

# *the* **FOLLOWERS**

November 2, 2014  
Celebration | 8:45 am  
Pastor Dave Mitchell

## John Mark

Restored After Failure: Mark's life reveals how restoration after failure is possible

### As Followers of Jesus:

**We must accept that failure may occur, even in some of the strongest spiritual relationships.**

Here is Mark's spiritually rich life:

- Mark was reared by a mother that followed Christ. Acts 12:12
- Mark experienced powerful answers to prayers by believers. Acts 12
- Mark was influenced by mature leaders in the church. Peter (Acts 12), Barnabas (Colossians 4:10), Paul (Acts 12:24-25)
- Mark witnessed God's power that will remove evil political leaders. Acts 12:20-25
- Mark learned from strong biblical teaching. Acts 13:5
- Mark watched God's miraculous power convert people to Christ. Acts 13:9-12

**We painfully learn that failure can tear apart some of the most mature relationships.**

- Mark was a helper on the ministry team of Paul and Barnabas. Acts 13:1-5
- Mark left the outreach ministry of Paul and Barnabas. Acts 13:13
- Mark's failure hurt the relationship and plans for Barnabas and Paul. Acts 15:36-41
- Therefore, our failure can divide relationships and appear as spiritual rebellion. Acts 15:38  
*"But Paul kept insisting that they should not take him along who had deserted them in Pamphylia and had not gone with them to the work"*

Desert =

**By the grace of Christ, restoration is possible for any relationships or plans that fail.**

How Mark was restored is a model for us:

- Heal from your failure by trusting in mature family members that will support you. Acts 15:39
- Grow from your failure by learning from godly leaders that mentor you in your faith. I Peter 5:13
- Restore after your failure by living in the grace of Christ for each other. I Timothy 1:12-16
- Be patient after your failure since it takes time for God to reconcile (change) relationships.  
*"Pick up Mark and bring him with you, for he is useful to me for service."* II Timothy 4:11

II Corinthians 2:6-11

## Live with the hope that God heals and restores any that turn to Him.

- **God restored Mark so he wrote the Gospel of Mark in our Bibles.** II Corinthians 5:17-21  
*“Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come. Now all these things are from God, who reconciled us to Himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation, namely, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and He has committed to us the word of reconciliation. Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were making an appeal through us; we beg you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.”*
- **Reconcile** = to change a person or relationship. In Greek = “katallage” meaning “restored to favor”

*With whom and where do you need reconciliation? Are you reconciled with God by Jesus Christ?*

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### Digging Deeper:

John Mark is one of the lesser known followers of Jesus. He was not one of the original 12 disciples, but was apparently saved later after Christ was ascended into heaven. Mark’s mother was a Christian that owned a rather large home where believers would gather. So he likely had a comfortable lifestyle with other believers in his family, such as his cousin Barnabas, that also appeared wealthy because of some land he owned on Cyprus. We learn from Mark’s life that even with all those qualities in his favor, he had his moment when he failed and left the ministry with Paul and Barnabas. From his life, we learn how God can still restore anyone to Himself and other people that may have been hurt from that failure.

### LifeGroup Discussion:

1. When have you experienced failure? What did you learn from that experience?
2. When have you been hurt or disappointed by the failure of another person? What have you learned from that experience?
3. Learn about Peter’s mentoring of Mark: Peter described Mark as his “son” in I Peter 5:13. Read that passage. Mark was not Peter’s biological son, but likely a spiritual son that he helped grow in his faith. After Mark’s failure, why would Peter be a good resource for Mark based on Peter’s difficulties that Mark recorded in the gospel he wrote? Read Mark 14:26-42, 66-72.  
How many ways did Peter disappoint Jesus in that passage?  
How was Peter uniquely qualified to console and guide Mark to restore him to ministry?
4. Paul said in Acts 15:38 that Mark “deserted” them when he left their missionary journey in Acts 13:13. The word “deserted” is a strong word that has been used to describe a person in revolt or falling away in their faith or beliefs as in Hebrews 3:12. That is a strong indictment against Mark by Paul. And yet we know after a number of years, that Paul and Mark were reconciled as seen in I Timothy 4:11. That should give us hope that reconciliation is always possible.
5. Read I Timothy 1:12-16 on why Paul would offer Mark grace based on his own past experience?
6. Read II Corinthians 5:16-21. What ministry are we all called to in this passage? Remember, “reconcile” means to change and restore relationship. For example, God reconciled all that believe in Jesus by changing them from sin to righteousness as described in II Corinthians 5:21.
7. Who is God calling you to reconcile with? How might you need to change to make that reconciliation possible? What will you ask God to change in others to be able to reconcile? He alone changes people.

### Next Steps:

1. Is there someone in your life that you need to pursue reconciliation with? Take a next step in the reconciliation process by calling the Calvary Care Counseling Center at 714.550.2390 to receive counseling and encouragement as you pursue reconciliation with someone. [calvarylife.org/care](http://calvarylife.org/care)
2. Do you need prayer for restoration in your faith or reconciliation in your relationships? Use ‘The Card’ located in the chair rack in front of you to submit prayer requests. These prayer requests are prayed for weekly by Calvary’s prayer teams and ministries.
3. Would you like to be discipled (mentored) by a fellow Christian or sign up to be a disciple (mentor) of a fellow Christian? Contact Laura Copeland, the LifeGroups & Discipleship Director, at [LCopeland@calvarylife.org](mailto:LCopeland@calvarylife.org) or 714.550.2398.  
[calvarylife.org/discipleship](http://calvarylife.org/discipleship)