

TO BE OR NOT TO BE ...? * *Can You Be a Barnabas to Someone?*

Dr. Grimo - NBC Chapel - Jan 26, 2010 (Barnabas * Acts 4:32-37, 9:26-27, 11:19-26, 15:36-40)

I Be the Encourager and Coach – Mentoring Rom 15:4-6 / 2 Thes 2:16-17

- Do you have a Barnabas – someone to lift you up?
- Someone who gives you permission to fail? - *NOT* a flatterer.
- And consider: to whom are you a Barnabas?

* Who do you regularly encourage or lift up -- allow yourself to be the wind to another person's sails? -- *"the wind beneath their wings"*

Fact: We all need affirmation, positive attention, and the encouragement to press on

We all have moments of weakness and of compromised resolve (satanic attacks)

- We desire to do the right thing, but somehow it just *doesn't* or *didn't happen*.

When this happened to John Mark, as recorded in the book of **Acts 15:37-39**, Paul lost faith in him and discarded him, but Barnabas gave his young cousin another chance. Paul took Silas and went off in one direction. Barnabas took John Mark and went off in another. Barnabas was a respected leader during those days of the early church. When the apostles were not sure of Saul, Barnabas vouched for him. Later, when Saul, by that time known as Paul, was fed up with John Mark, Barnabas gave the young man another chance.

Who is your Barnabas? - "we may be called to encourage someone and not even be aware of it"

Hebrews 13:2 " ... *Some people have entertained angels without knowing it.*"

II Be a Life Coach and Good Samaritan – Generosity Eph 4:11-12

- Coach makes encouragement and support natural ... without effort
- Coach show up when you are in need ... just to cheer you up
- Coach *Brings a smile, a slap on the back, a kind word -- "way to go!"*
- Your Coach may *NOT* have much depth, but that's OK.
 - o Not every coaching relationship - needs to be deep -- if that was the case, we would quickly become emotional wrecks while being told to **press on** and to **get it together**, while being pushed to succeed.

- With this type of relationship, shallow in the midst of the deep, is a good thing -- the **coaches** support, tenacity, drive and dedication to **move you** in the right direction is a valuable relationship during these times
- This spontaneous coaching Barnabas (positive & upbeat coach) helps us to see those everyday moments where *God is revealed* and *God's grace provides*, and most often when we least expect it. **GOD IS GOOD !!**
- Others play a part in our successes – our acceptance of coaching, by those who care about us are important moments of growth in our success.
 - None of us can *go it alone* ... we are not wired to be absent of relationships. (Remember: *The Christian life is all about a **Relationship***)
- **Coaching** (or encouraging) means putting yourself out for the benefit of others.
 - Practice and preparation – a place where encouragement takes on the solitude needed to get better – encouragement without the time and place to work it out will not produce productive fruit.
- The goal of a coach or encourager is:
 - **“A Coach equips, edifies , encourages ... he continually enriches God’s servants to press on toward the goal”**
 - While *giving of ourselves*; we minister to others while *refreshing in their souls* and *renewing them in their service*.
 - Consider this: to **mentor** / to **encourage** / to **coach**
 - *How do we service in ministry?*
 - *Are you a servant?*
 - *Do you die to self daily?*

Synergy of working together – **1 Cor 9:24** / are we on course to finish the race ourselves? To walk the walk ... to live with authenticity? --- **Rom 12:4-8** ... the body as an object lesson.

John 3:16 – 17 *For God so loved the world that he gave ... God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but so that the world might be saved through Him.*

III **Be a Brother or Sister – Family**

- Family knows our short comings -- our weaknesses, our strengths, our hopes & desires. --- Generally they know more about us than we care to admit.

