



**COLLEGE HEIGHTS  
BAPTIST CHURCH**

# *"Stories"*

Part I

Daily Scripture Readings for  
April 22-May 26

## **WEEK 1 - RUTH:**

Today, we embark on a journey that will take us throughout the Spring and Summer. We embark on a journey of Stories. Each week, we will read about one person's life and see what their life can teach us. Stories are powerful. We all like to hear a good story. The world is no different. Your story has the power to change other people. When you share the story of what God has done in your life, people will listen. They will think. God can use your story to bring salvation to others. So, this summer we are going to be reading the stories of many characters of the Bible. Some major characters we all know and other less known characters whose stories also show us God at work in the world. We are going to be hearing the stories of our fellow church members and hearing how God has worked miracles in each of our lives. We all have a story. What's yours?

### **Monday, April 22 - Ruth 1**

While we will not be studying Ruth this Sunday, we look at her story this week. Ruth's story begins in tragedy. Her husband dies young. They do not have any children, so she is alone. To make matters worse, her brother-in-law dies as well. Now, there is certainly no one to take care of her. To make her family tragedy even worse, her father-in-law dies as well. Naomi, her mother-in-law, tells Ruth and Orpah to go back to their fathers' families. Orpah agrees, but Ruth says no. In one of the most beautiful expressions of love that is found in the Bible, Ruth says she will stay with Naomi no matter what.

We often hear this expression of love in Ruth 1:16-17 at weddings, but it is originally spoken from daughter-in-law to mother-in-law. It reminds me of the love that we need to have for Jesus. Our devotion to Jesus should be such that we follow him to the ends of the earth. Where is your current love of Jesus? Is it such that you would leave behind everything if he ask you to? Is it to a degree where you willingly drop everything to do his will even without him "forcing" you to? Be as devoting to Jesus as Ruth was to Naomi.

### **Tuesday, April 23 - Ruth 2**

In Leviticus 19:9-10, Israel is given a law that states "you shall not reap to the very edges of your harvest, or gather the gleanings of your harvest...you shall leave them for the poor and the alien." This type of law was Israel's form of Social Security. So after Ruth comes to Bethlehem, she goes and finds a field from which to glean in order to provide for herself and Naomi. As God's plan would

have it, she found the field of Boaz, a relative of Elimelech. As you read this passage today, focus on what Boaz says in 2:11-12. Ruth has found favor with Boaz because of the sacrifices she made in order to stay with Naomi. Her story has already become well known in Bethlehem.

Small towns (and small churches) always know everything about everybody else. I guess the question is what story do people know about you? How can you follow Jesus more closely in order to change the path of your story?

### **Wednesday, April 24 - Revelation 19-20**

We got “potential severe weather” last week, so we are relooking at Revelation 19-20 today in preparation of our study tonight. We will get to hear the Last Word on Salvation tonight!

### **Thursday, April 25 - Ruth 3**

Ruth 3 should be rated at least PG-13. There are euphemisms and sexual overtones throughout the passage that original readers would have recognized. Ruth’s activity would have certainly been provocative and scandalous according to the social customs of the day. It was not normal for a woman to go to a man in the middle of the night and lay down at his feet. Even if that is literally what happened (unlikely), it would still be considered promiscuous. We can see that in the fact that Ruth 3:14 tells us that “it must not be known that the woman came to the threshing floor.”

Why is Ruth doing this in the first place? Boaz is her kinsman-redeemer. In Deuteronomy 25:5-10, there are specific instructions on brothers being obligated to marry a deceased brother’s wife in order to provide heirs for the deceased brother and protection for the widow. While the laws on “levirate marriage” do not legally apply here, this is the origin of Ruth going to Boaz. By trying to marry within Elimelech’s family, she is providing a lineage for her father-in-law. A lineage that is important for the ultimate plan of God, as we will see tomorrow.

