

A Biblical Critique of “**SITUATIONAL LEADERSHIP®/LEAD LIKE JESUS**”¹

One of the hottest methodologies in leadership training today is called “**Situational Leadership II®**” &/or “**Lead Like Jesus**.” It is being used and promoted by mission boards, churches, and denominations, as well as secular corporations and companies.² Everything from books and seminars, to training materials teaching this methodology have been developed and are heavily promoted by an organization called “**The Center for FaithWalk Leadership**.” The original “**Situational Leadership**” was created by Dr. Paul Hersey while he was a professor at Ohio University, and has been around since the 1960’s. However the “**Lead Like Jesus**” or “**Situational Leadership II**” version has only surfaced within the past two decades. The “**Situational Leadership II**” version (*SL-II*) was developed by well-known author, and management expert Dr. Ken Blanchard. He claims to have worked with Hersey in creating and developing the original “**Situational Leadership®**.”³ Three decades later Blanchard, along with a number of colleagues, has founded “**The Center for FaithWalk Leadership**.” This organization is rapidly becoming a major force in leadership training and technique.

Blanchard is perhaps most famous for his multi-million copy best seller “**The One Minute Manager**.”⁴ He has authored or co-authored a plethora of management and leadership related books since that time.⁵ He, along with a number of other motivational and leadership experts such as Phil Hodges, Lee Ross, Bill Hybels, Rick Warren, Dan Cathy,⁶ and Laurie Beth Jones are heavily promoting what they claim is a leadership style taught by Jesus to His disciples, and which is thus “*the*” methodology to use in management technique. A closer look will reveal that it is simply the original “**Situational Leadership®**” updated and “*Christianized*.” In this newer version Blanchard et al., even appeal to a number of Scripture passages for support, such as Jesus’ statement that “*he that would be greatest among you must be your servant*,”⁷ as well as Christ’s foot-washing incident recorded in the thirteenth chapter of the gospel of John.

You may be thinking: “**What could be better or more biblical than that?**” However before Bible-believers jump on the “**Situational Leadership/Lead Like Jesus**” bandwagon, they might want to look more closely at its roots, its teachings, and the theological positions of some of the staff and board members of the Center for FaithWalk Leadership. The Scripture admonishes us to “*examine all things, hold fast to that which is good*.” (I Thess. 5:21). With that command in mind, I would

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² e.g. “*Companies Embrace Jesus*”, a newspaper article which highlighted the usage of “**Lead Like Jesus**” & “**Situational Leadership® II**” training for companies such as Carquest, as well as hospital staffs, etc. ([The Greenville News](#), Section F, p.1, May 19, 2004). Companies from Estee Lauder to the Marriott hotel chain are now using their management materials and methodology (www.kenblanchard.com/speakers/speakers.cfm).

³ e.g. “*Ken Blanchard first developed Situational Leadership® with Paul Hersey in the late 1960s. It was in the early 1980s that Blanchard and the Founding Associates of The Ken Blanchard Companies created a new generation of the theory called Situational Leadership®II.*” (“*The Servant Leader*,” by Ken Blanchard and Phil Hodges, JCountryman: Nashville, TN, footnote on p. 69). cf. “*We would like to praise...Paul Hersey, cocreator of Situational Leadership®, for his breakthrough thinking around leadership.*” (“*Leadership by the Book*,” by Ken Blanchard, Bill Hybels, and Phil Hodges, William Morrow and Company, Inc.: New York, NY, 1999, p. 203). Earlier in his book, without using names, Blanchard apparently refers to his and Hersey’s work together in co-developing the original Situational Leadership, even using the same illustration that Hersey uses in at least one of his online printed interviews (pp. 48-49).

⁴ Blanchard et al, claim that this book, coauthored with Spencer Johnson “*has sold more than ten million copies worldwide and... has been translated into more than twenty-five languages.*” (*Leadership by the Book*, op cit., p. 211).

⁵ e.g. “*Raving Fans: A Revolutionary Approach to Customer Service*” (with Sheldon Bowles, 1993), “*Everyone’s a Coach*,” (with Don Shula, 1995); “*Empowerment Takes More Than a Minute*” (with John Carlos and Alan Randolph, 1995); “*Whale Done!*” (with Thad Lacinak, Chuck Thompkins, and Jim Ballard), “*Gung Ho!: Turn On the People in Any Organization*” (with Sheldon Bowles, 1998), “*The One Minute Apology*”; “*The Heart of a Leader*,” 1999, “*The Power of Ethical Management*” (with Norman Vincent Peale), 1988, “*Managing by Values*” (with Michael O-Conner), 1997, “*The Generosity Factor*” (with S. Truett Cathy), etc.

⁶ President of Chick-fil-A restaurants, one of the largest family-owned restaurant chains in America.

⁷ Mt. 20:26.

like to present some factual information that the average layman, and even many pastors may be unaware of, in regards to this increasingly popular, “cutting edge,” leadership methodology. Is “Lead Like Jesus” the rediscovery of long overlooked biblical truth? Or is it another fad borrowing from the secular world and sweeping biblical Christianity, much like the “WWJD” and “Purpose-Driven Church” crazes have done during the past few years? After reading the following, I will leave that to your judgment.

I. A BRIEF HISTORY & EXPLANATION OF SITUATIONAL LEADERSHIP.

- A. **ORIGIN.** As noted above, the “*Situational Leadership*” management philosophy was the brainchild of a man named Dr. Paul Hersey, and originally created in the 1960’s. At the time, Dr. Hersey was on the faculty of Ohio University. In published interviews Dr. Hersey has made it clear that he did not develop his theory and management model by himself. Instead he has acknowledged his deep debt to two men: Douglas MacGregor, a management thinker of the 60’s, and Dr. Carl Rogers, the renowned secular psychologist and creator of “*Rogierian Counseling*.”⁸ Dr. Hersey has also said that much of his thinking was the fruit borne of management studies done by Ohio State University & the University of Michigan in the 1940s.⁹
- B. **CONCEPT.** Dr. Hersey lamented the fact that people in management were not looked upon as “professionals” in the same manner as doctors, lawyers, etc. Hersey also decided and maintained vigorously that there was no single or right kind of leadership.¹⁰ So he created a management methodology in which people were divided into one of four types of individuals (R1, R2, R3, & R4)¹¹, depending on their response towards those in leadership over them, and the tasks they were assigned to perform. A person could even be more than one type of person on any given day, depending on the situation. According to *Situational Leadership*, it is up to the situational leader to “*diagnose*” which kind of “*person*” an individual is at any given point in time, and then give them the appropriate type of leadership response and behavior (S1, S2, S3, or S4) after “*reading*” or “*diagnosing*” them, i.e. the situation. Thus the term “*Situational Leadership*.”

⁸ “Doc (Hersey) is fond of saying that if he has special skills in leadership and management it is because he has stood on the shoulders of giants. His giants include Douglas McGregor and Carl Rogers.” (“Lessons in Leadership-An Interview with Paul Hersey.” Interview conducted by Dr. Charles W. Blackwell, Associate Professor of Management in the Wayne Huizenga Graduate School of Business and Entrepreneurship at Nova Southeastern University, p.1). Both this interview and the one by Schermerhorn were downloaded from <http://www.situational.com/home/articles.htm>, in 2003 (Blackwell’s interview was conducted during the Fall 2000 term, according to the text). Hersey: “*In fact, if I look back on the people who had an impact on my life I value having had the opportunity to learn from those like Douglas McGregor, Carl Rogers, and others. I can’t remember who said it, but I’ve always valued the expression: ‘We can see so much further from the shoulders of giants.’*” (“Situational Leadership@: Conversations with Paul Hersey.” John R. Schermerhorn, Jr., Ohio University, c. 1979, 1998, 1993, 2001 by the Center for Leadership Studies, Inc. All rights reserved”, p. 3). According to the accompanying note, Dr. Schermerhorn is “...the Charles G. O’Bleness Professor of Management in the College of Business and Director of the Center for Southeast Asian Studies at Ohio University.” [p.8].

⁹ Hersey: “*Actually, this model goes back to the Ohio State Studies and the University of Michigan studies which began back in the late 1940s... The Situational Leadership Model is actually based on the Ohio State Studies. Research has showed there is no one best style*” (Hersey, quoted by Blackwell, op cit., pp. 2-3).

¹⁰ Hersey: “*Over the last few decades, people in the field of management have been involved in a search for a ‘best’ style of leadership. Yet, the evidence from research clearly indicates that there is no single all-purpose leadership style. Successful leaders are those who can adapt their behavior to meet the demands of their own unique situation.*” (Schermerhorn, op cit., p. 1). Please note that Blanchard parrots this thinking in his “Christianized” SLII as well: “*There is no single best leadership style. Leader effectiveness all depends on the development level of the person you are attempting to influence.*” (*The Servant Leader*, Op cit., p. 69)

¹¹ Blackwell, op cit., pp. 4-5. Note, in Blanchard’s subsequently developed “*Situational Leadership II*,®” he changes the letter used from “R” to “D” and uses different terms to describe the four types of “commitment levels”, changing them to: “*Enthusiastic Beginners, Disillusioned Learners, Capable but Cautious Performers, & Peak Performers/Self-Reliant Achievers.*” Blanchard attempts to minimize and downplay the latter term (“*Self-Reliant Achiever*”), since self-reliance is completely unbiblical. He coyly states: “*Although the term Self-Reliant Achiever is also used to describe this fourth level of development, Peter would probably not claim it as his own...*” (p.81) -an obvious tip-off that the Situational Leadership “styles” originated not from Scripture, but from the secular business world. (cf. *The Servant Leader*, pp. 70-72).

Dr. Hersey was especially excited about this type of leadership technique since, to use his own words, “*Situational Leadership® gives us a way as managers or as leaders to be just as professional as those who practice medicine or law.*”¹² The reason he felt it made management personnel as professional as doctors and lawyers, was that Situational Leadership involved a diagnosis first, much as a doctor diagnoses a patient before prescribing an appropriate medicine to effect a cure. According to the theory, if the situational leader correctly diagnoses the individual he is trying to lead or “*influence*” and responds to him with appropriate behavior, that worker will be happy and productive, while the leader will also achieve his and his organization’s goals.¹³

In Hersey’s original model, the four types of leadership technique to be used on workers was “*telling*” “*selling*” “*participating*” or “*delegating*”, depending on the situation.¹⁴ For instance **R1** would be someone who, in Hersey’s words, is “*unable and unwilling*” or “*unable and insecure.*”¹⁵ In such a case, Hersey says you do little in the way of “*relational*” behavior (talking). Instead you give them clearly defined *tasks* to do, “*telling*” them what to do and how to do it, and are very directive. The second level is **R2**, and is described by Hersey as “*unable and willing*” or “*unable and confident.*”¹⁶ This person is very similar to an eager worker the first day on the job, i.e. eager but clueless. With them, according to Hersey, you do “*selling... Here the leader uses much more relationship behavior...*”¹⁷

Note: “Relationship behavior” harkens directly back to psychologist Carl Rogers. It is defined by Hersey as a supplementing of task behavior with “...socio-emotional support and explanations of why something should be done a certain way... The leader also attempts through two-way communication and socio-emotional support to get the followers psychologically to ‘buy into’ decisions that have to be made... (Hersey states) Relationship behavior is the extent to which a leader engages in two-way communication by providing socio-emotional support, ‘psychological strokes’, and facilitating behaviors... We began following the lead of Carl Rogers. We used nondirective interviewing to isolate various skills that were essential to managerial work. These included people skills like questioning, active listening responses, mirroring, encouraging, all things that we associate with Carl Rogers work, and all hands-on things that would be useful in goal setting, performance evaluation, and problem solving.”¹⁸ Interestingly, very similar descriptions have been given in regard to Situational LeadershipII®/“Lead Like Jesus” training and techniques: “*Servant leaders create successful teams by empathizing with employees, listening to them, helping them in times of crisis, using persuasion rather than merely issuing orders...*”¹⁹

R3 behavior is defined by Hersey as “*able and unwilling*” or “*able and insecure.*”²⁰ Hersey: “*This person is presently demonstrating skills necessary to get the job done, but she may be unwilling or unmotivated due to some circumstance.*”²¹ In other words, they are not enthusiastic “happy campers.” Hersey then gives an illustration of two “R3’s” which is highly instructive: “*Let’s say that Tom is still doing his normal fine job but he is demotivated because of the five customer service representatives in the department, he is handling 40% of the calls and yet his raise is the same as everyone else. Tom is thinking about working less hard because he feels he is being inequitably rewarded. The S3 leadership style, participating, will use lots of relationship behavior to mend fences with Tom and show him how*

¹² Schermerhorn, op cit., p. 4.

