

BY THE CO-AUTHOR OF  
THE NEW ONE MINUTE MANAGER®

# LEAD LIKE JESUS

REVISITED

LESSONS FROM THE GREATEST  
LEADERSHIP ROLE MODEL OF ALL TIME

KEN BLANCHARD  
PHIL HODGES  
PHYLLIS HENDRY

# PRAISE FOR THE PREVIOUS EDITION

“One of our world’s great problems is egocentric, self-serving leadership—leaders who think people exist for their benefit, instead of vice versa. In stark contrast, Jesus modeled servant leadership, leading by example. He said, ‘I came to serve, not to be served.’ Now, two thousand years later, Jesus has over 2.1 billion followers, which makes Him the undisputed greatest leader of all time. No one else comes close! This is why you need to know how to lead like Jesus. He is the only flawless example. That’s why you should read this book!”

—Rick Warren, Author, *The Purpose Driven Life*

Named One of “America’s Twenty-five Best Leaders”

(*U.S. News and World Report*)

“I had the pleasure of hosting at our church one of Ken Blanchard and Phil Hodges’s *Lead Like Jesus* Celebrations. What an impactful day that was for those who participated. I know they will never think about leadership in the same way again. Reading *Lead Like Jesus* will provide you with that kind of experience. Don’t miss learning from the greatest leadership role model of all time.”

—Bob Russell, Bob Russell Ministries;

Retired Pastor, Southeast Christian Church

“Ever since writing *Leadership by the Book* with Ken Blanchard and Phil Hodges, I’ve watched them grow in their depth of understanding of what the Bible reveals about how Jesus would have us lead others. The best thinking the Lord has revealed to them, to this point, can be found in this book. If you want to be the servant leader that Jesus mandated His followers to be, then read *Lead Like Jesus*. It will change your life and the lives of people you are able to influence.”

—Bill Hybels, Senior Pastor,

Willow Creek Community Church

“You’ll find few men better qualified to address this topic than Ken Blanchard. His favorite name is *Jesus* and preferred verb is *lead*. Let him do for you what he’s done for me and millions of others—help you lead like Jesus.”

—Max Lucado, Minister of Preaching, Oak Hills Church; Bestselling Author

“Finally. Finally. Finally. A definitive guide to the connection between our faith and our work—one that is both theoretically elegant and immensely practical. This is, without a doubt, the most important management book I have ever encountered.”

—Patrick Lencioni, Author, *The Five Dysfunctions of a Team*

“Ken Blanchard and Phil Hodges continue to lead us deeper into the gold mines of God’s Word to the treasured truth of life. *Lead Like Jesus* promises a refurbishing, applicable perspective from the leader of all time!”

—Dan T. Cathy, President and COO, Chick-fil-A, Inc.

“For those who seek to lead like Jesus, this book is an important reflective tool in helping to better understand—who we are, where we are going, and why it is important for people to follow. It is a reminder to all of us that leadership is only a means. To what end is the ultimate question.”

—C. William Pollard, Chairman, Executive Committee,  
Billy Graham Evangelistic Association; Former Chairman, ServiceMaster

“There is no greater leadership model than Jesus, and Blanchard and Hodges have taken years of experience identifying the leadership characteristics of Jesus that will affect your life and leadership. They have hit the nail on the head with *Lead Like Jesus*.”

—John C. Maxwell, Founder of the John Maxwell Company, the John Maxwell Team, EQUIP, and the John Maxwell Leadership Foundation

“Millions of people wish everyone could lead like Jesus. Ken Blanchard and Phil Hodges have dedicated their time and energy, insights and professionalism, to make it happen. Read this book and ponder the questions

raised, the ideas presented, and ask yourself if you too can take up the challenge in your own life. It's not just what would Jesus do, but especially, how would Jesus lead? This book will help you find the answers."

—Laurie Beth Jones, Author, *Jesus, CEO*;  
*The Path; Jesus: Life Coach*; and *The Four Elements of Success*

"Ken has a divine passion for leaders to let Jesus live out His life through them in servant leadership. His book, *Lead Like Jesus*, is an extremely timely book that is both thorough and God-honoring. I highly recommend it to all who lead others."

—Henry Blackaby, Author, *Experiencing God*

"*Lead Like Jesus* is a gift to the sincere and a beacon of light to the lost. May the knowledge conveyed in this teaching help spread the message of truth around the world. It has spoken to my heart as well as my mind."

