

One of our world's great problems is ego-centric, 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, Senior 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, Pastor, Oak Hills Church, Best-selling 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, The Service Master Company

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, INJOY Stewardship Services & Equip
New York Times Best-Selling Author

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*

As I read the compelling words in *Lead Like Jesus*, I found myself nodding enthusiastically and resisting the urge to shout "Amen!" at the turn of each page. Their message—whether we sit in the family room or the board room—is undeniable: Jesus calls us to servant leadership, the essence of who we are in Him and how we demonstrate His love. His command leaves us no choice—and to this I say, "Amen."

Paul J. Meyer, Founder, Success Motivation Institute, Inc. and 40+ companies
New York Times Best-Selling Author

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, 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, First Pacific Bank

Enlightening, challenging, and convicting—the only complete book on leadership I've ever read. It will be read one hundred years from now.

Charlie "Tremendous" Jones, Executive Books

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 takes the concept of servant leadership and makes it simple enough to begin implementing it right away. The idea that servant leadership is about the head, the heart, and the hands makes it easy to understand why vision, character, and implementation are each so critical to true leadership performance. Reading this book today will be the first step in making you a better servant leader tomorrow.

Zig Ziglar, Author/Motivational Teacher

LEAD LIKE JESUS

LESSONS FOR EVERYONE FROM THE
GREATEST LEADERSHIP ROLE MODEL OF ALL TIME

Ken Blanchard & Phil Hodges



THOMAS NELSON
Since 1798

NASHVILLE DALLAS MEXICO CITY RIO DE JANEIRO

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Robert S. McGee for his penetrating concept regarding the folly of following "Satan's formula for self-worth being the sum of your performance plus the opinion of others."

Bill Hybels, who was our co-author of *Leadership by the Book* and got us going down this journey of looking at the heart, head, hands, and habits of leading like Jesus.

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To leaders everywhere who go quietly about the day-to-day task of serving others with courage and humility! May the example of Jesus make a difference in your lives and the lives of those you touch.



Introduction

THE LEAD LIKE JESUS JOURNEY

*Faith and business. Jesus and parenting.
Personal and professional. Servant and leader.*

Seeing those words paired together makes people uneasy. Our sophisticated culture encourages us to draw lines and keep our spiritual lives separate from our secular lives. Faith is only for Sundays or family gatherings, right?

A Word from Ken Blanchard

I, too, once modeled my life after that tired pattern, and I had a generally good, successful life. I had earned full professor with tenure at age thirty-five at the University of Massachusetts. In 1976–77 my wife, Margie, and I went on sabbatical leave. We then decided to stay in California to start our training and consulting company. Blanchard Training and Development was a quick and early success that began to grow in leaps and bounds. But the Lord was not central in my life. It

wasn't until the publication of *The One Minute Manager* nationally in 1982 that I began to think about God. That book was so amazingly successful in such a short period of time that even I had trouble taking credit for its success. I began to think somehow it was a "God thing."

Opening my mind to that possibility, the Lord began to send all kinds of believers into my life, starting with my longtime friend and colleague Phil Hodges. Phil and I had met on the bus going to orientation camp at Cornell University in 1957. He had turned his life over to the Lord a few years before, and ever since, he'd been praying for me. When he heard about the success of *The One Minute Manager*, Phil called and said, "Ken, let's take a walk on the beach." During our walk, he said, "Why do you think this book is so successful? Do you think you are smarter or a better writer than other people?" I said, "No, Phil. I think somehow God is involved."

Phil was delighted with my answer and began to give me Christian publications to read. But I was slow to commit. However, the Lord kept on sending me people who pushed me closer to Him, like Norman Vincent Peale with whom I co-authored *The Power of Ethical Management*.¹ Right from the beginning, Norman said to me, "Ken, the Lord's always had you on His team; you just haven't suited up yet."

My journey continued and was further impacted by Bob Buford, author of *Halftime*, and Bill Hybels, founding pastor of Willow Creek Community Church outside of Chicago. With my new spiritual team of Hodges, Peale, Buford, and Hybels, I finally couldn't deny the power of God's grace and the gift that He offers us. I suited up for the Lord.

When I turned my life over to the Lord in the late 1980s, I began to read the Bible. As a behavioral scientist, I went straight to the Gospels—Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John—and the book of Acts

because I wanted to know what Jesus did. As I studied those books, I became fascinated with how Jesus transformed twelve ordinary and unlikely people into the first generation of leaders of a movement that continues to affect the course of world history some two thousand years later. I soon became aware that everything I had ever taught or written about effective leadership during the past thirty-five years, Jesus did to perfection, beyond my ability to portray or describe. I realized that Christians have more in Jesus than just a spiritual leader; we have a practical and effective leadership model for all organizations, for all people, for all situations. As a result, Phil Hodges and I co-founded the Lead Like Jesus ministry to inspire and equip people to lead like Jesus and to follow His mandate to be servant leaders.