¹³ Hersey: “*What Situational Leadership® teaches is that you need to do your diagnosis first and then act on it to provide those things that can make a difference... Situational Leadership® is about being effective as a leader. This involves matching your leader behaviors (those behaviors you use when attempting to influence someone else) with the needs of the individual or group that you are working with.*” Ibid, pp. 3-4.

¹⁴ In Blanchard’s SLII, the first three terms have been changed to “*Directing, Coaching, & Supporting*” with “*Delegating*” remaining the same. (The Servant Leader, p. 73, etc).

¹⁵ In Blanchard’s SLII, he renames this level, “*Enthusiastic Beginners*” (The Servant Leader, p. 70).

¹⁶ Renamed “*Disillusioned Learners*” in Blanchard’s SL II (ibid).

¹⁷ Blackwell, op cit., p. 5.

¹⁸ Blackwell, p. 5, & Schermerhorn, pp. 2 & 6 (bolding added).

¹⁹ The Greenville News, op cit., p. 1.

²⁰ Renamed “*Capable But Cautious Performers*” in Blanchard’s SL II (The Servant Leader, op cit., p. 71).

²¹ Blackwell, op cit., p. 5.

valuable he is. On the other hand, the able and insecure R3 also needs a high dose of relationship behavior to give him the encouragement and confidence he needs. Let's say Andy has completed the Situational Leadership training course with flying colors and has all the skills necessary to teach the course. But Andy hasn't taught the course by himself before so he's nervous as to how he will do. The successful leader will offer some help, encourage Andy, remind him how much he knows and how well he did in training class, and in other ways bolster Andy's confidence until he becomes an R4."²²

Red flags should immediately pop up in regard to the above illustration about Tom. The comment "*mend fences with Tom*" sounds very much like the use of praise and flattery to manipulate him. A biblical approach would more likely be to confront the lazy co-workers who are causing him to have to carry an excessive amount of the workload.²³ Furthermore, giving all the workers in Tom's department equal raises when they are not equally deserving of them, violates the biblical principle of equity, as well as flies in the face of Jesus' teaching of increased reward and responsibility based on faithfulness to previous tasks.²⁴ In the book of Acts there was a similar situation (i.e. a group of disgruntled individuals who did not feel they were being treated with equity). Interestingly the Apostles didn't try to "*mend fences*" with them by "*showing them how valuable they were.*" Instead they dealt with the problem in a very directive fashion.²⁵

Finally, Hersey describes an **R4** as someone who is "*able and willing*" or "*able and confident.*"²⁶ In other words they know how to do what you want them to do, and they are eager to do so. They have "bought into" what you want them to do. They are "gung ho, happy campers" if you please. For them they need little "task" or "relationship" behavior. They can run with the football because they've bought into your agenda. But you still should check in on them once in a while, especially since in Hersey's words, "...the R4 may be self-sufficient in one task, but be an R3 or even an R2 in another task."²⁷

The above four styles or categories (R1-R4/S1-S4) are illustrated in a famous **bell-curve diagram** by Hersey, which has also been adopted by Ken Blanchard-again illustrating the extremely close connection between the two management systems,²⁸ and the dependence of *Situational Leadership II* on its predecessor, Situational Leadership® (see below).

II. THE BIRTH AND BASIS OF "*SITUATIONAL LEADERSHIP II*" & "*LEAD LIKE JESUS.*"

- A. **ORIGIN.** In the mid 1980's, Dr. Ken Blanchard, who claims to have worked with Dr. Paul Hersey to create the original "*Situational Leadership*®", "revised and updated it" calling it, "*Situational Leadership II*®."
- B. **CONCEPT.** As noted previously, what Blanchard, Hybels, Hodges, et al., have tried to do is retroactively "*Christianize*" Hersey's original secular management theory twenty-five years after its creation. Having already accepted and used Hersey's management model for decades, Blanchard and his colleagues have after-the-fact gone back to the New Testament Gospels to search for examples of Jesus using Situational Leadership's® four leadership styles with his disciples. Not surprisingly, Dr. Blanchard and his colleagues found what they were looking for (while ignoring a whole lot of contrary biblical evidence!). In lockstep with Hersey's original breakdown of everyone into one of four categories, they claim that Jesus used four types of leadership techniques on his disciples (S-1, S-2, S-3, & S-4), depending on where they were at management-wise on a given day or situation (D-1, D-2, D-3, or D-4).

²² Ibid, pp. 5-6.

²³ II Thess. 3:6-15.

²⁴ Equity in Scripture has the connotation of qualities such as: "evenness," "straightness," "uprightness," "fairness," "straightforwardness," "integrity," etc. (e.g. Ps. 98:9; 99:4; Prov. 1:3; 2:9; 17:26). cf. Mt. 25: 21, 23.

²⁵ Acts 6:1-7.

²⁶ Renamed "**Peak Performers/Self-Reliant Achievers**" by Blanchard in SL II (The Servant Leader, op cit., p. 71).

²⁷ Blackwell, op cit., p. 6.

²⁸ e.g. *The Servant Leader*, p. 75, as well as materials found on Blanchard's websites.

(!) Like Hersey, Blanchard teaches that good leaders learn to “read” the people under them.²⁹ Blanchard, et al., quote a number of biblical passages to try and buttress their argument. However a careful, unbiased comparison of Blanchard’s books and statements promoting “*Situational Leadership II/Lead Like Jesus*” with Dr. Hersey’s original, earlier “*Situational Leadership®*” will lead one to conclude that Blanchard’s theory did not spring from Scripture at all. Rather, it is simply 1960’s secular management theory and techniques reworded and repackaged. Some Scripture verses have been sprinkled in giving it an instant appeal to Christian mission boards, churches, and organizations. But underneath everything, it’s the same animal. Having made such a serious assertion, it is now incumbent upon me to support it. This I will attempt to do in the remainder of this paper.

III. PROBLEMS WITH THE ORIGINAL VERSION OF SITUATIONAL LEADERSHIP.

- A. **UNGODLY, BANKRUPT SOURCES.** As noted above, Dr. Hersey has repeatedly and publicly claimed that he got much of the thinking for “*Situational Leadership®*” from OSU & U-M management studies, as well as Douglas MacGregor, whose theories are controversial at best.³⁰ However the most troubling source for much of his thinking in regards to “*Situational Leadership®*” comes from Dr. Carl Rogers whose psychological theories can truly be described as worthless.³¹ Rogers, and his Rogerian Counseling techniques are some of the most ludicrous (not to mention unbiblical) ideas and practices ever seen in psychology. Dr. Jay Adams has thoroughly debunked Rogers’ theories in a number of his books.³² Dr. William Kirk Kilpatrick, associate professor of educational psychology at Boston College has also given an illuminating and devastating inside view of a weekend counseling experience with Carl Rogers.³³ But even apart from such learned critiques of Carl Rogers and his brand of psychology by experts in the field, the bankruptcy of his theory is obvious for even a layman to see: When Rogers’ wife was diagnosed with cancer, instead of standing by her in her hour of greatest earthly need, he divorced her and found another woman to marry, stating that he couldn’t cope with it and needed to leave his sick wife for his own well-being!
- B. **INCORRECT MOTIVES FOR DEVELOPING THIS SYSTEM.** As noted above, a prime motivation behind Hersey creating and developing “*Situational Leadership®*” was to put those involved in management on a level of “professionalism” equal with doctors and lawyers. Hersey: “*Situational Leadership provides a way to be just as professional as those in other disciplines, such as law and medicine...I like to think of it as “reading them, leading them, and succeeding with them.”*”³⁴ cf. “*Situational Leadership® gives us a way as managers or as leaders to be just as professional as those who practice medicine or law.*”³⁵ While people in the unsaved world are consumed with attaining ever higher status in the eyes of others, that certainly is not a proper motive for Christians to develop or use a management style or technique. In fact a number of authors have pointed out that present-day Christianity’s dogged pursuit of professional status and respect by the world is having catastrophic spiritual consequences in many churches, denominations, and organizations.³⁶

²⁹ “*There are three skills to being a Situational Leader: diagnosis, flexibility, and partnering for performance.*” *The Servant Leader*, Op cit., p. 69.

³⁰ Hersey: “*Actually, this model goes back to the Ohio State Studies and the University of Michigan studies which began back in the late 1940s. These studies showed that leaders can engage in task behavior and relationship behavior... The Ohio State researchers settled on a diagram with four quadrants... The Situational Leadership Model is actually based on the Ohio State Studies. Research has shown that there is no one best style. Each quadrant or leadership style was the most effective leadership style in certain situations.*” (Blackwell, op cit., pp. 2-3).

³¹ Hersey is quoted by Charles Blackwell in an online interview thusly: “*Doc (Hersey) is fond of saying that if he has special skills in leadership and management it is because he has stood on the shoulders of giants. His giants include Douglas McGregor and Carl Rogers.*” (Blackwell Interview, p. 1)

³² e.g. *Competent to Counsel*, pp. 78-104, & *The Christian Counselor’s Manual*, pp. 24-89, etc. cf. “*Psychology: The Trojan Horse*”, Gil Rugh, Indian Hills Community Church: Lincoln, Nebraska, 1995.

³³ See “*The Emperor’s New Clothes*,” William Kirk Kilpatrick. Crossway Books: Westchester, IL, 1985, pp. 127-184.

³⁴ Blackwell Interview, op cit., pp. 4-5.

³⁵ Schermerhorn Interview, op cit., p.4.

³⁶ See for example “*Dining With the Devil*,” by Os Guinness, “*Brothers, We Are Not Professionals*,” by John Piper, “*No Place For Truth*,” by David Wells, etc.

