

**JESUS' MISSION TO THE VULNERABLE:  
THE POWER OF SERVANTHOOD IN THE GOSPEL OF MARK**

The Gospel of Mark unpacks Jesus' powerful mission to the vulnerable, who are variously called "poor," "sick," "leper," "demoniac," "Gentile," "widow," "woman," and "child." This paper seeks to fulfill two goals; namely: (1) to place Mark's original audience in its "social location" (i.e., position in a social system shared by a group of people), including the vulnerable segment (composed of the degraded, unclean, and expendables), through the use of insights from sociological studies; and (2) to survey how Mark challenged his audience to be on mission to the marginalized in their community, just as Jesus empowered the vulnerable in the narrative (using the "servanthood" model of Jesus in the Gospel). In this study, "servanthood" refers to the discipleship motif of renouncing domineering power, the exercise of service on behalf of the vulnerable, and the posture of freedom to give oneself to others, especially to those who cannot give in return.

Mark unfolds Jesus' "servanthood" motif of power in three ways: (1) through the healings, exorcisms, and miracles of Jesus; (2) through the "servanthood" expressions of Jesus; and (3) through the sacrifice of Jesus as ultimate "servanthood." In light of these three indicators of Jesus' mission to the marginalized, this paper concludes with reflections on how Christ followers today can employ his "servanthood" model to help address theologically the inequalities in a wounded world and to help respond practically to the needs of the vulnerable in a local mission context.

Chosen Field of Study: BISAM (Biblical Studies and Mission)