

Lesser Known Characters 05 Barnabas-Whole Hearted

by Joseph Balsan

The sermon emphasizes the importance of warm-heartedness, both towards God and towards others, using the example of Barnabas' love and concern for Saul as a model for Christian relationships.

Duration: 56:10

Scripture: Acts 4:32-33, Acts 11:21, Acts 15:39-41, 1 Corinthians 12:21

Topics: "Christian Ministry", "Spiritual Support"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher shares a story about a man who was able to lift a fallen horse by communicating with it. The preacher then relates this story to the concept of ministry and how it involves getting down to where the fallen person is. He emphasizes the importance of not giving up on those who have failed or come short, but instead having a warm heart and offering support. The preacher references the book of Acts, specifically chapter 4, verse 32, which talks about the unity and generosity of the believers. He concludes by highlighting the need for ministers to connect with and communicate effectively with those who are struggling.

Transcript

Well, it's good to see you all out again tonight. I would like to have you turn to the book of Acts, the fourth chapter, Acts chapter 4, and verse 32. Acts 4 and verse 32, And the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul.

Neither said any of them that ought of the things which he possessed was his own, but they had all common, and with great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and great grace was upon them all. Neither was there any among them that lacked, for as many as were possessors of lands or houses sold them, and brought the prices of the things that were sold, and laid them down at the apostles' feet, and distribution was made unto every man according as he had need. And Joseph, 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.

The ninth chapter of Acts, Acts chapter 9 and verse 26. And when Saul was come to Jerusalem, he assayed to join himself to the disciples, but they were all afraid of him, and believe 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.

And he was with them coming in and going out at Jerusalem, and he stayed boldly in the name of the Lord Jesus, and disputed against the Grecians, but they went about to slay him. The eleventh chapter of Acts, and verse 19. Now they which were scattered abroad upon the persecution that arose about Stephen, traveled as far as Phinis, and Cyprus, and Antioch, preaching the word to none but unto the Jews only.

And some of them were men of Cyprus and Cyrene, which when they were come to Antioch, spake unto the Grecians, preaching the Lord Jesus. And the hand of the Lord was with them, and a great number believed, and turned unto the Lord. Then tidings of these things came unto the ears of the church which was in Jerusalem, and they sent forth Barnabas that he should go as far as Antioch.

For when he came, and had seen the grace of God, was glad, and exhorted them all that with purpose of heart they would cleave unto the Lord. For he was a good man, and full of the Holy Ghost, and of faith, and much people was added unto the Lord. Then departed Barnabas to Tarsus, for to seek Saul, and when he had found him, he brought him unto Antioch.

And it came to pass that a whole year they assembled themselves with the church, and caught much people, and the disciples were called Christians first in Antioch. In one more chapter, the fifteenth chapter of Acts, Acts 15, and verse 1, And certain men which came down from Judea taught the brethren, and said, Except ye be circumcised after the manner of Moses, ye cannot be saved. When therefore Paul and Barnabas had no small dissension and disputation with them, they determined that Paul and Barnabas and certain other of them should go up to Jerusalem unto the apostles and elders about this question.

And being brought on their way by the church, they passed through Phenis and Samaria, declaring the conversion of the Gentiles, and they caused great joy unto all the brethren. And when they were come to Jerusalem, they were received of the church, and of the apostles and elders, and they declared all things that God had done with them. But there rose up certain of the sect of the Pharisees which believed, saying that it was needful to circumcise them, and to command them to keep the law of Moses.

Paul also and Barnabas continued in Antioch, teaching and preaching the word of the Lord with many others also. And some days after, Paul said unto Barnabas, Let us go again and visit our brethren in every city where we have preached the word of the Lord, and see how they do. And Barnabas determined to take with them John, whose surname was Mark.

But Paul thought not good to take him with them, who departed from them from Pamphylia, and went not with them to the work. And the contention was so sharp between them that they departed asunder one from the other. And so Barnabas took Mark and sailed unto Cyprus, and Paul chose Silas and departed, being recommended by the brethren unto the grace of God.

And he went through Syria and Cilicia, confirming the churches. May the Lord bless to us the reading of his words. I am sure from the portions that I have read to you tonight that you are well aware of the individual that is on my mind, and that is this man who is known as Barnabas.

