

Failure Doesn't Have to be Final

- A. Demas and Mark are contrasts in failure. One provides words of warning, the other words of hope.
- B. As people who stumble in many ways (*James 3:2*), we need both.

I. Contrasts in Failure

- A. _____, "*in love with this present world.*"
 1. Some of the last words of the apostle Paul express heartbreak (*2 Tim 4:1-10*).
 2. What happened? Whatever it was, Paul saw it as a love affair with the present world.
- B. _____, "*very useful to [Paul] for ministry.*"
 1. Just a few sentences later, Paul writes some very hope-giving words (*2 Tim 4:11*).
 2. Remember Mark? (*Acts 12:12,25; 13:1-5,13; 15:35-40*).
 3. Now, approximately 15 years later, we get the sense that Paul trusts Mark completely.

II. Words of Warning and Hope

- A. Demas: words of _____.
 1. From all indications, he began well. Paul described him four or five years earlier as a "*fellow worker*" (*Col 4:10-17; Philem 23-24*).
 2. There was a time when Demas apparently made the same choice as Moses (*Heb 11:24-25*).
 3. He doesn't appear to have ended well, which leads us to words of warning (*1 Pet 1:13-16; 4:1-2; 5:6-10; 1 John 2:15-17*).
 4. Ours is a "*fight of faith*" (*1 Tim 6:11-12*) in which we must "*stand firm*" (*Eph 6:13*).
- B. Mark: words of _____.
 1. From all indicators, he had a weak start. But he grew and matured and proved himself to be a faithful, trusted, useful warrior in the Lord's service.
 2. Which leads us to words of hope (*Isa 40:30-31*).

III. Good News for Fellow Stumblers

- A. All of us fail. Some of our failures produce massive consequences. But if we turn from our sinful failures to follow Christ, there is no failure that cannot be redeemed at the _____ (*1 Pet 3:18*).
- B. If we will humble ourselves under the mighty hand of God (*1 Pet 5:6-7*), there is no failure that Christ cannot restore to useful service.
- C. Jesus choose and uses _____. Paul knew this from experience (*1 Tim 1:12-17*).

Conclusion:

- A. We don't know the last word on Demas. Mark reminds us that failure doesn't have to be final.
- B. Whatever your past failures, your trajectory can be changed at the foot of the cross (*Phil 3:12-14*).