

Dr. Mark Louis Johnson Sr.

Dr. Mark Louis Johnson Sr. graduated from Washington and Jefferson College as the first African American Senior Class Commencement Speaker in 1994. Born in Anderson, Indiana, Dr. Johnson was licensed and ordained as a Baptist minister, making him the third generation in the Johnson family. Following a professional basketball career in Europe and South America, Dr. Johnson was accepted as a graduate student at Princeton Theological Seminary in Princeton, New Jersey, where he earned the degrees of Master's of Divinity and Master's of Theology in Christian Education.

While attending Princeton, Dr. Johnson was named Executive Director of Youth and Young Adult Ministries at the 7,000-member Metropolitan Baptist Church in Newark, New Jersey. There he received the "100 Positive Men of New Jersey" award for his outstanding work with at-risk youth. Dr. Johnson expanded his career to the non-profit sector by accepting the position as the National Best Men Program Director for the "Best Friends Youth Foundation" in Washington, DC, and spent time on Capitol Hill presenting character-based curriculum for United States School Districts.

In 2009, Dr. Johnson was elected the eighth Pastor of the Liberty Hill Baptist Church in Cleveland, Ohio. His pastorate saw growth that impacted the church and the Cleveland community. Dr. Johnson created national partnerships with churches, businesses, organizations, and even Hollywood's Paramount Pictures. During that time, Dr. Johnson helped mobilized over 1000 missionaries from across the country, who came to Northeast Ohio each summer to beautify the city of Cleveland. His achievements would attract the attention of "Baseball Chapel," an organization responsible for assigning chaplains to every Major League Baseball Team. In 2017, Dr. Johnson was named Chaplain to the Cleveland Indians and served alongside his wife, providing support for the organization.

While serving the Cleveland community, Dr. Johnson completed a Doctor of Ministry from New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, New Orleans, LA. His published project, "Racial Reconciliation in the Southern Baptist Convention," focuses on repentance, reconciliation, and restoration. Dr. Johnson also contributed to a collection of writings entitled *Engage: Tools for Contemporary Evangelism*.

In September of 2018, Dr. Johnson and his family moved from Cleveland, Ohio, to New Orleans, LA, where he would work toward a Ph.D. in Evangelism, Pastoral Ministries, and Christian Leadership. After leading the Edgewater Baptist Church (New Orleans, LA) through the height of the COVID-19 pandemic as Senior Pastor, Dr. Johnson joined New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary as Assistant Professor of Evangelism and Pastoral Ministries and Director of the Doctor of Ministry Division. Dr. Johnson currently resides in New Orleans, LA, and serves as Interim Pastor, professor, college lecturer, researcher, and Chaplain with the Miami Marlins and Tulane University Men's Basketball Team. Twenty-nine years ago, Dr. Johnson married his college sweetheart (Heather Williams) Johnson, and they have four children: Mark Jr., Jonathan, Victoria, and Benjamin.