—Mary Anne Shula, Shula Enterprises

"*Lead Like Jesus* transcends all relationships and cuts to the heart of the matter—leading like Jesus will change you and the lives you touch. Choose this book today to be challenged and motivated to lead at a higher level everywhere! You'll never be or lead the same again!"

—Marjorie Dorr, Independent Director, Pharmerica Corporation;  
Former Chief Strategy Officer, WellPoint, Inc.

"In *Lead Like Jesus* we learn that it is intimacy with Jesus that transforms our lives and leadership. The difference between this and other leadership books is that the focus on Jesus encourages the leader to actually learn, grow, and change behavior. There is no more effective way to becoming a great leader."

—Vince Siciliano, President and CEO, New Resource Bank

"A path-breaking book in every way. This book shows you how to live your faith in your world—without ducking, without offending. Follow the path and be changed in every way."

—Bob Buford, Author, *Halftime* and  
*Finishing Well* Founder, Leadership Network

# LEAD LIKE JESUS

REVISITED

# LEAD LIKE JESUS

REVISITED

LESSONS FROM THE GREATEST  
LEADERSHIP ROLE MODEL OF ALL TIME

KEN BLANCHARD  
PHIL HODGES  
PHYLLIS HENDRY



W PUBLISHING GROUP

AN IMPRINT OF THOMAS NELSON

© 2016 Lead Like Jesus

All rights reserved. No portion of this book may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means—electronic, mechanical, photocopy, recording, scanning, or other—except for brief quotations in critical reviews or articles, without the prior written permission of the publisher.

Published in Nashville, Tennessee, by W Publishing, an imprint of Thomas Nelson.

Thomas Nelson titles may be purchased in bulk for educational, business, fund-raising, or sales promotional use. For information, please e-mail [SpecialMarkets@ThomasNelson.com](mailto:SpecialMarkets@ThomasNelson.com).

Unless otherwise noted, Scripture quotations are taken from the Holy Bible, New International Version<sup>®</sup>, NIV<sup>®</sup>. Copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984, 2011 by Biblica, Inc.<sup>®</sup> Used by permission of Zondervan. All rights reserved worldwide. [www.zondervan.com](http://www.zondervan.com). The “NIV” and “New International Version” are trademarks registered in the United States Patent and Trademark Office by Biblica, Inc.<sup>®</sup>

Scripture quotations marked **ESV** are from the *ESV<sup>®</sup> Bible* (The Holy Bible, English Standard Version<sup>®</sup>). Copyright © 2001 by Crossway, a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

Scripture quotations marked **KJV** are from the King James Version. Public domain.

Scripture quotations marked **THE MESSAGE** are from *The Message*. Copyright © by Eugene H. Peterson 1993, 1994, 1995, 1996, 2000, 2001, 2002. Used by permission of Tyndale House Publishers, Inc.

Scripture quotations marked **NASB** are from New American Standard Bible<sup>®</sup>. Copyright © 1960, 1962, 1963, 1968, 1971, 1972, 1973, 1975, 1977, 1995 by The Lockman Foundation. Used by permission. ([www.Lockman.org](http://www.Lockman.org))

Scripture quotations marked **NLT** are from the *Holy Bible*, New Living Translation. © 1996, 2004, 2007, 2013 by Tyndale House Foundation. Used by permission of Tyndale House Publishers, Inc., Carol Stream, Illinois 60188. All rights reserved.

Scripture quotations marked **NKJV** are from the New King James Version<sup>®</sup>. © 1982 by Thomas Nelson. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

Scripture quotations marked **PHILLIPS** are from The New Testament in Modern English by J. B. Phillips. Copyright © 1960, 1972 J. B. Phillips. Administered by the Archbishops' Council of the Church of England. Used by permission.

Scripture quotations marked **RSV** are from Revised Standard Version of the Bible. Copyright 1946, 1952, and 1971 National Council of the Churches of Christ in the United States of America. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

Italics in Scripture verses are the authors' emphasis.

Any Internet addresses, phone numbers, or company or product information printed in this book are offered as a resource and are not intended in any way to be or to imply an endorsement by Thomas Nelson, nor does Thomas Nelson vouch for the existence, content, or services of these sites, phone numbers, companies, or products beyond the life of this book.

