



Northwest FOCUS

God at Work Through Northwest Independent Church Extension

JUNE 2020

Putting On a Barnabas Hat

To be an encourager has been the desire of all the NICE Directors, past and present. In the Bible, Barnabas was called the Son of Encouragement. In interactions with NICE Missionaries, the Directors have often put on their Barnabas hat!

Current Director, Bob Rodgers sends emails of encouragement to the NICE Family. Recently, he said, *"I like to smoke all kinds of meat, and I like the smell and flavor of it! Recently, while smoking salmon, I thought of II Corinthians 2 where Paul says, 'Thanks be to God, who ... through us spreads the fragrance of the knowledge of Him everywhere. For we are the aroma of Christ to those who are saved and to those who are perishing, to one a fragrance of death, to the other a fragrance of life.' A smell of death for some, a smell of life for others. That's the ministry God gives us. Matthew Poole said, 'Oh how great a work is this! No man in himself is sufficient for it. It's a mighty work to preach the gospel, and Christ enables us to do so.' I don't think I'll ever smoke meat again without considering the impact of my preaching and my influence to both saved and unsaved. Be encouraged: it's by the power of Christ that we leave His aroma with them!"*



Earl Brubaker gave direction to the Mission from 2000 to 2010. He reflected, *"Our NICE missionaries are a resilient group, who often persevere in difficult ministries. A large part of encouraging such a diverse group is what NICE missionary and Police/Fire Chaplain Ben Benthien often referred to as 'the ministry of presence.' This ministry of presence is one way that I seek to bring encouragement to our Missionaries. It begins with presence, but it is more than that. It*

is characterized by a lot of listening and little talking. It is understanding the situation, feeling the trauma, but not necessarily having all the answers. It is, whenever possible, validating the commitment and decisions of another. It is rejoicing in the effective ministry of others rather than seeking recognition for oneself. It is the present day equivalent of Barnabas in the early church launching Paul's Apostleship by introducing him to the Church leaders in Jerusalem, enlisting him for ministry in Antioch, helping him up after he was stoned and left for dead at Iconium, then disappearing from sight as Paul's influence grew.

Roy Sprague, Director from 1970 to 2000, recalls, *"When we were asked to serve as the Minister At Large, the Mission Board said, 'Be available to encourage the NICE Missionaries and churches in every way possible.' How to do that? One day Elvia said, 'Roy, it's God's Word that's the source of encouragement; remind people of what God has said!' Soon after this we were with a group of missionaries. I reminded them of God's promise in II Corinthians 9:8: 'God is able to make all grace abound toward you, that you, always having all sufficiency in all things, may have an abundance for every good work.' Then I quoted Charles Spurgeon, 'The Christian life is totally dependent upon the grace of God. It is the wealth of God's kindness; the riches of His mercy; the ointment of His forgiveness; the free and lavishly offered gift of life.' God used His Word to encourage folks that day. It's also our source of encouragement today!"*

You, too wear a Barnabas hat! Your faithful prayer and support is a constant source of encouragement! We thank God for the privilege of partnering together in this ministry.

So then neither he who plants is anything, nor he who waters, but God who gives the increase. I Corinthians 3:7