



GO! BE THE CHURCH  
"Mission Evangelization as a Strategy  
for Congregational Transformation"  
A Bible Study for Lent or Any Season

***Leaders' Guide***

**WRITER: Mark** - Although the author is anonymous when you look strictly at the words in the Gospel of Mark, tradition says that the author of the second Gospel, Mark, is John Mark (Mark being a surname), the son of one of the New Testament "Marys", and the nephew of Barnabas. He is mentioned in the writings of Luke in Acts 12:12 and 25, Acts 15:37 and 39 and by Paul in Colossians 4:10, 2 Timothy 4:11, and Philemon 1:24 as a colleague of the apostles. He is said to have written these words in Rome as a summary of Peter's sermons and for the gentile Christians in Italy.

**DATE:** The Gospel of Mark is widely considered to be the earliest Gospel of the four Gospels in the New Testament written down when eye witnesses to the life of Christ were dying. The date of Mark has been placed between A.D. 57 and 64 AD.

**THEME of the GOSPEL OF MARK:** The scope and purpose of the book are very clear: Jesus is God's Son and God's Servant. Jesus is the mighty Worker. All through the Gospel the servant character of Jesus is seen.

But this Servant, who became a man, was, even so, "the mighty God" (Mark 1:1). So he does mighty works that authenticate and validate His ministry. Because this Gospel is the gospel of a Servant-Messiah, Mark is characteristically a Gospel of deeds, rather than words.

In every Gospel a unique Personality is revealed. Jesus is King in Matthew, **Servant in Mark**, Man in Luke, and God in John. **When you put them all together what you have is not a biography, but a Personality.** We do not learn the facts of Jesus life from birth through death. We do not see a complete biography. That is not important. What is important is the complete Personality of the Christ. To the Gospel writers it is not important that we know every detail of his life. What is important to Mark, as well as the other Gospel writers, is that we get to know Jesus – what he stood for, what he believed, and, especially in Mark, what he did as the Son of God and the Son of Man.

For your own preparation, prayerfully read Isaiah 42:1-21; Isaiah 50:4-11; Isaiah 52:13-53:12; Zechariah 3:8; Philippians 2:5-8

**THEME of the STUDY GUIDE:**

**Read Matthew 9:35-39.** Since its advent in the ministry of Jesus Christ, as described in Matthew, Christianity has been unapologetically evangelical and missionary. The church of Jesus Christ, as we understand it, does not have a mission, it is mission. It is God's mission to reach every living soul with God's offer of reconciliation through the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Christian mission, in other words, is rooted in the "mission Dei", the self-revelation and missionary initiative of the Triune God. That evangelical and missionary impulse, in a global context, has not diminished. Worldwide, the "harvest is plentiful," and the laborers are just as

plentiful. In Africa alone the number of Christian adherents has increased from near 9 million in 1900 to near 350 million currently with a projection of reaching 700 million by 2025. In settings where the political climate has not been conducive to growth, the Church has nevertheless grown. Membership in the Methodist Church in Cuba, for instance, has more than tripled in the last 15 year.

The exception to this growth has been among the so-called “main line” denominations in the western world of Europe and North America. There, population growth has far outstripped growth in church membership. In the state of Florida, for instance, 7 out of every ten persons are unchurched. This discontinuity is due, not just to the rapid population growth in the state but for the fact that as many as two-thirds to four-fifths of all congregations in the state founded before 1960 are either on a plateau in size or are shrinking in numbers. “The laborers,’ it seems, “are few.” That is, too many congregations seem content with the status quo, neither expecting growth to occur nor willing to make the changes required for such growth. They are mostly unaware of what is required of them as congregations to bring the lost into the presence of the Triune God.

Christ calls the whole church to an authentic discipleship that compels us to proclaim the good news of the Kingdom of God and the salvation of the Lord. Why do we make disciples? We do not make disciples to save the church or even grow the church. Jesus makes disciples to join him in God’s great enterprise of mending the entire world. Mark pulls no punches. Discipleship requires total commitment to a relationship with the risen Christ. Total commitment includes Mission evangelization.

***The General Format of the Study***

This study is divided into six sections. Each section emphasizes a movement of the evangelical/missionary congregation. They are:

1. Introduction

2. “Proclaim the Good News”

3. A Commitment to Christ

4. Acts of a Disciple

5. The Transforming Power of the Good News

6. Disciples Witness to Their Relationship with Christ

(Mark 1-3).

(Mark 4-6)

(Mark 7-10)

(Mark 11-13)

(Mark 14-16)

**The study is designed to be done each day as a daily devotion. There is daily scripture reading and study reading with questions for each student to reflect upon on their own. These daily reflections will make up the bulk of the Bible Study content when the group gathers. So it is very important that people are encouraged to do some preparation 5 of the 7 days of the week.**

***Structure of Each Lesson***

Each lesson is divided into 5 sections:

1. The Theme (Brief Discussion of the Meaning of the Title)

2. Opening Prayer

3. What Did Mark Mean

4. Life Application

As your Bible Study Group discusses their individual answers to questions written in the Study Guide, you will cover both *What Did Mark Mean* and *Life Application*.

## 5. Closing Prayer

The lessons are designed to last approximately one hour, but you will notice that if you ask every question and deal with each in depth, your class will last about 90 minutes. This has been done on purpose because every group is a little different and every facilitator is different. You may not get to every question suggested in this guide if your class lasts only one hour. Choose the discussion questions that you believe will be the most beneficial for your particular group and fit your style of facilitation.

Minutes Used for each section:	
5	1. <b><u>The Theme:</u></b> This is a warm-up question designed to get the class involved with the lesson's theme immediately. <b><u>Do not take more than 5 minutes</u></b> using this question to introduce the theme. If only one person shares an answer, so be it. Move into the lesson. Simply ask <b><i>"What does the title of the lesson mean to you?"</i></b> or <b><i>"What does the title of the lesson have to do with being an effective church?"</i></b>
1	2. <b><u>Opening Prayer:</u></b> You may want to pass this privilege around. Besides reminding the group that God is there and a part of the discussion, it will serve as a way of closing the discussion of the Theme question and move the class into the body of the study.
45	<b><u>What Did Mark Mean:</u></b> Some of the questions are designed to give the group information about the Bible story and to engage them with the text. This material is basically non-threatening – the "head" part of the Bible study.
	3. <b><u>Application:</u></b> Some of the questions are devoted to transformation questions. This is "where the rubber meets the road" and helps people integrate the Bible study with their lives, choices, values, and behavior.
9	4. <b><u>Closing Prayer:</u></b> Take time to take prayer requests and encourage group members to pray for one another throughout the week, and then close by reading the prayer in the guide.