

DAY 24

Risk-Takers: Legendary Leader 2

Barnabas, however, took him [Saul] and brought him to the apostles ...

Acts 9:27

Leadership Affirmation

I see seams of gold coursing through others' lives, knowing the value they have to the Lord and willingly invest in their lives for His purposes.

Legend-making leaders are risk-takers. We see this the second time Barnabas appears on the pages of Scripture. Barnabas chooses to invest his life in a man few others trusted. We know the back story of Saul, the man who would become the Apostle Paul. He was a vicious man. He persecuted Christians. He arrested Christians. He murdered Christians. Then Jesus showed up.

That's the story of all of us. We were all enemies of Christ, but then Jesus showed up and changed our hearts.

That's what Jesus did for Paul. He changed his heart. But for the Lord to use him more fully, He needed to change the hearts of others, too. God's solution to his "Saul problem" was Barnabas. Barnabas loved people, and he was willing to take a risk on this former Pharisee. The emphasis behind the first part of verse 27, *Barnabas took him and brought him*, is that Barnabas took him under his wing as his mentor.^{xxii}

And this isn't the only time Barnabas took a chance on Saul. He watched as Paul grew. When he saw further evidence of Paul's growth, Barnabas took another chance on him. The church in Antioch commissioned Barnabas to be a missionary. He was going to go on the first missionary journey, travel around, and plant churches. Faced with this challenge, Barnabas says, "Go get me, Saul."

Barnabas wasn't reckless with Saul. You can't elevate people without evidence that the Lord is at work in their life. But because Barnabas was willing to take a calculated risk on Saul, the church accepted him, his ministry flourished, and God used him to spread the gospel among the nations.

Legend-making leaders are always looking for the best in people. They are always looking for potential. And they're always willing to take calculated risks with people. Don't be quick to dismiss a vessel God may use. Look for ways to elevate them, grow them, and invest in them, even if they have a back story from their past.

Prayer for Protection

Lord, I refuse to join the chorus of naysayers about the ministry potential of any individual.