

“The Building Blocks to Becoming a Barnabas”

Intro:

Go ahead and flip in your Bibles to Acts 11:19-24.

Expect/Attempt

How have you been doing? It's 4 weeks. Anyone expected or attempted ANYTHING? It's easy to say from the pulpit, it's something different to have our church body put it into practice corporately and individually.

I was thinking about this last week and talked about this with the staff this past Monday morning. The only way we will ever attempt or expect great things is if we know that God is worthy to be expected of. What I mean is...if you don't believe that God can do great things, why would you every expect him to? So let's establish first some of the great things he has done.

He spoke and it was. The universe and all that is within it. The very sound of God's syllables is spectacularly formative.

He breathes life into dust and fashions man.

He tears a rib and forms perfection of beauty in human form.

He causes water to fall from the sky.

He stands a sea on end so His loved ones could escape the catastrophe of an angry army.

He crashes a wall to crumble in upon itself at the mere sound of voices.

He causes fire to fall from the sky at Mt. Carmel.

He stops the sun for a full day. Literally presses pause on the rotation of the earth. (speed of earth?)

He breathes life into a valley of skulls and bones and they become a gigantic army.

He steps out of Heaven and puts skin on, is birthed as a baby, lives completely perfectly, heals the blind and the sick, raises the dead, takes a beating of a lifetime, then is beaten some more, has his beard ripped from his face, has nails driven through his wrists and feet and is hung to die. He stays ON the cross when at any time the very thought of I don't want to do this anymore would call upon legions of angels. He stays on to the point of death. But he doesn't stay dead.

He raises HIMSELF from the dead, taking the power of sin and Satan and destroying it once and for all.

He's done all of this, and so the answer is YES he is WORTHY to be expectant of. Great things. And because His Spirit lives within you and I if you are in Christ, then we can be expected to Attempt some great things for Him.

Intro 2

So that's our starting point...but we want to learn and see some examples in the Scriptures of those who attempted great things for God, and today we are talking about one of them.

In Hebrews 13:7, the writer is talking about faith. He's just listed the great hall of faith chapter of all the cool people that had gone before and he writes this, "Remember your leaders, those who spoke to you the word of God. Consider the outcome of their way of life, and imitate their faith. Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever." I love this. Because Christ is the same. Consider those faithful leaders. Look at their faith and imitate them. One of my favorite leaders in the NT is a man by the name of Barnabas.

THIS MORNING WE ARE GOING TO BE EXAMINING THE BUILDING BLOCKS TO BECOME A BARNABAS!

Now, we never EVER want to exalt a man in his humanity, so specifically what we will be looking at this morning is how Barnabas loved Jesus. And we will draw from that.

Let's read the passage together.

~~19:11-24~~ 11:19-24

Remember, we just established that the Lord is WORTHY to be expected of. Here's what we just read. It's another thing. He references the stoning of Stephen, and what has happened as a result. The Gospel EXPLODES all over the world because of the persecution of one man, because the Lord has plans for His fame. Remember we talked about last time I preached that our main mission is to PURSUE JESUS PASSIONATELY AND TO MAKE HIM _____? FAMOUS, right! Listen, here is the Truth, the will of God is unstoppable. He is mighty and sovereign and His fame will spread throughout the world whether we join in or not...but we can receive the blessing of being a part of that if we are active in pursuing Jesus passionately.

Ok, so Stephen is stoned and the Gospel explodes all over as the Christians scatter to the ends of the earth. Some go to this place called Antioch and “a great number believed and turned to the Lord.” The report comes back to Jerusalem and they send BARNABAS to Antioch.

Who is this guy? Well He’s a Cyprian Jew born by the name of Joseph, but his Character has earned him a Nickname: Barnabas, meaning Son of Encouragement. Luke, the writer of Acts, makes a big deal out of Barnabas...which is saying something. He focuses on Barnabas a lot throughout the book of Acts, so we can learn a lot from him. But check out how Luke describes Barnabas in this passage, vs 24, “a good man, full of the Holy Spirit and of faith.”

