

Faith for Others

Small Group Guide

Warm-up Question: (Choose one, make up your own, or skip this part all together, depending upon the nature of your group.)

1. What is one random topic you think you could effectively teach someone else about?
2. When you buy a new product, do you typically read the instruction manual, or do you just dive right in?

Read the following passages: Acts 4:32-37; 9:26-30; 11:19-26; 15:36-40.

Barnabas is a great example of a man who trusted God to do big things through the lives of other people. Barnabas was an encourager. He invested his resources in those around him. He helped Paul walk in God's calling for his life. He saw John Mark's potential even when he failed. Barnabas's faith made the people around him better.

Questions for Discussion (Choose several that are relevant for your group):

1. Can you think of anyone who believed (or still believes!) that God would (or will) do great things in and through your life? Explain. What is the difference between having faith in another person, and having faith *in God* for another person? How might this impact how we respond when we see weaknesses or failures in another person's life?
2. Does encouraging others come easy for you? Explain. How well do you receive encouragement when others try to give it to you?
3. In what sense was Barnabas taking a risk when he brought Paul to the apostles? What are some ways God might call us to "take a risk" on others? How do we know when we're taking a healthy risk on another person and not just being foolish (e.g. I know this person has a drug addiction he's not dealing with, but I'm just going to take a risk and lend him \$1,000 anyways)?
4. After Barnabas saw what was happening at Antioch, why do you think he went to look for Paul (Acts 11:25)? What are some ways we can help others move forward in God's calling on their lives?
5. Even though John Mark "deserted" Paul and Barnabas on their first church-planting mission, Barnabas was convinced God still intended to do great things through Mark's life. What are some practical ways we can walk with others through their failures? How do we do this without downplaying the significance of real failures that might have affected us or other people? Are there occasions when we might not be the right person to walk with an individual through his/her failure?

Explain.

6. Are there any failures you have had that are keeping you from moving forward in some area of your life? Explain. Can you think of anyone who might be able to help you work through it?

Pray