We have been looking at various individuals in the New Testament, and we have seen some of the virtues, you might say, that characterize them. We have noticed how Anna is a beautiful example to us of abiding in Christ. We have seen how Apollos was a beautiful example to us of the teachableness that

should characterize a child of God as well as a servant of the Lord.

And last night we were looking at Epaphras, who is a beautiful example of potent prayerfulness. His prayers were very specific, and they were very definite for the people of God, and we saw how essential they are for us in our day. Now, here we have this man Barnabas, and I think that if there is one word that might describe this man, why, it would be the word warm-heartedness.

Warm-heartedness. You know, warm-heartedness, you might say, is the very essence of all successful human relations amongst the children of God as well as in the world. We see people in the world who are seeking to attain place, who are seeking to attain wealth, who are seeking to attain power, who are seeking to honor and place in the world, and sometimes when they obtain and obtain what they are seeking without the element of warm-heartedness, we find that their lives are really quite barren and quite isolated.

Someone has very well said that warm-heartedness is the flame, you might say, that cooks all the ingredients of the elements of life and makes them savory or well-pleasing, and I believe that warm-heartedness is a quality that is very essential and needful. We know in weather like this how we are warmed by warmth, and so there are also individuals who are characterized by this warmth, this warmth that we find in others, and this warmth of heart that should be found in each and every one of us who belong to the Lord. It's not only what we radiate toward others in this element of warm-heartedness, but warm-heartedness does ourselves good.

In other words, a warm-hearted person is a person who has a good feeling in himself as a result of his warm-heartedness. Amongst the many authors that I enjoy, I enjoy one author in particular who is now with the Lord. He was a nerve specialist in Harley Street, England.

He was the author of a number of books. His name was Alfred G. Schofield, not C.I. Schofield, but Alfred G. Schofield, and he has a number of books. He was one of the pioneers in dealing in nerve diseases, and he has written a number of very wholesome, rich Christian books, as well as books on medicine, and health, and nerves in order, and nerves in disorder, and I remember one of the things that he said.

He says, you know, Christians can be compared to two kinds of fruits. He says, you know, and of course I want to be very careful in this because I'm talking about fruit, and I'm only giving his illustration. He says, you know, some Christians are just like nuts.

He says they're very hard like nuts on the outside, but he says when you break those nuts and get beneath the shell, you'll find that it's very good to the taste, and you'll find that these people are very fine, lovely people, but they've got an exterior that you've got to break through. In order to find out what they really are underneath, that they're lovely Christians, that they enjoy the Lord, and that they're wonderful people to know and fellowship with. He says other people, other Christians, are like the other kind of fruit, the so-called soft fruit.

You know, you take the peach, and the peach is very sweet, and you sink your teeth into it, and then at the kernel of it you find the thing that, as it were, gives it form and gives it strength and stability. He says, now I like the first kinds of Christians, but he says I really prefer the second kind because it's not so hard to get acquainted with them. Well, I think that this man Barnabas, we have brought before us an example of the second kind of fruit.

In other words, the one who, as it were, expresses in his attitude, and in his conduct, and his relationships with others, a warm heartedness that has a beneficial and a wholesome effect on everything that he comes in contact with. Now, we have read these five portions, and I would like to notice five ways in which he was warm-hearted. First of all, in the fourth chapter of Acts, I might say that he was warm-hearted toward God.

Warm-hearted toward God! Oh, how essential this is! How do I know that he was warm-hearted toward God? Well, here we find this man. He is a Levite of Cyprus, and we find that his name is Joseph, and he was by the apostle surnamed Barnabas, and we find that that means the son of consolation or comfort, a Levite of the country of Cyprus who, having lands, sold it and brought the money and laid it at the apostle's feet. Here is a man that takes everything that he has, and he brings it, and he lays it out before the Lord, offering it all unto the Lord.

Now, I realize that the circumstances here were most unusual. We know that the Communists, for instance, they tell us that the first church was a Communistic church, and because they communed, they brought together all their funds. But, I believe that this was the most unusual circumstance, because we must remember that it was not long after this that the entire city of Jerusalem was overridden by the Roman armies, and all was destroyed.