### **Friday, April 26 - Ruth 4**

The story of Ruth is a powerful one. From a young widow who leaves her home in devotion to her mother-in-law to a strong provider for herself and Naomi to the wife of Boaz who are the great-grandparents of King David, Ruth’s legacy is one of strength and resolve arising from an unexpected and difficult tragedy.

It is so awesome how God can use us in ways which we don't expect or even deserve. The beauty of God is that he doesn't look at the outside of our lives, but cares about the inside. God doesn't worry about our lineage or family history, but cares about us and how He can use us for His glory in the future. Ruth came from the Moabites. Genesis 19 tells us that the origin of the Moabites is a union between Lot and one of his daughters. Similarly, Ruth 4:18-22 shows us that Boaz lineage traces back to Perez. In Genesis 38:29, we learn that Perez is borne out of the union between Judah and his Canaanite daughter-in-law Tamar. Neither Ruth nor Boaz come from "righteous" families. And God uses them as part of the lineage of David and, ultimately, Jesus. God doesn't care about your past. He cares about your future with him. What are you doing today? Are you being faithful to God and letting him use you? Or are you letting Satan remind you of your past and feeling worthless? God wants to use you for the Kingdom in a powerful way. Let Him!

### **Saturday, April 27 - Zechariah**

If you are able today, I encourage you to read all of the book of Zechariah as you prepare for Sunday Evening Worship. If you need to read a shorter amount of Scripture, read Zechariah 1:1-6, and 1:7-4:14. The first six verses are an introduction to the first eight chapters of the book and the rest of chapter one through chapter 4 are the first five visions. This will give you a good representation of the types of visions found in Zechariah. Zechariah 8 and 14 would also be good chapters to read before Sunday night if you are too short on time to read all of the book.

### **Sunday, April 28 - Psalm 1**

Typically, we have been reading some type of psalm or song on Sundays in order to prepare our minds for worship. For the last few months, we have been not going in any type of order. Starting today, we will be reading through the Psalms in order on most Sundays. Read this psalm concerning the two ways to live and join your church family for worship this morning.

## **WEEK 2 - HEZEKIAH:**

### **Monday, April 29 - 2 Kings 18:1-8**

Hezekiah was one of the only Kings of Judah who was good. What is interesting to note is how God describes good. Simply put, Hezekiah was obedient to God even at the detriment of himself and the nation of Israel. Hezekiah had his moments of disobedience, and we will read about one of those later this week. However, on the whole “he trusted in the Lord” as 2 Kings 18:5 says. I say that Hezekiah was obedient to God even at the detriment of himself and Israel because the annals of history would not be as kind to Hezekiah as the Old Testament is. Verse 7 tells us that Hezekiah rebelled against Assyria and “the Lord was with him.” This is seen as victory in the Old Testament. We are left with the picture of Israel’s sovereignty from 2 Kings 18:1-8.

However, when you read on in the chapter and you look at history outside of the Bible, while Judah does not suffer the same fate as Israel, they are conquered by Assyria, and Hezekiah is forced to pay tribute to them. Our passage says that Hezekiah was good because he would not serve Assyria. That rebellion is why Assyria conquered. Hezekiah is not good because he protects Israel or makes a politically savvy decision. Hezekiah is good because he focuses his monarchy on God and does not go after the idols the other kings went after. He leads Israel as God wanted Israel to be led. There are negative political ramifications to his obedience to God. God calls us to spiritual obedience not physical success. There might be material ramifications of our obedience to God. Even in the face of adversity, choose obedience. Be like Hezekiah.

### **Tuesday, April 30 - 2 Kings 20:1-11**

Do you believe in the power of prayer? Our scripture today shows us the power of prayer. Hezekiah was given fifteen more years of life because he petitioned God. Prayer truly does change lives. It has a profound effect on the world around us. As children of God, we have the power to go to God and ask Him to consider our requests. God will not always answer the request the way we want, but God will always listen. What request do you need to bring before God today? Prayer is powerful. Just ask Hezekiah.

