

## Acts 11:19-30 Disciples making disciples

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Code-named the "**White Mouse**" by the Gestapo, **Nancy Wake** is one of the most decorated women of the Second World War.

In 1940, she joined the French resistance movement. Between 1940 and 1942 she worked manning the dangerous escape routes through France and helped save the lives of hundreds of Allied Troops.

She was a courier smuggling messages and food to underground groups in Southern France. She bought an ambulance and used it to help refugees fleeing the German advance. She obtained false papers that allowed her to stay and work in occupied France..

Her missions with the Resistance meant her life was in constant danger. She became a suspect and was watched. The Gestapo tapped her phone and opened her mail. She took many identities. By 1943, Wake was No 1 on the Gestapo's most wanted list and there was a five million-franc price on her head.

**She was an ordinary person playing an extraordinary role.**

The unstoppable Gospel has been spreading through the preaching by the Apostles. In this section we have ordinary people playing a role in the continued spread of the Gospel.

### 1. God uses ordinary people to spread the message of Jesus - *Disciples making disciples*

**Read: 19-20**

There no names given to these people. They are just ordinary people telling others about Jesus.

The word for 'speak' is the word for ordinary conversation. They were gossiping the Gospel.

Take notice of what's not there that has been there before in the spread of the Gospel in Acts. No Apostles - No miracles - No tongues

This is you and I. Ordinary people being used by God to spread the message of Jesus.

If the spread of the Gospel was left to just Pastors and missionaries it would be very limited.

In **John 17:18** Jesus said: "*As you sent me into the world, I have sent them into the world.*"

It is false humility to think how - could God use me. That is pride to think it is about you. Or about what you think about yourself. It is the message that does the work. Pauls says in **Romans 1:16**: "*I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God.*"

**NOT ONLY** do we see **disciples making disciples** but also **disciples growing Disciples**.

**How does this happen?** Let's look at the next section.

### 2. God uses people to grow people in their faith - *Disciples growing disciples*

**Read: 22-24**

The focus is on Barnabas. He:-

**LOOKED**

What for? **Evidences of God's grace.**

No doubt these new Christians had a long way to go. No doubt they a lot of problems – conflicts, sin but Barnabas didn't focus on them. God's prior work of grace has worked in them so there must be evidence of this grace.

What are they? Repentance, fruit of the Spirit, love, joy. Peace, kindness, goodness, self control

Barnabas lives up to his name which means Son of encouragement

How would people at church view you - as a fault finder?

Or do they know you as someone who calls attention to the evidence of God's grace in others lives?

Are you someone who's quick to notice the wrong in church and slower to see the work of God?

Barnabas also:-

### **ENCOURAGED**

- **them to remain true to the Lord**

It is staying true to what you know about God. Stay faithful to him. Not just with your head. But also...

- **with all their hearts**

We are to encourage one another. Hebrews 3:12-13 commands us to encourage one another.

Church is more about shared life than programmes or numbers. It is about friendships.

We tell our girls to have a friend you have to be a friend. You need to pursue. Reach out to others. Go and talk to people. Invite people over to your place. That is why God has given you the resources you have and the house you have. Don't wait for someone else to make the first move. Take the initiative and invite people into your life. It does require effort and hard work.

Barnabas also:-

**PARTNERED.** Read 25-26 Barnabas knows he can't do it alone. He needs help.

Find someone to bring to help others. Take someone somewhere for help. Go somewhere yourself to get help.

*When you don't come to church you're saying I don't need help?*

*When you don't come to church your saying I'm not going to give anyone else help?*

Barnabas also:-

### **INITIATED**

Barnabas as just another Christian doesn't wait for the 'Pastor' to do something he takes the initiative. He doesn't wait for the Apostles to come and encourage these Christians.

He goes and gets help.

What do they DO together? They...

### **TAUGHT. v. 26**

No doubt they taught them about Jesus. His life, teachings, death, resurrection, and his return. The church is to be on about evangelism and establishing. The internal and the external. The gathering to strengthen then the dispersing to share.

I wonder have you ever been 'established' in your faith?

Have you been sat down and taught the foundational truths of the Christian faith?

Would you even know what they are?

In the Elders planning of the VISION for Lakeshore Plan we have put our 1<sup>st</sup> step to be to work through our Statement of Faith.

**Let's get practical. How can we take the initiative to encourage others?**

**This is not place to be a consumer.** Come looking for God. Go looking for people.

*Share something you read and learnt in the Bible through the week*

*Share something you learnt or were reminded of in the sermon.*

*Share you favourite memory verse. If you don't have one find one.*

*Ask how I can pray for you*

*Pray when a conversation finishes before you part*

By God's grace apart from my family I have always had people in my life who have encouraged me. The leaders of the boys group – Danny Bailey. My Sunday School teacher – Jon Mayne. Ivy Smart when I was a teenager. Even recently when I was diagnosed with a long term sickness. God sent Stephen Jones along as an older man who knows what it is to suffer with a long term illness. He came and read the Bible with me and prayed with me when I found it hard to pray.

No doubt you can think of those individuals who have invested their life and teaching in you.

What about those you are investing in? How are you pouring your life into others?

How are sharing your life and the word with others for the sake of seeing them make progress in their faith? Are you involved in someone's life so you see them grow in their faith? Are you involved in a discipling relationships?

The Elders of Lakeshore went and found me to help you guys. Help you with what? I know what I can't help you with. Mechanical stuff, Handyman stuff. But that's not why the Elders got me. I'm here to help grow in your faith.

**MEN** you are to leading the way with this in our church. I'm prepared to meet with man who wants to meet to talk about how you can help others.

Paul says in 2 Timothy 2:2: *"The things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable men who will also be qualified to teach others."*

**DADS** – The mantra about parenting is that it's about giving your kids every opportunity.

It's not. Not according to the Bible.

Your role as a Father is clear in Ephesians 6:4 *To bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord.*

So Dads if you are not instructing your children about Jesus by modelling and teaching the Bible your not loving your kids. Praying with your children, reading the Bible with them, committed to church by being involved.

The 2 **BIGGEST BARRIERS** to relationships.

1. **BUSINESS**
2. **LAZINESS**

*"What you leave behind is not what is engraved in stone monuments, but what is woven into the lives of others."..... Pericles*