

Seek Help for Your Wounded Soul

Fear of failure is a huge issue for most men. When things go south in a hurry, men instantly give themselves the label “failure.”

Along with this label is the feeling that God could never use them. However, this is not true! God can take any failure and turn it into something useful for His kingdom.

Let’s look at Mark, for example. Mark had what many would call a “charmed life.” As a young child, Mark had the privilege of being around Jesus. He came from a wealthy family that supported the ministry of Jesus. The first time we read about Mark in the Bible is when Jesus is being taken prisoner in the Garden of Gethsemane.

“Now a certain young man followed Him, having a linen cloth thrown around his naked body. And the young men laid hold of him, and he left the linen cloth and fled from them naked”(Mark 14:51-52).

Most believe this young man is Mark since the only Gospel that describes this experience is the book of Mark. Apparently, Mark was in bed when he heard Jesus and the disciples leave the upper room, and he decided to follow them. When the mob came and arrested Jesus, this young man was grabbed but was able to escape by leaving his blanket and running away naked.

This appears to be no big deal. However, running scared came to be the defining characteristic of Mark’s early life.

We don’t read about Mark again until many years later. Paul and Barnabas were handpicked by God to go far and wide and preach the Gospel, and Mark was chosen as their assistant. It was the internship that most men only dream of.

Mark was given the privilege of being the right-hand man for the evangelistic dream team. He would serve alongside them and take care of all of their needs. Unfortunately, as we continue on through the book of Acts, we learn that it was an opportunity that Mark squandered.

“Now when Paul and his party set sail from Paphos, they came to Perga in Pamphylia; and John [Mark], departing from them, returned to Jerusalem” (Acts 13:13).

Mark abandoned them. It is important to realize Mark's responsibilities. Paul and Barnabas were probably middle-aged men. Everywhere they went they went on foot. They had to carry their own supplies and protect themselves from animals and thieves.

This is the reason why a young man like Mark was sent along. He was to be their muscle, their packhorse and their physical support as they did their spiritual work. When Mark abandoned them, they were forced to pick up his responsibilities and balance both the spiritual and physical work, bearing the weight and exhaustion that accompanied each set of duties. Fortunately, they met another young man named Timothy.

What was it that made Mark abandon them? The Bible doesn't say. All we know is that something spooked him, and as a result, he left the missionary team high and dry. Mark came home a failure, and everyone knew it!

He had been so full of potential, but, when given a chance, had shown himself to be a weak man. His sense of shame grew deeper when the group returned with magnificent tales of miracles and conversions and as the dynamic missionary duo prepared for their next missionary journey.

“Now Barnabas was determined to take with them John called Mark. But Paul insisted that they should not take with them the one who had departed from them in Pamphylia, and had not gone with them to the work. Then the contention became so

sharp that they parted from one another. And so Barnabas took Mark and sailed to Cyprus; but Paul chose Silas and departed" (Acts 15:37-40).

Can you imagine what it must have felt like to be the cause of the splitting of one of the greatest ministry teams to ever be formed? Paul had made it perfectly clear that he had no use for Mark as a helpmate. How's that for a glowing recommendation to attach to your resume?

Mark had successfully destroyed the ministry team and was now labeled as a man who was of no use as a minister. It seemed that his future ministry potential was gone. Mark's state seems hopeless and destitute.

Mark, the failure, was at the end of his rope. He turned to an old friend, Peter, for help. If there was one man who understood the deep hurt and pain that Mark was facing because of his failure, it was Peter. Peter had experienced the same feelings as Mark after denying Jesus. Peter understood the feelings of hopelessness. Peter knew what it felt like to have failed so miserably that you thought your entire life was destroyed. Peter understood the great sense of self-loathing Mark was enduring.

However, Peter also knew that forgiveness and restoration were available for Mark. This is exactly what he offered Mark.

Peter gave Mark the one thing that he needed more than anything. He gave him love, acceptance and forgiveness. He reached out to Mark and helped him deal with all the hurt and pain he was facing. He offered Mark a shoulder to cry on, an ear to listen, arms to embrace and hands to hold on to as Mark tried to become a restored man. Peter could do this for Mark because Jesus had done it for him.

God allowed Peter to minister to Mark because he could relate to him in a way that no one else could. Mark was restored to a place of ministry. He ministered alongside Peter. He wrote

what has become the Gospel of Mark based on the teachings that had been set out for him by Peter. He was even restored to Paul and once again received Paul's blessing. God was able to make Mark into a useful man for His glory.

No matter what you have done to your life or how you have failed, there is hope for you. God can take any man who is broken and make him whole.

He will bring men into your life to help you out of your state of failure as He did with Mark. He can restore your broken life and make you into a strong, vibrant believer. All you need to do is seek God for help and allow Him to heal your wounded soul. There is restoration for the broken life.

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