
  2. Read and watch spiritually uplifting, life affirming things.
  3. Arrange your home, schedule, decoration, relationships, etc. with a view to more spiritual things
  4. Look for relationships with other encouragers
  5. Become an encourager
- D. Develop eyes for one another
  1. People tend to be more interested in themselves than they are in others. Intellectually, we realize the need to be encouraging to other,
  2. Train ourselves to be on the lookout for opportunities to encourage.
    - a. Phil. 2:3-4
- E. Discipline ourselves to do for others as we want them to do for us.
  1. We want to be encouraged when we are down
- F. Don't wait for the opportunity to do some grand gesture
  1. Take care of the pennies and the dollars will care for themselves.
  2. Always say "Please" and "Thank you."
  3. Always smile and give a friendly greeting.
- G. Always follow through with the impulse to encourage.
  1. Don't say, "Someone ought to..." Do it!
- H. Be quick to offer words of praise.
  1. People will improve faster when their successes are pointed out than when their mistakes are corrected.

2. When something is done well, immediately acknowledge it. Never use empty flattery.
- I. Be there for each other. The power of presence
  1. We need to spend enough time with brethren to develop a comfort zone
  2. Closeness doesn't happen from a distance

### **III. ENCOURAGING THE LOCAL CHURCH**

- A. Love them, and they will come to love each other - John 13:34-35
- B. Keep the group growing in the faith; learning builds confidence and security
- C. Keep the group actively involved with each other
  1. Worshiping together is part of it - Heb. 10:23-25
  2. But the first century Christians were together daily - Acts 2:46, 5:42
- D. Find work to share together: spiritual and physical work parties
  1. My first memory of being involved in a group work at TR was when Bill Calame was here, I was 11, and we went to Baden to pass out meeting announcements for the church at Dippold Avenue
  2. It is hard for busy Christians to stay discouraged, especially if they are busy helping others

#### Conclusion:

- A. Gal. 6:2
- B. "Be an Encourager: When you encourage others, you boost their self-esteem, enhance their self-confidence, make them work harder, lift their spirits and make them successful in their endeavors. Encouragement goes straight to the heart and is always available. Be an encourager. Always" (Roy Bennett)