



Lesson #6: God Doesn't Give Up on You (Acts 13)

Acts 13 records for us some important information about the missions work of the early church.

13:1-3 records the _____ of Barnabas and Saul

13:5 records the _____ of John Mark to be their assistant

13:6-12 records the _____ Gospel ministry of these men

It is right in the middle of this narrative about God's work we are struck by an unusual comment from Luke. Right when it seemed like God was working the best in their midst we read that John Mark deserts his coworkers (Acts 13:13).

In this text, we have an example of _____. You will notice in John Mark's life his forgiveness but to get to that point we must first talk about his foolishness. In many ways John Mark is the New Testament _____. Just like that Old Testament prophet, John Mark abandoned God's clear commission on his life. But while John Mark's life is most definitely a warning it is also an encouragement. In today's lesson we will spend time addressing both.

THE DESERTER WILL _____ PERSONAL CONSEQUENCES

John Mark made a decision that must have haunted him for years afterwards.

A. The deserter will waste his _____

John Mark had a privileged background. His _____ was actually a prominent Christian in Jerusalem. The early church trusted her enough to host their prayer meetings in her home (Acts 12:12). Add to this familial connection the fact that John Mark was closely related to _____ (Colossians 4:10). In many ways his upbringing should have prepared him.

B. The deserter will lose _____

Consider what John Mark's unfaithfulness _____ him. He sat home while Paul and his comrades were spreading the Gospel and winning souls. He sat home while the whole city of Antioch came to hear Paul preach. He sat home while the Gentiles were rejoicing over the Gospel. His life is a warning. If you desert God's calling you will miss God's _____.

C. The deserter will lose _____

For years after this desertion John Mark lost the respect of the Apostle _____. If the world disrespects you, you can expect it, but if godly saints do not respect you, you have lost valuable _____.

THE DESERTER CAN _____ CLOSE FRIENDS

John Mark's desertion became a point of great conflict between Barnabas and Paul (Acts 15:37-39). The sharp disagreement between these two men in Acts 15 came as a direct result of John Mark's desertion back in Acts 13.

A. Your desertion is never just _____

What many people don't realize when they make choices to split off from ministries is that those choices do have profound _____. We mark our choices and our choices turn around and make us.

B. Your desertion is never just _____

Whoever said, "As long as the choices people make do not affect others, then you are free to do what you want," was terribly wrong. That statement is contradictory. The choices you make will always _____ someone. You don't live your life in a bubble. At times, a choice may primarily affect the person who makes it, but never _____.

THE DESERTER CAN BE _____ THROUGH RESTORATION

John Mark's story doesn't end in miserable _____ but continues to missional _____.

A. John Mark was restored to fellowship with the _____ whose confidence he deserted

Although it took time, John Mark was eventually able to regain Paul's confidence. When Paul would later write to Timothy he would instruct Timothy to bring John Mark "for he is _____ to me" (2 Timothy 4:11). Despite his failure, John Mark didn't quit and eventually was praised as a diligent worker for God in the ministry. In Philemon 24 Paul lists John Mark as a "_____ of his."

B. John Mark was restored to fellowship with the _____ whose commission he deserted

It is good for us to consider what John Mark did *not* do in this instance.

1. He did not give up on himself and _____
2. He did not become so _____ that he withdrew into a shell
3. He did not become _____ over a loss of confidence

This part of the message is really for the downhearted and dejected. If you feel your failure in ministry means you cannot be used again let John Mark's example enlighten your thinking.

Concluding Thoughts

God does not require His children to be talented, intelligent, handsome, or perfect. But God is looking for one important character trait - _____. In our text today we are given an example of unfaithfulness. It involves a man named John Mark who became a deserter (Acts 13:13). But John Mark would once again be used by God in mighty ways even after his desertion. His life teaches us all that **although a person may fail the Lord greatly there is always the blessed consolation or _____ when he is forgiven.**