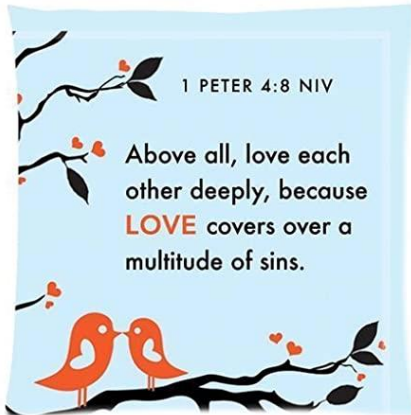


Guided by a cloud 30 (Exodus 13:21-22)

Following on from Steve's sharing last week about various characters in the bible I was reminded about one of the first preaches I ever did at Ashley looking at the life and times of Barnabas so I thought I'd revisit him. As we look at snapshots of His life presented throughout the book of Acts we discover a number of things that Barnabas did that demonstrate what true friendship is all about.



Worship time

[What a friend we have in Jesus](#)

[My hope is built on nothing less](#)

[The Lord's my shepherd \(I will trust\)](#)

1. Sacrifices for Others Acts 4:36-37 *Joseph, a Levite from Cyprus, whom the apostles called Barnabas (which means Son of Encouragement); sold a field he owned and brought the money and put it at the apostles' feet.* Barnabas saw a need and acted on

it literally putting his money where his mouth was. Looking after one another was a key element of the early church. A genuine friend helps out even when it comes at personal cost.

2. See the best in others Acts 9:26-27 *When he (Paul) came to Jerusalem, he tried to join the disciples, but they were all afraid of him, not believing that he really was a disciple. But Barnabas took him and brought him to the apostles.* Barnabas, the encourager, takes Saul/Paul by the hand and brings him to the leaders and says let me tell you about the change in my brother Saul. A true friend sees good in us that maybe others can't. They encourage others by saying, "I believe in you". Ephesians 4:2 reads, *"Be humble and gentle. Be patient with each other, making allowance for each other's faults because of your love."*

3. A spiritual help. Acts 11:23-24 *When he (Barnabas) arrived and saw the evidence of the grace of God, he was glad and encouraged them all to remain true to the Lord with all their hearts. He was a good man, full of the Holy Spirit and faith, and a great number of people were brought to the Lord.* Barnabas encourages the new believers in their faith, an important aspect of friendship that can be overlooked. A good friend brings the spiritual aspect into daily life. When a friend shares about a struggle they're facing what stops us from offering a prayer right then and there? As a friend we should not only be offering physical help but also spiritual help. 1 Thessalonians 5:11 reads, *"So encourage each other and build each other up, just as you are already doing."*

4. Helps others achieve. Barnabas was prepared to be patient with Saul rather than expecting him to be perfect and ready to lead from the start. 1 Corinthians 13:4 reads, *"Love is patient."* Ronald Reagan once said there's no limit to what we can accomplish if we don't care who gets the credit, a characteristic that is often dismissed these days. We need to be friends who work for the success of each other.

5. Slow to judge. Acts 15:36-39 *Barnabas wanted to take John, also called Mark, with them, but Paul did not think it wise to take him, because he had deserted them in Pamphylia.* Barnabas again sees potential in someone despite a past failure. We need to be prepared to look for the potential in others in all aspects of our lives church, family, friends and work colleagues.

So, briefly, that's the story of Barnabas, he really was a great friend and a great encourager. The thing that brings out the best in most people is encouragement, and we - no matter what our circumstances are - can provide those around us with this precious gift.

"Cast all your anxiety on Him because he cares for you" 1Peter 5:7