

What Others Are Saying About *It's All About Jesus*

Charlie Tremendous and Ken Blanchard are two of the best and most outwardly focused human beings I have ever known. They are both great friends and deeply rooted in Christ. What a treasure to have this collection of readings.

—Bob Buford

Founder, Leadership Network

Author, *Halftime* and *Finishing Well*

I have never known anyone who loved Jesus more than Charlie. His life and this book truly epitomizes *It's All About Jesus*. You will be blessed as I have been.

—Ron Glosser

Retired CEO, Hershey Trust

and the M.S. Hershey Foundation

From the moment we are born we are all on a journey. Many of us follow maps, some of our own making and others of religion, doctrine and culture pointing to our destination. But beyond all such mapping lies our true destination. “It’s All About Jesus.”

—James H. Amos, Jr.

CEO, Tasti D-Lite,

Chairman Emeritus, Mail Boxes Etc.

It's All About Jesus is a brilliantly written book chock-full of inspiration and encouragement for those who want to live a Christ-filled life. Moreover, it's a joy to read. There are hymns to be hummed; prayers to recite; and Scripture to contemplate...and then there are the *lists*. For people who enjoy reading and writing lists as I do, this book just might provide a little slice of heaven here on earth. I'm particularly fond of the lists titled, "The Blood of Jesus 'A' to 'Z'" and the "Titles of Jesus." Each listed item has a corresponding Biblical reference that makes it a handy companion when reading the Good Book. Compiled by three of the most Christ-centered guys I know, *It's All About Jesus* is sure to find a permanent place on your bedside table. Although I'm certain he is here in spirit, I wish Charlie "Tremendous" Jones would witness the launch of this gem of a book. No doubt he would have dismissed such praise, saying: "It's not about me, it's all about Jesus!"

—Paul J. Meyer

Founder of Success Motivation International, Inc.,
and forty-plus other companies; *New York Times*
bestselling author

It's All About JESUS

Ken Blanchard
Charlie "Tremendous" Jones
Bob Phillips



TREMENDOUS
LIFE BOOKS CO.

It's All About Jesus

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*Dedicated to the glory of God
and the lifting up of His Son*

Jesus

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In Remembrance

Charlie “Tremendous” Jones

October 23, 1927—October 16, 2008

For a number of years Charlie wanted to produce a book that had a central focus on Jesus. It was his driving passion. *It’s All About Jesus* was begun while he was living through his battle with cancer. Although he was unable to see the final book in print, he did see most of the material and directed the concepts.

It has been said that you can tell the size of a ship by the wake it leaves behind. Charlie’s wake is enormous. His influence has touched the lives of thousands and thousands of people through his motivational speaking, writing, and tape recordings. He was an avid reader, a humanitarian, and a beloved father and grandfather. Charlie would just say he was a “follower of Jesus.”

Charlie’s positive spirit was contagious. He attempted to encourage and say something kind to everyone he met. His nickname was ‘Tremendous Jones.’ This was given to him because he was always saying “Tremendous.”

“How are you Charlie?”

“*Tremendous!*”

What kind of day has it been Charlie?”

“*Tremendous!*”

“What do you think the future will be like Charlie?”

“*Tremendous!*”

Charlie will be loved and remembered for many of his sayings. Probably one of the most familiar is, “You will be the same five years from now as you are today except for the people you meet and the books you read.” Charlie loved books and passed on this excitement for reading at every chance he got. It was the foundation for starting his company, Executive Books.

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We would encourage you to check out the many wonderful books offered through this service by going to their website at www.TremendousLifeBooks.com

During Charlie's last days, many friends stopped by to express their love and concern for him. Even while he was in the process of dying he had a plan to get people to read. Well wishers would ask, "Is there anything I can do for you, Charlie?" He would reply, "Yes. Could you read the Bible to me?" Sometimes he would choose a devotional book for them to read. All of the reading by friends had a purpose. Charlie wanted those readers to hear the great truths from the Bible or positive thoughts from the books. He wanted the readers to get encouragement from what they were reading more than to support him. Charlie attempted to continue to reach out and help others in the midst of his own physical suffering.

Charlie's life is an example of how one person can be a shining light in the midst of a darkened world. His light helped to challenge and light the lives of many others who wish to follow his example. Charlie "Tremendous" Jones will be sorely missed. However, we can keep his memory alive as we influence others. Charlie used to say, "You only keep what you give away." Charlie must have had a great deal of emotional and spiritual wealth because he gave so much away.

Charlie would often summarize his life story by saying:

"I'm not what I think I am,
I'm not what I hoped I'd be,
I'm not what I ought to be,
But by the grace of God,
I'm not what I was.
I once was lost, but now I'm found,
Was blind but now I see."

