

THE GOOD MAN, BARNABAS

**Acts 11:24-
Lesson # 1**



I. Introduction: its interesting to do a study on “good and evil men!”

A. Barnabas is called a good man-Acts 11:24.

B. Jesus called his disciples evil-Matthew 7:11.

C. Jesus taught that God made the sun to rise on the evil and the good-Matthew 5:45.

D. The Lord spoke of a good man bringing forth good things out of the good treasure of his heart, and evil men bringing forth evil things out of evil treasure-Matthew 12:35.

E. Jesus said, “*There is none good but one, that is God*”-Matthew 19:17.

F. Apparently, God will say to His servants who have used their talents properly, *“Well done, thou good and faithful servant”*- Matthew 25:21 & 23.

G. I’ve drawn the conclusion that even disciples of the Lord are evil in comparison to God! God is inherently good! Man is not!

H. I’ve also drawn the conclusion the Lord calls His faithful disciples, “good,” and the non-disciples, “evil.”

I. Too, I’ve drawn the conclusion that “good and just” are to be viewed synonymously, and that “evil and unjust” are to be viewed synonymously- Matthew 5:45.

NOW, LETS LOOK AT SOME OF THE THINGS STATED IN THE NT ABOUT BARNABAS

J. We meet Barnabas first in the record in Acts, chapter 4:36 & 37.

“And Joses, who by the apostles was surnamed Barnabas, (which is, being interpreted, The son of consolation,) a Levite, and of the country of Cyprus. Having land, sold it, and brought the money, and laid it at the apostles’ feet.”

A. By no less than the apostles, he was nicknamed, *“Son of exhortation”*-v. 36.

B. He was a Levite from the island of Cyprus-v. 36.

C. He sold his land and gave it to the apostles for distribution-v. 37.

K. Did not this act prove the love Barnabas had for both God and his brothers in Christ?

If not, why not?

“But whoso hath this world’s goods, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?”-1 John 3:17.

A POINT TO PONDER

To this point in my life as a Christian, I’ve never know of any Christian to sell their possessions, goods, houses, and lands to help needy brothers-see Acts 2:45 & 4:32 & 34.

II. Approximately 3 years after Paul's conversion, Barnabas already had a trusting relationship with Paul-see Galatians 1:17 & 18; Acts 9:26 & 27.

A. "And when Saul was come to Jerusalem, he assayed to join himself to the disciples: but they were all afraid of him, and believed not that he was a disciple. But Barnabas took him, and brought him to the apostles, and declared unto them how he had seen the Lord in the way, and that he had spoken to him, and how he had preached boldly at Damascus in the name of Jesus"-Acts 9:26 & 27.

B. How Barnabas had come to know this information about Paul is unknown; but Paul had to have gained great appreciation of Barnabas for persuading the brothers in Jerusalem that he was genuine!

III. The church in Jerusalem sent him to Antioch of Syria after learning of conversions there- Acts 11:22.

A. Since we know that Herod Agrippa I died shortly after the feast of unleavened bread in 44 AD, we probably would draw the conclusion that the church in Antioch was established in 42 AD.

B. The fact that the Jerusalem church sent Barnabas to Antioch is indicative of the great confidence of the brethren there.

C. The Lord had greatly blessed the preaching in Antioch.

“And the hand of the Lord was with them: and a great number believed, and turned unto the Lord”-Acts 11:21.

D. When Barnabas arrived, he saw wonderful things!

“Who, when he came, and had seen the grace of God, was glad, and exhorted them all that with purpose of heart they should cleave unto the Lord”-Acts 11:23.

“And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified”-Acts 20:32.

God’s word imparts grace, strength, and power to those who will receive it. The brethren in Antioch were applying God’s word and were growing greatly because of it!

Seeing all of this, Barnabas was “glad,” and exhorted the brethren in Antioch, “that with purpose of heart, they would cleave unto the Lord”-verse 23.

1. Barnabas was using his God-given gift of exhortation! Wonderful things happen when brethren use their talents fully!

2. “With purpose of heart (prothesei).” The phrase has reference to these brethren making a determination, or steadfast resolution to “cleave” unto the Lord!

3. The reason many brethren do not continue with the Lord is because they have not made this strong resolution to do so!

4. “Cleave (pros/menein) unto the Lord.”

The Greek word “pros” means “towards,” and the word “menein” means to, “abide, remain, continue, and dwell.”

Since the verb is a present tense, the thought is that the disciples would “keep on abiding with the Lord!”

“If you continue (meinete) in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed.

And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free”-John 8:31 & 32.

As the context shows, those Jews did not continue with the Lord!

Paul “counted the cost” before he became a disciple, and resolutely determined, in spite of all the great things he would suffer, he would walk faithfully with the Lord-see the record in Acts 9:16.

5. We have the same thought in Acts 2:42.

“And they continued steadfastly in the apostles’ doctrine and fellowship and the breaking of bread, and in prayers.”

a. Apostles’ teaching. It is impossible for God’s people to remain with the Lord without continuing steadfastly in The Word! See Matthew 4:4; 1 Peter 2:2; Acts 20:32; Job 23:12.

b. Fellowship. God’s people can share things in common with other Christians and be strengthened, or share things in common with evil companions and have their morals corrupted- see 1 Corinthians 15:33; Exodus 23:2

c. Breaking of bread (the Lord's supper).

The new Christians in Jerusalem “continued strong” in the breaking of bread. This means they had the practice of meeting on Sunday's to partake of the Lord's supper!

The purpose of the Lord's supper is that Christians will “remember!”

“THIS DO YE IN REMEMBRANCE OF ME”-Luke 22:19; I Corinthians 11:25.

d. Prayers. I have often said, “How can Christians make it through one day without many prayers!”

6. God's people must resolve strongly to cleave unto the Lord!

MAY GOD GIVE US MORE GOOD MEN LIKE BARNABAS!