

# Book review – lead like jesus essay



**ASSIGN  
BUSTER**

In their book *Lead Like Jesus* Ken Blanchard & Phil Hodges encourage readers to ask themselves three key questions: 1) Am I a leader? (pg. 4) 2) Am I willing to follow Jesus as my leadership role model? (pg. 11) 3) How do I lead like Jesus? (pg. 19) The authors try to define who is a leader. They say “ Leadership is a process of influence.

Anytime you seek to influence the thinking, behaviour, or development of people in their personal or professional lives, you are taking on the role of a leader. ” (pg. 5) You might be a parent, a teacher, a nurse, a pastor, a coach, or an adult child helping her aging parents. There are differences between being a “ life leader” (such as a parent) and an “ organizational leader” (a manager in a company). The author defines leadership as influence in a positive or negative direction.

Blanchard & Hodges say leaders are defined by how they use their influence, they say. If our instincts are self-promotion and self-protection, then we’ll use our influence to fulfill these needs. Conversely, if we are driven by service and dedication to a cause or a relationship, then we will model and encourage these values in others. The authors then go deeper than just leading; they speak of being a leader and growing other leaders. One of the greatest challenges leaders today face is training and developing new leaders.

Jesus wanted those around him to succeed. He had vision, values, and purpose, he stated them clearly, and did all he could to see they were carried out. In the book *Lead Like Jesus* we read how Jesus empowered and gave ownership to those around him, concerned more with their success

than his own. It highlights that Jesus is the greatest leadership role model of all time, that He mandated His followers to be servant-leaders, and also that there is no “ Plan B” with Jesus.

Blanchard & Hodges focus on four key areas and how they can direct you toward becoming the incredible leader you aim to be. (pg. 34) The four areas are: •Heart—What is your motivation as a leader, whether as head of a family, church, or a large corporation? •Head—What are your beliefs and viewpoints about leadership? •Hands—Do you set clear goals and measure performance, consistently following up with those you lead? •Habits— How do you refresh and renew yourself as a leader? Blanchard & Hodges, guide readers through the process of discovering how to lead like Jesus. It really could be described as the process of aligning two internal domains, the heart & the head and two external domains, the hands & the habits.

These four dimensions of leadership form the outline for this very practical and transformational book. Blanchard & Hodges believe that the application of the true meaning of leading like Jesus to the heart, head, hands and habits will enable individuals to modify and transform their leadership styles. I think the one area that leaders struggle with most is with their EGO. It seems that they let their ego get in the way of their success as they only think about what they want without considering what it could do for others. Is leading by Ego the best way? Yes, we want to be successful, but at what cost? I believe full heartily that ego can lead to success in the short-term but like the leaders of fallen giants like Enron & Arthur Anderson will tell you, it can catch up to you.

We can only fill our ego for so long before it needs more. One of the questions one has to ask himself/herself to keep their ego in check is, "Am I here to be served or to serve? Blanchard and Hodges assert that self-serving leader "Edges God Out (EGO)" (pg. 80) by not valuing and not trusting God. Consequently, Edging God Out will lead to problems of false pride and fear.

In contrast, Exalting God Only cancels the impact of Edging God Out and will result in replacing false pride and fear with "humility and God-grounded confidence" The authors remind us that the ultimate leader serves the community first & not himself/herself. In the book I found a great section about the difference between being called and driven. Driven people think they own everything. They own their relationship, they own their possessions, and they own their position.

In fact, they perceive their identity as the sum of their relationship, possessions, and position. Called people, on the other hand, believe everything is on loan. They believe their relationships are on loan; they know that we have no guarantee we will lose those we love tomorrow. Called people also believe their possessions are on loan are to be held lightly, to be enjoyed and shared with an open hand.

This section of the book really made me sit back and reflect how I treat my life and the others around me. I also loved the five habits in the chapter titled "The Habits of a Servant Leader" (pg. 153) 1) Solitude 2) Prayer 3) Study and application of Scripture 4) Accepting and responding to God's unconditional love 5) Involvement in supportive relationships The heart issue of leadership requires us to determine whether we are servant leaders or self

serving leaders. Blanchard & Hodges share that the three unique patterns of behavior that differentiate between self-serving leaders and servant leaders include the responses to the following questions: (pg. 0) 1) How do I handle feedback? 2) How do you plan for successors? 3) Whom do you follow? The best moments in this book are when the authors get practical rather than theoretical. Jesus welcomed disagreement and wasn't afraid of it.

(Do you welcome feedback? Find someone who will tell you the truth! )

Address your own credibility as an individual before trying to improve things at an organizational level. (Is your security based on what others think? )

Have you planned for a successor in your job? (Does that seem threatening?)

There's an excellent section on identifying pride and fear, and how it affects our ability to lead. Indeed, the examples of how pride and fear influence leadership are among the best parts of the book. Blanchard & Hodges share

that “ there are two parts to the servant leadership that Jesus exemplified:

(pg. 114) 1) A visionary role – setting the course and destination 2) An

implementation role – doing things right with a focus on serving Blanchard & Hodges's mission is to motivate and prepare people to lead like Jesus and “

to follow His mandate to be servant leaders” (pg. XIII).

In the book there are assessment tools that will help you in analyzing your own leadership style. There is also a practical chart showing the four learning stages (novice, apprentice, journeyman, and master/teacher) and obstacles to success in each. There's specific help; rather than just telling readers to get into an accountability group, the authors offer a specific model of what this would look like. Chapter end summaries, personal and fictional examples that explain the concepts, and invitations to reflect on various key points will

help in engaging more fully with and applying the material. The book concludes with “ Next Step Tools” that challenge and can be revisited time and time again.

According to Blanchard & Hodges, “ Lead Like Jesus” is not a final destination; but a transformational journey (pg. 19). The transformational leadership process initiates from personal leadership and progresses to one-on-one leadership and team leadership and continues to organizational leadership. Your leadership transformation means adopting a God’s-eye view of your life and leadership. This will help you learn how to align your leadership motivation, viewpoint, behaviors, and habits with those of Jesus to effectively lead others. Blanchard & Hodges say that “ the world desperately needs new leadership role models, and Jesus has shown us the way to lead” (pg.

234). Jesus is the greatest leader of all time and Jesus calls us to be servant leaders. Lead Like Jesus is a tool that can help guide us toward that goal. It will definitely make a difference in your leadership and in those you influence.

Bibliography – Lead Like Jesus by Ken Blanchard & Phil Hodges