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The *Adult Sabbath School Bible Study Guide* is prepared by the Office of the Adult Bible Study Guide of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists. The preparation of the guides is under the general direction of the Sabbath School Publications Board, a subcommittee of the General Conference Administrative Committee (ADCOM), publisher of the Bible study guides. The published guide reflects the input of worldwide evaluation committees and the approval of the Sabbath School Publications Board and thus does not solely or necessarily represent the intent of the author(s).

Jesus Through *the* Eyes of Mark

We are about to embark on a journey that will take us to the Holy Land, to Galilee in particular. With John Mark as our guide, we will retrace the steps of the greatest Man who ever lived, Jesus Christ.

So marvelous was this life that no one account can do justice to it. In the Bible we find four Gospels, but even they, combined, cannot encompass everything about Jesus. Thus, John the beloved closes his record with the observation: “Jesus did many other things as well. If every one of them were written down, I suppose that even the whole world would not have room for the books that would be written” (*John 21:25, NIV*). That’s an incredible amount of books, but Jesus did an incredible amount of deeds.

Each of the four Gospels—Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John—was written at a different time and, at first, circulated separately. Many scholars think that Mark’s was written first, and while that’s possible, it cannot be established with certainty.

What matters is that each of the Gospels was inspired by the Holy Spirit, and each bears a united witness to Jesus Christ and what He did for the world.

Because each Gospel writer retained his individuality as he wrote, we see differences of perspective and emphasis. This is as the Lord wanted it; and, indeed, this is how the Holy Spirit works. Far from calling into question the divine inspiration of the Gospels, this variety of perspective helps to affirm it. It’s God’s way of seeking to touch lives. He wants to reach us all, who are so different, and He uses different voices to do it.

“There is variety in a tree,” wrote Ellen White, “there are scarcely two leaves just alike. Yet this variety adds to the perfection of the tree as a whole.

“In our Bible, we might ask, Why need Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John in the Gospels, why need the Acts of the Apostles, and the variety of writers in the Epistles, go over the same thing?

“The Lord gave His word in just the way He wanted it to come. He gave it through different writers, each having his own individu-

ality, though going over the same history.”—*Selected Messages*, book 1, p. 21.

John Mark’s Gospel is the shortest of the four accounts. Whereas Matthew portrays Jesus as a great teacher, Luke highlights His concerns for those on the fringes of society, John focuses on His conversations one on one with a variety of people, and Mark shows Him as a man of action. Through Mark’s eyes, we see Jesus as a man with a mission, one that He will accomplish.

Mark’s Gospel has a simple organization:

- A. Prologue (1:1-13)
- B. Ministry in Galilee (1:14–8:26)
- C. The Passion looms (8:27–10:52)
- D. Final ministry in Jerusalem (11:1–13:37)
- E. The Passion and Resurrection (14:1–16:20)

And yet, we shouldn’t be fooled by the simplicity, for just as Jesus told “simple” stories with profound implications, Mark does the same. His account is filled with powerful insights that give birth to life-changing revelations about God.

So join Mark as he takes us where Jesus walked. We will follow his account in order and, like the disciples of old, may we walk with Jesus throughout this quarter.

Mark shows Jesus as a man of action, a man with a mission, one that He will accomplish.

And though the Gospel itself was written by John Mark, our lessons come from another disciple of Jesus, a modern-day disciple, one whose words have, over the years, brought encouragement, hope, and promise to the church: Dr. William Johnsson, editor of the *Adventist Review*. A prolific writer and a well-known New Testament scholar, Dr. Johnsson takes us through the book of Mark, giving us his own Spirit-inspired insights, as well. Thus, we see Jesus through the eyes of Mark, who comes to us this quarter through the eyes of Bill.

Trustworthy views, to be sure.

How to Use This Teachers Edition

The teachers comments demonstrate different methods of teaching the standard *Adult Sabbath School Bible Study Guide*. Five parts make up the teachers comments:

- ▶ **Key Text, Lesson Aim, and Outline:** The key text is taken from the standard edition guide. The lesson aim is designed to (a) help class participants understand and know about the lesson material, (b) evoke an appropriate feeling about the lesson material that complements the lesson content and helps to internalize it, and (c) help class participants apply the lesson material to their daily lives. The lesson outline may not always follow exactly the material that appears in the standard guide. It may reflect additional perspectives as it attempts to stimulate class discussion.
- ▶ **The Commentary** follows the traditional teaching methods of Sabbath School. It explains Bible passages and provides appropriate information leading to spiritual applications.
- ▶ **The Inductive Bible-Study Method** emphasizes careful, methodical discovery of the meaning in a text. The teacher encourages and supports the learner's investigation and discovery, using distinctive approaches: (a) Study a text thoroughly and systematically before drawing a conclusion. (b) Look for textual meaning carefully and thoroughly, understand the passage in context, avoid misquoting the author. We must not develop opinions without biblical proof. (c) Share insights through group discussion as students examine a Bible passage together. (d) Apply the text to life today. (e) Allow the Holy Spirit to minister to class members during Bible study.
- ▶ **The Focus-on-Witnessing Approach** should be used in conjunction with other methods of Bible study to demonstrate how particular passages of Scripture can be used to encourage people to commit their lives to Christ and to nurture spiritual life once it has been awakened.
- ▶ **The Life-Application Approach** demonstrates how issues that grow out of Bible study can be shared in a small-group setting. This section uses an approach suitable for discussion in a small group in which interpersonal sharing and dialogue are key elements.

Use a combination of teaching methods. Within one class period it often is possible to draw from all five methods demonstrated in the teachers comments. Some teachers will prefer to focus on one method of teaching, drawing heavily on the material in the teachers comments.