

11-8-2024

Son of Encouragement

Joseph Khabbaz

And Joses, who was also named Barnabas by the apostles (which is translated Son of Encouragement), a Levite of the country of Cyprus, - Acts 4:36

Encouragement is being lifted when life feels heavy. A community was scrambling to gather their belongings after a major storm flooded a town in Iowa. Amid the chaos, a policeman saw a young boy carrying another boy on his shoulders while also trying to carry his family's luggage. The police went to help the boy and said, "My, you're trying to do too much. You've got all these bags and then you've got that boy on your shoulders....It's too heavy." The little boy looked at the policeman and said, "He ain't heavy, he's my brother." Like the young boy carrying his brother, it is easier to bear the weight and carry the burden of those we love. We can also appreciate it when someone carries our burdens through words or acts of encouragement.

In Acts 4, we find Joses, who had an encouraging spirit, so much so that he was nicknamed Barnabas, which means Son of Encouragement. For Barnabas, encouragement was not just something he spoke about; it was something he lived, and it set a tone for the new Christian community. The book of Acts shares how Barnabas sold a field and gave the proceeds to the apostles to share with those in need. On another occasion, Barnabas put in a good word for Paul, the persecutor of Christians known as Saul. Barnabas vouched for Paul and encouraged the church leaders to accept Paul's conversion to Christianity as genuine. You can thank God for people like Barnabas, who live life with God and support you when others may not understand you or appreciate your circumstances. People like Barnabas bring unity, hope, and sometimes a needed bowl of Chipotle, through the power of encouragement.

You may already have a friend like Barnabas; others may wish they did. Well, there is good news: we all have access to the greatest Encourager of all, Jesus Christ. He has sent the Holy Spirit to be our comforter, the same Greek word as encourager in John 14:16. As we seek to help others, Ellen White writes, "Speak words that will encourage faith....Open the Bible before the tempted, struggling one, and over and over again read to him the promises of God."¹¹ May we, like Barnabas, be encouragers so that when life is heavy we can lift others.

REFLECTION

1. How do you define encouragement in your own life? Who has been a "Barnabas" to you during difficult times, and how did their support impact you?
2. Like Barnabas, who advocated for Paul despite his past, how can we support and encourage those who may feel misunderstood or rejected by others? How might God be calling you to advocate for someone in your circle or community?

Jesus sent the Holy Spirit as our comforter and encourager. In what ways do you sense the Holy Spirit encouraging you today, and how might the promise of the Holy Spirit help you lift others who are facing burdens?

PRAYER REQUESTS AND RESOURCES

- Worship with us tonight at Collegedale Church for Vision Trip Vespers. Doors open at 6:00 p.m., with the Vespers service starting at 6:30 p.m. for first service and 8:30 pm for second service. Afterglow will be held at 7:30 p.m.
- Find a meaningful sense of belonging by joining a student or faculty/staff LifeGroup today: [click here.](#)
- Follow @ministryandmissions on Instagram for updates on events and programs, and it is also a place where you will find encouraging messages. Also, [check out our website](#) for many new resources.
- Talk with Chaplain [Anna Bennett](#), [Manny Gomez](#), or [Joseph Khabbaz](#) if you need someone to pray with or have a desire to grow spiritually.