- C. **A RANDOM, BASELESS DIVISION OF PEOPLE INTO FOUR TYPES.** As with other secular sociological and psychological practices such as psychological personality testing, the dividing of people into a certain number of neat categories (in this case four) has no legitimate basis. Situational Leadership’s division of people into four types does not come from Scripture. Neither is it scientific. When asked why he divided everyone into four types of personalities rather than 3, 8, or 81, Dr. Hersey proudly replied in at least two separate interviews that it was due to the fact that his father used to work for Bell Laboratories, and discovered that people had trouble remembering phone numbers with more than four digits in a row.(!) Consequently, Hersey said he decided to divide people into four types or styles of people that leaders must deal with!³⁷ Words fail me. It would be similar to me creating a new management model and dividing everyone in the world into five styles or types of people, based on the fact that my dad had worked for the United States Postal System and had discovered that people had trouble remembering zip codes of more than five digits! Having discovered the real basis for the four styles of leadership, one immediately realizes that Dr. Blanchard’s attempt to show that Jesus used four styles of leadership technique has clearly been superimposed on the biblical record in order to fit a priori, a preconceived theory.
- D. **A FAULTY DEFINITION OF LEADERSHIP.** Dr. Hersey claims that leadership is just “*influencing*.” In response to the interviewer’s request for him to define leadership, Hersey replied: “*Actually it’s very simple. Leadership is simply the process of influencing someone to do something that he or she might otherwise not do. Leadership is influence.*”³⁸ Upon reading that definition, the term “*manipulation*” immediately comes to mind. This is a very valid observation since Hersey in two different interviews has described the techniques used in “*Situational Leadership®*” thusly: “*The leader also attempts through two-way communication and socio-emotional support to get the followers psychologically to ‘buy into’ decisions that have to be made...I believe we can help people learn to change their behaviors so that they don’t have to be replaced...*”³⁹ Hersey is aware that such thinking leaves situational leadership open to criticisms of being manipulative. So he attempts to define leadership in a way that he obviously hopes can avoid this problem, trying to draw a hypothetical distinction between the terms “*influencing*” & “*manipulation*.” He states: “*Now many people have a problem with this definition because they equate influence with manipulation. The way I see it, there is nothing wrong with influence as long as you are influencing someone to accomplish something that advances organizational goals and their own goals at the same time. That’s a win-win situation. If, however, you attempt to influence someone to do something which is harmful to them while advancing your own personal goals or even organizational goals, that is manipulation and sets up a win-lose dynamic. This is not what we mean by leadership.*”⁴⁰

To an unbiased person, such a distinction is contrived at best—a simple case of using semantics to try to evade a serious problem. By Hersey’s definition, virtually nothing done to motivate a person to perform a task or job could qualify as manipulation—since it would be nearly impossible for anything to fit into

³⁷ “Blackwell: ‘I notice that your model includes four styles. With so many styles available why did you choose four?’ Hersey: ‘I have often said that in order for a model to be successful it should be based on organized common sense. What we attempted to do was to provide a simple model, something that people could carry around with them. **My dad worked for Bell Labs and held over 50 patents dealing with the telephone system. When people were first given telephone numbers, they made all kinds of mistakes. Most numbers were five or six digits. Research proved that as long as the numbers were in sets of four or less, fewer mistakes were made when dialing a number. People can handle sets of ones, twos, threes, and fours with little difficulty. So that’s where the “four” came from in Situational Leadership®. It seemed to be the best number for people to remember.**’” (Blackwell, op cit., p. 6). cf. Hersey: “People have asked me many times: ‘Why four styles, why four levels of readiness? Why not 5, why not 8, why not 81, like the Managerial Grid?’ My response is that for a model to have any value it has to be used and for it to be used it has to be simple. My dad worked for Bell Labs and held the original patents on the dial system for telephones. When people were first given telephone numbers they made all kinds of mistakes. Most numbers were five or six digits, some seven. What researchers eventually found was that as long as you kept the numbers in sets of four or less, the mistakes went way down. People can handle in their minds sets of ones, twos, threes, and fours. When you get beyond that you get lots of mistakes in the dialing system. **So that’s where the ‘four’ came from in Situational Leadership®. It seemed to be the best number for people to remember.**”(!) (Schermerhorn, op cit., p. 5 – bolding added).

³⁸ Ibid, p.2

³⁹ Schermerhorn, p. 2 & Blackwell, op cit., p. 7, (bolding & underlining added).

⁴⁰ Ibid (underlining added).

Hersey's definition of manipulation i.e. influencing someone to do something harmful to themselves. After all, one would be hard pressed to think of *any* situation where a manager knowingly and consciously has asked or could ask a worker to do something that was blatantly "harmful" to that worker. And according to Paul Hersey, if it isn't harmful, it isn't manipulation! Such reasoning may quiet the conscience of a leader trying to achieve his desired ends via flattery and manipulation, but it certainly isn't biblical. Consequently, very similar definitions and statements about leadership by Blanchard bring his management methodology under a similar indictment.

- E. **ARE RELATIONSHIPS AS IMPORTANT AS THE TASKS ASSIGNED?** The teaching that workplace *relationships* matter as much as the *tasks* to be performed is also highly suspect, whether we're talking about companies, churches, schools or mission boards.⁴¹ The Scriptures place a high premium on hard work and the character that it flows from, as well as personal responsibility. The "*Protestant work ethic*" is rooted in such biblical concepts. Jesus made it clear in Matthew 25 that the people who should be given more responsibility are those who have proven faithful in smaller things. Paul publicly excoriated the lazy believers in Thessalonica who weren't working diligently. He certainly didn't do more "*relational*" activity to get them to be industrious. In fact in today's management culture he would probably be accused of a severe lack of "*people skills*" in light of the blunt, directive way he handled the problem.⁴² Even highly respected Christian leaders are saying these things. One is quoted in a Situational Leadership manual thusly: "*Attitude, to me, is more important than facts. It is more important than the past, than education, than money, than circumstances, than failures, than success, than what other people think or say or do. It is more important than appearance, giftedness, or skill. It will make or break a company...a home... a relationship.*"⁴³

Even a cursory reading of the Old and New Testaments will lead one to conclude that the Lord Jesus, as well as the apostles and writers of Scripture were straightforward in their interpersonal dealings. Truth was what supremely mattered to them. The same Paul who admonished believers to "*speak the truth in love*" publicly confronted and rebuked Peter to his face in front of a crowd, when he was acting hypocritically.⁴⁴ By Hersey's standard and definition, virtually all of the Old Testament prophets were dismal failures because they weren't skilled at using "*relational behavior*" to get people to "*buy into*" leadership's goals. Likewise Stephen and most of the rest of the apostles and early church leaders were apparently colossal leadership failures, since they failed to use "Situational Leadership" styles and heavy doses of "*relational techniques*" and "*psychological strokes*" to get believers to "*buy into*" the goals they, as leaders, wanted to achieve. The bankruptcy of such a methodology when compared with Scripture is self-evident. Blanchard's Situational Leadership II® and the Master's degree program he offers in conjunction with the University of San Diego advertises and promote this same "*relationships are as important as tasks*" mentality.⁴⁵

- F. **A PRAGMATIC BASIS FOR CREDIBILITY.** In Dr. Hersey's online interviews and promotional materials, like any good marketing person, he repeatedly appeals to the fact that hundreds and hundreds

⁴¹ cf. Hersey: "*People lead based on their expertise and their relationship power, not just based on their job title...* Blackwell: '*...But what do leaders actually do that set them apart from others? How do they exercise this influence?*' Hersey: '*The way I see it, leaders use two different types of behavior to influence others...leaders can engage in task behavior and relationship behavior... I define task behavior as directive behavior or providing guidance for employees... On the other hand, relationship behavior entails two way communication, facilitating behavior, active listening, and socio-emotional support. Relationship behavior can be called supportive behavior. You are supporting the employee through interpersonal relationships. The important part is knowing when to provide each type of behavior in your influence efforts.*'" (Blackwell Interview, op cit., pp. 2-3, underlining added.)

⁴² II Thess. 3:6-15.

⁴³ from "*Welcome to the World of the Situational Leader*", a training syllabus given to me in 2003, p. 18.

⁴⁴ Eph. 4:15 cf. Gal. 2:11-21.

⁴⁵ "*The MSEL (Masters of Science in Executive Leadership) ...focuses on how to develop people and organizations rather than on administrative responsibilities such as maximizing work-unit efficiency or technical competence.*" (www.kenblanchard.com/meetcomp/msel.cfm); "*Another key element of being a servant leader is to consider people's development as an equal end goal as their performance.*" (*The Servant Leader*, p. 68.)

of companies around the world are using his Situational Leadership methodology.⁴⁶ The implication is that if a lot of “big name” companies use something, it must be right. But the Bible believer knows that just because multinational corporations use something, it doesn’t necessarily mean that Christians should. The believer is also aware that results alone do not justify something. Moses got great results when he struck the rock the second time, in fact he got enough water to slake the thirst of two million Israelites-but it was still wrong. Furthermore, if one is going to appeal to results, he needs to consider all the results, not just the number of people or companies who use a leadership methodology. Personally, having experienced “*Situational Leadership*” techniques first-hand on the mission field, I for one would testify that they are often counterproductive, and actually a detriment to morale, productivity, and team spirit.

IV. GENERAL PROBLEMS WITH “*SITUATIONAL LEADERSHIP II*®” & the “*LEAD LIKE JESUS*” PHILOSOPHY & METHODOLOGY.

- A. **ALL THE ABOVE-MENTIONED PROBLEMS OF THE ORIGINAL “*SITUATIONAL LEADERSHIP*®” APPLY.** For instance, The source and basis for “SL-II/Lead Like Jesus” theory is not Scripture, but a secular theory based in large part on an ungodly psychologist’s bankrupt ideas. The division of people into four types is totally random and without any scientific or biblical basis. Situational Leadership II operates with the same questionable definition of what constitutes true leadership,⁴⁷ and fails to properly differentiate between leadership and manipulation.⁴⁸ Proponents teach the highly debatable idea that relationships are as important as the tasks that need to be performed.⁴⁹ And there is a heavily pragmatic appeal and emphasis to personalities and endorsements by organizations that are using the methodology.
- B. **BLANCHARD UNAPOLOGETICALLY CLAIMS HE GOT HIS IDEAS FROM DR. PAUL HERSEY...and we have already noted the secular sources from whence Hersey got them!**⁵⁰
- C. **“*SERVANT LEADERSHIP*” ITSELF CAN BE RIGHT OR WRONG, DEPENDING ON THE TRUE UNDERLYING MOTIVATION BEHIND IT.** We can serve others out of a true heart of love for others, *or* we can serve them in order to achieve our own personal agenda and goals as a leader. The latter is nothing more than a postmodern manifestation of “*outside-in*” or “*others-oriented*” thinking, such as former president Bill Clinton repeatedly demonstrated. Clinton was a master at making others feel

⁴⁶ e.g. “Dr Paul Hersey...has influenced managers and leaders in over 150 countries and has helped introduce Situational Leadership to more than a 1000 business and industrial organizations including Mobil, IBM, Caterpillar Tractor, Harris, and Illinois Bell to name a few.” (Blackwell Interview from Hersey’s website, p. 1). The website for “The Center for Leadership Studies-East” (“Leading Solutions Group,” www.leadingolutionsgroup.com, Raleigh, NC) is the official east coast partner of Hersey’s “Center for Leadership Studies” in Escondido, CA and also uses quotes by a variety of their clients including corporations such as Bristol-Myers Squibb, Jaguar Cars, Duracell International, Nortel Networks, Bausch & Lomb, Hewlett-Packard, Hilton Hotels, Roadway Express, etc., to promote themselves.

⁴⁷ “What is leadership? It’s an **influence** process(emphasis in the original)-any time you are trying to influence the thoughts and actions of others toward goal accomplishment in either their personal or professional life you are engaging in leadership...As a servant leader, you have to identify which changes are necessary to implement your vision, and then help people move in that direction. Change is rarely easy, but understanding the reactions people have to change will make implementation less difficult on everyone.” (The Servant Leader, op cit., pp. 10, 65, underlining & bolding added.)

⁴⁸ For example, on the “Ken Blanchard Companies” website one discovers that a main reason to have a person from their speaker’s bureau, is because: “Your people will walk away with more than just a smile. They’ll leave with a lasting impression of what it takes to improve performance, think differently, **and begin embracing your most important initiatives.**” (www.kenblanchard.com/speakers/speakers.cfm date: 3/30/2004).

⁴⁹ e.g. “You must elevate the growth and development of people from a ‘means’ goal to an ‘end’ goal of equal importance to the product or service mission of the organization... Another key element of being a servant leader is to consider people’s development as an equal end goal as their performance.” (The Servant Leader, op cit., pp. 58, 68).

⁵⁰ “Ken Blanchard first developed Situational Leadership® with Paul Hersey in the late 1960s. It was in the early 1980s that Blanchard and the Founding Associates of The Ken Blanchard Companies created a new generation of the theory called Situational Leadership® II. The best description of this thinking can be found in Lenneth Blanchard, Patricia Zigarmi, and Drea Zigarmi’s *Leadership and the One Minute Manager* (New York: William Morrow, 1985). From: (The Servant Leader, op cit., p. 69). cf. “We would like to publicly praise: ...Paul Hersey, cocreator (sic) of Situational Leadership®, for his breakthrough thinking around leadership.” “Leadership by the Book,” op cit., pp. 48-49

like he valued them, was indebted to them, and was interested in them. But those who experienced it, including his most trusted intimates, candidly confess to being hoodwinked. A number have stated in retrospect that they feel it was only a way of Clinton achieving his own ends, i.e. gaining or maintaining political position and power.

