

# Characters - Barnabas

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## REVIEW LAST WEEK'S NEXT STEPS

What, if any, next step did you commit to last week, how did it go?

- I will learn to be grateful for imperfect gifts.
- I will learn to be grateful in times of worry and frustration.
- I will learn to be grateful by avoiding grumbling and complaining.
- I will express a grateful heart openly, often and in all circumstances.
- I will express a grateful heart by worshiping God.

## THIS WEEK'S SERMON RECAP

This message is about the life-giving power of encouragement, looking specifically at Barnabas in the book of Acts. We all have what might be called "bleacher people." These are people who stand in the bleachers, cheering us on as we run the race of life. They believe in us. They're realistic about our shortcomings, but they also have a vision for what God made us to be.

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. When Paul first entered the Christian community, Barnabas vouched for Paul and took him under his wing while Paul still lacked credibility. Why was Barnabas able to do that when most other apostles were unable to accept him right away?
  
2. Years later, when Paul suggested visiting the believers in all the towns where they preached, Barnabas wanted to take John (also called Mark), who had left (deserted) their ministry to return to Jerusalem. Just as Barnabas believed in Paul, and helped him grow into a prominent leader, he wanted to give John (Mark) a second chance. But the disagreement between Barnabas and Paul regarding this was so sharp that Barnabas and Paul parted separate ways. Has there been someone in your life who gave you a benefit of doubt or had given you a second chance even at the risk of possible disappointment or loss?

3. Are you a person who believes people can change and support those who lack credentials or credibility? If not, what is the reason why you are unable to be that way?
  
4. If you can become a person of encouragement like Barnabas, how different would your relationships in your family and community be?
  
5. If you want to be a person of encouragement, what set of characters do you need? And which do you lack or need to grow in?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
6. What actions do you want to take to grow as a person of encouragement?

## **NEXT STEPS FOR THIS WEEK (COMMIT TO GROW)**

- I will identify who my bleacher people are and thank them.
- I will humble myself and invest in the greatness of someone else.
- I will pray for the person I'm in conflict with.
- I will give up trying to fix the person I'm in conflict with.
- I will encourage the people God brings in my life this week.

## **SCRIPTURE REFERENCES**

- Acts 4:36
- Acts 9:26-28
- Acts 11:19-25
- Acts 11:29-30
- Acts 12:25
- Acts 13:2
- Acts 13:13
- Acts 15:36-41
- 2 Timothy 4:11
- Matthew 5:44

## **Prayer Request(s)**

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