



unsung

Unsung: "Barnabas: First in Assists"

September 21 & 22

Speaker: Pastor Heather Zempel

Scripture: Acts 4:32-27; 9:26-28; 11:22-26; 13:2-3; 15:36-39

Series Overview

The story of God is propelled by people whose names we will never know – people leading quiet lives of prayer, obedience, and faithfulness. They are people who believe with deep conviction that history belongs to the intercessors, that change happens on the other side of long obedience in the same direction, and that faithfulness shapes generations.

Series Questions

Who is an unsung hero in your life? Share a story of someone that has radically changed your life from behind the scenes.

Sermon Overview

Leaders aren't intimidated by other people's gifts and abilities; they build a platform for them. Barnabas was a minor character in the book of Acts, but his influence extends to us today. He invested in a story larger than his own, gave Paul a place to belong, a place to matter, and a place to lead, and gave John Mark a second chance.

Sermon Questions

Barnabas is one of Pastor Heather's favorite characters in the whole Bible. Is there an unsung hero in Scripture that particularly resonates with you? Why?

Spend time reading and responding to what we learn about the character of Barnabas throughout the book of Acts in the following verses:

- 11:24
- 13:1
- 15:12
- 13:45
- 14:19
- 15:26

- 9:27
- 12:25
- 11:25-26
- 15:36-41

In what ways has someone been a “Barnabas” in your life?

If you want to be first in assists, you have to:

1. Invest in a bigger story: Read Acts 4:32-27. How might God be asking you to move from consumer to contributor? Have you ever experienced a miracle as a result of someone else’s investment?
2. Build someone else’s platform:
 - a. Barnabas gave Paul a place to belong. Read Acts 9:26-28. Why was it risky for Barnabas to advocate on behalf of Paul? Has someone ever advocated on your behalf? What were the results?
 - b. Barnabas gave Paul a place to matter. Read Acts 11:22-26. What would it look like for you to be more of a tour guide than a travel agent with those you lead, with those with whom you have influence?
 - c. Barnabas gave Paul a place to lead. Read Acts 13:2-3. “In Jerusalem, Barnabas took Paul under his wing. In Antioch, Barnabas gave him wings. Throughout Asia Minor, Barnabas let him fly.” Praise God for those who have taken you under their wing, given you wings, and let you fly. Ask him to reveal to you who he might ask you to do the same for throughout this season of your life.
3. Give someone a second chance: Read Acts 13:5, 13 and 15:36-39. Do you tend to lean more toward frustration and discouragement or optimism and hope for the next generation? What would it look like to create safe places to fail for people and to extend a hand to get back up and try again after they do?

What shifts might you need to make this week to prioritize developing people rather than completing projects?

Practical Application

- Set aside time to do a character study of Barnabas, and record what you learn.
- Send a note of appreciation to someone who’s served as an advocate for you.
- Evaluate your schedule this week with the goal of developing people over completing projects. Find one hour to invest in building someone else’s platform.