Likewise, servant leadership and an interest in others *can* be genuine, ***or*** it can simply be practiced to achieve one's own goals and objectives. Even Blanchard's book tacitly admits this, and statements from his website imply it! At one point in *Leadership by the Book*, we read an imaginary dialogue between Michael, a leader who had lost his way, and the professor who was trying to help him get back on the Situational Leadership track: "If I can rekindle my servant heart with your help," Michael continued, "what are the key leadership concepts that you believe are aligned with Jesus' method of servant leadership?" ... "Let's suppose you only had an hour to spend with a leader with a servant heart. What would you like to teach that person about leadership methods? **I don't need to know everything-just some key concepts that will get the results I want and make Jesus proud.**"⁵¹

Other similar statements: "Ken Blanchard is widely known...In his books and lectures, he teaches that the greatest leaders are Situational Leaders who diagnose each employee's competence and commitment for a task, and **then communicate with that person in a style that elicits desired results.**"⁵² "Using Blanchard solutions, people increase their impact as leaders, thus **enabling them to achieve strategic objectives and drive organizational results.**"⁵³ "What is leadership? **It's an influence process...**"⁵⁴ "Servant leadership begins with a clear and compelling vision of the future that excites passion in the leader and commitment in those who follow... a good vision has three parts: YOUR PURPOSE/MISSION: What business you are in—How will you benefit your customers?..."⁵⁵

The above statements are nearly identical to this final one: "The more you can do to offer assistance to others, the easier it will be to get others to follow your plan of action." Would it surprise you to find out that this quote is from a Horoscope that I came across recently in a local newspaper?!⁵⁶

And while SL II advocates claim their terminology and methodology are Bible-based, it can be demonstrated from their own website that it comes from the secular business realm and from courses taught in that setting by Ken Blanchard and his colleagues. Consider the following descriptions which they have posted:

"Coaching.com™ is now a wholly owned service of The Ken Blanchard Companies. We offer personalized coaching initiatives for sustained organizational change, utilizing business coaches dedicated to improving the effectiveness and commitment of managers. Blanchard coaching services are personal coaching solutions that support, drive, measure, and ultimately provide the quantifiable feedback that corporations need to establish an ROI for their training investments."⁵⁷

In light of the above quotes, is it any wonder that in Blanchard's management training books written specifically for Christian audiences, he portrays Jesus as a "performance coach" who taught his disciples how to "coach" others?! On the contrary, Jesus didn't come to earth to teach leadership principles to a rag-tag bunch so that he could "coach" them to be successful on this earth and teach them some sort of "up by your bootstraps" pathway to salvation (actually all of them but one were martyred according to history and tradition). Jesus is God, and He came to earth to live the perfect life we couldn't, and then

⁵¹ *Leadership by the Book*, op cit., p. 119.

⁵² www.kenblanchard.com/meetcomp/msef.cfm date: 3/30/2004

⁵³ Ibid.

⁵⁴ *The Servant Leader*, op cit., p. 10. cf. Hersey's description of leadership as "influencing", quoted earlier in this paper.

⁵⁵ Ibid, p. 45. Note: Blanchard includes a footnote with this quote, recommending his book, 'Full Steam Ahead: The Power of Visioning (Ken Blanchard and Jesse Stoner (Berrett-Koehler, San Francisco, CA, 2003). Hopefully the concepts contained in this book are different than the New Age type of visualizing/visioning. (?) I can't say though, since I haven't read that book.

⁵⁶ Horoscope, "Aquarius" (birthdate Jan. 20-Feb. 18), *The Greenville Journal*, January 7-13, 2005, p. 47.

⁵⁷ www.kenblanchard.com/meetcomp/alliances.cfm date: 3/30/2004.

died to atone for our sins that we might be redeemed and obtain eternal life by putting our complete and total faith in Him and His work on the cross! Teaching leadership techniques to his disciples so that they could “influence” others was definitely **not** His main purpose-or even a minor purpose for His coming to earth!

V. **THEOLOGICAL PROBLEMS WITH “SITUATIONAL LEADERSHIP II®”/“LEAD LIKE JESUS” THEORY.**

- A. **AN INCORRECT DEPICTION OF JESUS AND HIS PURPOSE WHILE ON EARTH.** As mentioned above, Jesus’ main motivation for being here was not to train leaders, but to give His life to redeem man! Yet in the writings of Blanchard and others, Christ’s purpose for being on earth is often depicted as nothing more than to develop leaders and become a “**performance coach**.” Here are few more examples:

*“I can see now why people wanted to follow Jesus,” said the Professor. “He provided them with clear direction and hope for this life and the next.” “And his Father provided direction for him.” The Minister smiled... “Yes,” said the Minister. **“In fact, when we talk about servant leadership, Jesus can serve as a model without even referring to his ultimate sacrifice.”** ... When Jesus was no longer physically present, his disciples seemed to carry on quite successfully. **How did he make that happen?” “He modeled servant leadership.** (sic) ... “Once he revealed the vision of the Kingdom of God and how people could receive the grace of salvation, **Jesus sent his disciples out to—in your terms—support, direct, encourage, coach, and facilitate other people to make the necessary choice.**’ ... “Is there anything else you would teach leaders?” asked Michael. “Yes,” said the Professor. **“I think one of the functions servant leaders have to fulfill is that of being performance coaches.**’ ... “That’s exactly what Jesus did with his disciples,” said the Minister. **“He modified his approach with them as they progressed from being inexperienced in what he wanted them to do—be fishers of men—until the point when they were able to carry on without his physical presence”(!)** ... “A good servant leader is always available if he or she is needed. Jesus is there for us now if we’re willing to get our egos out of the way, and ask for help.” Michael nodded. **“So Jesus was a performance coach—and that’s what I’m supposed to be too.”** “Absolutely,” said the Professor. (sic)”^{58 59}*

*“Leaders must determine with their people how to work together in a way their people can accomplish their goals, and then they must follow through on any agreements... This is exactly what Jesus did as **He transformed the disciples from enthusiastic beginners to peak performers.**”(sic)⁶⁰*

Blanchard: “Jesus said, ‘The Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve.’ (Matthew 20:28). And what did he come to serve? He came to serve the vision that He had been given by His Father. He came as a teacher, as a leader, as a trainer to prepare people to go out and help other people live according to that vision.”⁶¹ False! Jesus actually came to earth to die for sinners and He was part of the Trinity, so he didn’t receive an assignment based on a vision His “higher up” gave him. The Trinity works in complete unity and is three in one. And as mentioned, Jesus came as our redeemer-not primarily as a teacher trying to inculcate a leadership/management technique to His followers!

⁵⁸ Ibid, pp. 127,141, 142, 155, 157.

⁵⁹ Blanchard, et al., also misunderstand why Christ came to John the Baptist to be baptized: “In His interaction with John, Jesus demonstrated two very significant attributes of servant leadership. He validated and affirmed John in his ministry and submitted Himself to the same acts of surrender to doing the right thing that He would require of others. A servant leader never asks anyone to do something they wouldn’t be willing to do themselves.” (The Servant Leader, p. 24). In reality, while Jesus did persuade John to baptize Him in order to “fulfill all righteousness”, the main reason Jesus came to John and was baptized over John’s protestations, is because that was the official beginning of Christ’s ministry, and was the way Christ was recognized as the long-awaited Messiah, and publicly declared to be so by John! (Mt. 3:15-17, cf. Jn. 1:26-34, esp. v. 29).

⁶⁰ *The Servant Leader*, op cit., p. 74.

⁶¹ Ibid, p. 56.

B. THE SCRIPTURES USED TO SHOW THAT JESUS DIVIDED PEOPLE INTO FOUR TYPES, ARE OUT OF ORDER CHRONOLOGICALLY. That fact alone clearly demonstrates that Blanchard's four-fold division was taken from outside sources and then subsequently superimposed or "read into" Scripture. Blanchard's four-fold breakdown is labeled slightly differently,⁶² but it is obviously taken from the original Situational Leadership®. The terms used for the four leadership "styles" are likewise very similar: "Telling, Selling, Participating & Delegating" by Hersey in his original Situational Leadership vs. "Directing, Coaching, Supporting & Delegating" in Blanchard's SLII.⁶³ Even Hersey's famous bell-shaped diagram is duplicated by Blanchard, albeit with new labeling.⁶⁴ Blanchard's book *"The Servant Leader"* is a masterpiece of graphic layout and visual impressiveness designed to wow the reader. But the Scriptural passages used in it to support the theory are totally random and not in chronological order—thus demonstrating Situational Leadership II® was formulated a priori, then Bible verses were later sought and "found" to try and support the theory.⁶⁵ Blanchard's own statements regarding criticism he received when he revised his original management theory and decades later tried to give it a spiritual spin tacitly admit as much.⁶⁶

⁶² "D1—Low Competence, High Commitment; D2—Low Competence, Low Commitment; D3—Moderate to High Competence, Variable Commitment; & D4—High Competence, High Commitment." (*The Servant Leader*, Ken Blanchard & Phil Hodges (Nashville, TN: J Countryman, 2003, pp. 75-82).

⁶³ Blackwell & Schermerhorn interviews, op cit., cf. *The Servant Leader*, op cit., and p. 73-ff.

⁶⁴ e.g. *The Servant Leader*, p. 75, as well as on various pages from Blanchard's websites.

⁶⁵ Blanchard's D1 individual is allegedly seen in Matthew 4:18-22. Six chapters later (much later in time chronologically speaking, and in a completely different situation), Jesus supposedly responds to the disciples' D1 behavior with "S1" leadership technique in Matthew 10:5-10. According to Blanchard, D2 behavior, "*The Disciples as Disillusioned Learners*" is seen in Mt. 17:15-19, to which Jesus supposedly gives them S2 leadership coaching technique in Mt. 17:20. Apart from the problem of random usage of occasional passages and the ignoring of many others up to this point, the chronology completely breaks down when Blanchard goes to D3, which he claims to find in Matthew 14:26-30. Supposedly Jesus gives Peter S3 "*High Supportive, Low Directive*" behavior in verse 31. Finally, Blanchard claims he finds D4 "*High Competence, High Commitment*" behavior in Acts 2:36-38. However by that time, Jesus had already ascended to heaven (Acts 1:9-11)—so the analogy completely breaks down since Situational Leadership® II is dealing with a leadership style between a leader and his followers who are physically present together on the earth. To cover for this obvious problem chronologically and otherwise, Blanchard makes the wild claim that Jesus supposedly was using S4 leadership technique from Matthew 28:18-20 on them at that time. The chronology does not follow whatsoever. It's as though Blanchard & Hodges had searched their concordance to find **any** passage that could be "*shoe-horned*" into their preconceived system. And the reason Peter was such a "*Peak Performer*" on the Day of Pentecost, **was because the Holy Spirit had come and was now indwelling him. It was not because he had finally grasped Jesus' leadership techniques!** Such teaching is almost blasphemous. This does however highlight another weakness: The Holy Spirit and His ministry is almost completely ignored in Blanchard et al's writings. Yet Jesus clearly told those disciples that while they were weak and insufficient to live the Christian life, that He would send the Holy Spirit to them, and that He, i.e. the Spirit, would give them the power to witness for Christ (Acts 1:4-5 cf. v.8). The Holy Spirit would be the one who would come alongside to help them and enable them to stand faithful and true (Jn. 14:26-27; 16:7-15). In the "Situational Leadership II®/Lead Like Jesus" scenario, the disciples simply learned from their "*coach*" and then emulated him—with no intimation of a need of, or reliance upon the power of the Holy Spirit to change from fearful followers to fearless apostles. Compare this with another Blanchard quote: "*This is the duty of a servant leader—the ongoing investment of the leader's life into the lives of those who follow. By changing His leadership style appropriately as His disciples developed individually and as a group, Jesus empowered His followers to carry on after He was gone. Through His hands (effective leader behavior) He was able to transmit what was in His heart and head about servant leadership (sic).*" (*The Servant Leader*, p. 83). Such statements, as well as the hermeneutics mentioned above, are a wonderful example of verses taken out of context to try and support a secular business management system. It is not exegesis, but rather isegesis, i.e. a forced reading *into* the Scriptures what one wants it to say.

