



THE BARNABAS FACTOR

DYNAMICS OF CHARACTER

“When Barnabas and Saul had finished their mission, they returned from Jerusalem, taking with them John, also called Mark.”
—Acts 12:25

MARKING MATURITY Acts 12-15, II Timothy 4:11

“Mark was interpreter, secretary, to Peter. He wrote down Peter’s reminiscences, being ‘careful not to leave out or falsify anything’. A lukewarm missionary, but a remarkable historian.” —Frank S. Mead

I. A PLACE OF PRAYER (Acts 12:12)

- A. The haven of the Apostle Peter.
- B. The home of the candidate.

“Beware in your prayer, above everything, of limiting God, not only by unbelief, but by fancying that you know what he can do.”

—Andrew Murray

II. A PURPOSEFUL PARTNERSHIP (Acts 12:25)

- A. The evangelistic coalition of Barnabas, Saul, and John Mark.
- B. The consigned team for the first missionary journey.
- C. Barnabas as John Mark’s mentor.

“God never destroys the work of his own hands, he removes what would pervert it, that is all. Maturity is the stage where the whole life has been brought under the control of God.” —Oswald Chambers

III. A PAINFUL PARTING (Acts 15:35-41)

- A. John Mark’s defection.
- B. Note the earlier conflict between Barnabas and Peter (Galatians 2:11-13)
- C. Barnabas’ heart of patience and grace.

“It is very difficult to be humble if you are always successful, so God chastises us with failure at times in order to humble us, to keep us in a state of humility.” —D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones

IV. A PROFITABLE PARDON (II Timothy 4:10, 11)

- A. Fellowship and partnership restored with Paul.
- B. Fulfillment for ministry in the life of John Mark.
- C. Futurity in service and the recording of the second Gospel.

“The church, God’s church, is big enough, and small enough, to exalt the humble and humble the exalted.”
—Philip Yancey



Barnabas and Paul in dispute over John Mark

FOR REFLECTION...

1. Read Mark 14:51, 52. Some commentators believe that this was John Mark, writing about himself. What are your thoughts about this view? In what ways does it suggest his personality?
2. What are some reasons why Paul and Barnabas selected John Mark to accompany them on their challenging first missionary journey? What did they see in him as far as potential?
3. In the disagreement between Peter and Barnabas, was there a right and wrong attitude regarding the issues? Which of the two would you consider to have been correct? How critical was the debate?
4. With the prospect of the second missionary tour, what might have been the factors that caused John Mark to head back home? Was his decision completely wrong and out of the will of the Lord?
5. As to Barnabas, what traits of character and maturity did he display with regard to John Mark’s departure? What might have happened had he, like Paul, dissuaded the young man?