ISBN 978-0-7180-7725-9 (TP)

ISBN 978-0-7180-8497-4 (eBook)

#### Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Library of Congress Control Number: 2015917587

*Printed in the United States of America*

16 17 18 19 20 RRD 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

# CONTENTS

<i>Introduction</i>	xi
---------------------	----

## **PART I: A BIBLICAL PERSPECTIVE ON LEADERSHIP**

Chapter 1: Are You a Leader?	3
Chapter 2: The Greatest Leadership Role Model of All Time	9
Chapter 3: Jesus the Servant	13
Chapter 4: Is Jesus a Relevant Role Model for Us Today?	17
Chapter 5: A Transformational Journey That Begins on the Inside	23
Chapter 6: The Four Domains of Leading Like Jesus	35

## **PART II: THE HEART OF A GREAT LEADER**

Chapter 7: What Does Leading Like Jesus Look Like?	43
Chapter 8: I Want to Lead Like Jesus, but My Heart Does Not	49
Chapter 9: The Results of a Heart Out of Order	53
Chapter 10: Warning Signs on the Path to Edging God Out	65
Chapter 11: A Heart Turnaround	73

## **PART III: THE BEING HABITS**

Chapter 12: The Habit of Accepting and Abiding in God's Unconditional Love	89
Chapter 13: The Habit of Experiencing Solitude	95
Chapter 14: The Habit of Practicing Prayer	99
Chapter 15: The Habit of Knowing and Applying Scripture	105
Chapter 16: The Habit of Maintaining Supportive Relationships	115

## **PART IV: THE HEAD OF A GREAT LEADER**

Chapter 17: Developing Your Own Compelling Vision	125
Chapter 18: Jesus' Compelling Vision	135



Chapter 19: Creating a Compelling Team/Organizational Vision	141
Chapter 20: Implementing Your Compelling Vision	155
<b>PART V: THE HANDS OF A GREAT LEADER</b>	
Chapter 21: The Leader as a Performance Coach	167
Chapter 22: The Work of the Carpenter	173
Chapter 23: The Way of the Carpenter	179
Chapter 24: The EGO Factor	199
<b>PART VI: THE DOING HABITS</b>	
Chapter 25: The Habit of Obeying God and Expressing His Unconditional Love	211
Chapter 26: The Habit of Grace	217
Chapter 27: The Habit of Forgiveness	221
Chapter 28: The Habit of Encouragement	227
Chapter 29: The Habit of Community	231
Chapter 30: Leading Like Jesus Begins in You	239
<b>PART VII: NEXT STEPS TO LEADING LIKE JESUS</b>	
Chapter 31: Leading Positive Change	247
Chapter 32: EGOs Anonymous: Taking the First Step Toward Exalting God Only	259
Next Steps to Leading Like Jesus: Checklist	269
Next Steps to Leading Like Jesus: Resource List	271
<i>Discussion Guide</i>	275
<i>Acknowledgments</i>	295
<i>Notes</i>	297
<i>About the Authors</i>	303
<i>Index</i>	307
<i>Scripture Index</i>	315

# INTRODUCTION

*The world is in desperate need of a different leadership role model.* Written a decade ago, the original *Lead Like Jesus* book begins with this statement, which we believe is still true today.

Our experiences and learnings in the last ten years have continued to remind us that the most important thing in leadership is the leader; the most important part of the leader is his or her heart; and the most important connection to a leader's heart is God.

Most leadership resources focus on management techniques, competencies, strategies, and tactics while ignoring the most important part of leadership—the leaders themselves. At *Lead Like Jesus*, we believe that real, lasting change starts on the inside. When a leader chooses to allow Jesus to transform him or her from the inside out, that choice will have an effect on everyone and everything that leader influences. We are clear: you can't lead like Jesus without Jesus!

A tremendous benefit happens in the lives of people who lead like Jesus: freedom. Jesus is the only one who offers a model of leadership that's built on freedom and complete security in Him and His power at work within us. While the world continues to throw solutions at us that are built on self-empowerment, self-reliance, competition, peer pressure, and performance, leading like Jesus frees us to reach heights of influence we never would be able to reach on our own. When we are free from pride and fear, free to humbly accept feedback and admit our mistakes, and strong

enough to overlook offenses and forgive the errors of others, we can lead people and help them reach their full potential.

