Jesus, CEO

Book Review and Shared Vision Action Plan

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Jesus, CEO - Book Review

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Laurie Beth Jones worked many years in business was struck by the notion that Jesus’ leadership approach with his staff ran counter to most of the management styles and techniques employed today. Burdened to find invaluable human energy and intelligence untapped and underutilized, Jones has made it her goal to help empower people at all levels of leadership. She encouraged them to re-view the divine excellence in themselves and in those they serve. By harnessing the three categories of strength behind Jesus’ leadership techniques:

- the strength of self-mastery
- the strength of action
Jesus, CEO - Book Review

- the strength of relationships

Each person can become the empowered leader that the new millennium will require. Jesus stories teach and are examples of a divine manager at work. He took a disorganized “staff” of twelve and built a thriving enterprise- Jesus, CEO details a simple but profound approach to motivating and managing others.

About the Author

Laurie Beth Jones has written multiple national best-selling books, including Jesus, CEO: Using Ancient Wisdom for Visionary Leadership; Jesus in Blue Jeans: A Practical Guide to Everyday Spirituality; and The Path: Creating Your Mission Statement for Work and For Life. Using practical wisdom, humor, and reality-based thinking, Ms. Jones has become one of the world’s leading consultants for business that want to take their work and their workers to unparalleled levels of performance, satisfaction, and success.

“Laurie Beth Jones’ work has reached as high as the White House, the Pentagon, the halls of congress and the senate, as well as the streets of Calcutta, Bosnia, and South Africa. She is a member of the Woman’s Action Council for Amnesty International, a sustaining contributor to World Vision International, and is currently helping to build an orphanage outside of Juarez, Mexico through her Jesus, CEO Foundation. She firmly believes that living out one’s spiritual calling is the only path to joy, and that heaven will consist of all people fully expressing their highest gifts.” (Jones 1995)
Relevant Context

The novel Jesus, CEO is relevant and specific when defining visionary leadership. I selected this unique novel in which the author Laurie Beth Jones defines and illustrates step by step how to make a shared vision a reality.

Author’s Thesis and Supporting Points

This revolutionary thought of using ancient wisdom as the foundation of visionary leadership was designed by the “Omega Leader” himself or Jesus’ leadership techniques. These tested and proven techniques can be categorized into three strengths:

- the strength of self-mastery
- the strength of action
- the strength of relationships

The Strength of Self-Mastery

- He stuck to his mission.

Jesus knew his mission statement, and he did not deviate from it. He declared that his mission was, in essence, to teach people about a better way of life. In the wilderness Jesus was given several “business opportunities” that did not relate to his mission. Each of the opportunities was related to talents that he had, and used, in one way or another. However, he resisted them because they did not fit his
mission statement.

The wisdom and strength of self-mastery can be defined in the following questions:

What is your mission? Can you define it in one or two sentences?

Do feelings stir inside you that suggest you might contribute to a better way of life for other? Can you list opportunities currently in your path that might really be distractions? What are they?

- He owned it.

Ownership is an interesting and elusive concept because it implies a permanent state of possession. Yet all things, even life itself, are only on loan to us. “Leaders are those who view life’s resources as being on loan to them.” The strength of self-mastery can be defined in the following questions:

What do you really own, with a deep-down-in-your-heart knowing? What are you trying to own? How can you truly own it?

- He felt a sense of destiny.

Jesus said, “I know where I came from and I know where I am going.” He felt a sense of destiny about his life. When the storm arose that threatened to sink his ship, he slept calmly, knowing it was not his time to die. “Great leaders inspire others to the extent that they inspire themselves.” The strength of self-mastery can be defined in the following questions:

Do you feel as if you were destined to be doing what you are doing? Why or why
not? Do you believe any leader can lead effectively without feeling destined to do so?

**The Strength of Action**

- He broke ranks.

Jesus did not follow the crowd. He led it. He did not report the news. He made it happen. “The Pharisees were dysfunctional religious leaders whom Jesus felt so strongly about that he called them “whited sepulchers, broods of vipers,” and other choice words. He had such strong words for them because they were supposed to set people free, yet instead they enslaved people for their own selfish gain. Jesus knew he had to step out of the crowd in order to set people free.”

The strength of action begins by asking these questions:

If you did what was really in your heart, with whom or what would you come into conflict? Describe the troops that you are currently marching with. What fear of conflict is keeping you from being a leader?

- He came from left field.

Jesus was not exactly what the people had in mind for a leader. He not only came from the wrong side of town. The man nobody considered wore the crown. Nothing from their libraries called for a carpenter king. Once again, God played surprise.

“The call to leadership can come from many directions and in many ways. I believe that the Old Testament indicates three ways that we are called to leadership: the
burning heart, the burning bush, and the burning house.” (Jones 1995)

The strength in action begins by asking these questions:

In what ways do you “come from left field” as a leader? What type of call to leadership have you experienced:

- The burning heart? The call David had. He said “I’ll fight the giant!”
- The burning bush? Moses was called to leadership by seeing the burning bush.
- The burning house? Esther risked her life and revealed her identity to the king, and became a leader when her house was burning down.

How have you surprised yourself and others with your leadership?

- He rose above it all.

“Leaders must be able to rise above controversies, jealousies, petty personal attacks, and ego slights, real or imagined, in order to accomplish anything of worth.”

“Jesus, despite all the thunderous noise around him, maintained confidence in his wings and his perspective. He rose above it all.” (Jones 1995)

The strength of action begins by asking these questions:

What “fray” are you involved in that you could “rise above” by taking an aerial view?

Who represents thunderous, seemingly more powerful “competition” to you?
Strength of Relationships

- He believed in them.

“Jesus looked at the earnest young man and said, “Some people say your name is Simon. But I am going to call you Peter. And upon this rock I will build my church.”

To have someone believe in us can help set our greatness free.

The strength of relationships begins by asking these questions:

How can you show your staff members you believe in them?

Write down any new insights you might have now about the ones you might have been writing off, like Peter, as “flaky.”

- He set an example for them.

A popular saying is that children learn by what they see, not by what they hear. Leaders set the example by what they do. Jesus washed his staffers’ feet; they were shocked and protested that they should be washing his feet. Leaders are not afraid to roll up their selves and help out. Strength by relationships begins by asking these questions: What kind of “by-example” training is your staff now receiving?

Would you be willing to have someone videotape your deeds for a day and then use that tape as a training video?
Jesus, CEO - Book Review

- He defended them.

In business a common saying persists: “The customer is always right.” “In the case of management, it should be: Your staff is always right…at least as far as the public is concerned.” (Jones 1995) Jesus defended his staff in public. A woman accused of adultery was dragged before him. Again, someone had broken the law. Jesus could have one scored points with the scribes by upholding their sense of righteousness. Instead, he asked the people who were without sin to throw the first stone at her. The accusers left the woman alone. He defended her.

Strength by relationships begins by asking these questions: How can you defend your staff on a day to day basis? List three times that you had to make a choice to defend or reprimand one of your staff members. What were the consequences?