⁶⁶ Blanchard: "*I began by making references to the character side of servant leadership in my writing and speeches—tentative references at first, but then with increasing confidence and excitement. As I spoke about the compatibility of my leadership theories with the servant leadership practiced by Jesus, I was amazed at the response. Some of my friends and readers counseled against tampering with the formula that had been so successful in the past. Others, however, responded like people dying of thirst who had just been given a cool drink of water.*" (*Leadership By the Book*, p. 63.); "*The more I read the Bible, the more I realized that Jesus did everything I'd ever taught or written about over the years—and He did it perfectly. He is simply the greatest leadership model for all time.*" (*The Servant Leader*, p. 10).

- C. **BLANCHARD, ET AL., ARE EXTREMELY SELECTIVE IN THE EXAMPLES FROM JESUS' LIFE THAT THEY USE TO TRY TO "PROVE" THEIR THEORY.** In reading through the gospels of Matthew and Mark, as well as portions of the other two gospels, I have discovered dozens and dozens of leadership behaviors, styles and actions practiced by Jesus. **Why are the vast majority of them ignored by the "Lead Like Jesus" proponents?** Perhaps because those "leadership styles" don't fit in with their preconceived, secularly-based theory. Blanchard and Hodges boldly state: "*Did you notice? Jesus did not scold the disciples. He did not lose His temper with them... Nowhere in the Scriptures do we find a time when Jesus blasted the disciples because of a mistake they made.*"⁶⁷ Frankly, I don't know what Bible they are reading from. Jesus, as well as a variety of apostles and other disciples clearly and strongly rebuked various followers, as well as the unsaved. That is a fact that is irrefutable! For example, when Peter protested Jesus' prediction of his coming death, Jesus rebuked him in no uncertain terms, saying, "*Get thee behind me Satan.*"⁶⁸ I would imagine that Peter felt that he had been "*blasted*" by Jesus, since usually when someone is called "*Satan*," they don't consider it a compliment! Americans certainly don't consider it a compliment to be referred to as "*The Great Satan*" by various Muslim leaders. And this wasn't the last time Jesus would sternly and publicly rebuke Peter or some of the other disciples.⁶⁹ Nor was Jesus the only one to do that! (see below)
- D. **"SITUATIONAL LEADERSHIP® II'S" PROPONENTS IGNORE THE NT LEADERSHIP PRACTICES OF JOHN THE BAPTIST AND VARIOUS OTHER APOSTLES, PROPHETS, & CHURCH LEADERS.** A number of apostles and prophets strongly and publicly rebuked various disciples, as well as unbelievers, throughout their ministry as recorded in God's Word!⁷⁰ And in Acts 6 when there was an interpersonal management-type problem in the early church, the apostles didn't try to "*diagnose*" what type of persons the Hellenistic Jews were (obviously D-2, since they were disgruntled, unhappy campers! ☺). Instead, they simply and bluntly dealt with the problem. They told the church to assign some persons of integrity to oversee the distribution of food equitably. End of story! And it's worth noting that they applied very directive commands, regardless of whether anyone's feelings might get hurt or not!
- E. **THE CENTER FOR FAITHWALK LEADERSHIP'S INTERPRETATION OF JOHN 13 IS SERIOUSLY FLAWED.** While being a servant to others is clearly demonstrated in Jesus' foot-washing incident, Jesus Himself bluntly told the disciples that what he was doing they did not understand then, but would understand later (v.7). Obviously they all understood He was washing their feet. But deeper truths, particularly regarding salvation, love for the brethren, and forgiveness, were being taught there by Jesus.⁷¹ Those truths went way beyond Jesus supposedly teaching His disciples management/leadership

⁶⁷ *The Servant Leader*, op cit., p. 79.

⁶⁸ Mt. 16:23.

⁶⁹ Jn. 21:2; Mt. 26:40-41; 19:14; 12:47-50.

⁷⁰ e.g. Paul rebuked Peter publicly (Gal. 2:11-15) as well as other professing believers (I Tim. 1:18-20; II Tim. 1:15); John, the apostle of love, declared: "*I'll remember his deeds which he (Diotrophes) doeth, praying against us with malicious words...*" (III Jn. 9-10). Those certainly were not "*relational*" type comments. Peter told Ananias that Satan had "*filled his heart*" when rebuking him & Sapphira (Acts 5:3-10)! The Old Testament is no different, if not stronger still. Prophets regularly rebuked kings, leader and common members of God's chosen people (e.g. II Chron. 19:2). And when Jesus, the Apostles, and various prophets encountered unbelievers, they were even stronger in their rebuke, often exhorting them publicly (e.g. Jesus: Mt. 12:34; 15:7-9; 17:17; 23:13-33; John the Baptist: Mt. 3:7-10; Paul: II Tim. 2:16-17; 4:14-15; Acts 23:3; Peter: Acts 2:23-24; 3:13-19; 4:10-12, 19-20; 5:28-33, etc.; Stephen: Acts 7:51-53; Elijah: I Kings 18:18,27,40; Micaiah: I Kings 22:14-28; Jeremiah: 36:20-32; etc., etc)!

⁷¹ A former missionary colleague, in preaching on this passage in October, 2003, pointed out that there were two main lessons that Jesus was teaching in John 13. The bigger lesson was regarding salvation, i.e. that conversion is a one time occurrence, and that truly born again individuals are cleansed forever, thereafter needing only to confess individual sins as they "*walk*" through this world, in order to restore their fellowship and walk with God (cf. I Jn. 1:9). In other words, the primary lesson of John 13 is that believers need to keep short accounts with God. My colleague maintained that a second lesson of the passage was the importance of humbly loving our brethren. The disciples had tangibly seen how much Jesus loved them-to the extent that he humbled Himself and performed a duty normally done by women or servants! Jesus said that in a similar fashion they were to love one another (cf. vv. 34-35, words spoken by Jesus at the same occasion and time). So Jesus' second main lesson in John 13 was that we should do this (i.e. demonstrate love and a preferring of others) on a daily basis!

techniques!⁷² Blanchard and Hodges completely miss the point when they state: “*When Jesus washed the feet of the disciples, He was transitioning His focus from the visionary direction part of leadership to the implementation role.*”⁷³

William MacDonald in his well known Bible commentary makes the following helpful observations in regard to the John 13 passage: “Jesus now taught Peter that there was a spiritual meaning to what He was doing. Foot-washing was a picture of a certain type of spiritual washing. Peter knew that the Lord was performing the physical act, but he did not understand the spiritual *significance*... he would know it by experience when later he was restored to the Lord after having denied Him... As Christians walk through this world, they contract a certain amount of defilement. Listening to vile talk, looking at unholy things, working with ungodly men inevitably soils the believer. He needs to be constantly cleansed. This cleansing takes place by the water of the Word... When Jesus said ‘you have no part with me,’ He did not mean that Peter could not be saved unless He washed him, but rather that fellowship with the Lord can be maintained only by the continual cleansing action of the Scriptures in his life... The *bath* speaks of the cleansing received at the time of one’s salvation. Cleansing from the *penalty* of sin through the blood of Christ occurs only once. The *basin* speaks of cleansing from the *pollution* of sin and must take place continually through the Word of God... Did the Lord mean that they should *literally* wash each other’s feet with water? Was He here instituting an ordinance for the church? No, the meaning here was spiritual. He was telling them that they should keep each other clean by constant fellowship over the Word. If one sees his brother growing cold or worldly, he should lovingly exhort him from the Bible.”⁷⁴

F. SERIOUS THEOLOGICAL PROBLEMS WITH SOME OF THE “CENTER for FAITHWALK LEADERSHIP’S” (CFL) SPEAKERS AND BOARD MEMBERS.

1. **LAURIE BETH JONES.** Ms. Jones is both a CFL Board member and a regularly featured speaker at “*Lead Like Jesus*” rallies and meetings. Ms. Jones is the author of several books including “*Jesus, CEO*,” “*The Path*,” & “*Jesus in Blue Jeans*.” Unfortunately her published comments evidence serious theological problems that run the gamut from the Liberal belief that everyone is already part of the “*Divine*”, all the way to statements that evince New Age sympathies & tendencies towards belief in the Mormon idea of a primordial spirit realm! In addition, her website makes it clear that she is totally opposed to the biblical doctrine of ecclesiastical separation from error. Consider a few of her published statements:

“*My mission is to recognize, promote, and inspire the divine connection in all of us.*”⁷⁵ Such a statement only fits in with the beliefs of New Agers, Unitarians, & theological liberals. It is completely contrary to the teaching of Scripture. Ms. Jones also claims that Jesus was “...*a CEO who took a disorganized staff of twelve and built a thriving enterprise...*” and she markets a set of posters that accompany her book, “*Jesus, CEO*.” Apart from the theological problems of trying to make Jesus into a management guru of a first century company (which

⁷² To physically wash the feet of someone else in a church service or other public venue would seem to be an example of biblical misinterpretation and misapplication, since, a) Jesus clearly stated in the passage that his actions were not about physical foot-washing (John 13:7: “Jesus answered and said unto him, ‘*What I do thou knowest not now; but thou shalt know hereafter.*’”), and, b) Doing such publicly is highly questionable since it tends to call attention to the person performing the act, as well as the physical act itself. It is important to note that Jesus did this privately to 12 people-not publicly before a crowd. To wash feet publicly would be somewhat akin to what the Pope does every Easter. Each year the Roman Catholic Pontiff has a dozen beggars brought into the Vatican on Maundy Thursday, and he then washes their feet with much publicity and fanfare, in what amounts to a public relations exercise. Everyone realizes that if those same beggars were to ask to see the Pope a month or two later, they undoubtedly wouldn’t be given an audience.

⁷³ The Servant Leader, op cit., p. 53.

⁷⁴ “*Believer’s Bible Commentary*,” William MacDonald (Thomas Nelson Publishers: Nashville, TN, 1995), pp. 1542-1543, italics in the original.

⁷⁵ Quotes taken from two different sources: Ms. Jones’ website, under “Jesus, CEO Foundation Mission Statement” & a publicity statement in a catalog marketing her materials published by Mach 1, Chico, CA, 2000, p. 16, copy on file-bolding added..

He definitely was not!)⁷⁶, the caption on one of the posters states: “*Deep down, we know that we are made of stardust, and are willing to give up what we have on earth in order to approach the heavens from whence we came.*”(!) Evolutionists and Humanists have to love that! So do Mormons, since they believe and teach that everyone lived in a primordial “*spirit world*” prior to coming to earth. Another of Ms. Jones’ posters reads: “*The Divine constantly urges us to look to the horizon—there are always more possibilities than the eye can see.*” Go figure!

As far as doctrine is concerned, Ms. Jones states on her website: “*Members of the Jesus CEO Foundation embrace and support compassionate Christianity, which emphasizes relationship over religion. We refuse to be divided by doctrinal differences, and respect each individual’s unique connection to God, which may or may not yet be fully realized (sic). We believe unequivocally that Jesus is who he said he was,*⁷⁷ *and that the only group he said we need fear are those whose hearts are filled with self-righteousness... We pray, know and believe that through our work millions will experience the glory of God, and in so doing become more fully alive.*” All I can say is, New Agers eat your heart out!