Many were led into captivity, and I think that the Lord, as it were, moved them in this direction, not only as an expression of their love for him, but also, it ultimately proved to be a means of salvation because they had given to the Lord, and they had saved in so giving. Consecration. What is consecration? Consecration means that I come with my hands full, and I'm bringing it unto the Lord.

This man, in giving his all to the Lord, he was really and truly giving himself in his entirety unto the Lord. I wonder this afternoon, this evening, if each and every one of us has given ourselves to the Lord. Now, that doesn't necessarily mean that we have to give all of our money to the Lord.

I want you to notice that this man did this voluntarily. He was not commanded to do so, he was not bound to do so, but he did it of the voluntariness of his heart. Now, I remember reading and hearing a story, a missionary in Jamaica telling me about a brother who was down in Jamaica who was very irresponsible.

He was very careless, very sweepshod, and there was another brother in the assembly who was very wealthy, and one day this brother who was very slipshod and indolent, he came to this other brother, and he said to him, you know, I've been in the presence of the Lord this morning, and speaking to the Lord, and the Lord told me that you should give me so much money. Well, this brother thought for a moment, and then he says, well, he says, I'll tell you. When the Lord tells me to do it, why, then I will do it.

But until then, I'll just wait until he tells me what to do. Well, this is exactly what happened here. Here was a man who gave his all.

Why did he give his all? Because of his love, because of his warm-heartedness, because he was giving himself in his entirety unto the Lord. I wonder if you and I have given ourselves to him because we love him. Oh, you remember that beautiful story, the story of that gypsy girl who came to the artist's studio, and who was being painted by the artist, and at the same time he was painting a picture of the crucifixion as she was drawn to it, and as she was drawn to it, why, she says, she asked him all about it, and he told her the story of Jesus, not because he was interested, not because he cared, but because he wanted to just get rid of the whole thing.

And finally, after he told her how Christ had died on the cross, how he had suffered on that cross, how he had given himself on that cross for sinners, she said to him, Oh, you must love him very much in that he gave himself for you. Well, you know, that spoke to that man. That convicted that man of his sin, and the result was that he was led to trust the Lord Jesus as his Savior.

And after that, when he became a Christian, he wanted to do something for the Lord, and so the only thing he could do was paint. And so he was praying for guidance and help, and he painted a picture of Christ crucified, and on the bottom of that picture he wrote the words, All this I did for thee, what hast thou done for me? That picture was taken, and it was placed at the institute in Paris, and there it was on display, and spoke to many from time to time as they passed by it. There was a young, noble man, very careless, knew the Lord, but living for himself, and as he came into that institute, and he was going from picture to picture, he came to this picture, and he saw that form dying on that cross, and then he read these words, All this I did for thee, what hast thou done for me? And it spoke to Count Zinzendorf, and the result was that Count Zinzendorf laid his whole fortune at the feet of the Lord Jesus, and yielded himself to him unreservedly to the youth, and became the founder of the Moravian Mission.

Warm-heartedness, warm-heartedness for God. What have I given to him? What have I done for him? He who did so much for me, he who bore so much for me, he who endured so much until he crossed for me, has there been a response in my heart that I have rendered to him of my life, of my kind, of my thought, of my service? Here we find this man Joseph Barnabas, and the first thing that we find is that he's laying himself with all that he has at the feet of the Lord because of his love for him. That's where everything begins.

Warm-heartedness for God. But you know, in the ninth chapter of Acts, we have another incident. Here in this ninth chapter of Acts, we have a young man by the name of Saul of Tarsus who was converted, and when he was converted on the road to Damascus, and began to witness for Christ as he was associated with the believers in Christ, he was persecuted for the faith, and he had to flee for his life.

And it says in the twenty-sixth verse, And when Saul was come to Jerusalem, he assuaged 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. And he was with them coming in and going out at Jerusalem.

Here we have Barnabas with a warm heart for the young believer in Christ. Oh, how much this is needed today! A warm heart for the young believer in Christ. Oh, I know we're living in the age of the so-called generation gap, but you know, really and truly there never has been a time when there wasn't a generation gap.

There always has been a generation gap. As long as man has been upon the face of the earth, there's been a generation gap. I can look back to the time when I was a teenager, and there was a generation gap between me and my father, and there was a generation gap between many of my young fellow friends and their parents as well.

