

**Mary Craig**

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**From:** Mary Craig

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Dr. Mary Craig with David Patten, The Barnabas Project Director

Mary Craig Ministries, Inc.

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We began The Barnabas Project in 2003 with David Patten as Director to provide encouragement and hope, a “lift,” to forgotten people groups and communities in South Florida. These free distributions of goods and sometimes food have helped a thousand families or more and demonstrate God’s free grace and goodness to all in some ways.

Over the years we have seen “the times.” We’ve seen donations of goods nearly dry up two years ago as people feared for the future. We’ve seen abundance as Christians give and then give more to help families in crisis. We’ve seen the increase in homelessness, anxiety, consternation, and frustration as families find that small businesses, and even large ones, cannot make it under so many regulations and demands. We’ve seen people reaching out, again and again, to those in need.

But then there comes a Barnabas distribution like the one we just finished in Jupiter, Florida, at the El Sol Jupiter’s Neighborhood Resource Center. The Center was organized to be a liaison between registered workers and those registered persons who want to hire them as day laborers. Dora at the Center did a fabulous job on her end to get the event organized.



Families came from the surrounding community and also from Belle Glade and West Palm Beach, Florida, thanks to Sandra's efforts from Mt. Zion AME Church in Belle Glade and those of Rev. Jackie Clanton, pastor of St. Luke's AME Church in West Palm. Many, like the Louissant family of Belle Glade, came to help unload the 16' Budget Rental Truck.



Lydia and Joan of Child Evangelism Fellowship Lighthouse Chapter (WPB) set up a table to share the gospel with the children, at least 20 and perhaps 25 or more. It was exciting to see. Dale also helped.



Dale helping CEF



Marcy with some donated items from Publix

A big “Thanks” goes to Publix Super Markets for their generosity!

The pictures do better to show you what it was like. MCM had a team of ten working from set up to clean up. A big “Thanks” to Pastor Jim, Steve, Marcy, Dale, Kroy, John, Ani, Betty, and David Patten, our Barnabas Project Director!



The MCM team with Dora

At each new location we select a person or family to receive The Barnabas Box. This year my daughter and her children decorated the box, wrapped all the items, and prayed over each one for God to bless the recipient. The fellow selected received the box with apparent joy, as you can see below. Each item [a Bible, a copy of the Constitution, a bottle of water, olive oil, a map, bread, and a small stuffed animal] was explained as to its symbolism. Through this the gospel was presented, and Ani did a great job communicating in Spanish.



Ani presenting the Barnabas Box

Then something happened that has not happened since we began doing this in 2003. Usually, people are touched to the core. Some weep, some look astounded, some feel especially blessed, many receive Christ, all treasure what just happened. This time, for reasons known only to God, the box was thrown out with all of its contents except for the Bible and the copy of the Constitution. I found it all in a trash can as we were cleaning up. I was stunned, to say the least, and felt deep sorrow, because I know the Word of God.

I've thought about this, and I'm glad this didn't happen 8 or 9 years ago. Having a track record helped. But the thing is, the Word of God is Truth, and this reflected just how true God's Word is.

1. The parable of the sower and the soils. Matthew 13:1-9 and 18-23; Mark 4:1-9 and 13-20; Luke 8:4-8
2. Who has believed? John 12:37-50
3. The Reason for Parables. Matthew 13:10-17

Christians are called to show forth the love, grace, and goodness of God, to bless, to do good, to pray, "that you may love the children of your Father which is in heaven: for He makes His sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust...Be therefore perfect (mature; complete), even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect." Matthew 5:48.

Ours is not to judge; God is Judge. Ours is to represent the nature of God and His ways. When we present the gospel, we are only the messengers, those who cry out, Behold, the Lamb. The results are up to God, and we never know whether we are breaking up stony ground or fallow ground, or watching the judicial hardening of God take place.

The lesson for us is: Today if you will hear His Voice, harden not your hearts as in the provocation, in the day of temptation in the wilderness...Exhort one another daily, while it is called Today; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin...Today is the day of salvation. (Psalm 96; Hebrews 3, 4; 2 Corinthians 6:2)

Here it is: salvation in a sentence.

## Salvation in a Sentence

- By grace ([Ephesians 2.8, 9](#); [Titus 3.5](#); [Romans 6.23](#))
- you see your true condition; ([Romans 3.23](#); [Proverbs 14.12](#))
- understand the nature of God ([1 John 1:1-5](#); [1 John 4.8-10](#); [Isaiah 6.3](#); [Exodus 34.7](#); [Psalm 89.23](#))
- and who Jesus is and what He did; ([John 1.1,14](#); [John 3.16](#); [Isaiah 53](#); [Acts 2.36](#); [Romans .8-11](#))
- perceive the need to repent of sin, believe in Jesus and His word that He died to pay the penalty for your sin and rose from the dead; ([1 Corinthians 15.3, 4](#); [John 5.39,40](#))
- receive Him as Savior, Lord, and Master, ([John 1.12](#); [Luke 16.13](#); [Acts 4.12](#); [1 John 5.11-13](#))
- to follow Him in full trust, reliance, and confidence ([Luke 12.31, 32](#))
- and accept the free gift of eternal life ([John 6.47](#); [John 17.3](#); [1 John 5.10-13](#)).

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