

DAY 23

People-Lovers: Legendary Leader 1

Joseph, a Levite from Cyprus by birth, the one the apostles called Barnabas (which is translated Son of Encouragement) ...

Acts 4:36

Leadership Affirmation

I build up others through every means possible, whether speaking, serving, or leading them to follow Jesus.

Legend-making leaders love people. They want to see other people blessed. We are introduced to a man like this in Acts 4. His name was Joseph. He was from the island of Cyprus.

The early days of the church in Jerusalem were marked by exponential growth, both quantitatively and qualitatively. The Lord was multiplying the church, and there was a sweet spirit of unity. Luke reported in Acts 4:32 that the people were of “one heart and one soul” and that they “had everything in common.”

The Greek word for “common” is the root word for *koinonia*. It means fellowship, communion, partners, and partakers. This is the same relationship believers have with the Lord. All the resources of God are at the disposal of the child of God.^{xxi}

That’s how it was in the early church. People gave sacrificially so that others would be blessed. Joseph of Cyprus sold a field which belonged to him, and brought the money and laid it at the apostles’ feet. Why did he do this? Acts 4:34 says it was to meet the needs of the poor in the burgeoning Christian community.

Joseph became so synonymous with his behind-the-scenes generosity that the Apostles began to call him Barnabas, the *son of encouragement*. The name stuck. Few today know him by his given name, but most active Christ-followers know his nickname and his reputation.

What if people only called you by what you are best known for? What might that be? Ask your kids. Ask your family. Ask people at church. Their answers will give a pretty good view of your underlying priorities.

Barnabas loved people. Legend-making leaders do this instinctively. They are not interested in power, position, or personal accolades. They just love people and do what they can to lift them up.

Prayer for Protection

O Lord Jesus, deliver me from the sinful practice of tearing others down, whether in public settings or one-on-one.