The only thing is that it wasn't exaggerated. There wasn't so much propaganda and talk about it as there is today. It wasn't all out of proportion.

We expected there to be a generation gap, but you know, really and truly there should be no generation gap in the assembly of God's people. There should be no generation gap between the young and the older ones in the assembly of God's people. We find that when the assembly of God's people is likened to anything, what is likened to that which we see in nature around us? The people of God are likened unto sheep.

Now, it's been my privilege to be on farms in various places, and to be on farms where there are sheep, and one thing I have noticed, and that is I never noticed that the lambs are always by themselves and the older sheep by themselves. Whenever I've seen sheep, I've seen the lambs and the sheep together. I've seen them feeding together, browsing together.

I remember some years ago I was on a farm in southern Iowa, and a brother had some sheep, and so I wanted to test the truth of scripture. It says, the stranger will they not follow? And so I determined that I was going to see if they knew the voice of a stranger, and if they would flee from a stranger, would they come to me? And so I walked down toward that flock, and you know I used my softest and sweetest voice that I could muster, if I had any sweet voice, but I tried to talk in the most dulcet soft tones that I could as I drew near to those sheep to assure them that I meant them no harm. But you know I noticed that those young lambs, they just went on as it were feeding, but as I drew near, I don't know whether it was at a signal or what, but the older ones were watching me, and before I knew it the younger ones were watching me too, and the closer I came until I came to a certain distance.

And no matter what I said, why those sheep, they just fled from me. When I got a certain distance close to them, why they just fled. The lambs were directed and influenced by the older sheep.

The brother that I was staying with was a sort of a rough character, and he'd stand on top of the hill and he'd yell at those sheep. You know those sheep would begin coming toward him. I thought to myself, did they ever love a voice of a man like that? But you know they didn't pay attention.

They knew the voice of their shepherd, but they were together. Now here we find that Saul of Tarsus had been converted. He had to flee from Damascus, and we find that he comes to Jerusalem, and when he comes to Jerusalem he's coming to the very people that he had persecuted, and it says he is saved to join himself to the disciples.

Why, he was a believer, and the very people that he had hated before, the very people that he didn't care for before that he persecuted, and brought before judges to be put to death. Those were the very people that he wanted to be with. In the first epistle of John, in the third chapter, it says we know we have passed from death unto life because we love the brethren.

A proof of the new birth, a proof of a real experience with God is that I have a love for the people of God, and I think that that should be true of young believers as well. I think that young believers should have a love for the people of God, if they're really and truly born of God, because it says we know we have passed from death unto life because we love the brethren. Saul did.

When Saul came to Jerusalem, he is saved to join himself to the disciples. He wanted to cast in his lot with them. Why, that's nice to see in the life of young Christians that they desire to be with fellow believers.

It might be that even those that they looked down upon before, even those that perhaps he had despised before, even those for whom he had no respect before, but now that he's saved, he wants to be with them.

But, you know, they didn't believe that he was disciple. And here is where this man Barnabas, this warm-hearted man, he steps in, and what does he do? He shows an interest in that young brother.

You know, we have a lot of criticism about the young people, but I want to ask you tonight, do you have a warm heart for them to the extent that you take an interest in them, to the extent that you would invite them into your home and try to help them on in the things of God? Do you have a warm heart for the young people to the extent that you would go out of your way to help that young person on in the Christian life? Barnabas did. Barnabas had a heart for that young man. He saw that here was a believer in Christ.

Now, I can understand how the church of Jerusalem was afraid of Saul. He had persecuted them. He had brought some of them before the judges.

He had had some of them killed while they were doubting and wondering, is this really and truly a child of God? Maybe this is only a plot to get amongst us so he can bring us before the judges. Their suspicions were justified. I don't find fault with their suspicion and with their caution, but I do love to look at the beautiful example of Barnabas, that he had a heart for this young man, that he had a heart for this young believer to the extent that he wanted to see that young believer go on, and he was going to do something to help him go on.

