

John Left Them

The more I study the Bible, the more I realize just how much we can learn from every individual mentioned.

What can we learn from the life of John Mark? What does John Mark's life have to do with you and me? What does God want to teach us through this man's life?

If I were to compile every verse that mentions Mark by name and write a biography of his life, I think I'd end up with 7 chapters. Those **7 chapters** would follow 7 stages of his story.

Chapter #1 - A Quality First Impression. **Acts 12:12**

¹² When he realized this, he went to the house of Mary, the mother of John whose other name was Mark, where many were gathered together and were praying.

Facts about Mark:

1. He grew up in Jerusalem.
2. His mother was named Mary.
3. Her house was a frequent gathering place for the early church.
4. He knew the apostles well and they knew him.
5. He was a Christian. He was a believer in Jesus. More facts about Mark.

6. As a child, he grew up in a Jewish family.
7. He was the cousin of Barnabas (Col. 4:10 - cousin, or possibly Barnabas's nephew), who was a Levite (Acts 4:36).
8. He was the writer of the gospel according to Mark.

Guesses about Mark:

1. Some have wondered if his house, or rather, his mom's house was the house with the upper room where Jesus and the disciples held the last supper.
2. Many believe that Mark was an eyewitness to much of the events of Jesus' life and ministry.
3. Many believe that Mark wrote about himself in Mark 14:51.

From what I can gather of Mark's introduction to the apostle Paul, Mark made a good first impression. He was young, but there was something about him that caught Paul's attention.

Chapter #2 - Invited To Participate. Acts 12:25, 13:5

25 And Barnabas and Saul returned from Jerusalem when they had completed their service, bringing with them John, whose other name was Mark.

Of all the believers they had met with in Jerusalem, the one person who stood out the most was Mark. When they

returned to Antioch, the one person whom they brought with them was Mark.

5 When they arrived at Salamis, they proclaimed the word of God in the synagogues of the Jews. And they had John to assist them.

John-Mark was doing something right. He got to partner with 2 of the godliest men on the planet.

A challenge for us today: God is in the business of inviting us to participate in ministry. At home, at church, at work, and when you're out and about, God invites you to participate in ministry.

Chapter #3 - A Determination To Quit. Acts 13:13

13 Now Paul and his companions set sail from Paphos and came to Perga in Pamphylia. And John left them and returned to Jerusalem,

What happened? There have been many ideas thrown out, but the truth is, we don't know.

God never told us why he left. I wonder if God did that for a reason. Maybe God wants us to know that when it comes to living the life God calls us to live, there will be

the temptation to give up and quit. The temptations come from a variety of reasons.

Have you ever messed up?

Have you ever felt like running away and starting over?

Chapter #4 - Unwelcomed And Unwanted. Acts 15:37-38

37 Now Barnabas wanted to take with them John called Mark. 38 But Paul thought best not to take with them one who had withdrawn from them in Pamphylia and had not gone with them to the work.

The months went by, but time did not heal the wound. Sometimes in life, giving up and running away only makes matters worse.

Chapter #5 - Given Another Chance. Acts 15:39-40; 1 Peter 5:13

39 And there arose a sharp disagreement, so that they separated from each other. Barnabas took Mark with him and sailed away to Cyprus, 40 but Paul chose Silas and departed, having been commended by the brothers to the grace of the Lord.

Mark may have thought that God had given up on him, but when Barnabas refused to go with Paul, I believe God was reaching out to Mark saying, “I have never given up on you. And though you did mess up, I still want you.”

13 She who is at Babylon, who is likewise chosen, sends you greetings, and so does Mark, my son.

Chapter #6 - Back In Action. Colossians 4:10; Philemon 24

10 Aristarchus my fellow prisoner greets you, and Mark the cousin of Barnabas (concerning whom you have received instructions—if he comes to you, welcome him),

Some 12 years after Paul had written Mark off, we find Mark visiting Paul in prison. Without a doubt, Paul’s respect for Mark has been restored.

24 and so do Mark, Aristarchus, Demas, and Luke, my fellow workers.

Chapter#7 - Finishing A Winner. 2 Timothy 4:11; Mark 1:1-16:20

11 Luke alone is with me. Get Mark and bring him with you, for he is very useful to me for ministry.

How useful was Mark for ministry? God used Mark, one of only four men in history to write an inspired account of the Life and Ministry of Jesus Christ, the Savior of the world.

Mark finished a winner.

Here's the lesson I'm learning from Mark.

**IT'S BETTER TO GET UP AND KEEP GOING
THAN TO GIVE UP AND QUIT GOING.**