

Good morning, Church. Daily Reading, Acts 3.

Acts 4:36-37 "For instance, there was Joseph, the one the apostles nicknamed Barnabas (which means "Son of Encouragement"). He was from the tribe of Levi and came from the island of Cyprus. He sold a field he owned and brought the money to the apostles." (NLT)

Nicknames are something many people are given, and the names usually go along with some natural ability a person has or a person's appearance. For example, we might call someone who is fast by the nickname "Flash." If not natural or acquired ability, then maybe a physical characteristic like "Carrot Top" if you have red hair, or if you wore glasses the common name of "Four Eyes." (Yes, I endured that name for many years.)

Joseph, a Levite of Cyprian birth, was not named after his natural abilities or physical features but by his spiritual characteristics, or by the way, he saw needs and found ways to help out.

The name Barnabas has always been one of my favorite names in all of scripture, "Son of Encouragement." The name can also mean, "son of consolation or exhortation." As believers, we are urged to "motivate or encourage others to be thoughtful and to do helpful things. (Hebrews 10:24) This was the kind of person Joseph (Barnabas) was toward others. If it meant he would need to sell his property for the good of others, Joseph was all in. If it meant helping others (Saul of Tarsus) to be accepted by the majority, again, Joseph was your man. (Acts 9:27)

While there are those people with the rare quality to look out for the needs of others, the world is full of just the opposite, "Sons of Discouragement." We have all seen and experienced those who only think of themselves. Those who put down others just to lift themselves up.

Be a Barnabas to someone today. Build one another up in Christ.