Our Hope for this Book

We want you to experience Jesus in a whole different way—to grow to trust Him as the perfect One to follow as you seek to lead others. This involves surrendering your life and leadership to Him. The real secret to leading like Jesus is found in Proverbs 3:5–6: “Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make your paths straight.”

Jesus is clear about how He wants us to lead: He asks us to make a difference in our world by being effective servant leaders. It is our prayer and desire that *Lead Like Jesus* will be the beginning of a new and exciting chapter in your personal journey to becoming an effective servant leader. It is designed to guide you in exploring your personal response to Jesus’ call to “Come, follow me” and to put into action the principles of servant leadership.

Is this a leadership text for business? Yes. Is this a book to improve personal relationships? Yes. Is this an inspirational guide to a more intimate relationship with God? Yes. Simply put, *Lead Like Jesus* is a tool to help you take God beyond the spiritual compartment of your private spiritual life and to give Him free rein in all your daily actions and relationships, especially your leadership roles. Don't worry if you do not have a formal leadership role as you read this book—think of your relationships to your spouse, kids, friends, co-workers, and colleagues with whom you interact every day. The concepts in this book are not complex but they are challenging. They can be applied at any level of leadership, from the family room to the corporate board room. Don't approach this book as merely an intellectual exercise; take it to heart. We want you to change not only your knowledge, but also your attitudes, actions, and behaviors—your very life! Do you know how long it took Jesus to change His disciples' attitudes and behaviors related to servant leadership? Three years of daily interactions.

We have written this book to influence your daily interactions with others and to transform the behavior of those in your organization or family. This is a tall order. So we suggest the following steps to help you reap the greatest benefits from reading this book:

1. *Begin in prayer.* Ask God to guide you to the truth that will have the greatest impact on improving the way you lead.
2. *Skim through the entire book.* Skim through the book quickly to get a sense of the entire Lead Like Jesus concept. Then, slow down and take your time to study it in-depth.
3. *Read each chapter and underline key thoughts.* Be careful not to underline too much. Only highlight when you encounter

“Aha!” ideas that challenge your leadership behaviors and motives.

4. *Take time to pause and reflect.* Resist the temptation to focus your attention on what other people should do to improve their leadership. Remember, this is about you! After reading each chapter, stop to review your underlined sections and ask yourself, “How could knowing that concept or idea make me a better leader?” Be specific. Jot your ideas in the margin. We have included some “Pause and Reflect” stops in each chapter to give you a chance to let the message permeate your heart as well as your mind.
5. *Summarize your “Aha!” ideas and reflections in a separate journal.* Include action steps and plans on how you can apply what you are learning in your day-to-day life at work or in your family.
6. *Share with others what you have learned.* The best way to learn is to teach. After you have summarized your “Aha!” ideas, organize a meeting of all the people who are impacted by your leadership but have not read this book. Share with them what you have learned and how you intend to apply it. Use your journal as your study guide.
7. *Periodically review your progress in leading like Jesus.* Praise your progress, and redirect your efforts where you think you have lapsed. When you monitor your attempts to lead like Jesus, you will be surprised what God will do through your leadership as you apply these biblical principles. If you want a true picture of how well you are doing in implementing change in your leadership behavior, ask the people you lead for some feedback.

Introduction

We want you to come to trust Jesus as your leadership role model, so whether you are leading in a business, in a nonprofit organization, in your community, in your church, or in your home, you will make Jesus smile. It is the vision of our Lead Like Jesus ministry that someday, everywhere, everyone will know someone who is leading like Jesus. Join us in our quest!

God bless.

Ken Blanchard and Phil Hodges
Winter 2006



Chapter 1

**WHO WILL YOU FOLLOW?
HOW WILL YOU LEAD?**

The world is in desperate need of a different leadership role model. Pick up any daily newspaper, and you will quickly find examples of abandoned values, betrayed trust, exploitation, and manipulation committed by people of power and influence. Corporate leaders exploit privileges of position, bringing ruin to employees and investors. Meanwhile, citizens of underdeveloped countries languish in poverty and hopelessness in a leadership vacuum. Church leaders experience crises of integrity, compromising their churches and breeding skepticism and disillusionment. Families and personal relationships drift away from mutual commitment and head toward battlegrounds of self-absorbed conflict over rights to individual fulfillment.

