



WEEK 5

Living a “not so average life” is never just about US.

Romans 8:28

And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.

Acts 4:36-37

³⁶ Joseph, a Levite from Cyprus, whom the apostles called Barnabas (which means “son of encouragement”), ³⁷ sold a field he owned and brought the money and put it at the apostles’ feet.

“Not so average Joes” see what CAN BE.

Acts 9:26-31

²⁶ When he came to Jerusalem, he tried to join the disciples, but they were all afraid of him, not believing that he really was a disciple. ²⁷ But Barnabas took him and brought him to the apostles. He told them how Saul on his journey had seen the Lord and that the Lord had spoken to him, and how in Damascus he had preached fearlessly in the name of Jesus. ²⁸ So Saul stayed with them and moved about freely in Jerusalem, speaking boldly in the name of the Lord. ²⁹ He talked and debated with the Hellenistic Jews, but they tried to kill him. ³⁰ When the believers learned of this, they took him down to Caesarea and sent him off to Tarsus.

³¹ Then the church throughout Judea, Galilee and Samaria enjoyed a time of peace and was strengthened. Living in the fear of the Lord and encouraged by the Holy Spirit, it increased in numbers.

Sooner or later full obedience to God will involve RISK.

Acts 11:22-26

22 News of this reached the church in Jerusalem, and they sent Barnabas to Antioch. 23 When he arrived and saw what the grace of God had done, he was glad and encouraged them all to remain true to the Lord with all their hearts. 24 He was a good man, full of the Holy Spirit and faith, and a great number of people were brought to the Lord. 25 Then Barnabas went to Tarsus to look for Saul, 26 and when he found him, he brought him to Antioch. So for a whole year Barnabas and Saul met with the church and taught great numbers of people. The disciples were called Christians first at Antioch.

Predetermining preempts our ability to DISCERN.

Galatians 1:23

They only heard the report: “The man who formerly persecuted us is now preaching the faith he once tried to destroy.”

SO WHAT?

- There is always someone who needs ENCOURAGEMENT.
- See the IMAGE of God in others.
- Seek to add VALUE more than be valued.

NOTES:

2 Corinthians 13:11

¹¹Finally, brothers and sisters, rejoice! Strive for full restoration, encourage one another, be of one mind, live in peace. And the God of love and peace will be with you.

“God never gives us discernment in order that we may criticize, but that we may intercede.” -Oswald Chambers



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How to start a relationship with God:

- 1) Admitting that you, like everyone else, are in need of rescue.
- 2) Asking God to forgive your sins.
- 3) Saying YES to God by trusting Jesus as Savior & Lord.

You can do that right now by simply talking to God in a prayer like this:

Dear Lord Jesus, I know I am a sinner, and I ask for Your forgiveness. I believe You died for my sins and rose from the dead. Today, I receive you as my Savior; and I put my faith in you as my LORD. Help me to look to you and follow you all the days of my life. In Your name, Amen.

For Further Reflection:

- :: How has God been speaking to you through the “Not So Average Joes” series?
 - :: How have you incorporated what He has shown you into your life?
 - :: What difference/impact has that made for you or those around you?
- :: Revisit/Review Barnabas’ example, investments & life.
 - :: What made him a “not so average” Joe?
 - :: What most encourages/challenges you from his life? Why?
 - :: How did God use Barnabas’ willingness to risk?
 - :: Where has God positioned you to risk to add value to someone else?
- :: Pastor Shawn said, “Our faith does not grow in spaces of certainty.”
 - :: What are some practical implications/liabilities of that reality?
 - :: Share a time you’ve seen/experienced that in life. What happened as a result?
 - :: What are some practices that enable us to live by faith in uncertainty?
- :: Identify one thing God is asking you to do this week to take a next step in living a “not so average” life in Jesus.
- :: Identify & invite at least one person to pray for you & hold you accountable in it.