



Faithful Ministry in the Local Church

Acts 11:19-30

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As we've studied Acts, we've seen apostles, and signs and wonders, and it may be tempting to think that ministry then was very different and far removed from our local church experience today. Powerful miracles seemed to be far more common. Yet, the reality is that God saved people then, as He does now, by believers faithfully proclaiming the Gospel of Jesus Christ and discipling new believers to help them grow. Barnabas proves to be a good example of God-empowered faithful ministry in the body of Christ.

A reminder of the timeline of the book of Acts: it spans about 30 years.

The birth of the church in Antioch: Faithful men went and simply proclaimed the Gospel of Jesus Christ (11:19-21).

The Jerusalem church sent Barnabas to Antioch to confirm what was being taught and to see what God was doing. Barnabas ("son of encouragement") was a nickname. His real name was Joseph (Acts 4:36-37).

Four Character Qualities that God Nurtured in Barnabas for Faithful Ministry

Joyful (11:23)

Good (11:24)

Give over to God (11:24)

Humble (11:25-26)

Four Works of Faithful Ministry that God Accomplished through Barnabas

He exhorted them (11:23)

He stayed with them (11:26)

He taught them (11:26)

He served them (11:29-30)

Questions to Consider

1. Have you ever found yourself reading biblical narratives, like those in Acts, and feeling a bit of jealousy, as if Christians then had greater experiences of God's supernatural power?
2. What do we know about Barnabas from what we've read previously in Acts?
3. What enables a believer in Jesus Christ to remain joyful in any circumstance? Support your answer with scripture.
4. Do others see you as a good person? Why or why not? What are some biblical marks of a believer that God would describe as good?
5. Read Galatians 5:22-23. Is there fruit evident in your life that demonstrates yielding to God's Spirit? Are there areas in which you are struggling to submit to His Spirit?
6. How have other believers helpfully exhorted you? Has there been a recent time when you have exhorted others? Why is it important to exhort young believers "to remain faithful to the Lord with steadfast purpose"?
7. How are you being intentional to *remain* with other believers – to commune with them and have fellowship – even during Covid?
8. What's a tangible way that you can serve another believer this week?