

THE SON OF EXHORTATION (Acts 11:22-26)

I. He was willing to go.

- A. When the news of the church being planted in Antioch reached the apostles in Jerusalem, they chose Barnabas to go check on the work.
- B. Barnabas could have said no.
 - 1. He didn't know what was going on there.
 - 2. He might have had things going on in Jerusalem to which he needed to attend.
 - 3. But he didn't; he said yes and went.
- C. We encourage people when we go to them in the work of the Lord.
 - 1. Any of us that have visited congregations that are small or struggling know this.
 - 2. You get patted on the back and told thank you by a great number of the brethren there.
 - 3. When we go on campaigns, we are told numerous times how encouraging we are to the congregation with whom we are working.
- D. When brethren who are in a hard place are reminded there are other people out there like them, it gives them a boost of energy.
- E. When he got to Antioch, the ones who had brought the gospel to Antioch were probably excited that word of their work had reached the apostles.
- F. The new converts would have been encouraged that the apostles were interested in their well-being.
- G. We should be willing to go if presented with the opportunity and ability to do so.

II. He rejoiced.

- A. When Barnabas got there, he saw that the grace of God had been received in Antioch.
 - 1. God's grace is offered to all men (Titus 2:11).
 - 2. It is accepted by faith (Romans 5:1-2).
 - 3. Sadly, not all men have such faith.
 - 4. Thankfully, these brethren in Antioch did.
- B. Upon seeing the grace of God having been accepted, Barnabas rejoiced.
- C. His reaction had to be encouragement to those who were teaching the gospel in that town.
 - 1. An envoy of the apostles was rejoicing over their efforts.
 - 2. Everyone likes to have their work noticed and appreciated.
 - 3. When such happens, we are encouraged in our efforts to do more.
- D. Whenever good is being done, we need to rejoice.
 - 1. Some get upset when the work of others is noticed.
 - 2. Such an attitude should never be found in a Christian.
- E. His rejoicing would also have encouraged the new converts.
 - 1. Whenever we are embarking on something new, when praised for our efforts, we are encouraged to continue.
 - 2. No doubt those new to Christianity in Antioch were encouraged to

keep the faith by this rejoicing.

F. When someone does something in the work of this congregation, we should be aware and excited, encouraging that brother or sister.

G. We ought to rejoice in the Lord (Philippians 4:4).

III. **He encouraged their faith.**

A. Barnabas did not stop with rejoicing.

B. He went on to encourage them to determine in their hearts to hold onto Christ.

1. He was well aware temptation would come.

2. There would be the temptations you and I face that would be the same as they would face.

3. There would also be the temptation to turn back to Judaism or fold under persecution.

C. He knew the only way they would remain faithful is if they decided right then to hold onto Jesus no matter what came.

D. It is of great encouragement to me when brethren who are faithful take time to remind me of the need to be vigilant.

1. Often times, it is when things are going well that temptation strikes.

2. We need others to encourage to hold tightly to Christ.

3. The words 'cleave unto' translate a Greek word that literally means "to adhere to" something.

4. Barnabas encouraged them to be glued, stuck to the Lord.

E. We desperately need people to encourage us in this.

F. The times in which we live are bringing us a multitude of things that would rip us from the Lord.

1. In the lives of many, it is working.

2. Instead of hanging on loosely to the Lord, we need to make sure that we are stuck to Him.

G. We need to strive to be those that encourage others to be and remain faithful.

IV. **He encouraged by his way of life.**

A. There are very few people the Bible says were good.

B. Barnabas is one of them.

1. It means profitable or useful.

2. This is what made him good.

C. He was useful to the Lord.

D. He was profitable to be around.

E. The reason for such is that he was full of the Holy Spirit.

1. This could be miraculous.

2. However, I believe it has more to do with biblical knowledge.

3. You and I are to be filled with the Spirit (Ephesians 5:18).

F. This in turn led him to be man of great faith.

G. People who are full of faith are those who live in a manner that is encouraging to others.

1. God's word teaches us how to live.

2. When we have faith in that word, we show it by the way we live.

- 3. Living right is always an encouragement to brethren.
 - H. On the other hand, living wrong is always a discouragement to others who are trying to live right.
 - I. Barnabas lived out his faith and it encouraged those around him.
- V. He encouraged by seeking out others for the work.**
- A. Barnabas realized he needed some help.
 - B. He knew of a man that was perfect for the job.
 - 1. We don't know if he was divinely directed to get Saul.
 - 2. It is possible, but we don't know.
 - C. For whatever reason, Saul was the man that Barnabas believed could help.
 - D. I imagine this was a great encouragement to Saul.
 - 1. How do you feel when someone comes to you and says, "You are the person for this job."
 - 2. I guess it might depend on the job, but usually, it is very uplifting and encouraging to hear that someone believes we have the abilities and talents to do something.
 - E. Barnabas was not about getting glory for himself.
 - 1. He was about strengthening others.
 - 2. If that meant getting someone else in there to teach and preach, then he was willing to do that.
 - F. It is encouraging to others to include them in our works for Christ.