

Mark [John]

Mark's mother named Mary was related to Barnabas, [Colossians 4:10] the wealthy Levite from Cyprus who was a landowner, [Acts 4:36-37] and whatever his country of origin, was a resident of Jerusalem in the days of the early Christian Church.

Mark's mother Mary appears to have been a woman of wealth and position, as well as a Christian. Certainly her house was large enough to house a number of people, boasted at least one maidservant and was used as a meeting place by the apostolic Church even in time of persecution, [Acts 12:12-14].

Peter, when released from prison by angel, knew exactly where he would find fellow Christians, [Acts 12:5-12].

John Mark's father is nowhere mention in scripture and the fact that the house is called Mary's, it has been inferred that he was dead by that date, and Mary was a widow.

The young man mentioned in Mark 14:51, who saved himself by ignominious flight, is usually taken to be Mark.

It would be neither safe or customary for the author to mention his own name in such circumstances.

John Mark apparently remained at home until brought to Antioch by Barnabas and Paul who were returning from a relief mission to Jerusalem, [Acts 12:25].

Then Mark accompanied Paul and Barnabas on their first missionary journey to Cyprus, [Acts 13:5]. **When the party reached Perga on the mainland of Asia Minor, John Mark returned to Jerusalem, [Acts 13:13].**

Paul regarded this as desertion and thus when Barnabas suggested Mark as a travelling companion for the second journey, Paul refused point-blank, [Acts 15:38].

Barnabas took Mark back to Cyprus with him and Paul took Silas instead of Mark. After this, Mark is lost from view in Acts, but appears spasmodically in the Epistles.

By the time of **Colossians 4:10** Mark was with Paul, presumably at Rome. Paul apparently intended to send Mark on a mission to Colossae, must have forgiven and forgotten the past.

Mark is also mentioned in **Philemon 24**, among the same apostolic group which included Luke.

By the time of writing **2 Timothy 4:11**, Mark is now with Timothy, but there has been no rift. Presumably this means that Paul had sent Mark on a mission to Asia Minor, if Timothy was needed in Ephesus.

The fact that books and parchments are mentioned, [verse 13] could indicate the role that Mark often played when with Paul.

Mark made mistakes but he learnt from them, encouraged by the patience of Barnabas who stood by him.

We need to appreciate the encouragement we are patiently given by others in our Christian life.

Lessons we can learn from the life of John Mark –

Personal maturity usually comes from a combination of time and learning from mistakes.

Mistakes are not usually as important as what we can learn from them.

Effective living is not measured as much by what we accomplish as by what we overcome in order to accomplish it.

Encouragement can change the direction of a person's life.