Still, in the perspective of some leaders, leading like Jesus is “soft” or impractical; for this reason, many leaders continue to bypass it. The results of this way of thinking are clear: continued struggles, dissatisfied employees, frustrated leaders, broken families, split churches, and chaotic, poorly performing teams and organizations.

Try to imagine leaders who lead like Jesus. Leaders who love those they influence so much that they help them get from where they are to where God would have them go. Leaders who hold people accountable, encourage them daily, confront challenges, and bring authenticity, character, and integrity to every interaction. Leaders who want to guide others on the same path. Imagine a world full of those leaders!

There is no need to search further. We have the perfect leadership role model in Jesus. We simply need to follow Him and allow Him to work in us and through us.

Even though we have been declaring for many years that Jesus is the greatest leadership role model of all time, we have not realized the full extent of the leadership gifts He offers us. Jesus is not only the greatest servant leader but also the greatest visionary, the greatest team builder, the greatest team motivator, and the greatest change agent of all time. In fact, we cannot think of any attribute of leadership that Jesus did not model for everyone as He trained His disciples. Now, more than two thousand years later, Jesus still has more followers than any leader the world has ever had.

We have also learned—or relearned—that leading like Jesus is love-based leadership. In fact, God intends the primary outcome of our leadership and influence to be showing people Jesus’ love.

Leading like Jesus is essentially a matter of the *heart*. It is also the highest thought of the *head*, it is the principal work of the *hands*, and it is both expressed through and replenished by the *habits*.

The formula *Everything – Love = Nothing* is not of our making. It is the irrefutable law of the kingdom of God, perfectly fulfilled by Jesus. It is also the defining characteristic of the leadership model of Jesus: leading like Jesus means loving like Jesus.

These timeless words of the apostle Paul have much to say to those who are leaders and teachers, who influence the lives of others:

If we speak with the tongues of men and angels, but do not have love (as our purpose), we have become noisy gongs or clanging cymbals. If we have the gifts of prophecy, and know all mysteries and all knowledge (about how to lead people); and if we have all faith (in our leadership), so as to remove mountains, but do not have love, we are nothing. And if (we engage in selfish acts of self-promotions and) we give all our possessions to feed the poor and if we surrender our bodies to be burned, but do not have love, it profits us nothing. (1 Corinthians 13:1–3, paraphrased)

In this book we will dig deeper into what it means to “love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind” and to “love your neighbor as yourself” (Matthew 22:37–39). We will explore how our formal and informal influence on others can encourage them to develop a closer relationship with God and help them see the love He has for them—the love so beautifully demonstrated through His Son, Jesus.

Included are the following new or expanded lessons we’ve learned during the past ten years:

- If a leader's heart and motives are not right, all the brightest thinking and most skilled leadership cannot progress beyond the limits of artful, self-serving exploitation and manipulation.
- The Being Habits and the Doing Habits of Jesus provide practical ways to put into action the desire to lead like Jesus.
- Connecting powerful personal testimonies with biblical truths brings added relevance and authenticity to the Lead Like Jesus message for people of different generations and cultures.
- Leadership is about change: initiating change, responding to change, guiding the process of change, reinforcing change, and modeling change for others.
- To lead like Jesus calls for engagement in an interactive personal relationship with God through Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit.

Ken and Phil are excited that Phyllis Hendry, our dear friend, our sister in Jesus, and the president/CEO of the Lead Like Jesus ministry, is joining us as a coauthor. Her passion for the Lead Like Jesus message and her personal experience of the power of love and leadership greatly enrich this book.

Our prayer is that this book will strengthen your relationship with Jesus and that you will accept Him not only as your Lord and Savior but also as your leadership role model. As you are transformed, people around you will be influenced and drawn to the same model whether they are leading a business, a nonprofit organization, a community initiative, a church, or a family.

No matter how difficult your leadership role may seem, remember what Jesus said: "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest" (Matthew 11:28). Jesus' invitation is still open. And it is open to you.

## INTRODUCTION

We invite you to become part of the movement so that someday everyone, everywhere, will be impacted by someone who leads like Jesus.