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Charlie also had a favorite prayer. It went like this:

“Dear Lord, if I can be of most use by being of no use, then let me be learning to be of no use—if that’s the way I can be of most use. But please, Lord, never let my usefulness be the basis of my joy. Let my joy always be His joy, Himself, Christ in me . . . plus nothing.”

To Charlie, Jesus was more than enough. He would often say, “Jesus is better than His blessings, His gifts, His feelings, and His healing. He is all of these. Jesus is everything.”

It would be wonderful if we could ask Charlie one more question.

“Charlie, what is it like to be in Heaven with Jesus?”

We know what his answer would be.

“It’s more than TREMENDOUS!”

Ken Blanchard
Bob Phillips

A Word from the Authors

If you wish to be miserable, think about yourself; about what you want, what you like, what respect people ought to pay you, what people think of you; and then to you nothing will be pure. You will spoil everything you touch; you will make sin and misery for yourself out of everything God sends you; you will be as wretched as you choose.

Charles Kingsley

In 1969, Frank Sinatra popularized a song written by Paul Anka . . . the title was *My Way*. The lyrics talk about an older man reviewing the course of his life. He mentions his regrets, his tough times, his laughter and tears, and his determination to survive. At the end of each refrain, and at the closing of the song, he basically says, “I did it my way.”

Actually, that phrase, “I did it my way,” is not a surprising comment. We think it could be the statement of everyone who has ever lived. From the cradle to the grave we all have a tendency to be more concerned for our own well being than for the well being of others.

Babies aren’t concerned about their parent’s lack of sleep or their busy schedules. When they are hungry, hurt, or they need to be changed, they let the whole world know of their discontent. They will persist with a loud voice until their personal needs are met.

But it doesn’t stop there. Have you ever been to a store when a toddler or a younger child throws a temper tantrum? They don’t care who’s watching or if their parents get embarrassed. They want what they want when they want it.

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So, what else is new? This type of behavior can be seen in every culture and country of the world. How the parents deal with that behavior varies but the tantrums have a universal language.

Teenagers are no exception to the rule. They become unhappy when they don't get to wear what their friends are wearing or go where their friends are going. They can make life uncomfortable in the home when they don't get their way. They can pout, slam doors, turn to drugs, and on occasion run away.

There are some situations when we can smile at a child's temper tantrum. Their behavior is so obvious, predictable, and sometimes humorous. But just imagine that child growing up and continuing to have temper tantrums as an adult. At this point the behavior ceases to be amusing and can be quite destructive. They can be seen threatening people who innocently cut them off while driving on the highway. They can yell and scream at their family at home. They can pound tables, put their fist through the door, and sometimes become verbally or physically abusive to the closest members of their family.

We are all basically selfish, self-centered, and self-absorbed. When "King Me" is on the throne, everyone needs to watch out. Did you hear about the selfish young man who was eating dinner with some friends? Towards the end of the meal, a platter of chocolate cake was brought to the table and placed next to him. He noticed that one piece of cake was much larger than all of the rest. He determined that he wanted that large piece for himself. However, he was not finished eating what was on his plate. He started to chew as fast as he could with the hope that no one would ask for the platter of cake to be passed. But he didn't make it. Someone said, "Would you please pass the chocolate cake?"

The young man was in a dilemma. To insure that he got the largest piece of cake, he took his thumb and pushed it into the special piece and said, "This is my piece of cake!" Everyone looked a little shocked.

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The Bible suggests that whatsoever a man sows, that he will also reap. So as the platter was passed around the table, everyone took their thumb and jammed it into the large piece of cake saying, "This is his piece of cake! This is his piece of cake! This is his piece of cake!" So much for dealing with selfishness.

The topic of *self* is very popular. If you go to the World Wide Web and punch in the word *self* you may be surprised to find 37,600,000 sites that address the topic in some form or another. There are 474,000 sites for *self-esteem*, 198,000 sites for *self-confidence*, and 180,000 sites for *self-image*.

The focus on self has become very popular during the past few decades. Just go to the self-help section of your bookstore or library and see how many books are written on the topic.

The coin of self-esteem has two sides . . . one can be Positive, Practical, and Productive; and the other can be Damaging, Detrimental, and Dangerous. For example, self-analysis can be good if it helps us to determine our abilities, establish an action plan for growth, or have an honest appraisal of our talent and skills. On the other hand, self-analysis can lead us to negatively compare ourselves with others. We do not all look like movie stars or top models. We do not all have the ability to be a top Olympic athlete or sports figure. We are not all brilliant students or talented musicians. We are not all wealthy and live in mansions, and vacation on yachts or on the Riviera. Comparison with others drives many people to develop a poor self-image and negative self-esteem.