In one sense, the leadership model that people often experience is summarized by the popular opinion: "It's all about me." In all kinds of organizations and institutions, the rewards of money, recognition, and power increase as you move up the hierarchy. Self-promotion (pride) and self-protection (fear) are the reigning motivations that dominate the leadership landscape. Many leaders act as if the sheep are there only for

the benefit of the shepherd. In personal relationships, leadership expectations of mutual respect, loving care, self-sacrifice, and openness are 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. There is one perfect leadership role model you can trust, and His name is Jesus.

There is a way to lead that honors God and restores health and effectiveness to organizations and relationships. It is the way Jesus calls us to follow as leaders: to serve rather than be served.

As you begin your journey of leading like Jesus, you have to answer the following three key questions, which we will explore in this chapter:

1. Am I a leader?
2. Am I willing to follow Jesus as my leadership role model?
3. How do I lead like Jesus?

Am I a Leader?

Leadership is a process of influence. Anytime you seek to influence the thinking, behavior, or development of people in their personal or professional lives, you are taking on the role of a leader. Leadership can be as intimate as words of guidance and encouragement to a loved one or as formal as instructions passed through extended lines of communication in organizations. Leadership can be nurturing the

Am I a Leader?

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character and self-worth in children and promoting greater intimacy and fulfillment in personal relationships, or it can involve distributing diverse resources in an organization to accomplish a specific objective and task.

Each of the following situations describes someone engaged in an act of leadership:

- A mother with a child at any time of day
- A friend who risks alienation to confront a moral failure
- A corporate executive who rejects offers of inside information to gain a competitive edge
- A U.S. Navy SEAL commander who orders his troops into harm's way to succeed in their mission
- A husband and wife who seek mutual agreement on day-to-day finances
- A middle school teacher who excites curiosity in the minds of her students
- A rehabilitation nurse who patiently handles the anger of a stroke victim
- A missionary doctor who refuses to leave his patients to avoid capture by enemy forces
- A local pastor who avoids teaching on controversial issues for fear of rejection
- A high school coach who fails to confront rule violations by his star player

- An adult who provides advice and guidance on living arrangements to his aging parent
- A terminally ill patient who demonstrates grace, confidence, courage, and calm to anxious loved ones
- A local government official who takes an unpopular political stand based on principle
- A dictator who hoards millions of dollars while his citizens are starving

Two things are evident in this list. First, each of these people is a leader because he or she is affecting or influencing others, either in a positive or negative way. This list reveals that some leadership actions are very specific in nature (a dictator hoarding millions), and others are more general (a mother with a child); some are overt (an official taking an unpopular stand), and some are covert (a pastor avoiding teaching on a controversial issue). The actions of a leader that create influence are not always obvious to those being led. We also influence people who may not choose to follow, such as the executive who refuses insider information.

Second, these leaders are involved in making a personal choice about how and to what end they will use their influence. It is the same choice we are all called to make when we exert influence on people: do we seek to serve or to be served? If your driving motivations are self-promotion and self-protection, you will use your influence with others to fulfill these needs. If your actions are driven by service and dedication to a cause or a relationship, then you will model and encourage these values in others.

As you think about the many ways you influence the actions of other people, you can see that you are a leader wherever you go, not just at work. Whether you serve others as parent, spouse, family member, friend, or citizen—or whether you have a leadership title and position like CEO, pastor, coach, teacher, or manager—you are a leader!

As we consider how we can lead like Jesus in our various leadership roles, we need to be aware of the difference between life role leadership and organizational leadership.

Life Role Leadership

Functions in enduring relationships (parent, spouse, sibling, friend, citizen)

Focuses on growing and developing people and supporting mutual commitment in life role relationships

Involves seasons of personal sacrifice to promote the spiritual and physical well-being of others to whom you are bound in an enduring relationship

Is based on duty, honor, and lifelong obligation

Is resilient based on the level of relational commitment

Anticipates love, loyalty, trust, mercy, forbearance, forgiveness, and sacrifice

Is seasonal in levels of influence based on maturity and growth

Values love, compassion, trust, commitment, honesty, and grace

Organizational Leadership

Involves positions and titles bestowed at the convenience of the organization to serve the perceived needs and culture of the organization

Measured accountability for long- and short-term results under constant scrutiny by a variety of stakeholders (investors, governing boards, employees, customers, analysts, alumni, unions, regulatory agencies, partners, congregations, constituencies)

At risk based on performance and preferences of governing bodies and stakeholders

Power and influence are prone to conflicting agendas and priorities (finance versus marketing, engineering versus manufacturing, church staff versus lay leadership, staff versus operations)

Sensitive to shifts in organizational structure, standards, and priorities (mergers and acquisitions, reorganizations, outsourcing, and alliances)

Reward delivered in the form of additional power, material rewards, and recognition

Operates in the realm of competition and marketplace standards and biases (globalization, technology, demographics, trends, and fashion)

Values competence, material results, vision, courage, diligence, confidence, conviction, and integrity
