



Dr. John Mark
HARRISON

The son of Mark and Debbie Harrison, John Mark grew up in a minister's home and spent most of his childhood in Alabama. He became a Christ-follower as a boy, and began to sense God calling him to ministry as a high school student. Wanting to chase a dream of playing college football, he did not initially pursue the calling to ministry. He walked on to the football team at the University of Alabama and accomplished that goal. However, during that season, John Mark couldn't shake the calling that God had put on his life. Finally surrendering his life to ministry, he began to serve in any way he could and God began to open doors.

After transferring to Samford University, John Mark completed his Bachelor of Arts in Religion in 2006. He then attended Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, graduating with his Master of Divinity (Christian Ministry) in 2010, and then completing his Doctorate of Ministry (Expository Preaching) in 2013.

John Mark met his wife Brigitte while at the University of Alabama. The daughter of Gerald and Sylvia Barron, Brigitte was born in Jackson, Mississippi and grew up moving around the east coast. She became a believer in the 8th grade and very soon after that felt the Lord calling her to ministry. Over time, the Lord revealed to her that she was specifically called to marry a pastor. When she met John Mark, she received confirmation of that calling. Growing up with a dance background, Brigitte has used fitness as her outreach to her community, teaching classes at the local gym. She also enjoys leading women's bible studies, leading worship for kid's and helping with kid's summer camps. She is very supportive and engaged in ministry to the local church. Brigitte's primary focus, however, is her faith and her family. She loves being a wife and supporting John Mark while also parenting with him as they pour into the lives of their two small children and raise them to love Christ.

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John Mark and Brigitte married in 2003 and welcomed their first son, Dax, in January of 2004. Dax passed away after living a day. This great loss has shaped their marriage and ministry in many ways. It melded them together, taught them dependence upon God, and helped them identify with broken and hurting people. God answered to grow their family in 2008 and 2015 with the arrival of their son Cade (10) and their daughter Mia (3).



In 2005, John Mark and Brigitte moved to Houston. He was the Student Pastor (Pearland Campus) for Second Baptist Church Houston, helping launch that campus, until March 2007, when he moved to Asheville, NC, to become the Student Pastor for Biltmore Baptist Church. While there, he was asked to develop systems for effective multi-site ministry and launched their very first campus as their East Campus Pastor. Then in 2012, he became the Lead Pastor for Apex Baptist Church, in Apex, NC, where the attendance has grown from 500 to over 1600, their first multi-site campus was successfully launched in 2016, and a \$4 million renovation was recently completed at their downtown campus.

A strong Bible preacher and dedicated shepherd who loves the people God has entrusted to him, John Mark is very passionate about Christ and his church. His favorite part of ministry is to see people come to know Christ, learn to walk with Christ, find out what gifts and abilities God has given them, and then discover their ministry in the church. He appreciates the leadership challenges of the established church and desires to lead the church to impact its community for Christ. He spends a lot of his time developing leaders. He relishes rubbing shoulders with men and women with tremendous leadership potential and helping them discover all that God wants to do with their life.

John Mark also loves casting vision. He enjoys the process of discovering God's vision for the church, building multi-generational consensus for it, then sharing and executing it. His leadership style is strategic and collaborative, believing a healthy relationship of trust fuels this collaboration and energizes the team to work together, each person having value and purpose. John Mark believes in leading the paid staff to practice an Ephesians 4 model for ministry through the congregation. He wants to equip the saints, not to fulfill the staff's ministry, but to train them and release them to fulfill the ministry that God has called them to. He is convinced that there must be an intentional process of education in our church and a pathway of developing disciples and leaders in order to impact our world with the gospel.

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Finally, John Mark has a servant's heart and is determined to be faithful in preaching the word of God. His favorite verse is Colossians 1:28, “Him we proclaim, warning everyone and teaching everyone with all wisdom, that we may present everyone mature in Christ.”