On the journey with you,

KEN BLANCHARD

PHIL HODGES

PHYLLIS HENDRY

## PART I

# A BIBLICAL PERSPECTIVE ON LEADERSHIP

Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful. Let the message of Christ dwell among you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom through psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit, singing to God with gratitude in your hearts. And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

Colossians 3:15–17

People often see leadership based on an “It’s all about me” approach. In all kinds of organizations and institutions, the rewards of money, recognition, and power increase as an individual moves up the hierarchy. Self-promotion (pride) and self-protection (fear) dominate today’s leadership style. Many leaders act as if the sheep are there only for the benefit of the shepherd. In personal relationships, leadership based on mutual respect, loving care, self-sacrifice, and

openness is often undermined when pride, fear, and indifference replace intimacy with isolation. That's the bad news.

The good news is that there is a better way. This alternative approach to leadership is driven by four basic beliefs that have become central to our ministry:

- Leadership happens anytime we influence the thinking, behavior, or development of another person.
- Jesus is the greatest leadership role model of all time.
- Servant leadership is the only approach to leadership that Jesus validates for His followers.
- Effective leadership begins on the inside, with our hearts.

As you explore these four beliefs, we hope you will gain an entirely different perspective on leadership. May you come to see leadership as a journey that begins with your own transformation and progresses to your leading another person, then to leading a small number of people, and finally to leading an organization. May you also see that leadership is the alignment of four essential domains: the heart, the head, the hands, and the habits.

Let's get started!



## ARE YOU A LEADER?

Jesus called [his disciples] together and said, “You know that those who are regarded as rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their high officials exercise authority over them. Not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first must be slave of all.”

Mark 10:42–44

In our Lead Like Jesus workshops, we often ask, “How many of you think of yourselves as a leader?” We are amazed that only about 20 to 25 percent of the people raise their hands, even though our audiences are always predominantly made up of managers and supervisors at every level of a business, an educational institution, a government agency, or a faith-based organization. The reason most people don’t raise their hands is they assume that leadership has to do with a workplace position or title. Many people feel they are not high up enough on the organizational chart to say that they are leaders.

We always follow up our first question by asking people to think about the person who has had the most significant impact on

their lives, the person who has played a major role in who they are today as human beings. Then we ask, “How many of you named a manager or a supervisor you’ve worked for over the years?” Hardly a hand goes up. Then we ask, “How many of you identified your father, your mother, a grandmother or grandfather, aunt, uncle, or friend?” Almost every hand in the room goes up. Why is that? Because in reality, every human being is a leader in some part of his or her life—because *leadership is an influence process*. We believe that *anytime you seek to influence the thinking, behavior, or development of someone in your personal or professional life, you are taking on the role of a leader*.

As a result, the only way to avoid leadership is to isolate yourself from the outside world.

Leadership can be as intimate as speaking words of guidance and encouragement to a loved one or as formal as passing instructions along extended lines of communication in an organization. Leadership can be nurturing character and self-worth in children and promoting greater intimacy and fulfillment in personal relationships, or it can involve distributing resources in an organization to reach a specific goal or accomplish a given task.

Thus, there are two types of leadership: life role leadership and organizational leadership.

As a spouse, parent, family member, friend, or citizen, you have multiple life role leadership opportunities every day. What leadership role could be more important than these? Consider some examples:

- a husband and wife who seek mutual agreement on day-to-day finances
- a mother who teaches her toddler how to eat with a spoon
- a son who provides aging parents with advice and guidance about living arrangements

- a person who risks alienation when confronting a friend about a moral failure
- a citizen who helps find housing for the homeless

Different from life role leadership, organizational leadership usually comes with an official position or title that empowers you to serve the perceived needs of an organization. Again, examples might help:

- a corporate executive who rejects offers of insider information that would give his company a competitive edge
- a middle school teacher who excites curiosity in her students
- a rehabilitation nurse who patiently handles a stroke victim's anger
- a pastor who comforts a grieving member of his church
- a high school football coach who focuses more on molding his players' character than on winning games

A key difference between life role leadership and organizational leadership involves the permanence of the relationships involved. Life role leaders function in enduring relationships as parents, spouses, siblings, friends, and citizens; duty and obligation cannot be easily relinquished or discarded.

Organizational leaders, on the other hand, operate for a season in an environment of temporary relationships and fairly constant change. People can come and go very quickly for all sorts of reasons. This lack of stability in organizations often breeds a degree of reserve and qualified commitment evident in competitive office politics.

