



## *The Witness of Barnabas*

*Dr. Mary Craig*

### *December 2018 Barnabas Project Report*

Barnabas. His original name was Joses, or Joseph. A Jew of the tribe of Levi, he was a Jewish Hellenist from Cyprus or from a Cypriot family. We know he was a landowner, because in Acts 4 we read of him selling his property and giving away the proceeds.

Later he toiled at a trade while preaching the gospel free of charge and supporting himself on his missionary journeys.

The apostles called him Barnabas because it means "son of encouragement." (Acts 4.36) The name indicates a person great in the gifts of prophecy, a son of prophecy, son of encouragement, exhortation, consolation, a son of comfort, and son of the power of the Paraclete. Barnabas demonstrated a tender heart, generosity, strength, a forgiving attitude, long-suffering, an open hand, a nobility, and consideration of others. He wielded social influence and was revered by the saints as one they loved and trusted. He was dignified. His faith sought the fullness of the Spirit and God's goodness.

Barnabas yielded to the call of God, going where God directed and submitting to authority, as submitting to one another under the supreme authority of Christ. He looked beyond imperfections and saw the grace of God operating in people's lives and hearts. With his faith tuned to the frequency of grace, he could rejoice and encourage instead of taking offense. He focused on what people could become in Christ more than on their immediate imperfections, exhorting them all to remain faithful to the Lord with steadfast purpose. Thus he exerted himself for the perseverance of the saints. <http://www.marycraig.org/NewsViews/BeABarnabas.htm>

Since 2003 The Barnabas Project has helped hundreds of families around South Florida, giving hope and encouragement and "a little lift up."

God's purpose for the Barnabas Project is to reach out to communities and break spiritual bondage so that the merciful love and light of Christ may shine upon them. The Barnabas Project is a demonstration of the free grace of God. Our purpose is to glorify God by displaying His goodness and graciousness to all. We seek to minister to Jesus by serving His people, many of whom are the forgotten people of South Florida. We advance the Christian faith through representation and recommendation, giving help to those in need and offering encouragement and hope. We share the love of God and the truth of Jesus Christ and seek the empowerment of others by inspiring them with courage and confidence to fulfill their God-given purpose.



This December 1<sup>st</sup> the Christmas distribution was held at Iglesia en Pompano, Pastor Gabriel and Marisol Goffman. Maria Valdez, church

administrator, played a significant role in making the distribution successful by having willing workers ready to set everything up. Pastor Goffman led workers in prayer. Pastor Goffman, Marisol, Dr. Mary, David P. Barnabas Project Director

Here's Rose Vega, who comes each year to help the day of our distributions; this time with her son and a person they know. That's Steve Craig (President of MCM) and me.



With tables set up, a steady stream of people came in, whole families being blessed by everything from children's toys and clothing, books, linens, household items, drug store items and OTC medicines, baby furniture, men and women's clothing, school supplies, Christmas galore, and so much more.

It's fast paced and we clean up as we go.



We thank our vendors, especially Publix super markets, and all those who worked, contributed, prayed, and gave of themselves to make this distribution a success. We thank the LORD for you. Toward the end Maria and Marisol and possibly others, too, helped choose someone to receive The Barnabas Box. This time it was a Barnabas Basket decorated for Christmas. Each item in the basket represents something: A Bible, the Word of God; a bottle of water, the living water of life; a bottle of olive oil, representative of the Holy Spirit and anointing; a loaf of bread, Jesus is the Bread of Life; a copy of the Constitution and the Declaration of Independence, reminding

that we need to be law-keepers and legal; a small stuffed animal, reminding that as Christians we are called to have dominion over God's good creation, not domination—to "tend the Garden," not exploit; and "Salvation in a Sentence," the Gospel of Jesus Christ who alone saves as one puts their trust in Him with a hearty reliance on Him alone



As Steve presented the Barnabas Basket, and I, the Gospel, we drew a crowd. People were touched by the tangible awareness of the presence of the Holy Spirit. The woman who received the Basket and the Gospel wanted to receive Jesus Christ and was born again right there as Pastor Goffman led in prayer. Others, too, saw the glory of God and His heart.

We watched God work and we give Him all the glory. He takes what we offer to Him in faith. We find that He is faithful and He does all His good pleasure with whatever we bring Him. Working miracles of all kinds is God's normal for Him, and so we learn to delight in His goodness and grace, His love and blessings just as He delights in glorifying Jesus, and Jesus, Him.

Touching His grace,

## Mary Craig

Mary Craig, D. Min.

*He that spared not His own Son but gave Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things. Romans 8:32*

Freely you have received; freely give. Matthew 10:8b KJV



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