### **Wednesday, May 1 - Revelation 22:6-21**

We finish Revelation tonight in Bible Study. Seven times in these last verses, the word or a variation of the word “come” is used. Jesus says he is coming soon three times. We call for Jesus to come three times. And the call goes out to anyone and everyone to come to Jesus. We believe that Jesus is coming soon. We have been in the “Last Days” since he ascended into heaven. That “last week of years” as Daniel 9 puts it is where we find ourselves. Come Lord Jesus is our cry! Let’s be the lampstands and witnesses in this world in order to prepare people for Jesus’ return.

### **Thursday, May 2 - 2 Chronicles 32:24-33**

As we continue to read the story of Hezekiah, we see a moment of weakness in the king’s life. After he is miraculously healed, Hezekiah is prideful concerning his recovery. This turns God’s blessing into wrath. Like earlier in the week, we see why Hezekiah is considered good. Hezekiah realizes the error of his ways and repents. Repent means coming back to God. King David was the same way. He made mistakes (big mistakes) in his life, but he always repented of those mistakes.

This is the mark of a life lived with God. We will not always make the right choices. We will sin (this is not an excuse for sin, but a statement of fact). However, when we do sin, we come back to the throne of God and repent. We ask for forgiveness. God promises forgiveness to his children. Pray for forgiveness in your life. Come back to God.

### **Friday, May 3 - 2 Chronicles 32:20-23**

Hezekiah’s story really is a story of prayer. Today’s reading is no different. Judah was facing an adversary in Sennacherib and the Assyrian army. This is an army Judah could not defeat on their own. The Assyrian army was the strongest army to that point in history. It was the first army armed with only iron weapons. Estimates suggest that there were 150,000-200,000 men in the army. What did Hezekiah do? He and Isaiah prayed. And when we pray, God fights our battles. An angel of the Lord cut off the Assyrian army and protected Judah from destruction at this time.

This passage reminded me of a newer song by Michael W. Smith. In his song *Surrounded*, he says “It may look like I’m surrounded, but I’m surrounded by you. This is how I fight my battles.” When it seems like we are surrounded by

evil, when it seems that Satan is winning, know that our best weapon is prayer. When we pray, God fights our battles. Let God fight your battles. Let your story be one like Hezekiah, a story of prayer.

### **Saturday, May 4 - Malachi**

Tomorrow, we will close out our study on the Prophets with Malachi. Malachi closes the Old Testament with a statement that God will send a prophet like Elijah before the Day of the Lord. Christians believe that Elijah came in the form of John the Baptist to prepare the way for Jesus. Overall, Malachi speaks to a Jewish audience who are starting to fall into the trap of complacency. They are not the first generation back in the land of Israel. Life is starting to move on as normal, and people started to forget the lessons of their forefathers. Malachi speaks to the community to call the people back to a relationship with God. Is this a message you need to hear? Are you becoming complacent in your relationship with God? Let Malachi wake you up!

### **Sunday, May 5 - Psalm 2**

“Happy for all who take refuge in Him.” See you at church this morning!

## **WEEK 3 - HANNAH**

### **Monday, May 6 - 1 Samuel 1:1-8**

Hannah is a story that is all too familiar to modern-day readers. Six million women of childbearing age in the United States cannot have children according to the CDC. This number does not include the parents who struggle for years to become pregnant before having children. Mother’s Day (coming this Sunday) can be a hard day for these families. Nothing we can say can take away that heartache. When Hannah’s husband tries to comfort her, he does it the way most husbands would. His comforting tactic is likely not received as well as he meant. Men cannot fathom the loneliness Hannah felt. In the times of the Old Testament, women had one job: to have children. Being barren was a object of scorn.

Today, pray for the women you know who want children and struggle to have them. This week will be hard.