Most of the significant leadership that shapes our lives does not come from leaders with titles on an organizational chart; it comes

from leaders in life role relationships. It is instructive to note that in the early church, a candidate's life role leadership was a prerequisite for assuming organizational leadership. In 1 Timothy 3:1–7 we read this:

Here is a trustworthy saying: Whoever aspires to be an overseer desires a noble task. Now the overseer is to be above reproach, faithful to his wife, temperate, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, not given to drunkenness, not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome, not a lover of money. He must manage his own family well and see that his children obey him, and he must do so in a manner worthy of full respect. (If anyone does not know how to manage his own family, how can he take care of God's church?) He must not be a recent convert, or he may become conceited and fall under the same judgment as the devil. He must also have a good reputation with outsiders, so that he will not fall into disgrace and into the devil's trap.

One person who exemplified servant leadership in Jesus' life was His mother, Mary: "I am the Lord's servant. . . . May your word to me be fulfilled" (Luke 1:38). She passed on to her Son a legacy of obedience, submission, faith, and service. Mary epitomized the essence of a servant heart. In her life role as a mother, she was positioned to have strategic influence on the life and spirit of her Child. The relationship between mother and Son—between a soul already tested and found willing and a Soul to be nurtured, between a spiritual teacher and a Student—was part of God's plan to prepare Jesus for leadership.

## **PAUSE AND REFLECT**

Take a moment to think about the people who have most influenced your thinking, your behavior, and your life path. As you recall their names and faces, you will realize that leadership titles and positions of organizational authority are only part of the leadership landscape—and usually not the most significant part.



## IS JESUS A RELEVANT ROLE MODEL FOR US TODAY?

Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever.

Hebrews 13:8

A common barrier to embracing Jesus as a leadership role model is skepticism about the relevance of His teaching to specific twenty-first-century leadership situations. In many ways, we are in the same kind of situation that Peter was when Jesus asked him to take some highly unusual and unorthodox steps as he conducted his fishing business. Here was the situation as described in Luke 5:1–11:

One day as Jesus was preaching on the shore of the Sea of Galilee, great crowds pressed in on him to listen to the word of God. He noticed two empty boats at the water's edge, for the fishermen had left them and were washing their nets. Stepping into one of the boats, Jesus asked Simon [Peter], its owner, to push it out into the water. So he sat in the boat and taught the crowds from there.

When he had finished speaking, he said to Simon, "Now go out where it is deeper, and let down your nets to catch some fish."

“Master,” Simon replied, “we worked hard all last night and didn’t catch a thing. But if you say so, I’ll let the nets down again.” And this time their nets were so full of fish they began to tear! A shout for help brought their partners in the other boat, and soon both boats were filled with fish and on the verge of sinking.

When Simon Peter realized what had happened, he fell to his knees before Jesus and said, “Oh, Lord, please leave me—I’m too much of a sinner to be around you.” For he was awestruck by the number of fish they had caught, as were the others with him. His partners, James and John, the sons of Zebedee, were also amazed.

Jesus replied to Simon, “Don’t be afraid! From now on you’ll be fishing for people!” And as soon as they landed, they left everything and followed Jesus. (NLT)

What do you think was going through Peter’s mind when he replied, “Master, we have been fishing all night and we haven’t caught a thing”? It sounds as if Peter might have been thinking something along these lines: *I’ve listened to Jesus address the crowds and speak with great power and wisdom. I really respect His knowledge of God’s Word and His skill as a teacher. But now He has asked me to do something that goes totally against my own knowledge and instincts about how to run my fishing business. Jesus doesn’t know fishing; I know fish and fishing. That’s my business, and what Jesus asks is not practical. Besides, doing what He says will probably be a waste of time and energy—and my workers are going to wonder if I have lost my mind!*

However, Peter’s skepticism did not prevent him from taking the step of faith—the step of obedience—because the instructions had come from Jesus. Because Peter exercised his faith in this way, he experienced miraculous results, but he was overwhelmed by the



gap he perceived between himself and what Jesus would require of him.

Jesus sought to calm Peter's doubts and fears, and then He invited Peter to come and be transformed for a higher purpose. And Jesus is issuing the same call to us. Jesus knows fish, and He also knows your business, whether it is in the service of an organization or in a life role.