- If not a family member, sometimes this can be a close friend who has become a brother or sister to you throughout your life.
- Family members are generally the ones who will help you without hesitation -- every oops -- every *“well it looked good on paper”* -- you are loved? -- the ones that will let you know during the good or bad, -- you are loved. They will also remind you that you are an instrument of God’s love to others?
- Family members (especially your parents) Stay fixed on your goals and desires, they see your potential, when others can only see your defects?
 - They have that unconditional love of a son or daughter – or ***of our heavenly Father to a His son or daughter.***

Philemon 1:4-7

- When our cup is full we can bless others ... *“my cup runneth over”* – **Psalms**
- This is the person the keeps you glass half full rather than half empty
- Like hearing a gifted performer – a *musical moment* or a *perfect 10* at the Olympic Games

IV Be a Servant and Prayer Partner – Accountability

- Prayer matters !! -- Your prayer Barnabas is the person that you know about, who is praying for you. Not just when life is hard -- Not just about a specific situation – for those situation, positive and negative.
- Someone who keeps the *prayer chain moving* in your direction, the one who has entered into a covenant of prayer for you. This partnership of prayer changes much about the approach and attitude you bring to living, knowing that at least one person is holding you in prayer is most encouraging.

Prayer is another way of listening. Your Barnabas helps us listen for God.

- Prayer is a way of seeking guidance and keeps you aware
- Prayer keeps us on course and avoids our drifting away
- Prayer helps us to prepare for what is coming ... things we are not yet aware of
- Prayer asks our Father to walk with us and stand by our side
- Prayer helps us to hear God’s voice
 - *The experience of a praying church – example: The Brooklyn Tabernacle Choir/Church – Jim and Carol Cymbala and their following Gods calling and through prayer, experienced His assume power, love and provision.*

V **Being a Friend and Companion – Humor**

- This person knows when and how to make you laugh.
 - o To laugh at situations around you & helps you to laugh at yourself.
- This Barnabas *supports you*, and *NOT* by always *agreeing with you* !!
 - o A friend who supports you by propping you up or poking fun at you ... keeping you humble and focused on what our Father has for you in the future, and reminds you of the assume grip of ***His hand*** and concern for our lives.
 - o That gentle tease which reminds us not to take life so seriously.
 - ***To let go and let God ...***
 - ***Trust and Obey***
 - ***Encouragement is the much needed food of life – fuel to keep moving and to press on ...***
- Just as ***encouragement and hope*** go together, so is ***faith and humor*** tightly woven as one.
 - o No one has a better sense of humor than God and sometimes the only response to the challenges of life -- unexpected twists and turns -- having our legs knocked out from under us = is to stop and laugh.
 - o ... when we are at our lowest -- God is up to something extraordinary

Who saw that coming? Who'd have thunk it? Now what are you up to, God?

- A good belly laugh can relieve stress and tension and ease our minds, allowing us to see many situations differently. Friends and companions are a wonderful gift from the Father.

Remember: We are made for relationships and through relationships we experience the Love of Christ. ***How encouraging! What a God we Serve! God is Good!***

- *Be joyful in all things ...*
- *We forget that the Gospel means ... “good news”*
- *We may endure sadness by night, but joy will come in the morning” Ps 30:5*

VI **Be a life Pacer and Co-Pilot - Endurance**

- This is the Barnabas who stays with you when you're weak and abandoned. When the rest of the world has walked away, this person is still with you. Call in the middle of the night, calls from the opposite side of the world, from a different time zone – when you least expect it. Answers the phone in the middle of the night and listens to you with encouragement and concern.

The Greek word for patience is translated as **“a conquering endurance”**

... don't think you can do it alone ... be the one who puts the heart in someone

- The one who conquers your depression with sheer endurance. -- Sticks by you through thick and thin. -- Checks up on you just to hear how you are doing.
 - o *The one who doesn't know well enough to leave you alone ... and you're eternally grateful for their stubbornness.* The one who says to you, as Ruth said to her mother-in-law Naomi, *“where you go, I will go”*

We each need a Barnabas in our lives. Someone who provides a heartfelt presence and power ... who helps us to live life to the fullest; ... not by rote, ... not by reaction, ... not by following black and white rules, but through someone who helps us to live life through HIM ... Someone who has experienced the love of God and remind you that you are a result of God's love.

“We are not just to make a living but to live a life of passion” - Who we are in Christ is the example we present ... throughout our daily walk.

- o *It is about being, not doing ... we are “human beings” not “human doers”.*

Think about your friends. Who has your back? Who pulls you up when you're feeling down? Who are YOU ready to encourage? The truth is: The good life is not about possessions but people. And your relationships are to be your most valuable treasures.

Eph 5:19 ... speaking one to another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody with your heart to the Lord;