## **Tuesday, May 7 - 1 Samuel 1:9-18**

Hannah was sad because as 1:6 said “the Lord had closed her womb.” So she went and prayed. We start to get the sense of how devoted of a woman she is to God. Too often, we do not have this response. It is clear from 1:6 that the family blamed God for her barrenness. Instead of being mad at God, instead of running away from God, Hannah runs to God and prays. She pours her heart out to God and commits any future children to his service.

In this passage today, we also meet Eli. And we learn how far from God he is. He sees Hannah fervently praying and thinks she’s drunk. The priest cannot recognize when Hannah is praying. The priesthood is broken. God needs to raise up someone to take over the priesthood from Eli. God could really use someone strong and devoted, someone like Hannah...

When you are in seasons of frustration, do you run toward God or away?

## **Wednesday, May 8 - Acts 2:1-12**

Tonight, we will begin a study of the book of Acts as it relates to 21st century missions. We just finished Revelation and know that Jesus is coming soon. We need to do our part to tell this world what they need to do to be ready. Before we can act, the Holy Spirit goes before us. The Holy Spirit came down upon the disciples on the feast of Pentecost. Read over this passage a few times. Notice the words used to describe the moment. Try to remember descriptions of other Spiritual events in the Bible. How would you paint a picture of the Holy Spirit? Let’s talk about it tonight!

## **Thursday, May 9 - 1 Samuel 1:19-28**

Sarah was first. Then Rebekah and Rachel. Now Hannah. These are all women of the Old Testament who were unable to have children until God blessed them. Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, now Samuel have been blessings to their mothers who prayed many years for the opportunity to have children. “For this child, I prayed” is seen in 1:27. Hannah continues to be an excellent example for all people, especially parents. She follows through with her promise to give Samuel to the priesthood. She leaves him there as promised. Elkanah deserves some credit as well. According to Numbers 30:6-15, he could have nullified Hannah’s vow because he was her husband. He does not and allows his son to be devoted to God.



Hannah's response in 1:27 is in the past tense, but do any of us think she ever stopped praying for her son? Of course not! Praying for our children and grandchildren must be part of our regular prayer life. Take time right now, to pray for all of your children and grandchildren by name. Lift them up to God. Pray for future children you will have: biological, legally adopted, or "unofficial children." Be an example for them like Hannah was for Samuel.

### **Friday, May 10 - 1 Samuel 2:1-10**

These verses constitute what is considered "Hannah's Prayer." It is a prayer of thanksgiving. Thanksgiving is given for deliverance from different situations and oppression. Remember, Hannah was ridiculed for not having children. God heard her cry and she was released from the bondage she was facing.

What part of the song/poem/psalm stands out to you? For me, it is verse 8. The Lord lifts us up in our times of frailty. He raises all of us to be equal with the princes of the world. We are valuable to God! What is causing you to feel poor and needy today? Is it a physical need? Mental need? Spiritual need? Whatever it is, give it to the one who is our Rock!

### **Saturday, May 11 - 1 Samuel 2:18-21**

Without a Sunday Evening passage to read today, we will read the conclusion of Hannah's story today. Did she leave Samuel and just forget about him? Not a chance. Every year, when Hannah would make her pilgrimage to Shiloh, she'd bring a new robe for her son. Hannah was blessed by her devotion to God and conceived five more children.

I'm confident that Samuel thought about his mother fondly and her example helped him grow into the judge, prophet, and priest Israel needed him to be. As Mother's Day is tomorrow, think about your mom and the traits that you have because of her. Give thanks to God for her. Maybe your mother wasn't a great role model for you. Instead, think of someone else who you looked up to and thank God for that person who stepped into a void in your life. In addition, pray for God to give you the attributes like Hannah, so you can be a good example for children to follow today.

## **Sunday, May 12 - Luke 1:46-55**

On this Mother's Day, read the words of Mary's Song when she is pregnant with Jesus. Notice the similarities between her song and Hannah's. Be blessed by both of these great women as we prepare our hearts for worship today.

