

# resources



## an excellent resource for the bible year

### **Will you follow me? Exploring the Gospel of Mark, by Leith Fisher (2003)**

Scottish Christian Press, £11.99 ISBN 1904325033

#### **INTRODUCTION**

Actually published in 2003, this book is just what you need for the Vision4life Bible Year. So if you already have a copy, dig it out again, and if not – get one!

You see it happens that during Vision4life Bible Year the lectionary gospel is Mark. That means you need at least one or two good Mark books to get you through. But which ones? If you like ones with loads of footnotes, you'll hate this. There are none. If you want an energetic, relevant and down to earth look at Mark's gospel in a highly readable and applicable style, then choose this.

Leith is an experienced Church of Scotland minister and member of the Iona Community. Both of these facts shine through the book. His own experience of ministry and his commitment to discipleship through the Iona Community inform it all. This makes the book highly relevant for people trying to do ministry and discipleship during Bible Year.

He begins by stating the central question of Mark's gospel: Who is Jesus? Having begun with that he follows it up with: So what? In other words, who we think Jesus is will inform both ministry and discipleship. It matters who we think Jesus is because it shapes what we do in response. Each section of the gospel is presented in a bite-sized chunks; good for sermons, for talks for discussion groups or individual reflection.

#### **STRUCTURE**

Leith provides plenty of ideas about what to do with Mark's gospel. Indeed this is one of the best things about the book. It's like a Bible Year Menu in one cover. Both individual and group study activities based on Mark's gospel are provided at the end of each short chapter. These could easily become the Nibbles and Starters (in Bible Year menu language) that you will want to use in your own context. There is also additional material entitled 'Pauses' which explore in more detail a particular issue or theme relevant to that section of the text.

#### **EVALUATION**

Overall, Leith's book is ideal for the Bible Year. As he says 'We believe the church is always in need of reform and renewal. Share together what you think might need to be changed today to make the church true to its calling and relevant to our times. Begin with the local. And be bold!' (page 104).

With this book you will be in good company all year as you respond to the question 'Will you follow me?'

Janet Lees  
10.12.2008

#### **Prayer**

Loving God, take our hands, take our lives,  
ordinary as wheat or oatmeal, daily as bread –  
our stumbling generosity, our simple actions,  
and find them good enough to help prepare the feast  
for all your people.

Amen.

Christian Aid, from page 113 Will you follow me?