The \$64,000 question: “Why does the Center for FaithWalk Leadership (*Lead Like Jesus*’ parent company) have her on their board and use her as a main speaker?” And make no mistake about it; she isn’t a mere figurehead or a token female. She is specifically named and thanked in print in Blanchard, Hybels & Hodges’ bestseller “*Leadership By the Book*” for having attended the Inaugural Center for FaithWalk Leadership Conference held in January 1999!⁷⁸ More recently, in April 2004 she was one of the main speakers at a “*Lead Like Jesus Celebration*” held at First Baptist Church in Spartanburg, SC. She is featured on a promotional handbill (complete with photograph) as one of the main speakers, along with other CFWL heavyweights such as Blanchard, Bill Hybels, “*Legendary Football Great Rosey Grier*,” and Dan Cathy, President of “*Chick-fil-A.*” The blurb on one of the *Lead Like Jesus* promotional webpages states: “*The Celebration will be hosted by Ken Blanchard and Rick Warren and will feature Bill Hybels along with Dan Cathy, Laurie Beth Jones, and other outstanding speakers.*”⁷⁹ Another webpage headline reads: “*Spartanburg Celebration Features Blanchard and Hybels...Ken and Bill will be joined by a cadre of world-class speakers, men and women who lead like Jesus including Laurie Beth Jones, Rosey Grier, Phil Hodges, and Dan Cathy.*”⁸⁰ Obviously Ms. Jones is not an insignificant, unknown board member. She is a “*player!*” A main cog. A bright star in the “*Center for FaithWalk Leadership*” constellation. She even gives a recommendation on the dust jacket of one of Blanchard’s books!⁸¹ Biblically speaking, there is no justification or defense for it. And by using Ms. Jones and promoting her, the “*Lead Like Jesus*” organization is promoting doctrinal error, if not outright heresy.

To repeat: **Why is Ms. Jones on their board and being used so much by them?** Could it be because the Center For FaithWalk Leadership shares her beliefs? It is worth noting that similar statements regarding the idea of “*returning from whence we came*” are found in some of

⁷⁶ The Church is not a corporation. Christ is its founder (Mt. 16:18) & foundation (Lk. 20:17-18; I Cor. 3:11; Eph. 2:20; I Pet. 2:6), it is a living organism (I Cor. 12:12-27), energized, led, and empowered by the Holy Spirit (Jn. 16:7-15).

⁷⁷ It would, perhaps, be good to ask Ms. Jones which “*Jesus*” she is talking about—since Scripture teaches that there are many “*Jesus*”s, but only the one described in Scripture is the road to heaven. Her doctrine is clearly unbiblical (cf. II Cor. 11:4 cf. vv. 13-15.).

⁷⁸ *Leadership by the Book*, op cit., p. 206.

⁷⁹ www.leadlikejesus.com under a page called “*Quicktakes*”

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*

⁸¹ The rear of the dust jacket of “*Leadership By the Book*” carries the following endorsement by Ms. Jones: “*Leadership by the Book offers profound and meaningful insight into how spiritual principles can transform leadership at every level. The characters and the challenges that leaders face are real—as are the truths in this book. Read it, and think again about where your life is headed.—Laurie Beth Jones, author of Jesus, CEO and The Path.*” In light of Ms. Jones’ apparent confusion regarding spiritual truth, one is taken aback that she would be enlisted and quoted in such a prominent place.

Blanchard's books: e.g. "We would also like to acknowledge the memory of E.P. Hodges, Phil's dad, who was a constant source of encouragement and early editorial advice **prior to this (his?) journey back home.**"⁸² "'Please continue,' said the Professor. 'Very well,' said the Minister. 'I believe we were created by an unconditionally loving God. **But when we enter life, we develop a kind of amnesia. We forget where we came from—our heritage. It takes us various amounts of time to return to home base—recognition of our heritage and God's unconditional love. 'I believe that until we return home, we have a fundamental yearning—an emptiness—that cannot be filled as long as we operate within the limitations of an unchanged heart.**'"⁸³ "The Professor reminded his listeners about their calling and the Caller... At first he'd thought he might be overdoing it, **but his conviction that his mission was to awaken the presence of God in the lives of his audience gave him a new boldness.**"⁸⁴ Anyone familiar with Scripture and its teachings concerning man and his condition prior to salvation knows that unregenerate man is dead in trespasses and sins until he is born again, and that there is no "presence of God" to "awaken" in him. And we certainly didn't dwell with God prior to coming to this earth, since our existence began at conception (Ps. 139).

2. **UNBIBLICAL ECUMENICAL CONNECTIONS AND ALLIANCES.** The Center for FaithWalk Leadership which is the parent organization for the "Lead Like Jesus" /"Situational Leadership II®" training seminars and materials, has a number of New Evangelicals, as well as members of liberal organizations on their Board.⁸⁵ Not surprisingly, the Center for FaithWalk Leadership's Board is also heavily dominated by business executives.⁸⁶ Many of CFWL's speakers and staff also fall into the New Evangelical category or worse.⁸⁷ And Liberals and New Evangelicals, as well as the unsaved, are repeatedly thanked in print, for their help and the contributions they have made to "Lead Like Jesus" thinking.⁸⁸ Churches, colleges or mission boards which have sponsored "Lead Like Jesus"

⁸² Leadership By the Book, op cit., p. 207.

⁸³ Ibid, p. 80.

⁸⁴ Ibid, p. 195.

⁸⁵ Among those listed on their official website are: "George K Brushaber, President of Bethel College; Bishop George McKinney, Pastor, St. Stephen's Church of God in Christ & Member of the General Board of the Church of God in Christ, Inc.; John Maxwell, author and positive thinking advocate, whose book "*Be a People Person*" is a mix of positive thinking and Dale Carnegie leadership techniques, along with a number of unbiblical statements and some terribly flawed exegesis; Robert Reccord, President of the North American Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention; Steve Douglass, President, Campus Crusade for Christ; Ronald Glosser, Former Chairman, Guideposts Publications (Norman Vincent Peale's organization); Bill Hybels, Sr. Pastor, Willow Creek Community Church; Rick Warren, Pastor, Saddleback Community Church", as well as the pastors of churches such as Rancho Bernardo Community Presbyterian Church, Southeast Christian Church, etc. (www.leadlikejesus.com/templates/cusleadlikejesus/details)

⁸⁶ e.g. some names of board members listed on their "Lead Like Jesus - National Board Members" web-page include: "James H. Amos, Jr., Chairman Emeritus of Mail Boxes Etc... James "Micky" Blackwell, Former President and COO of Lockheed Martin Aeronautical Systems... Ken Melrose, Chairman and CEO, The Toro Company... Paul Meyer, Author-Entrepreneur, Founder of 30 Companies... Tom Muccio, President, Global Customer Teams, Procter & Gamble... Dan Cathy, President, Chick-fil-A, Inc... Mark Hansen, Chairman, Chicken Soup for the Soul® Enterprises, Inc... Alice B. Hayes, President, University of San Diego... Don Soderquist, Executive in Residence On Course LLC, Wal-Mart Stores, Inc... Linda Stirling, First Vice President, Merrill Lynch... Clifton Lambreth, Retail Marketing Manager, Ford Motor Company... Jimmy Walker, President, Sports Entertainment & Business Planning... etc., etc. (www.leadlikejesus.com/templates/cusleadlikejesus)

⁸⁷ e.g. Bill Hybels, Sr. Pastor, Willow Creek Community Church; Rick Warren, Saddleback Community Church; Rosey Grier, former football player and Chairman of Impact Urban America; Laurie Beth Jones (highlighted above); Lee Ross, who was employed by and held a strategic position in the Georgia Southern Baptist Convention for more than a decade prior to joining the Center for FaithWalk Leadership (according to a page on abwe.org's website); Bob Pike, CSP; etc. (www.leadlikejesus.com/templates)

⁸⁸ e.g. "We would like to publicly praise: ...Paul Hersey, cocreator of Situational Leadership®, for his breakthrough thinking around leadership. Spencer Johnson, coauthor of *The One Minute Manager*® for his creative thinking about managing people... Sheldon Bowles, coauthor of *Raving Fans and Gung HO!*, for his insights into customer service and motivating people... Norman Vincent Peale, coauthor of *The Power of Ethical Management*, for his important advocacy of

rallies &/or seminars, or have carried “Celebrations” via satellite hookups, span the theological spectrum. They include mainline churches from denominations such as the Southern Baptist, United Presbyterian, Episcopal, Church of Christ, United Methodist, Lutheran, Nazarene, Church of God and Christian Churches, as well as Charismatic churches such as The Assemblies of God & Destiny Fellowships. Colleges and mission boards sponsoring Situational Leadership® seminars include Bethel College and ABWE. In at least one case, possibly even a Roman Catholic Church has held one of their seminars (“The Church of the Ascension”)?⁸⁹ The “Lead Like Jesus” website proudly highlights the fact that one of their certified facilitators was scheduled to conduct a “*Leadership Encounter*” at the infamous Robert Schuller’s “Crystal Cathedral in Garden Grove, California on June 4-5, 2004!”⁹⁰

G. **A SERIOUSLY LOWERED VIEW OF THE TRIUNE GOD.** Blanchard, Hybels and Hodges repeatedly refer to the Father, Son and Holy Spirit in demeaning, business-world terms. A few examples:

*“They took turns opening their sessions with a short prayer—asking for guidance during the meeting from what the Minister liked to call the ‘great **three-person consulting team**’: the Father, who had started the whole thing; the Son, who modeled it; and the Holy Spirit, who was the day-to-day coach.”⁹¹ “We also extend our thanks... (to) our **three-member consultant team**, The Father, The Son, and The Holy Spirit, for the energy and purpose they have given to our lives on this project.”⁹² “‘With the two of you in my corner, I’m ready to go.’ That’s when I reminded him not to forget his third **partner** (God)...”⁹³ “If you choose to accept Jesus as your leadership model and **consultant**, how can you get in touch with Him?”⁹⁴ Under “Acknowledgements” in the back of their book “*The Servant Leader*” Blanchard & Hodges state: “We are indebted to the wisdom and writings of the following authors (named)... **And most of all, we owe thanks to our three chief Consultants: The Father, The Son, and The Holy Spirit.**”⁹⁵*

H. **MISCELLANEOUS PROBLEMS.**

1. **STATEMENTS FROM BLANCHARD’S BOOKS & WEBSITE CLEARLY DEMONSTRATE THAT SITUATIONAL LEADERSHIP II’S® ORIGIN, BASIS, PURPOSE AND GOALS ARE FROM THE SECULAR BUSINESS WORLD.** A few examples:

*“Phil Hodges is cofounder and vice chairman of the Center for FaithWalk Leadership... After thirty-five years as a human resources and industrial relations professional with Xerox Corporation and U.S. Steel, Phil joined the Ken Blanchard Companies in 1998 as a management consultant and trainer in leadership and customer service programs. **In addition to helping leaders of faith walk their talk in the marketplace, Phil developed a passion for bringing the lead-like-Jesus methods into the church.**”⁹⁶*

positive thinking... To all the people who have developed Alcoholics Anonymous-like groups to help to overcome people’s addictions... Bob Russell, Senior Pastor at Southeastern Christian Church in Louisville, Kentucky...” (!) (Leadership By the Book, pp. 203-205);

⁸⁹ www.ccnonline.net/programming/event/evt_29apr04list.htm

⁹⁰ The web page promotional reads: “*The following lists of calendar events are not sponsored by the Center for FaithWalk Leadership, but are led by certified facilitators... This calendar page is provided as a service to our Leadership Encounter Facilitators... Leadership Encounter at Crystal Cathedral, Garden Grove, California, June 4-5, 2004. Contact Bob Cavinder for more information.*” (www.leadlikejesus.com/templates/cusleadlikejesus/details. Date: 05/22/2004).

⁹¹ *Leadership By the Book*, op cit., p. 168.

⁹² *Ibid*, p. 207.

⁹³ *Ibid*, p. 61.

⁹⁴ *The Servant Leader*, op cit., p. 14.

⁹⁵ *Ibid*, p. 123.

⁹⁶ *Ibid*, p. 124.