So consider applying the same criteria to Jesus' knowledge, experience, and success that you would to the hiring of a business consultant. Take a few minutes to think about Jesus' earthly ministry. Would you hire Jesus as your leadership consultant for your life role leadership or organizational leadership positions? Reflect on the following leadership challenges you might be facing and then ask yourself, "Does Jesus have any practical knowledge or relevant experience dealing with leadership issues like these that I face every day?"

- working or living with and caring for imperfect people
- training, developing, and delegating
- being under constant scrutiny by competitors
- continually having your commitment and integrity tested
- handling opposition, criticism, and rejection
- facing conflicting demands from friends and foes
- being tempted by instant gratification, recognition, and misuse of power
- facing serious personnel issues, including turnover and betrayal
- communicating effectively in a multicultural environment
- challenging the status quo and established hierarchy to bring about change
- trying to communicate a radically new vision of the future

- calling attention to poor leadership, even at great personal risk
- putting career or relationships on the line to serve a higher purpose

Chances are, you answered *yes* about every situation. Why? Because Jesus absolutely did face every situation you face. The book of Hebrews says this of Jesus:

Because he himself suffered when he was tempted, he is able to help those who are being tempted. . . . We do not have a high priest who is unable to empathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are—yet he did not sin. Let us then approach God’s throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need. (2:18; 4:15–16)

In addition to His leadership experience, Jesus knew from years of personal experience the challenges of daily life and work. Although Jesus was God, He was not ashamed to do a man’s work. He spent the first thirty years of His life on earth as a working man: He was a carpenter in Nazareth. Jesus knows the difficulty of making ends meet. He knows the frustration of ill-mannered clients who won’t pay their bills. He knows the pressure of meeting deadlines and pleasing customers. He knows the challenges of living in an ordinary home and being part of a big family. He knows the problems that beset us in the everyday world.<sup>1</sup>

Now think about how Jesus would do your job differently than the way you are doing it. As the following scriptures suggest, Jesus wants to do His work in you and through you.

- “I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing” (John 15:5).
- “In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven” (Matthew 5:16).
- “And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him” (Colossians 3:17).

## PAUSE AND REFLECT

If you are skeptical about adopting Jesus as your leadership role model, write down your reasons. What about Jesus is causing you to doubt leading as He leads? And what about *you* is causing you to hold back?



## THE LEADER AS A PERFORMANCE COACH

[Jesus] said to [Simon and Andrew], “Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men.”

Matthew 4:19 ESV

An effective Jesus-like leader acts as a performance coach. An essential duty of servant leaders is their ongoing investment in the lives of their followers.

Jesus was the preeminent performance coach, and He changed His leadership style appropriately as His disciples developed individually and as a group. When Jesus called His disciples to follow Him, He pledged them His full support and guidance as they became fishers of men. Jesus also empowered His followers to carry on the work of sharing the salvation message after He was gone. Through His *hands*—His effectiveness as a Servant Leader—Jesus was able to communicate to His disciples what was in His *heart* and His *head* about servant leadership.

So what does being a performance coach involve? These are the three basic components: performance planning, day-to-day

coaching, and performance evaluation. Performance planning is the *leadership* aspect of servant leadership: providing direction and setting goals. Day-to-day coaching focuses on the *servant* aspect of servant leadership. That involves helping people win—accomplish their goals—by observing their performance, praising their progress, and redirecting their efforts when necessary. The third part of performance coaching is *performance evaluation*: servant leaders sit down with people and evaluate their performance over time.

Which of these three leadership activities do you think gets most of a manager's attention? Most people guess performance evaluation—and, sadly, that is the truth.

Yet performance evaluation is often a flawed practice. If leaders rate all their people high, they would be accused of being too easy, and they themselves would be rated low. As a result, the normal distribution curve is alive and well. Managers are expected to rate only a few people high, a few people low, and the rest as average performers. When we ask managers, "How many of you go out and hire losers so you can fill the low spots?" everyone laughs. Of course leaders hire either winners—people who already have a good track record in what the managers want them to do—or potential winners—people who the managers think can become winners with proper coaching. Managers don't hire losers. Why, then, do leaders have to give a certain number of people low ratings?

In Ken's teaching example, *performance planning* means giving people the final exam ahead of time. In this goal-setting stage of performance coaching, the traditional hierarchical pyramid can stay upright: if there is a disagreement over goals, the leader wins because he or she represents the organizational goals.