Full of the HS and of faith. This is so important. This is saying that he is full of the Holy Spirit. Romans repeatedly tells us that those who are Christians have the Holy Spirit dwelling within them, so all of us who are in Christ have this. Full of the HS means that he has divine enabling. He is not in his own power. He will not accomplish anything of his own power...that is for sure. Neither will we. We are entirely dependent on the divine enabling of the Holy Spirit in our lives to attempt any kind of great thing for God. But we HAVE HIM, so we aren’t missing that. But what are we missing. It says Barnabas is full of the HS *AND OF FAITH*. So this is something separate. We all have the divine enabling of the HS because he dwells within us, but not all of us have the human response to that, and that is walking in faith. Because of our understanding of the Holy Spirit inside, shouldn’t we be DOING tons of outrageous things in faith for the Lord. This is the characteristic of Barnabas that Luke keys in on. Let’s look at it.

So what makes him this way?

- 1) The first block to becoming a Barnabas is **CARE!** Look at Acts 9:26-27. Barnabas CARES about those who are on the outside. The Apostle Paul is on the outside, and Barnabas welcomes him in.
 - a. John Piper says, “Faith feels the wonder of being accepted as an outsider to God’s blessing.” He means that we were outside, welcomed in, so we welcome in.
 - b. What if he had said NO!?

2) Submission

- a. Terrifying word. We get scared by this word. We want control, but we need to be submissive to the Lord and His leading.
- b. **THEY SENT BARNABAS, HE WENT!** He responded to the calling through the church.
 - i. Some of us in this room need to buy in. All the way.
 - ii. Earlier in Acts (chapter 4), we find out that Barnabas sold his land to bless the church. Some of us need to stop saying we need to give and actually give.
 - iii. It is one thing to confess that something needs to happen, and another thing entirely to do it. I loved what _____ said. They gave in faith.
 - iv. This isn't just money. It's time. It's investment. It's missions.
 - v. We don't want this place to be a landing zone. We want it to be a launching pad. It's about fulfilling the great commission.
 - vi. You aren't too old or too young. No more excuses. We need to Submit to what God wants us to do.

3) Grace

- a. Barnabas went and **SAW THE GRACE OF GOD.**
- b. We need to have eyes to see the grace of God.
- c. The church is imperfect. You will never be a part of a church that has it all together. Because of sin. So we **DESPERATELY NEED THE GRACE OF GOD AND TO EXTEND GRACE TO OTHERS.**
- d. Faith lives by grace and can't survive without it.

4) Joy

- a. Barnabas rejoiced for the others. He came, he saw, and was **GLAD.** It filled him to celebrate God's presence and blessing in others.
- b. Are we like this? Or are we the **BUTS?** "That's great and all. Happy for you, **BUT** me God?????"
- c. Genuine faith delights in God's grace. God hasn't promised you or I anything but Himself. So until we are satisfied with His face, we will never be satisfied with his hand.

5) Exhort

- a. He **STRONGLY URGES** them to keep on. He encourages and builds them up.
- b. Life is exhausting and we are **ALWAYS** in need of encouragement. It can beat us up and leave us ready to quit. But Galatians 6:9 says, "Never tire of doing good for in time you will reap your reward."

c. So KEEP ON! And for some who have given up...KEEP UP! You are not too far gone. Remember the Holy Spirit has given you a divine enabling...just exhibit faith. Step it up.

These are the building blocks...and here's why I get excited about this. Look at the last segment of that verse.

They sent him, he went and saw, rejoiced, and exhorted. **AND MANY WERE ADDED TO THE LORD!**

That's the goal right? We don't attempt great things or expect great things solely for ourselves. How selfish would that be. That's making the gospel about us, and it never has been. The Gospel is about how Great our God is that He would save us through Jesus. I want MANY to be added to the Lord through our expectations and attempts of a Mighty God. AMEN???

Let me pray for us!