## **WEEK 4 - Joseph**

### **Monday, May 13 - Genesis 37:25-36**

This week we will see the story of Joseph. Like Hannah and Samuel last week, Joseph's birth is a miracle. Before Joseph, Rachel had not been allowed to have children. The assertion in Genesis 29:31 is that "Rachel was barren" and Leah (the other wife) was allowed to have children because Leah was unloved while Rachel was the favorite wife. Rachel finally becomes pregnant with Joseph after "God remembered Rachel" (Genesis 30:22). Joseph was Jacob's eleventh son.

However, instead of just being another son to Jacob, Joseph was the first born to the favorite wife. This made Joseph the favorite and everybody knew it (just a quick note: family life is easier if you only have one spouse and don't play favorites with the kids). This is the background of our reading for today. The resentment the brothers felt toward Joseph made them angry enough to kill him. It didn't help that Joseph just had a dream that he would reign over his brothers. Telling your ten older brothers about that is not a great way to endear yourself to them. Reuben, the oldest, has some sense not to kill his brother, but just leave him in a pit. I don't exactly know what Reuben's plan was after that, but the other brothers chose to sell him into slavery when Reuben is away. They lie to their father about the event and allow Jacob to believe that his son is dead. However, Joseph is alive but a slave in Egypt.

Sometimes we don't understand God's plan. Joseph must have been confused. Dreams were given more emphasis thousands of years ago. They had meaning. Joseph saw that he would be in charge of his family and now he is a slave? What is going on? In the middle of the story, sometimes it doesn't make sense. But when we see the full picture this week, we will see God at work even when Joseph is sold by his brothers. You are in the middle of your story right now. Maybe this chapter doesn't make too much sense. Trust the author of the book (God). When the story is read as a whole, it will make sense.

## **Tuesday, May 14 - Genesis 40:1-41:4**

If you have time this week, I'd encourage to read all of Joseph's story from Genesis 37-50. In the four days of readings on Joseph this week, we will not cover all fourteen chapters. Today, we look at Joseph interpreting dreams for the cupbearer and baker to the king. Those two and Joseph are in prison. Joseph had been fairly successful in Egypt since his arrival. However, his master's wife tried to seduce him and Joseph refused. In an act of revenge, Potiphar's wife accused Joseph of assault and he is thrown in jail.

He finds favor in jail and one day is able to interpret dreams for the cupbearer and baker. The interpretations prove correct and it seems Joseph will be remembered by the cupbearer and Pharaoh will be able to release Joseph from jail. And the cupbearer does remember Joseph...after two years!

Joseph's story seems to have setback after setback. So far, he has never really been in charge of his circumstances. His father put him in the position as favorite; his brothers sold him into slavery. The Midianites sell him to Potiphar. Potiphar's wife gets him thrown in prison. The cupbearer forgets to mention him to Pharaoh for two years. Sometimes it feels as if we have no control over our story. But we actually have lots of control. We control how we act in the situation. When Joseph is in Potiphar's household, he make the right choices. When he is in prison, he finds favor with the guard, most likely meaning he was being helpful to the guards. We all can choose how to react to our surroundings. We all have that much control in our story. How are you responding to the events in your story? Is it a way you can be proud of? Pray for God's guidance and pray for perseverance even in the most frustrating episodes of your life.

## **Wednesday, May 15 - Acts 2:41-47; 4:32-35**

As we continue our study of Acts tonight, these two passages focus our attention on forming fellowship with each other. The fellowship of believers was so strong in these early days of the church that they shared everything and no one had need among them. What a powerful witness the early church had. Whenever a need arose, someone else in the fellowship took care of it. What applications can the 21st century church take from the 1st century church here? Let's discuss tonight.

