



Stephen had been stoned to death because of his faith in Jesus. So many of the early Christians scattered to avoid the same fate. Some went here, some went there, but they all had news to tell about Jesus. The problem was in who they told.

Some of the scattered Christians only wanted to tell other Jews about Jesus. They didn't think they should tell the non-Jews. But things were different back in Antioch. In fact, things were so different that the church back in Jerusalem heard about it. They sent a Christian named Barnabas to Antioch to check things out.

When Barnabas got to Antioch, he was overjoyed by what he saw! He was so glad to see the Christians there sharing their faith with everyone they could! He encouraged them to keep it up, then he went looking for his buddy Saul. When he found Saul in another town, he brought him back to Antioch. Together, they stayed there a whole year, teaching people about Jesus and encouraging the other Christians. (Hey, did you know this? The name "Barnabas" actually means "Son of Encouragement." Check out Acts 4:36!)

- Why does partnering with people help our effectiveness?
- Who do you know that needs encouragement? How can you be an encourager like Barnabas to that person?

Family Fun

With your family, commit to hiding words of encouragement for each family member once this week. You might tuck a note in your dad's briefcase, hang an encouraging picture on your sister's bedroom door, or even leave a sign for your mom in the refrigerator! At the end of the week, discuss as a family how being encouraged affected your feelings and attitudes.

You're doing Great!

Daily Challenge

Choose one of these action steps to encourage each other to believe in Jesus this week:

- Offer to pray for someone who's going through a hard time. (Then pray!)
- Write your favorite Bible verse on an index card, and give the card to someone this week.
- Tell one person about Jesus this week. Practice what you'll say before you say it.

The WORD for the Week

Monday

Ephesians 2:10

- Why would encouraging others be something God has prepared in advance for you to do?

Tuesday

Philippians 2:13

- How does knowing that you should do what's in God's purpose help you encourage others?

Wednesday

Hebrews 10:24

- Why is it good to spur others on toward love?

Thursday

2 Corinthians 12:9

- Why do you think God works best in our weakness?

Friday

Isaiah 40:31

- How does this verse encourage you? How can you use this verse to encourage others?

Saturday

1 John 4:7

- How does encouragement show your love for God and others?

Bible Point

Encourage each other to believe in Jesus.