We find that he brings this young man before the apostles, and he declares unto them how he had seen the Lord in the way, and that he had spoken boldly to him, and how he had preached boldly at Damascus in the name of the Lord, and he was with them coming in and going out at Jerusalem. The warm-heartedness of this man, Barnabas, is showing a care for this man, is showing an interest in this man with the means of bringing this young man in amongst the people of God, so that he in turn became a help to them. Oh, how sad that sometimes the attitude has been just so much different, and instead of drawing the young into the assembly, there is a telling of the young from the assembly.

You know, I read about a young man in a university who was invited to the home of a family who showed him love, who showed him warmth, who showed him interest, and they brought him to the meetings, and the result was he was becoming interested in the meetings. He was becoming interested in the fellowship of God's people, and he even applied for fellowship to the assembly, and they said, well, when you come Sunday morning, we'll see about it. In the course of that week, he had joined a temperance society in which he had signed a declaration that he would touch intoxicating liquors for the rest of his days, and he had a little button given to him with a little ribbon.

You know, he came to the meeting on Sunday morning expecting to sit down with the Christians, and you know, an elder brother said to him, what's that button you've got there, and what's that ribbon you've got there? And he says, it's a sign of the temperance movement which I've joined, because you better sit back here. You can't partake of the Lord's Supper, and that young man was turned aside and stumbled, and the result was that he didn't come into the assembly of God's people, went on and finished his university education, and became a wonderful teacher whose writings have been a channel of blessing to many of God's people. So, just because some brother, in a hard-hearted way over some little thing that he didn't think was right, stood in his way and hindered him from taking a step that he wanted to take in obedience to the Lord.

Paul was helped by Barnabas. Barnabas had a warm heart, for the young believer in Christ. Do we have a warm heart for the young believer in Christ? In the 11th chapter of Acts, we have the gospel going out, and as it goes out, we find in the 21st verse, the hand of the Lord was with them, and a great number

believed and turned unto the Lord.

Then tidings of these things came unto the ears of the church which was in Jerusalem, and they sent forth Barnabas that he should go as far as Antioch, for when he came and had seen the grace of God was glad, and exhorted them all that with purpose of heart they would cleave unto the Lord. For he was a good man, and full of the Holy Ghost and of faith, and much people was added unto the Lord. Here we have a man who is warm-hearted for the work of the Lord.

It wasn't something that he had started. You know, sometimes we think to ourselves, well, if I haven't started, why doesn't make much sense? It's not very important. I don't think very much of it, but here we find that as the gospel had gone forth to these Gentiles at Antioch, and many of them had been brought to know the Lord, news of this reached the church of Jerusalem, and so they sent Barnabas, and when he came there and had seen the grace of God, when he saw what was accomplished, why it says he was glad.

You know, it's a good thing to have a warm heart that rejoices in seeing the salvation of souls, even though I may not be the preacher, even though I may not be the one who has brought it about. It's a wonderful thing to be of a spirit when you rejoice in the fact that others are reaping, and that others are seeing blessing. He rejoiced, he was glad when he saw the grace of God, and we find that he exhorted them.

He exhorted them what? He exhorted them all that with purpose of heart they would cleave unto the Lord. How essential this is to cleave unto the Lord. He directed them to the Lord, he occupied them with the Lord, he brought the Lord before them.

I don't go on the way I do because the people that I am associated with are perfect. They're not perfect. I don't go along with them because they don't fail, because they do fail.

I go along with them because this is where I find the Lord. Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them, because the Lord is amongst his people, and he amongst his people is the glory of his people. And so, we find that he exhorted them all that with purpose of heart they would cleave unto the Lord.

And I want to say that if you get your heart and your mind set on the Lord, you'll never be disappointed. The Lord will never fail you. You'll find that in the Lord you find all that you need, and it tells us here he was a good man and full of the Holy Ghost and of faith, and much people was added unto the Lord.

The word continued to grow and to expand. Warm-heartedness draws people. It drew people as he ministered there amongst these people, so much so that the word prospered so much that he needed help, and it says, then departed Barnabas to Tarsus for to seek Saul.

And when he had found him, he brought him unto Antioch, and it came to pass that a whole year they assembled themselves with the church and got much people, and the disciples were called Christians first in Antioch. Now, I know that there's quite a bit of discussion as to did the world call these people Christians, or how was it? I know that there's some very able Bible teachers who believe that it was the world that gave them the name Christian. But you know, this word called, if you were to look it up in Young's Concordance, you would find that it occurs nine times in the New Testament in different forms.