## **Thursday, May 16 - Genesis 41:37-57**

How quickly have you ever moved up in social status? When I was growing up, I've never looked like an athlete. My genes ruined most of my chance to play any professional sport. However, there were a few sports I was better at than I look. Baseball is one of them. One season when I was thirteen years old, I had a new coach who took one look at me and decided I didn't look like a pitcher. Every game when the season started, I told him I was available to pitch and every game he told me I wasn't pitching. Finally, after being annoying enough, he let me have the opportunity to pitch. I pitched well enough in that game to be a pitcher the rest of the season. In fact, my status on the team had changed so much that I went from not being allowed to pitch to the one who pitched in the most important games of the season.

Joseph went from prisoner to Prime Minister in one day. Talk about flying up the social ladder! He was put in charge of a plan to store grain for seven years because seven years of drought was coming. God's purpose for his life was starting to become clear. Genesis 41:57 tells us that the whole world came to Egypt to buy grain. Joseph's actions saved the world. And as we will find out tomorrow, he saved his family. God has a special plan for your life. It may not seem like it right now, but God knows where you are and what is going on. Trust in Him. You can serve God no matter your circumstances. Let God use you for his purposes.

## **Friday, May 17 - Genesis 45:1-8**

Joseph holds all of the power when his brothers come to buy grain. He has the power to punish them for their actions toward him. In fact, the brothers continue to worry throughout the last chapters of Genesis that Joseph will get revenge one day. Instead, Joseph shows kindness to his brothers. He rejoices in seeing his family again, and this divine appointment leads to the house of Israel coming to Egypt.

Who do you need to reunite with? Is it a family member? Friend? Co-worker? Neighbor? Who has wronged you in some way? Let me encourage you to not hold a grudge. Do not withhold help from someone in retribution to wronging you. Which of your relationships needs work? Don't delay. Contact that person today and set up a time to talk, in person if you can. If Joseph can forgive his brothers for selling him into slavery, then you can forgive whatever someone else did to you.

## **Saturday, May 18 - 2 Timothy 3:16-17**

We will begin a new Sunday Night sermon series tomorrow entitled “What does the Bible say about...?” This series will discuss Current Events and what the Bible says about these situations. In preparation for this study, read this passage today. It doesn’t matter if the Bible was written 1900+ years ago, it is still just as relevant today as it was then. We cannot ignore passages we disagree with. We cannot add addendums to make the Bible say what we want it to say. “What does the Bible say about...?” Come tomorrow night and find out.

## **Sunday, May 19 - Psalm 3**

God delivered Joseph as we saw this week. God delivered Israel to Egypt and delivered them out of Egypt. God will deliver you from your enemies as well. Come and worship that wonderful God this morning!

## **WEEK 5 - Barnabus**

## **Monday, May 20 - Acts 4:36-37**

We will read this passage as part of our Wednesday night study this week, but I want us to read it as the beginning of Barnabus’ story today. Barnabus wasn’t his original name, which makes it even more important. It was characteristic of who he was, which was an encourager. We all need encouragers in our lives. My biggest encourager is my dad. He has always been the one to cheer me on and support me. That support is vocal, physical, and in prayer. I know he has my back. Who is your biggest supporter? Pray a prayer of thanksgiving for that person and let them know that you appreciate their encouragement. Who can you be a Barnabus to? Pray for you to be an encouragement to everyone you see today.

## **Tuesday, May 21 - Acts 9:26-31**

We all need a good partner. Sometimes that partner and helper goes unnoticed, but we all recognize the importance of one who walks along beside you in your time of need. That is what Barnabus did for Saul/Paul. When Saul first met the disciples in Jerusalem, they were not sure if they could trust him. After all, this was the Saul who oversaw the stoning of Stephen in Acts 7:54-8:1. It is not far-fetched to think that Saul is faking this conversion in order to find the disciples and arrest them. But Barnabus believed in Saul’s new life and worked

as a mediator between Saul and the disciples. I don't think it is hyperbole to say this: Saul/Paul does not go on to be the Saul/Paul we know in the New Testament without Barnabus. Barnabus is the man behind the man. He leads Saul until the time when Saul is ready to lead.