“I once heard profit defined as the applause you get from creating raving-fan customers through gung-ho people,” said the Professor.”⁹⁷ “To keep that vision in mind, Michael put a plaque on his desk that read: **Profit is the applause you get for taking care of your customers and creating a motivating environment for your people.**” “...the Ken Blanchard Companies conduct seminars and in-depth consulting in the areas of customer service, leadership, team building, empowerment for employees to set goals and solve problems, managing by values, and organizational change... For further information... contact... www.kenblanchardcompanies.com”⁹⁸

“Widely accepted throughout the business world, these concepts easily apply anywhere—from multinational corporations to locally owned small businesses.”⁹⁹ “Leaders for the new millennium need the involvement of all their people to create organizations that are customer-driven, cost effective, fast and flexible, and continually improving. They also need to increase operational efficiencies and provide better service in order for their companies and governments to deliver the higher quality and lower prices that customers and constituents demand.”¹⁰⁰ “**So is this a business book? Yes. Is this (a) self-help book? Yes. Is this an inspirational book? Yes. Simply put, it’s a tool to help you to take God out of the spiritual compartment of your private spiritual life and give Him free reign in all your daily actions and relationships, especially your leadership roles... We want you to trust Jesus as your leadership model, so whether you’re leading in business, in nonprofit organizations, in your community, or at home, you will make Jesus smile.**”¹⁰¹

Endorsements by top leaders of secular companies such as Estee Lauder, Marriot International, etc., are proudly highlighted on Blanchard’s official company website.¹⁰²
The Blanchard Company is unashamedly dedicated to a marketing and business clientele:

“Using Blanchard solutions, people increase their impact as leaders, thus enabling them to achieve strategic objectives and drive organizational results... Your organization will see measurable results.”¹⁰³

“At The Ken Blanchard Companies, we believe that people are the source of business success. Despite growing competition, downsizing, or upsizing, training people to be the best they can be is the underlying strength of successful organizations. Beyond budgets or products, **nothing allows you to compete more aggressively than people who are committed to your organization goals.**”¹⁰⁴

Business terms dominate Blanchard’s web pages, e.g. “customers,” “managers,” “workers,” “management and employees,” “Guaranteeing business results.”¹⁰⁵ Their company even offers a Master’s degree in conjunction with the University of San Diego: “*The MSEL (Master’s of Science in Executive Leadership) is a two-year specialized degree program that features an interdisciplinary core curriculum of information technology, customers and markets, financial management and controls, and business and leadership strategies.*”¹⁰⁶

Even the way Blanchard’s company describes itself is in a marketing/business manner, rather than biblically: “Headquartered in California, with two wholly owned subsidiaries in

⁹⁷ *Leadership By the Book*, op cit., p. 76.

⁹⁸ *Ibid*, p. 217.

⁹⁹ www.kenblanchard.com/speakers/speakers.cfm date: 3/30/2004

¹⁰⁰ www.kenblanchard.com/meetcomp/msel.cfm

¹⁰¹ *The Servant Leader*, op cit., p. 11.

¹⁰² www.kenblanchard.com, op cit.

¹⁰³ *Ibid*, (3/30/2004)

¹⁰⁴ www.kenblanchard.com/meetcomp/index.cfm

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid*.

¹⁰⁶ www.kenblanchard.com/meetcomp/msel.cfm (3/30/2004)

London and Toronto, The Ken Blanchard Companies has 12 offices throughout the United States and 21 affiliate offices throughout the world... For more than two decades the principles of Ken Blanchard's business philosophies have helped more people reach their leadership and human potential than any other management process in the world. Now, an exciting new partnership with Ninth House brings the Blanchard experience right to your desktop. Your organization can have instant, online access via their company network today... The Master of Science in Executive Leadership degree (MSEL) is sponsored jointly by the University of San Diego and The Ken Blanchard Companies. The program offers both emerging and established leaders an advanced degree from a fully accredited university and business school in a venue that allows them to remain on the job. **This is the only program available that is based in part on the highly acclaimed and time-proven Situational Leadership® II Model** coauthored by Ken Blanchard."¹⁰⁷ "Dr. Ken Blanchard is the Chief Spiritual Officer (sic) of The Ken Blanchard Companies, a full-service management consulting and training company that he and his wife, Dr. Marjorie Blanchard, founded in 1979."¹⁰⁸

And clearly, Ken Blanchard and the "FaithWalk Leadership" folks know how to promote and market their "product." Lead Like Jesus seminars are billed as "*Celebrations*", and readers of their promotional advertising are constantly informed that they **ARE** leaders.¹⁰⁹ And not surprisingly, it's going to cost you money to become that leader: "*Leading like Jesus calls for an investment in resources that will help you explore all the dynamics and dimensions of servant leadership. From books to CDs and DVDs to small group studies and even seminars and celebrations, your friends at Lead Like Jesus want you to (have) everything you need to become a leader like Jesus... (which includes) An eight-week small group study designed to help leaders discover exactly what leading like Jesus means... The kit includes The Servant Leader, an individual's Study Guide, a Leader's Guide, and three DVDs. The study was written by Ken Blanchard, Phil Hodges, Lee Ross, and Avery Willis... The Resource kit is \$99 and the Individual Study Guide is \$14.95. Click here to order... Lead Like Jesus Celebration DVDs. Either relive the experience of the Lead Like Jesus Celebration or experience what you missed through this set of DVDs which includes every minute of the Celebration. That's over five hours of life-impacting content featuring Ken Blanchard, Rick Warren, Rosie Grier, Laurie Beth Jones, and more... This DVD set will be available January 5 for \$59.95. Click here to order... (and) Check our online store for other valuable resources to help you lead like Jesus.*"¹¹⁰ So for only \$173.90, plus the \$79 bucks it's going to cost you

¹⁰⁷ www.kenblanchard.com/meetcomp/index.cfm & www.kenblanchard.com/meetcomp/alliances.cfm

¹⁰⁸ *The Servant Leader*, op cit., p. 124.

¹⁰⁹ e.g.: "It's no accident we exist. Neither is it an accident that you are here. You are a leader... whether simply (or not so simply!) at home or at work or at play...you **are** a leader!" (emphasis in the original). (www.leadlikejesus.com/templates) date: 3/30/2004. Without wishing to appear cynical, Blanchard et al's insistence that all of us are leaders whether we realize it or not, remind me of a Garfield cartoon I saw a number of years ago. It showed Garfield sitting in a chair watching "Uncle Roy" on TV. The dialogue went like this: (Uncle Roy's voice from the television): "Good morning boys and girls. I love you just way you are." (Garfield): "Everyone loves Uncle Roy." (The television voice ["Uncle Roy"] continues): "You are kind, thoughtful, obedient and considerate... not to mention intelligent, witty and charming." (Garfield): "We all know Uncle Roy is a liar, but we don't care!" (1984, United Features Syndicate). In a similar fashion, the *Lead Like Jesus* folks tell us we're all wonderful, we're all leaders, even though some of us may have never evinced any leadership qualities-but it sure makes us feel good! Consider, for example, this statement from the front of one of Blanchard's books: "*I thank God for the leader you already are, and pray He will continue to guide you as you serve all those who look to you for leadership.*" (*The Servant Leader*, Ken Blanchard and Phil Hodges. [J. Countryman: Nashville, TN, 2003], front piece). At the beginning of the text of Blanchard & Hodges "*The Servant Leader*" (p.8), is a full page quotation of Matthew 23:11-12 from the NKJV: "He who is GREATEST among you shall be your SERVANT, And whoever EXALTS himself will be HUMBLED, and he who HUMBLE himself will be EXALTED"(capitalization in the original). It's noteworthy that they fail to quote or even refer to the preceding verse, which is an intrinsic part of that same discourse by Jesus. That's very interesting because verse 10 in the NASV reads: "And do not be called **leaders**; for one is your **Leader**, that is, Christ."(!) No wonder they ignore it.

¹¹⁰ www.leadlikejesus.com/templates/cusleadlikejesus/details. (from the Lead Like Jesus website, 3/30/2004).

to attend a “*Celebration*” such as the one held at “First North” in April 2004¹¹¹ (a **grand total of \$252.90**—Ten dollars more if you don’t pre-register), you can learn how to lead people like Jesus led them. Of course you could just read your Bible and follow its principles, pray, and depend upon the Holy Spirit’s power. But that would be free, and not nearly as exciting or “*cutting edge*.”

2. THE PRIMARY BOOKS PRESENTING SITUATIONAL LEADERSHIP® II PROMOTE A “12 STEP” APPROACH BORROWED FROM ALCOHOLICS

ANONYMOUS: “*We were even fantasizing,*’ said the Professor, smiling, *‘that we would start an AA-like twelve-step program designed to deal with the ego issues of FaithWalk leaders.’*... *‘That could certainly scare some people off,’* said the Professor. *‘But when you think about it, the disciplines included in the typical twelve-step program are in keeping with the end goal of FaithWalk Leadership...’*¹¹² In addition, a list of FaithWalk Leadership’s “Twelve Steps” is printed in or referred to in several of their books.¹¹³ Some of the serious problems with AA’s “12 Steps” have been covered by a variety of authors.¹¹⁴

3. QUESTIONABLE &/or DISCONCERTING STATEMENTS:

- a. **Regarding leadership:** “*‘Yes,’* said the Professor. *‘I think one of the functions servant leaders have to fulfill is that of being performance coaches.’*...Michael nodded. **‘So Jesus was a performance coach—and that’s what I’m supposed to be too.’** *‘Absolutely,’* said the Professor. *‘That’s the last key method you need to be an effective servant leader.’*¹¹⁵ “*Disillusioned learners (D2) need a coaching leadership style (S2)-high direction, high support. Jesus used an appropriate coaching style to respond to the disciples’ disillusionment... A key activity of an effective servant leader is to act as performance coach. When Jesus called (the disciples) to follow Him, He pledged to the disciples His full support and guidance as they developed into ‘fishers of men.’...By changing His leadership style appropriately as His disciples developed individually and as a group, Jesus empowered His followers to carry on after He was gone.’*(sic)¹¹⁶ “*There is no single best leadership style. Leader effectiveness all depends on the development level of the person you are attempting to influence.’*¹¹⁷
- b. **Regarding the Trinity:** “*They took turns opening their sessions with a short prayer—asking for guidance during the meeting from what the Minister liked to call the ‘great three-person consulting team’: the Father, who had started the whole thing; the Son, who modeled it; and the Holy Spirit, who was the day-to-day coach.’*¹¹⁸ (A special thanks) “*...finally, (to) our three-member consultant team, The Father, The Son, and The Holy Spirit...’*¹¹⁹ “*And most of all, we owe thanks to our three chief Consultants: The Father, The Son, and The Holy Spirit.’*¹²⁰ Blanchard: “***Buford and Hybels... taught me that as Christians, we get three consultants for the price of one—the Father who started life, the Son who lived life, and the Holy Spirit who handles the daily operations of life*** (sic).”¹²¹

¹¹¹ Information taken from a promotional handbill distributed by First Baptist Church, North Spartanburg, SC, copy on file.

¹¹² *The Servant Leader*, op cit., pp. 102-103.

¹¹³ e.g. *Leadership by the Book*, pp. 104-105; 165; 179; *The Servant Leader*, pp. 40-41.

¹¹⁴ e.g. “*The Useful Lie*,” by Dr. William Playfair (Crossway Books: Westchester, IL, 1991). See also a paper/critique of AA’s 12 step program written by me in 1994 for a counseling course as part of my M. Min. degree program.

¹¹⁵ *Leadership By the Book*, op cit., p. 145, 157.

¹¹⁶ *The Servant Leader*, pp. 79, 83.

¹¹⁷ *Ibid*, p. 69.

¹¹⁸ *Leadership by the Book*, op cit., p. 168.

¹¹⁹ *Ibid*, p. 207.

¹²⁰ *The Servant Leader*, p. 123.

¹²¹ *Leadership by the Book*.

- c. **Possible New Age mysticism?** Some of Blanchard et al.'s books seem to encourage and emphasize a mystical "New Age" type of spirituality, instead of referring to the Bible as the one place where God speaks to us. It should be kept in mind that while they claim to write from a Christian perspective, they are not writing for a distinctly Christian audience. Nor are they, by their own admission, trying to convert anybody (see f. below, p. 22). With that fact in mind, the following quotes from some of their books are disconcerting:

*"There was much to be done, but he knew he would not have to do it alone...the Minister was filled with renewed hope and assurance for leading his people. It sprang from his belief that as he continued his journey, daily seeking guidance and wisdom from Jesus, he would find the answers no matter what the question."*¹²² But what exactly does it mean to seek "guidance and wisdom from Jesus", without a concomitant emphasis that His will is found in the Bible, and there alone.