Most people will admit that self-pity, self-doubt, and self-conceit are not healthy or beneficial. There are, however, traits of self that the majority of people view as positive and constructive such as self-control, self-reliance, and self-sacrifice.

We would like to suggest that there is something even more beneficial, healthy, and powerful than focusing on self: It is learning to look to Jesus.

On one occasion the disciples of John the Baptist came to

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him with a concern that people were beginning to follow Jesus rather than him. John had shared with his disciples that Jesus was the Messiah but they did not fully understand. They were upset that Jesus was getting more attention than John.

John replied,

“God in heaven appoints each person’s work. You yourselves know how plainly I told you that I am not the Messiah. I am here to prepare the way for him—that is all. The bride will go where the bridegroom is. A bridegroom’s friend rejoices with him. I am the bridegroom’s friend, and I am filled with joy at his success. He must become greater and greater, and I must become less and less.”

That’s the motivation for this book and the desire of our hearts: that we all may begin to turn from the focus on self to a focus on Jesus. May we join Paul in saying, “For to me, to live is Christ, and to die is gain . . . according to my earnest expectation and hope that in nothing I shall be ashamed, but with all boldness, as always, so now also Christ will be magnified in my body, whether by life or by death.” And may we say with Jesus himself, “and I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me.”

Ken Blanchard
Charlie Jones
Bob Phillips

A Comment about Writing Style

The writing of this book was a joint effort of three friends who have spent many years speaking, teaching, and consulting with various businesses and organizations. We could have chosen to write it entirely in the third person, thus keeping our personalities out of the material and illustrations. We could have chosen to split up the content, with each of us writing certain chapters.

For the most part, we decided to write the illustrations in the first person and much of the text in third person. Except for sharing our own journeys of grace and Ken's reflections on Jesus as a leader, by changing the names of the people or situations in the illustrations . . . and not identifying who is speaking . . . we have kept the power of the event while protecting the confidentiality of the individuals.

We felt that a first-person account of a real-life event would be a more dynamic form of presentation. It is our hope that this style of writing will keep the flow of thought running smoothly and the reader will sense the reality of a true-life incident. You, as the reader, may be more comfortable pretending either Ken, Charlie, or Bob is the only author. If that would be helpful, then please proceed with that concept in mind. We are all in agreement with the thoughts presented and speak with a unified mind.

Part I
It's All About Jesus

**Through Jesus,
We Can Experience a Life
That is Exciting and Fulfilling**

It's All About Jesus

It has been said that there are seven major sins. They are wealth without works, pleasure without conscience, knowledge without character, commerce without morality, science without humanity, worship without sacrifice, and politics without principle. Much of society seems to focus on what is called the “Cafeteria Plan”—self service only. Listed below are self words that can be destructive.

Damaging, Detrimental, Dangerous

Self-Absorbed
Self-Abuse
Self-Complacent
Self-Conceit
Self-Conscious
Self-Despair
Self-Important
Self-Interest

The focus on self is not all entirely bad from a human standpoint. It is healthy to have a realistic self-image. It is also good to have a certain amount of self-reliance and to be a self-starter when it comes to work. Society benefits greatly by individuals who are self-sacrificing and are willing to face danger. This was exemplified by the firefighters and police in the World Trade Center bombing on 9/11 . . . and by military personnel who go to war to protect our nation.

Listed below are self words that are beneficial.

Positive, Practical, Productive

Self-Analysis
Self-Confident
Self-Control
Self-Defense
Self-Denial
Self-Discipline

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Self-Forgiveness
Self-Knowledge

As good and helpful as the above self words may be there is a better or higher attainment to seek. It is to focus on Jesus who is the author and finisher of our faith. By concentrating on Him we can experience a life that is exciting and fulfilling.

Listed below are words that help to take us to a higher plane.

DYNAMIC, LIFEGIVING, MATCHLESS

Christ-Examined
Christ-Reliant
Christ-Controlled
Christ-Protected
Christ-Likeness
Christ-Empowered
Christ-Forgiven
Christ-Awareness

Read Demosthenes or Cicero; read Plato, Aristotle, or any others of that class; I grant you that you will be attracted, delighted, moved, enraptured by them in a surprising manner; but if, after reading them, you turn to the perusal of the sacred volume, whether you are willing or unwilling, it will affect you so powerfully, it will so penetrate your heart, and impress itself so strangely on your mind that, compared with its energetic influence, the beauties of rhetoricians and philosophers will almost entirely disappear; so that it is easy to perceive something divine in the sacred Scriptures, which far surpasses the highest attainments and ornaments of human industry.

John Calvin
from *Institutes of the Christian Religion*,
1536