

## “QUITTING AND GOING HOME”

Acts 13:13

Pastor Keith E. Gephart

“And John left them and returned to Jerusalem.”

People are quitting all the time: their marriages, their families, their jobs—prematurely and out of God’s will, their life goals and plans (as God has led them), their church (not for the right reasons), their call to ministry—not just “full time” calling, but ministry in the church according to their gifting and calling.

### What does it take to get you to quit serving God and ministering in your church?

There are many reasons that people quit:

- \*Discouragement
- \*Hurt and bitterness
- \*Moral impurity
- \*Worldliness and materialism
- \*Peer pressure
- \*Fear
- \*Disappointment in other people
- \*“Burnout”
- \*Lack of fruit or outward results
- \*Do not get their way
- \*Disagreement over non-essentials
- \*Misunderstandings
- \*Homesickness
- \*“The grass is greener” complex
- \*Physical problems
- \*Trials or persecution
- \*Financial pressures
- \*Many other reasons

In this passage we see an example of one who quit the ministry and left a missionary team. He was a *good* young man with *great potential*.

There have been many John Marks over the centuries—many ministries have been hurt, churches weakened, other believers discouraged, God not glorified, their own lives unfulfilled because of lack of perseverance. **And pastors are some of the worst offenders!**

Where are the Phil Calcianos? The Sandy Monroes? The Ted Bowmans? Helen Wilsons? The Russell Whitleys? The Doug Sextons? The Cecil and Wanda Downs?

**DARE TO BE FAITHFUL AND STAY TRUE TO THE LORD AND TO THE MINISTRY AND CHURCH TO WHICH GOD HAS CALLED YOU.**

- I. THE FOLLY OF IT
  - A. He quit at such a crucial time,
  - B. He quit when the prospects were so good,
  - C. He quit just before God’s greatest blessing,
  - D. He quit on a God-ordained mission.
- II. THE FAMILY BACKGROUND
  - A. Excellent Home—Mary
  - B. Excellent Cousin—Barnabas
  - C. Excellent opportunities

- Eyewitness of the events of Jesus' life
- Experienced the power of the beginnings of the NT church—meeting in his home
- Rubbed shoulders with the great leaders of Christianity

### III. THE POSSIBLE EXPLANATIONS FOR HIS FAILURE

- Mosquitoes gave him malaria—no evidence of, and why would Paul be so upset if that had been the case?
- Anxiety over people back home—esp. in light of the famine.
- Homesickness (cf. college students, missionaries, people who serve in other states away from home and family)
 

**Illustration: Gepharts—coming to Arizona; staying in Arizona**
- Lack of Courage
  - Dangers in the mountain passes
  - Rigors of the inland missions work they were about to take on.
- Resentment over Paul's new leadership role [the Greatness of Barnabas] and his family ties—Barnabas was his cousin.
- Change of [and disagreement over] plans for the work: Perga to Antioch.
- Paul's Gentile strategy—too wide-reaching to suit Mark—note the name change to "Paul".  
Any or all of these factors could have been involved in John Mark's quitting of this ministry endeavor.

**The Bottom line is: HE QUIT!**

### IV. FRICTION BETWEEN BARNABAS AND PAUL—15:37-39

Notice the problems that can be caused because one quits—even with great leaders!

### V. FORGIVENESS AND FUTURE MINISTRY FOR BARNABAS

- With Barnabas in 15:37-39
- With Paul—Col. 4:10; II Tim. 4:11  
Thank the Lord that there is mercy and forgiveness with the Him!  
But, how much better if we don't cause the damage in the first place.

### VI. CONTINUED FAITHFULNESS OF PAUL AND BARNABAS IN THE MINISTRY

**Don't you be discouraged when John Marks quit—Keep on being faithful!**

### CONCLUSION

See John 6:66-71.

**Where are the Daniels? Where are the Josephs? The Moses'?**

**Are you going to be one of them?**