You'll find that it occurs in the 11th chapter of Hebrews, where it says, By faith know of being warned of God. That very expression, warned of God, is the very same word that is used here called. In the second chapter of Matthew, where you have Joseph as the wise men have come to worship the child Jesus, it says, and Joseph was warned of the angel.

It was a divine communication. In all the other eight instances of this word in the New Testament, it always refers to a divine message, a divine warning, a divine call, and I believe they were divinely called Christians. That it was the Lord that gave them the name of Christians.

That we belong to Christ. What am I? I'm a Christian. I belong to Christ.

Every believer is a Christian. Every believer belongs to Christ, and so we find here that Barnabas, and if we could just follow, it would be interesting to follow this through the 11th, 12th, 13th, and 14th chapters of Acts, and we would find how this man Barnabas was led into an ever-increasing enlarging sphere of work for the Lord. Why? Because he had a heart for the work of the Lord.

Do we have a heart for the work of the Lord? Are we warm-hearted toward the work of the Lord? In the 15th chapter of Acts, we have the fourth instance. It says in the first verse, "...and certain men which came down from Judea taught the brethren, and said, Except ye be circumcised after the manner of Moses, ye cannot be saved. When therefore Paul and Barnabas had no small dissension and disputation with them, they determined that Paul and Barnabas and certain others of them should go up to Jerusalem unto the apostles and elders about this question, and they come to Jerusalem." What was it about? What was the contention about? The contention was about the truth of the gospel, and we find that Barnabas, with his warm-heartedness, didn't give in to error.

He didn't give in to the false teachers. Here was something that was vital to the gospel. They were saying, except ye be circumcised, ye cannot be saved, and this warm-hearted man, he didn't say, well, it's all right, the air is all right.

You know, today we seem to confuse love and truth. We seem to think that if I love, I can't hold the truth. But, my friends, the word of God brings before us that these two things go together, love and truth.

And if there is a warm-heartedness for God, if there is a warm-heartedness for the young people of God and all the people of God, if there is a warm-heartedness for the work of God, there will also be a warm-heartedness for the truth of God. Except ye be circumcised, ye cannot be saved. There are people like that today.

Except you keep the law, you cannot be saved, except you be baptized. Now, I firmly believe in baptism. I believe it's an ordinance of the Lord, but I certainly don't believe in baptism for salvation.

Baptism is for a believer in Christ. Whether a believer is baptized or not, if he's saved he'll be in heaven. But the moment you attach baptism to faith in Christ for salvation, you've got error, and it's something to be resisted.

Except ye be, ye cannot. And we find that Barnabas, good Paul, they stand for the truth. You know, you read your magazines, you read your newspapers today, you listen to your commentators, and they use that word gospel very lightly and very flippantly.

Even so-called ecclesiastical leaders in some of the churches, I mean the big churches, they talk about the gospel, living according to the gospel. And yet, if you were to ask them, what is the gospel? In the social movements today, they talk about being true to the gospel, and if you were to ask them, well, what is the gospel? My friends, you will never get the answer of the bible to what the gospel is. They give that title gospel to all their various philosophies, and it's not the gospel of the bible at all.

You know what the gospel of the bible is? The gospel of the bible is that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures, and that he was buried, and that he was raised again the third day according to the scriptures. That's the gospel. My friends, we need to have a warm heart for the truth, and that is the whole truth of God.

Barnabas did to such an extent that when these false teachers came to Antioch, he and Paul withstood them. That didn't mean they weren't warm-hearted. That didn't mean that they were stiff or hard.

The very foundations of the faith were being undermined, and they knew that if they were undermined, there'd be nothing worth having. There'd be nothing worth holding to. My friends, it's the very thing today.

The church is not a social club. The church is a witness for God in the world. I'm talking of true believers.

The church is a witness for God to maintain the truth of God before a world that's in darkness and in confusion, and doesn't know the way. And we've got to stand for the truth, but stand for it with a heart that's warm. Warm for the truth because we appreciate it, because we love it, because we prize it.

