

# Making Good From Disaster

*Barnabas wanted to take John, also called Mark, with them,  
but Paul did not think it wise to take him,  
because he had deserted them in Pamphylia and had not continued with them in the work.  
They had such a sharp disagreement that they parted company.  
Barnabas took Mark and sailed for Cyprus,  
but Paul chose Silas and left, commended by the believers to the grace of the Lord.  
He went through Syria and Cilicia, strengthening the churches.  
Acts 15:37-41 NIV*

**T**he first great division in the Christian community is recorded in Acts 15 and the two men who quarreled were Paul and Barnabas. The occasion of their dispute was whether to take John Mark with them on the second missionary journey.

On the first journey Paul and Barnabas took John Mark along as an apprentice. However when the going got tough John Mark deserted them and fled home to his mother in Jerusalem.

When the two men planned the second journey Barnabas wanted to give the young man John Mark a second opportunity to succeed. On the other hand Paul felt they needed men who were proven under pressure. He did not

have time for a quitter.

The argument between Paul and Barnabas became so sharp that they separated never to work together again. So the young man became the occasion for the division between the two great men. Mark was now saddled with an unfavourable reputation to try to live down.

To his credit, Barnabas stayed with Mark and shaped him into a great leader in the early church. The lesson here for us is that if we have a sad failure in Christian ministry it is possible to overcome such a deficit and go on to do wonderful things for the Lord. Mark wrote the third Gospel in our Bibles and was the very person Paul sought when he was about to die a martyr's death.

Have you failed the Lord in some significant way? Have you been set aside because of some serious failure? God is the God of the second opportunity and you need to look for a Barnabas to take you under his wing and provide you with a place to serve quietly and consistently for some time so that your reputation is restored.

Be patient and wait for the Lord to mend fences for you. Having failed once is not the end of the world. However, giving up and ceasing from working where you are is not right. Remember the story of John Mark and pray for an opportunity to be restored to a fulfilling life of service for the best of Masters.