

Divine Merger: What Happens When Jesus Collides with Your Community

Available March 2016

\$16, 192 pages, paperback

978-0-8308-4452-4

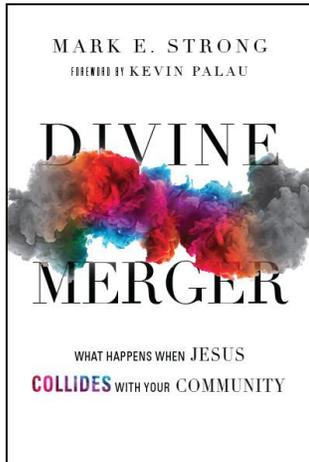
Inspiring the Church to Connect with their Community

Mark Strong offers churches encouragement and helpful resources for engaging with their community in his latest book, *Divine Merger*. Strong has personal experience in bridging the divide between church and community, and his passion is apparent as he calls other churches to use their gifts to experience a “Jesus collision.” Strong’s practical advice and discussion questions help any Christ-follower take the first steps toward a divine merger – the collision of church and community that looks toward kingdom transformation.

“I’ve had a burning passion to see communities and cities impacted by the gospel,” says Strong. “I want to help churches and followers of Jesus understand that God can, and will use their gifts and passions to create a Jesus collision in their community.”

Divine Merger discusses questions like

- What are practical and simple ways a church can reach out to the community?
- For a divine merger to happen, you say, “When it comes to the church, you’re all in; when it comes to the community, you’re all in.” What does it look like for a church to be engaged internally and externally?
- How should the church view the community and reach out to community members?
- How do you allow God to capture your heart for community? How can you develop a passion for reaching out?
- How can the church reach out to those suffering in their community?
- What are reasons why the church does not engage with the community?
- How is the church to represent or present Jesus authentically in our communities?
- What do I need to know about my community in order to reach people? How do I learn about people who are different from me?
- Why is our attitude important in our service to the community? What does Jesus teach us about the proper attitude toward service?
- You say that God does not expect our church to do everything, but he does intend for the church to do something. How can our church figure out what that “something” is?
- In what ways does the Holy Spirit help and empower people to serve the community? Why do we need to depend on the Holy Spirit?
- Why is it critical to keep a balance of life and ministry in order to facilitate a Jesus collision? What are some practical ways to maintain balance?
- What are the important questions to ask when making a plan to reach out to the community?



Divine Merger: What Happens When Jesus Collides with Your Community

Available March 2016

\$16, 192 pages, paperback

978-0-8308-4452-4

A “Trusted Guide” Bringing Together Communities and Churches

“Mark Strong is a legend in our city. The archetype of a wise, humble, faithful urban pastor. Many younger planters look to him for more than mentorship, but for a template to pour our own lives into. When a guy like Mark talks about the collision of Jesus and community, I listen.”

— **John Mark Comer**, Bridgetown: A Jesus Church, Portland, Oregon

“Mark Strong is a pastor’s pastor, and a deeply committed leader and preacher. In *Divine Merger* he challenges us to do the spiritual work of bringing our communities and our churches together. He does this with wisdom and grace, inviting us to intentionally seek God’s leading for change for *both sides*. The book is inspiring, biblical and practical. If you want to catalyze change in your church and community, this book, filled with stories of Mark’s own experiences and insights learned on the battlefield, can be a trusted guide.”

— **MaryKate Morse**, George Fox Seminary, author of *Guidebook to Prayer*

“*Divine Merger* brings just the sort of theological reflection we desperately need to face the challenges of our day. . . . Mark lives what he preaches, and my prayer is that you’ll allow this book to take you to a place of deeper love for our Savior and for the community all around you.”

— **Kevin Palau**, president of the Luis Palau Association, Portland, Oregon

“Gentrification, spiritual lethargy and the clash between new realities and old dreams are part of Mark’s journey as a leader in his church and community. As one who strives to live his life fully invested in both spheres, Mark provides in this book a mixture of practical implementation, pastoral encouragement and theological grounding for embracing our call to partner with Jesus in the transformative collisions between our church and our community.”

— **Rick McKinley**, lead pastor, Imago Dei Community, Portland, Oregon, author of *Jesus in the Margins*