

APRIL 28, 2024

"For the First Time"

Scripture: Acts 11:25-30



for the **First** Time

5th Sunday of Easter

AUTHOR

Luke, a Gentile physician, wrote this gospel between A.D. 63-70. It's considered to be a sequel to the Gospel of Luke which he also wrote. Luke writes about the birth and growth of the Christian church and covers the 30 years after Jesus was taken up into heaven.

CONTEXT

Some of the believers in the early church went to Antioch and preached to the Gentiles about Jesus. Many believed and turned to the Lord. It was here that the 1st Gentile church was founded and where believers were first called Christians. When the church at Jerusalem heard about this, they sent Joseph (nicknamed Barnabas, which means Son of Encouragement) to visit. Barnabas was strong in his faith and encouraged the believers there to stay true to the Lord. Our scripture passage opens with Barnabas going to Tarsus to get Saul (Paul) and bring him back to help with the church at Antioch.

ENCOURAGEMENT

Investing in new Christians by encouraging, teaching, and nurturing them in the faith, is not only helpful to the individual, but also an investment in the church and its future and helps to build the Kingdom of God. Be a Barnabas.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Read Acts 11:25-30. What did Barnabas and Saul do in Antioch? Why do you think they invested a whole year of their lives to the church at Antioch when they could have been doing many other things?
2. Read about the early church and how they took care of each other in Acts 4:32-35. Read about Barnabas and his contribution in Acts 4:36-37.
3. Barnabas can teach us a lot about encouraging new believers. How might you follow his example?
4. Today is Confirmation Sunday at Mount Tabor. How can we encourage our confirmands in their faith walk? Maybe you could offer a prayer for them today or send them a card.
5. In verse 27, what did Agabus prophecy about?
6. What was the reaction of the church at Antioch and why was this significant?
7. Read 2 Corinthians 9:7 to see why their actions were commended.

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