As I said, the Lord trained me out of a Roman Catholic system. You know, many, many times I just marvel at his grace that he ever opened my eyes to the wonderful truth of his salvation, the wonderful truth of his revelation. As the hymn writer has put it, I can't express in the exact words, but you know the thoughts, while there are thousands of others who are blindly groping and would rather die than trust Christ, why was I made to trust him? Why was I made to receive him? Why was I one of those whose eyes have been opened and was able to say, I know whom I have believed and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day? Barnabas was warm-hearted for the truth.

Oh, appreciate the truth! Enjoy the truth! Go on to know the truth! Live the truth! Make known the truth! When we come to the end of this fifteenth chapter, after that council, of course, and you can read about in the fifteenth chapter of Acts in which the truth of the gospel was maintained, and they went back to that church at Antioch, and they bore witness of what had been established. It says in the fifteenth chapter, the thirty-fifth verse, Paul also and Barnabas continued in Antioch, teaching and preaching the word of the Lord with many others also. And some days after Paul said unto Barnabas, Let us go again and visit our brethren in every city where we have preached the word of the Lord, and see how they do.

And Barnabas determined to take with them John, whose surname was Mark. But Paul thought not good to take him with them who departed from them from Pantalea, and went not with them to the work. And the contention was so sharp between them that they departed asunder one from the other.

And so Barnabas took Mark and sailed unto Cyprus, and Paul chose Silas, and departed, being recommended by the brethren unto the grace of God. And he went through Syria and Cilicia, confirming the churches." My, this is a very sad thing to read, isn't it? Two great men, the apostle Paul and Barnabas, who had worked together, labored together, fellowshiped together, stood together, gone on together, and yet we find a situation arising here that spreads them asunder so that they separate one from another.

One takes Mark and goes to Cyprus, the other one takes Silas and departs unto Cilicia and Syria.

You know, the bible says, take heed lest ye fall. Who was right? Who was wrong? Oh, somebody said, well, Paul was right, and Barnabas was wrong. Is that so? How do you know Paul was right? Well, after all, he was recommended by the brethren unto the grace of God.

He may have been right. I don't say he wasn't. He may have been right.

He had the approval of his brethren, and of course we know that with Silas, the entire course of Paul is followed, and is used of God in a remarkable way. But may I suggest to you that here we have a warm-heartedness on the part of Barnabas for a man who had failed, for a man who had fallen. A warm-heartedness on the part of our... Oh, you say, but after all, wasn't John Mark his nephew? Wasn't John Mark his relative? John Mark had failed.

Remember earlier how Paul and Barnabas had taken John Mark, and he was going to go with them into the works, and when the going got tough, when the going got hard, when he didn't find it as glamorous as he thought... Oh, you know, we get kind of glamorous pictures of missionary work, don't we? We get glamorous pictures of the work of the Lord as we sit and listen to it, and we get all excited. Is that the trouble with John Mark? He got glamorous pictures of the work of the Lord as he heard Paul and Barnabas tell about what the Lord had done, and now when he got into it, and he found out what difficulty there was... I remember when the Lord led me into the work, and Brother Stant was talking to me, and he said to me, well, there will be discouragement, difficulties. I thought to myself, but I didn't tell him, well, I'll never be discouraged.

I'll never be discouraged. In three months I was so depressed and downhearted, I was almost ready to give up. And so, the Lord gave me a little verse.

I thought myself so useless. In the 12th chapter of Corinthians, I read those words, the head cannot say to the feet, I have no need of thee. Well, if the head cannot say to the feet, I have no need of thee, why, the Lord who is the head must have some use for me, and so the Lord's kept me to this day in spite of the discouragement.

Oh, the work of the Lord! There's unglamorous moments, there's difficulties, there's trials, but here we find this young man when the difficulties comes, he turns his back and he goes back. He leaves Paul and Barnabas. That was quite a severe and serious thing for a man to do, turn his back on the word of the Lord, turn his face from the plow and go back.

Now, when Barnabas wants to take this young man with him, Paul says, oh no, he failed, he's come short. But, Barnabas perhaps says, well, let's give him another chance. Maybe he'll come back, maybe we'll be able to help him.

And the contention was so severe amongst them, between them, that they finally decide, Paul says, well, you go your way, Barnabas, and I'll go my way. And so, Barnabas takes that young man and he takes them to Cyprus, and people say, well, we have no more mention of Barnabas in the Bible, don't we? Oh yes, we do. Yes, we have mentions of Barnabas in the Bible after this.

