

25-0511a - Detailed Summary

25-0511a - *Barnabas, the Son of Encouragement, Part 1*, Jim Lokenbauer

Bible Readers: Kevin Woosley and Tom Freed

This detailed summary by Grok, xAI, (Transcription by TurboScribe.ai)

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Barnabas, the Son of Encouragement, Part 1

Summary of Transcript (0:04 - 22:59)

Scripture Readings:

1st Scripture Reading (0:04 - 1:14), Kevin Woosley

Romans 12:3-8

The sermon begins with two scripture readings. Kevin reads from Romans 12:3-8, which emphasizes humility and the diverse gifts given by God to members of the church, such as prophecy, ministry, teaching, exhortation, giving, leading, and showing mercy. Each gift is to be used according to the grace and faith bestowed upon individuals, highlighting the unity and interconnectedness of the church as one body in Christ.

2nd Scripture Reading (1:19 - 1:55), Tom Freed

James 1:16-18

Tom then reads James 1:16-18, which underscores that every good and perfect gift comes from God, the unchanging Father of light, who brought believers forth through the word of truth to be the firstfruits of His creation.

Summary

Preacher: Jim Lokenbauer

(2:00 - 2:40) Introduction

The preacher, Jim, introduces the sermon's theme of encouragement, noting that the scriptures read by Kevin and Tom focus on God's gifts. He emphasizes that God provides unique gifts to each believer to strengthen the church and glorify Him, setting the stage for a discussion on the gift of encouragement.

(2:41 - 4:49) Introduction to Barnabas and His Gift of Encouragement

Jim introduces the central figure of the sermon, a man named Joseph from Cyprus, known by his nickname Barnabas, meaning "Son of Encouragement." This nickname was given by the apostles, as noted in Acts 4:36, which describes Barnabas as a Levite from Cyprus. Jim clarifies that Barnabas is distinct from another disciple named Joseph (also called Justus) mentioned in Acts 1:23, who was

considered to replace Judas Iscariot. Barnabas was set apart by the Holy Spirit for a special mission alongside Saul (later Paul) to establish the first-century Gentile church. His God-given gift of encouragement is highlighted as a key focus, with Jim referencing Paul's mention of encouragement in Romans 12. The sermon will explore how Barnabas used this gift to support the early church.

(4:50 - 5:14) Scope of the Study

Jim briefly notes that the sermon will not be an exhaustive study of Barnabas's life, as his presence spans much of the book of Acts and could warrant weeks of discussion. Instead, the lesson will be split into two parts, covering Barnabas's contributions in the current morning service and continuing in the evening service. This sets expectations for a focused exploration of Barnabas's role as an encourager.

(5:15 - 6:33) The Nature of Encouragement

Jim defines encouragement as a rare and valuable quality in a self-centered, narcissistic culture obsessed with personal gain and selfies. An encourager, he explains, is outwardly focused, prioritizing the needs of others and seeking opportunities to uplift and support them. Barnabas is described as the "Son of Encouragement" or "Son of Exhortation" in various translations, with both terms deriving from Greek words: *parakaleo* (to call near, comfort, or exhort) and *protrampo* (to encourage or exhort). These terms emphasize Barnabas's role in inviting, consoling, and inspiring others. This section underscores the contrast between worldly selfishness and the selfless, God-given gift of encouragement exemplified by Barnabas.

(6:34 - 7:16) Definitions and Impact of Encouragement

Jim elaborates on the distinction between exhortation, which involves giving direction and instruction, and encouragement, which focuses through building others up. The English definition of "encourage" includes giving courage, increasing confidence, inspiring strength, and emboldening others. Barnabas is portrayed as a positive, uplifting figure who provided direction and instilled courage in others to serve God. This section establishes encouragement as a powerful, transformative gift that strengthens individuals and communities in their faith.

(7:16 - 12:20) Barnabas's Early Contributions and Support for Saul

Jim delves into Barnabas's actions in the early church, beginning with Acts 4:32-37, which describes the unity of believers who shared their possessions to meet the needs of others. Barnabas, identified as a Levite from Cyprus, sold a field he owned and gave the proceeds to the apostles for distribution to those in need, demonstrating his commitment to the church and his use of encouragement to refresh and support others. Jim then transitions to Acts 9, introducing Saul, a Pharisee who initially persecuted Christians. After Saul's dramatic conversion on the road to Damascus, where Jesus appeared to him, he was blinded, healed by Ananias, and baptized. Saul spent three years in Damascus before returning to Jerusalem, where believers feared him due to his past actions. Barnabas, however, interceded for Saul (Acts 9:26-31), vouching for his genuine conversion and fearless preaching in Damascus. By bringing Saul to the apostles, Barnabas facilitated his acceptance into the church, enabling Saul to move freely and preach boldly in Jerusalem. This act of encouragement not only supported Saul but also contributed to a period of

peace and growth for the church in Judea, Galilee, and Samaria, strengthened by the Holy Spirit, which Jim notes as an encourager alongside Barnabas.

