

Sons of Encouragement

Scripture: Acts 4:36

Introduction: Character is what God knows you are. Reputation is what people think you are. There can be an enormous gap between these two, particularly in our culture where so much emphasis is placed on “image.” The great thing about Barnabas is that his character and his reputation were very much in step. We see his influence in:

1. Encouraging the Church—Acts 4:32–37. There was a generous spirit about Barnabas. It’s relatively easy to be a “taker,” but what a joy to find a “giver.”
2. Encouraging Someone Ostracized—Acts 9:26–32 and 11:25–30. Barnabas said, “Let’s reach out to this guy, Saul of Tarsus, and love him into the kingdom.”
3. Encouraging Someone Who Failed—Acts 15:36–31. Barnabas gave up traveling with the great apostle Paul in order to pour his life into this wobbly kid Mark.

Conclusion: If it hadn’t been for Barnabas, we wouldn’t have had Mark’s Gospel or Paul’s Epistles. Who can you encourage this week?