

Barnabas the Son of Encouragement

Barnabas sells his land and lays the money at the apostles' feet, exemplifying the generous spirit and encouragement that characterized the early church.

Acts 4:32-37

CHARACTERS: Barnabas, The Apostles, The Believers

THEMES: Generosity, Encouragement, Unity, Sacrifice, Stewardship

THE MULTITUDE OF believers in Jerusalem demonstrated a unity that transcended natural human tendencies. They were of one heart and one soul, neither said any of them that ought of the things which he possessed was his own, but they had all things common.

The apostles gave witness with great power to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and great grace was upon them all. Neither was there any among them that lacked, for as many as were possessors of lands or houses sold them and brought the prices and laid them down at the apostles' feet.

Among these generous believers, one man stood out. Joses, a Levite from Cyprus, was surnamed by the apostles 'Barnabas,' which means 'the son of consolation' or 'son of encouragement.' His new name revealed his character—this was a man who built others up.

Barnabas, having land, sold it and brought the money and laid it at the apostles' feet. His gift was substantial—land represented security, inheritance, and status. Yet Barnabas valued the kingdom of God above earthly security. His example of generosity and encouragement would extend far beyond this gift—he would later encourage the church to receive the converted Saul and support John Mark when others wanted to abandon him.

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