

PERMISSION GRANTED: To Figure Out How Life in Christ Works

Pastor Joe McConkey

The Story of John Mark

Acts 4:36-37; 9:20-28 Barnabas & Paul begin their partnership
Acts 12 Herod, James, Peter, the Prayer at Mary and Mark's
Acts 13:4-5, 13 Barnabas, Paul and Mark on mission
Acts 15:36-40 Paul & Barnabas part ways over Mark
2 Timothy 4:10-11 Paul, 14 years later, on John Mark
1 Peter 5:13 Peter, on Mark

Here's What We Know About Walking with God:

It is a process.

Philippians 1:6

It has many twists, turns and failures.

Proverbs 24:16

It can happen!

John 15:8

How To Walk With God:

One word: Grace

Titus 2:11-12 "*The grace of God...is training us...to live godly lives...*"

We walk with God by:

A new identity Ephesians 1:3-14

A new power Ephesians 1:15-23

A new strategy Ephesians 2:1-10

The key is to consistently grow in His grace!

2 Peter 3:17-19

Food for Thought for the week of April 24, 2016

(Questions and Scriptures for further study and discussion.)

1. Looking back at your notes from this week's sermon, was there anything that particularly caught your attention, challenged, or confused you?
2. What did you learn from the story of John Mark? What things could cause us to withdraw from service to God or even from God Himself?
3. Which is more important, beginning or ending well? Why?
4. Tell your group about a time you "threw in the towel".
5. Growing in Christ is a process. Why is this critical to understand?
6. Read Galatians 3:1-3 NIV Why do we struggle to consistently live by the Spirit? What things typically "bewitch" us? Hint: pride, ego and the like
7. Read Acts 13:5, 13 Why did Mark quit? Why do you think God allows us to quit and throw in the towel?
8. Read Acts 15:36-40 As you think about the situation with Paul and Barnabas. What was the problem? Who was right? Who was wrong?
9. Read Matthew 5:3 (The Message version) Why does God want us to come to the end of ourselves, difficult as that may be? What are the benefits of our failures and misfires?
10. Read Titus 2:11-12 What does a "grace of God" based life look like? How does grace train us?
11. What is our new identity (Col. 3:4), new power (Rom. 1:16), and new strategy (Gal. 2:20)?

Application:

1. What things draw us back into service for the Lord and a closer walk with Him?
2. One of our Pleasant Valley core values is to Grow in Christ Together. Discuss how your small group can put this into practice.

Further Study & Resources:

1. More on new "identity in Christ" Ephesians 1:1-14 (Check out Freedom in Christ Ministries)
2. More on new "power in Christ" Ephesians 1:15-23 (Get into a PV Small Group)
3. More on new "strategy in Christ" Ephesians 2:1-10 (Check out the PV Ministry Starting Point)

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