The ninth chapter of 1st Corinthians tells us about Barnabas. Paul spoke very highly about Barnabas. That epistle to the Corinthians was written after this incident, and he says, I, only Lord Barnabas, don't we have power to forbear working? Don't we have power to meet upon a sister? He was still an honored servant of

the Lord.

But the wonderful thing about it is that Barnabas took this young man, and he took him to Cyprus, the very place where Barnabas came from. In other words, he took that young man home, and he worked with that young man. He bore with that young man.

He instructed that young man. You know what the result was? That young man was restored to the Lord, and became so useful that in Colossians, Paul said to the church of Colossae and Marcus, concerning whom you have received commandment, receive him. And in the last letter that Paul wrote, Paul says, bring Mark.

Bring Mark, for he is profitable unto me for the ministry. And that young man Mark, who had failed, that young man Mark, when made a mess of things, was picked up by Barnabas, and Barnabas took an interest in him. Oh yes, Barnabas perhaps forwent a wider range of service, but he spent his time with that young man, and the result was that young man became profitable, and that young man became more useful.

Because you know what? Well, we know that Mark was the one who wrote the gospel of Mark, and he was the one who wrote about that perfect servant, the Lord Jesus Christ, and through the centuries people have been reading the gospel of Mark, and been learning about that perfect servant from a young man who had failed. But because a man had a warm heart for that Savior, and took an interest in him, and spent some time with him, and lifted him up, until he became a useful, profitable servant for the Lord, I think it exemplifies for us what we read in Galatians chapter 1. Brethren, if any man be overtaken in a fault, you which are spiritual restores such an one in the spirit of meekness. This is an old story.

It's a story written by Mr. J. P. Mawson on ministry, and he wanted to explain and illustrate what ministry really is, and he gave an incident of what happened in London in a wintry day. It was in the horse and buggy days, and this equivalent of a modern taxi cab driver was driving his cab with his horse through the streets of London. It was a very slippery, wintry day, and that horse, as he was prodding along, suddenly slipped and fell.

And when he slipped and fell, why, of course, the driver tried to get him up, pulling him by the reins. Nothing happened. Then he tried to talk to him.

Nothing happened. And the longer nothing happened, the worse things became, and pretty soon he began talking in a taxi cab driver's way to that animal, but nothing happened. And, of course, a crowd began to gather, and so they tried to lift up the horse, but they couldn't lift him up, and every means possible they tried to raise that horse, and they couldn't do it.

And after using every means possible and getting nowhere with him, a man stepped out of the crowd. He says, give me just a few minutes, will you? Why, yes, how will you get that horse up? Well, he went right to that horse, and he began talking into his ear, and as he kept talking into his ear, why, that horse perked up his ears, and then the next thing that he did was, why, he began putting two legs. I don't know whether it was the back legs first or the front legs, and you who know horses could tell me, but you know in a little while, why that horse was up on its feet.

All the beeping, all the kicking, all the driving, all the yelling and swearing didn't do a bit of good, but when that man got down to where that horse was and began to talk to him and communicate with him in a way

that he knew, why, that horse got up and began to function. You know, that's what ministry is, getting down to where the fallen one is. He's failed, he's come short, don't give him up.

Keep a warm heart for him. Barnabas did, and the result was that a vessel came forth that was more useful and fruitful than it had ever been before. May the Lord make us warm-hearted, warm-hearted toward God, warm-hearted toward his people, young and old, older, warm-hearted for his work, warm-hearted for his truth, and warm-hearted to those who perhaps have fallen off by the way, who perhaps have made a mess of things, who need a word of restoration, a word of encouragement, a word that will lift them up and help them in the things of God.

Shall we pray? Our Father, we desire to thank thee for this beautiful example that we have in thy word. We do pray that thou will write these lessons upon our hearts, that we might be characterized by this beautiful virtue of warm-heartedness, radiating the love and the kindness, the gentleness and the strength and thoughtfulness of our Lord Jesus. Father, we just thank thee for these lessons, and we pray that thou will bless thy truth to each one of our hearts, in the Savior's worthy and precious name.

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