

I. Powerful Friendship (Acts 9:23-28)

A. Paul was being hunted by unbelievers (23-25) - “When many days had passed, the Jews plotted to kill him, 24 but their plot became known to Saul. They were watching the gates day and night in order to kill him, 25 but his disciples took him by night and let him down through an opening in the wall, lowering him in a basket.”

B. Paul was being rejected by believers (26) - “And when he had come to Jerusalem, he attempted to join the disciples. And they were all afraid of him, for they did not believe that he was a disciple.”

C. Barnabas made a risky move on Paul’s behalf (27-28) - “But Barnabas took him and brought him to the apostles and declared to them how on the road he had seen the Lord, who spoke to him, and how at Damascus he had preached boldly in the name of Jesus. 28 So he went in and out among them at Jerusalem, preaching boldly in the name of the Lord.”

II. Kingdom Partnership (Acts 11:19-25, 13:1-3)

A. Revival was breaking out (Acts 11:19-21) - “Now those who were scattered because of the persecution that arose over Stephen traveled as far as Phoenicia and Cyprus and Antioch, speaking the word to no one except Jews. 20 But there were some of them, men of Cyprus and Cyrene, who on coming to Antioch spoke to the Hellenists also, preaching the Lord Jesus. 21 And the hand of the Lord was with them, and a great number who believed turned to the Lord.”

B. Barnabas sought Paul as a partner in ministry (Acts 11:22-26) The report of this came to the ears of the church in Jerusalem, and they sent Barnabas to Antioch. 23 When he came and saw the grace of God, he was glad, and he exhorted them all to remain faithful to the Lord with steadfast purpose, 24 for he was a good man, full of the Holy Spirit and of faith. And a great many people were added to the Lord. 25 So Barnabas went to Tarsus to look for Saul, 26 and when he had found him, he brought him to Antioch. For a whole year they met with the church and taught a great many people. And in Antioch the disciples were first called Christians.

C. God mightily blessed their partnership (Acts 13:1-3) - “Now there were in the church at Antioch prophets and teachers, Barnabas, Simeon who was called Niger, Lucius of Cyrene, Manaen a member of the court of Herod the tetrarch, and Saul. 2 While they were worshiping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, “Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them.” 3 Then after fasting and praying they laid their hands on them and sent them off.”

III. Disrupted Fellowship (Acts 15:36-41)

A. A season of decisions (36) - “And after some days Paul said to Barnabas, “Let us return and visit the brothers in every city where we proclaimed the word of the Lord, and see how they are.”

B. A seasons of disagreement (37-39a) - “Now Barnabas wanted to take with them John called Mark. 38 But Paul thought best not to take with them one who had withdrawn from them in Pamphylia and had not gone with them to the work. 39a And there arose a sharp disagreement...”

C. A season of departure (39b-41) - “...they separated from each other. Barnabas took Mark with him and sailed away to Cyprus, 40 but Paul chose Silas and departed, having been commended by the brothers to the grace of the Lord. 41 And he went through Syria and Cilicia, strengthening the churches.”

IV. Relational Ownership

A. Colossians 4:10- “... Mark the cousin of Barnabas, concerning whom you have received instructions - if he comes to you, welcome him...”

B. 2 Timothy 4:11 - “Luke alone is with me. Get Mark and bring him with you, for he is very useful to me for ministry.”

C. 1 Corinthians 9:6-7 - “Or is it only Barnabas and I who have no right to refrain from working for a living?”

Paul wrote 1 Cor after the split off from Barnabas in Acts 15 - he still viewed him as a brother and fellow laborer in the Gospel