

DAY 27

Failure-Redeemers: Legendary Leader 5

Barnabas wanted to take along John who was called Mark. But Paul insisted that they should not take along this man who had deserted them in Pamphylia and had not gone on with them to the work. They had such a sharp disagreement that they parted company, and Barnabas took Mark with him and sailed off to Cyprus.

Acts 15:37–39

Leadership Affirmation

I look for the best in every person, wondering how God wants to use them for His glory.

Legend-Making Leaders are Failure-Redeemers. The last reference to Barnabas in the book of Acts comes on the heels of the Jerusalem Conference. The Apostles assembled leaders from the churches to discuss the nature of salvation. After much debate, “the apostles and the elders and the whole church” settled once and for all the “grace alone, faith alone, in Christ alone” certainty of God’s salvation for all people. They penned a letter to be delivered to all the churches (Acts 15:1–29).

Paul and Barnabas took the letter to Antioch, where they remained for a ministry visit. Then Paul suggested to Barnabas that they return to the churches they had planted on their first missionary journey. Barnabas wanted to take John Mark with them. Paul disagreed since Mark had abandoned the mission team on their first journey. When they could not reach an agreement, they went their separate ways. Paul and Silas took the northern route to Asia Minor while Barnabas and Mark returned to Cyprus (Acts 15:36–41). In God’s sovereignty, the team broke up, but the ministry multiplied.

Barnabas, true to his nature, is always looking for a way to show grace. Paul, true to his nature, isn’t willing to trust Mark with that level of responsibility until he earns it back. The men reach an impasse: Barnabas isn’t going without him, and Paul isn’t going with him. So, they separated.

Barnabas was able to redeem Mark for effective ministry. Mark later traveled with Peter. Mark wrote the first of the four Gospels. Barnabas even redeemed Mark in the eyes of Paul (2 Timothy 4:11). Legend-making leaders seek to redeem failures for future usefulness in the Kingdom.

Prayer for Protection

Lord, let me see with Your eyes, refusing to believe a young leader’s potential is defined by failure in previous service.