

HOSPITALITY AS PART OF OUR VISION/MISSION ACTS 4 AND 9

The story of the early church in the book of Acts is very interesting. They were just learning, growing, discovering what it was to be followers of Christ, and to share the Good News of Christ.

One of the very most influential persons is Barnabas. In this message and the next, I wish to do a study of Barnabas, and the influence he had in the church. His life can be a model for us in the areas of hospitality and reaching out to others to share Christ's love.

Acts 4:34-37

³⁴There was not a needy person among them, for as many as owned lands or houses sold them and brought the proceeds of what was sold. ³⁵They laid it at the apostles' feet, and it was distributed to each as any had need. ³⁶There was a Levite, a native of Cyprus, Joseph, to whom the apostles gave the name Barnabas (which means "son of encouragement"). ³⁷He sold a field that belonged to him, then brought the money, and laid it at the apostles' feet.

Barnabas graciously gave of his resources for the welfare of others, seeking to meet their natural and physical needs.

***Any time we share our time/talents/resources to meet others' needs, it is hospitality! And it is an expression of God's love! Sharing meals together, helping a neighbor do farming, provide lodging for a guest, bringing in a meal, cleaning neighbor's house/yard, cleaning up after the flood in WL and the hurricane in Dayton, MDS projects, Voluntary service, giving to MCC, etc.

***Anita and I had a year at the IGH in Wash. DC, helping meet the needs of travelers, 2011-2012. We shared the love of Christ with people from all over the world, providing sense of acceptance to all, no questions asked!

Acts 9:26-28

²⁶When he had come to Jerusalem, he attempted to join the disciples; and they were all afraid of him, for they did not believe that he was a disciple. ²⁷But Barnabas took him, brought him to the apostles, and described for them how on the road he had seen the Lord, who had spoken to him, and how in Damascus he had spoken boldly in the name of Jesus. ²⁸So he went in and out among them in Jerusalem, speaking boldly in the name of the Lord.

Barnabas was the person who bridged the gap by bringing Saul, (the persecutor turned believer), into the life of the Church! Had it not been for Barnabas, history might have been very different!

***taking the time to build friendships with people, is a form of hospitality, and very important form of outreach! It is the essential of what 'Missional' is all about!

***Some of you are part of OGMC because of friendships formed thru school, business, neighbors, etc. We are doing this, and I urge us to continue it, realizing that it is what God wants us to do!