Who could use your voice in moving forward in their faith? Who needs you to speak up to a community where they are still the outsider? Be a Barnabus. Tell the "insiders" that the new person is worthy. You never know what God has planned for that individual and what Kingdom work will be done because of your obedience.

### **Wednesday, May 22 - Acts 4:36-5:11**

This is not a continuation of Barnabus' story, but this is preparing us for our study of Acts tonight. A couple questions to contemplate as you read our Scripture today: What is Ananias and Sapphira's sin? How can we be in danger of committing the same? Join us tonight to discuss.

### **Thursday, May 23 - Acts 13:1-5**

In 1974, South Korean churches sent out their first missionaries to the world by commissioning 24 individuals ready to serve the Lord. Forty years later, South Korean churches had 27,436 missionaries serving in 170 countries. What led to this drastic growth in mission work? Prayer and obedience. Korean Christians have a practice of getting up and going to church for prayer service every morning at 5 am before work. It is during these prayer services, where many are called to missionary work. And most of those who are called, go immediately. President of the Foreign Baptist Mission Board in the Korean Baptist Convention, Jae Kyeong Lee explained the immediate obedience in this way: "Koreans are passionate people. If God leads, even if it seems irrational, they are willing to go without even knowing exactly where to go, as Abraham did. Korean missionaries believe God will take care of them, for it is he who has called and sent them."

This is exactly the same course of events that occurred in our Scripture passage today. It is amazing the work the Holy Spirit can do when we devote our time to worship and prayer. It is also amazing the obedience we live out when we have devoted our time to worship and prayer. The message for your life today is this: spend time in worship and prayer. God is doing amazing things in this world. When we spend time in worship and prayer, we see those actions and get to be

part of them. Don't miss out on the greatest opportunity of your life because you aren't focusing on the Holy Spirit.

### **Friday, May 24 - Acts 13:13, 42-43**

These verses may not seem like much, but they are a turning point in the story of Barnabus. Up to this point, the duo has been described as Barnabus and Saul. While not significant in twenty-first century English, order of people was significant in first century Greek. The first person mentioned was always the primary person in the group, the leader. Barnabus has been leading Saul so far in their journey. But in these verses today, Saul's name has changed to Paul (first seen in Acts 13:9), and the group is "Paul and..." Paul has reached a point in his spiritual growth that he is the leader who God planned for him to be.

What does this mean for Barnabus? Has he been demoted? Not at all. This means that Barnabus has been successful. He has done this job. There is lots of joy and sadness when a mentee grows up before your eyes and no longer needs you every step of the way. When the mentor takes a backseat and new leadership fills their training, it can be difficult (as we will see in the next account of Paul and Barnabus). However, as we focus on today's episode in the story of Barnabus, he acts appropriately by handling the transition the right way. He gives up control to Paul, and Paul never looks back. Barnabus has done a great job of leading Paul to this "graduation" day. Is there anyone in your life who you are mentoring? Are they ready to become the leader? How will you plan to act when that day comes? Are you ready to take the step back that is necessary?

### **Saturday, May 25 - Acts 15:36-41**

I apologize for not knowing the Sunday Night schedule of "What does the Bible say about...?" yet, so today we close the story of Barnabus. I wish it were a happy ending. However, Paul and Barnabus have a disagreement about John going with them. John Mark was Barnabus' cousin (Colossians 4:10), but Paul didn't want John Mark to join because he deserted them during the First Missionary Journey. The two separated after this event, and we never hear from Barnabus again. In fact, Paul travels through Cyprus, Barnabus' home, twice in Acts 21 and Acts 27, but Barnabus doesn't join Paul at that point. It is a sad breakup of a great relationship. In reality, it seems like a petty issue, but I've seen churches split over less. Don't let this happen to your friendships. Don't let your

story end this way. Let Barnabus and Paul be a warning to you. Come to resolutions in your quarrels amongst brothers and sisters in Christ.

**Sunday, May 26 - Psalm 4**

“You alone, O Lord, make me lie down in safety.”