When Moses went to the top of the mountain to get the Ten Commandments, he didn't take a committee with him. Otherwise,

he would have come down with three commandments and seven suggestions. Similarly, Jesus didn't involve His disciples much in formulating the goals He came to accomplish. He had received those from the top of the organizational hierarchy—from His Father.

These two examples, however, do not mean that in our work in the home, community, and office we shouldn't involve others in setting goals. You certainly can collaborate at work, with experienced people, and at home when the kids get older. When goals are established, though, the organizational or life role leader is responsible for making sure the direction is clear. In their life role leadership in a family, parents have to take responsibility for setting goals and objectives. We all remember times when we would say to our mothers, "All the other kids are doing it." If your mother was like Ken's, her response was always quick: "That's because their name isn't Blanchard." Our parents were in charge of performance planning for us, their kids.

We can't emphasize enough the importance of clarity of purpose in the performance planning role of a servant leader. If there is not clear communication of what a good job will look like when it is accomplished, somebody will end up frustrated—the leader, the follower, or both.

Some organizations do a good job of performance planning. Unfortunately, after goals are set and distributed, they often are filed away and forgotten until it's time for managers to evaluate their people's performances. Then everyone runs around frantically, trying to find the goals. To avoid this situation, leaders must engage in the most important element of servant leadership—*day-to-day coaching*—in which servant leaders help people reach their goals.

## PAUSE AND REFLECT

Think back to a time when you were involved in a failure in communication resulting in a vast difference between what was expected and what was delivered. Recall the frustration and wasted energy that could have been avoided by initially testing for understanding.

When it comes to *day-to-day coaching*, the pyramidal hierarchy turns upside down, and servant leaders begin to work for their people. Now that the goals are clear, this aspect of being a performance coach is about teaching people the right answers—in other words, helping them accomplish their goals—so that when they get their performance review, it really will be a review. This principle also holds true in the family: after family goals are established and communicated, parents can serve their kids by being their cheerleaders, encouragers, and supporters as they work to accomplish their goals.

Whether organizational or life role leaders, servant leaders are all about helping people get As. Servant leaders aren't threatened by people around them who perform well, because their confidence is secure in the unconditional love of God. Being rooted in God's love permits servant leaders to see and respond to the success of others in a different way: they celebrate it rather than fear it.

A perfect example of someone who helps people get As is Garry Ridge, president and CEO of WD-40 Company. After Garry heard about Ken giving his students the final exam questions at the beginning of the semester, he decided to implement the "Don't Mark My Paper; Help Me Get an A" philosophy for his company's



performance review system, because that philosophy aligned with Garry's beliefs about leading and motivating people.

At WD-40, every manager meets with each direct report annually to discuss the essential responsibilities set forth in that person's job description. Their discussion begins with the question "Is this still what you understand your job to be?" Once both parties are clear on the essential functions of the job, they work together to establish three to five observable, measurable goals for the coming year. This partnership aligns and clarifies expectations for both parties. Next comes day-to-day coaching—a key step in the process. The leaders continually diagnose their direct reports' development level for each goal and adjust their leadership styles to ensure they are giving the direct reports the appropriate amount of direction and support. If people attain their goals at the end of the year and live the company values as they do so, they will get an A.

When managers have come to Garry to tell him someone isn't working out and needs to be fired, Garry's first question is "What did you do to help that person get an A?" If the manager can't document the "Don't Mark My Paper" process, it's likely that Garry will fire the manager rather than the direct report. He has had to do that only a few times. Now managers all understand that their major role at WD-40 is to help people get As. Not only do the direct reports win, but so do the managers and the company.

Has this kind of performance planning and day-to-day coaching made a difference? In the last several years, WD-40 has had the highest stock price in company history. In its most recent employee satisfaction survey, filled out by 98 percent of the employees, the highest-rated statement was "I am proud to tell people I work for WD-40." Do you think the employees respond that way just because of their job responsibilities, or is it because they are in a work environment that makes people feel good about being involved? What

a great example of how to achieve both great results and human satisfaction!

## PAUSE AND REFLECT

In this chapter, the emphasis has been on helping people become high performers. But leading like Jesus is much more than that. To Jesus, getting an A is beyond *doing* or performing. It is about *being* a person who models His character by serving others from a loving heart yielded to Him.

Read 1 Corinthians 13 and reflect on *doing* without *being*.  
The math is pretty simple: Everything – Love = Nothing!