(12:21 - 12:52) Barnabas's Faith and Love

Jim highlights Barnabas's courage, faith, and love in supporting Saul when others were fearful. Unlike the skeptical believers, Barnabas showed empathy, trusted in Saul's conversion, and demonstrated agape love, as later described by Paul in 1 Corinthians 13 (patient, kind, believing all things). This section emphasizes Barnabas's selflessness and willingness to risk his reputation to support a former persecutor, illustrating the depth of his encouraging nature.

(12:53 - 17:32) Barnabas's Mission to Antioch

Jim describes the broader context of the early church's growth following Stephen's martyrdom, which led to persecution and the scattering of believers (Acts 11:19-26). Christians spread the gospel to Jews and Gentiles in cities like Cyprus and Antioch, where many Gentiles believed. The Jerusalem church sent Barnabas to Antioch to verify these reports. Upon arriving, Barnabas was overjoyed to witness God's grace at work among the Gentile converts and encouraged them to remain steadfast in their faith, recognizing the temptations of Antioch's pagan culture. Described as a good man, full of the Holy Spirit and faith, Barnabas's efforts led to many conversions. He then traveled to Tarsus to find Saul, bringing him to Antioch, where they taught the believers for a year. Their effective teaching resulted in the disciples being called "Christians" for the first time, a term initially used mockingly but reflecting their Christ-like character.

(17:33 - 18:42) Impact of Barnabas and Saul's Ministry in Antioch

Jim concludes this part by emphasizing the success of Barnabas and Saul's ministry in Antioch, the third-largest city in the Roman Empire. Barnabas's familiarity with the region, as a native of nearby Cyprus, made him an ideal leader for this mission. His excitement about the Gentile conversions prompted him to involve Saul, and their year-long teaching efforts significantly grew the church. The term "Christians" (meaning "little Christs") emerged as a mocking label from non-believers but became a badge of honor, reflecting the profound impact of Barnabas and Saul's encouragement and teaching. This section highlights the ripple effect of Barnabas's gift, which not only strengthened individuals but also transformed the church and its identity.

(18:43 - 20:22) Barnabas's Trustworthiness and Mission to Jerusalem

Jim highlights Barnabas's trustworthiness as a key aspect of his character, referencing events at the end of Acts 11. A prophet named Agabus, inspired by the Holy Spirit, predicted a worldwide famine. In response, the Gentile Christians in Antioch, moved by love and generosity, collected money and goods to aid the believers in Jerusalem affected by the famine. Demonstrating their faith in God's will, they entrusted Barnabas and Saul with the perilous task of delivering this substantial relief package. The journey was fraught with danger, as travelers faced robbers and murderers, risks amplified by the desperation caused by the famine. Despite these challenges, Barnabas and Saul's bravery and reliability ensured the successful delivery of the aid to the elders in Jerusalem. Afterward, they remained in Jerusalem to serve the church, during a period when King Herod initiated a wave of persecution against Christians, marking a time of heightened tension for the early church.

(20:22 - 22:59) Persecution, Divine Intervention, and Return to Antioch

Jim recounts the intensification of persecution under King Herod, who executed James, the brother of John, by beheading, pleasing the Jewish leaders. Encouraged by this response, Herod arrested Peter with plans for his execution. However, the church gathered at the house of Barnabas's aunt, Mary Mark, where her son John Mark (Barnabas's cousin, as noted in Acts 12:12 and Colossians 4:10) lived, and prayed fervently for Peter's release. God answered their prayers by sending an angel to miraculously free Peter from prison. When Herod ordered Peter's execution the next day, he was not found, leading Herod to execute the guards instead. Frustrated, Herod retreated to his palace in Caesarea, where he addressed the people of Tyre and Sidon, who relied on him for food. Dressed in royal attire, Herod delivered a speech, and the crowd flattered him, proclaiming him a god. Failing to give glory to the true God, Herod was struck dead by an angel, consumed by worms—a vivid and grim consequence. With Herod's persecution ended, Barnabas, Saul, and John Mark returned to Antioch. Jim notes that Acts 13 marks a pivotal event in their lives, to be explored in the evening sermon. He concludes by offering an invitation for anyone with needs to come forward for prayer, as the congregation stands to sing.