Another book by Blanchard and Hodges, contains some helpful concepts in a chapter titled: "*The Habits of a Servant Leader.*" Unfortunately, after mentioning Jesus' example of getting away alone to pray and talk with God (which is a good practice for any believer!), the authors fail to make it clear that today God speaks to us through His written Word, as opposed to dreams, visions, impressions, etc. Instead they go on to make a number of statements regarding the necessity of "*hearing God speak*" during regular periods of "*solitude.*" On the page following their references regarding Christ, one reads:

*"Silence is a natural part of solitude and is its essential complement...Silence means to escape from sounds and noises, other than the gentle ones of nature. But it also means not talking, and the effects of not talking on our soul are different from those of simple quietness. Both dimensions of silence are crucial for the breaking of old habits and the formation of Christ's character in us... One of the greatest of spiritual attainments is the capacity to do nothing... **How to Engage in Solitude.** Find someplace where you can be totally out of contact with all kinds of human noise...for a minimum of thirty minutes...If you are seated in a comfortable position, place your hands on your knees in a down position. If walking, visualize yourself in this position. In harmony with the position of your hands, mentally put down everything you are concerned about or expending energy in trying to manage or control at the foot of the cross. Be specific-name each burden as you put it down. **When you have exhausted your list, take a couple of deep breaths and turn your hands, physically and mentally, into an up position and quietly receive what God reveals to you. Have no expectations or agenda for this time with God. Let it be His to fill.**"*¹²³

Later in the chapter, under a section on prayer, another similarly nebulous statement is made: "*Even when we are praying for or about things other than our own spiritual needs and growth, **conversing with God cannot fail to have a pervasive and spiritually strengthening effect on all aspects of our personality. That conversation, when it is truly a conversation, makes an indelible impression on our minds, and our consciousness of Him remains vivid as we go our way.***"¹²⁴

By contrast, the Westminster Catechism states that the "*means of grace*" (i.e. the tools God uses to develop Christ-like character in us and provide victory over sinful habits), are "*the Word of God and prayer.*" Blanchard and Hodges declare that *silence* is "*crucial for the breaking of old habits and the formation of Christ's character in us.*" And what exactly does it mean, after having sat in a yoga-like position, to turn your palms upward and "*quietly receive what God reveals to you*" with "*no expectations or*

¹²² Ibid, p. 192.

¹²³ *The Servant Leader*, p. 89.

¹²⁴ Ibid, p. 92.

agenda for this time with God” letting it be “*His to fill.*” It sounds like an invitation to open yourself up to visions, impressions, audible words or anything else—including, potentially at least, even the demonic. Where is the Word of God in all of this? That should be the source of God’s revealed will for a believer! In another place Blanchard and Hodges refer to such habits as prayer and Bible study as a “*set of positive addictions*”¹²⁵, a very poor description at best.

- d. **Questionable views & statements regarding salvation and man’s condition:** “*I think you would be amazed,’ said the Professor, ‘that once behavioral norms are established and fulfilled, how quickly people’s hearts will be softened and their individual innate characteristics will take the form of caring for and serving others.’ ‘And once this step is taken,’ interjected the Minister, ‘the door is open for people to explore a closer connection with God.’”*¹²⁶ (Scripture teaches that our innate characteristics before regeneration are towards self and sin, rather than towards caring for and serving others).

“*I certainly lost touch with my soul, and I don’t want to let that happen again.*”¹²⁷

“*‘That’s interesting,’ said the Professor, ‘So Jesus, right from the beginning, began to instill in his disciples a greater purpose than just being fishermen.’ ‘It certainly seems like it,’ said the Minister. ‘When I thought about the importance of passion in a vision, I immediately remembered Jesus saying: ‘...I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.’ ‘...have it to the full,’ repeated the Minister. ‘Giving life was Jesus’ passion. He envisioned a world where people took the higher road—one of love and truth.’ ‘Were love and truth the most important values for Jesus?’ asked Michael. ‘When it came to values,’ the Minister responded, ‘those two values, according to the Bible, seem to rise above all the rest...’*”¹²⁸

“*The next day, the Professor shared his personal mission statement with his audience. ‘My mission,’ he said, ‘is to be a loving teacher and example of simple truths that help myself and others to awaken the presence of God in our lives.’ ...The Professor reminded his listeners about their calling and the Caller...At first he’d thought he might be overdoing it, but his conviction that his mission was to awaken the presence of God in the lives of his audience gave him a new boldness.*”¹²⁹ (Religious Liberals and New Agers must love statements like this).

“*We believe that people want to be magnificent and need to be valued. They want to be set up for success.*”¹³⁰ (compare this statement with the Bible’s description of man and his spiritual condition).

“*One of the first people to point me seriously to the Lord was my longtime friend Phil Hodges...I was interested, but I didn’t take the Lord into my heart completely for some time.*”¹³¹ (Can you take the Lord into your heart in stages?)

- e. **A nebulous &/or incorrect view of regeneration and Christ’s atoning work:** “*While Carla’s faith was central to her own life, she had to admit that Michael did not have a very active spiritual life. He’d been willing to stand up and proclaim his faith for the baptism of each of their children, (?) but it took a back seat to the day-to-day struggles*

¹²⁵ *The Servant Leader*, p. 114.

¹²⁶ *Leadership By the Book*, op cit., p. 83.

¹²⁷ *Ibid*, p. 117.

¹²⁸ *Ibid*, p. 126.

¹²⁹ *Ibid*, p. 194, 195.

¹³⁰ www.kenblanchard.com/meetcomp/index.cfm

¹³¹ *The Servant Leader*, Ken Blanchard and Phil Hodges, p. 10.

of his business life... This pattern continued for a number of years. Michael seemed satisfied with remaining **in a state of arrested spiritual development**... 'When I think about what that means for leaders who are followers of Jesus,' said the Professor, 'it strikes me that they have a vital role in "walking their talk" and modeling behaviors he would value.' 'That's true,' said the Minister. 'But remember, the key thing is that the process starts on the inside with who they are—their character—and not by teaching people specific behaviors or methods separated from the motives of their heart.'(where's the gospel?),¹³²

"When Jesus was no longer physically present, his disciples seemed to carry on quite successfully. How did he make that happen? He modeled servant leadership (sic). Jesus was continually asking questions like, "How do I become first?" Or, "Who's the greatest?"", said the Minister."¹³³ Actually Christ only asked those questions in response to the selfish conversation and behavior of the disciples. And it didn't happen often. And to imply that the disciples "success" was due to having learned "leadership techniques" from Jesus, rather than having been regenerated by putting their faith in Christ alone, as well as having been baptized and filled with the Holy Spirit who alone gave them the power to live a holy, Christ-like life, is terribly defective and unbiblical!

"While Jesus taught his disciples to be servants of all, he didn't send them out to serve without clear direction, did he?" inquired the Professor. 'Absolutely not,' said the Minister. 'And he received his direction literally from the top of the hierarchy,' said the Professor, smiling. 'You've got that right,' said the Minister. 'Once he revealed the vision of the Kingdom of God and how people could receive the grace of salvation, Jesus sent his disciples out to—in your terms—support, direct, encourage, coach, and facilitate other people to make the necessary choice.'"¹³⁴ **"Jesus' message was not just for the mind. It was directed at my heart.... it was about character change. Jesus is interested in me being a different person—a good and caring human being."¹³⁵ (How one is supposed to become "a good and caring human being" without the new birth and the power of the Holy Spirit, isn't even hinted at). **"Jesus modeled the true servant leader by investing most of His time training and equipping the disciples for leadership when His earthly ministry was over."**(sic)¹³⁶**

- f. **A publicly stated aversion to converting people. "FaithWalk Leadership isn't about converting leaders to Christianity (!), but about helping them to become the kind of leader Jesus was and to align their leader behavior with the servant leadership values that he modeled."**¹³⁷ "Suppose as the leader of an organization,' wondered Michael, 'I surrender. I get back to home base and recognize God's unconditional love. Before I implement servant leadership throughout my organization, **do I have to convert everyone?**' **'Absolutely not,' insisted the Minister. 'The best advice I've heard on that subject is: "In sharing your faith, use words only when necessary."**(!) **In other words, the best way you can share your faith is to behave differently as a leader.**"¹³⁸ **'Yes,' said the Minister. 'In fact, when we talk about servant leadership, Jesus can serve as a model without even referring to his ultimate sacrifice.'**"(!)¹³⁹ Such statements are extremely dangerous, since this popularizing of a nebulous Jesus, in the fashion of Charles Sheldon's **"In His Steps"** and the much more recent **"WWJD"** ("What Would Jesus Do?") fad, tends to inoculate people against the true Christ, the true gospel, and

¹³² *Leadership by the Book*, op cit., pp. 21, 23, 46.

¹³³ *Ibid*, p. 142.

¹³⁴ *Ibid*, p. 144.

¹³⁵ *Ibid*, p. 171.

¹³⁶ *The Servant Leader*, op cit., p. 21.

¹³⁷ *Leadership by the Book*, op cit., p. 106.

¹³⁸ *Ibid*, pp. 81-82.

¹³⁹ *Ibid*, p. 141.

what's most important of all, the need for personal salvation, as opposed to "being a dynamic leader." In fact the WWJD phrase appears in one of Blanchard's books.¹⁴⁰

This philosophy of consciously not trying to convert others is definitely being picked up by at least some of those who have undergone "Lead Like Jesus" training. A recent newspaper article (which significantly was on page one of a business section of the paper), described "Lead Like Jesus" thusly:

*"Proponents say it is a management philosophy that does not exclude non-Christians, and seminars and related training events are aimed at people with a range of religious beliefs."*¹⁴¹ An assistant store controller for a company named Carquest which is implementing this methodology company-wide exclaims: "You don't have to be a Christian to understand the point they're trying to make...Jesus was the ultimate servant leader, the perfect example to live by, whether you believed his message or not. What he did and how he did it could still apply at work today...the trait of wanting to be good is in everybody."(sic)¹⁴²

- g. **False spiritual security:** "By engaging in the disciplines of solitude, prayer, study of the Scriptures, and belief in God's unconditional love for me, I seek to align my servant leadership effort with what Jesus modeled..."¹⁴³ But the crucial, and un-addressed question is, "What Jesus are we talking about?" When you refer to Jesus, Mormons, Muslims, Moonies, Catholics, Jehovah's Witnesses, etc., all have very different ideas as to who Jesus was and what He did. In light of the terribly nebulous "Jesus" that is presented in books published by Blanchard and his colleagues, such statements as those above are confusing at best, and eternally damning at worst. Prayer is emphasized, but it appears to be the kind of prayer to a generic Jesus that can mean almost anything: "Jesus is the master of the art of living and leading as an act of service. He loves it when you call on Him. He is only a prayer away as your leadership guide and inspiration."¹⁴⁴ But is He? John 9:31 declares that God "heareth not sinners" i.e. He does not obligate Himself to hear an unsaved person's prayer, other than the prayer and cry for salvation through the blood of Christ. Of course God can answer anyone's prayer including the unsaved, but it is highly questionable whether He is greatly consumed with an unsaved person's request to make him a better manager at work!
- h. **Misinterpretations of Scripture.** "As a leader, let your people know what's expected so they can excel. Jesus made His expectations clear to His followers- 'I am the truth and the way...follow me'" (sic).¹⁴⁵ A more obvious misinterpretation of one of the most well known verses in Scripture, would be hard to find. When Jesus said that, He didn't mean his disciples were to follow his leadership techniques. He was declaring that He was the only way to heaven!
- i. **An unbiblical appeal to people's "needs."** "Every organization should seek to improve the quality of life of its customers. Key questions to answer are: -Do you know the customers you are serving as a leader? -Do you know what your customers value? ...YOUR PURPOSE/MISSION: What business you are in—How will you benefit your customers?"¹⁴⁶ "When you turn the traditional hierarchy upside down for

¹⁴⁰ "After a time, Michael was a hero...But this time it didn't go to his head. He kept things in proper perspective through his daily prayers and consistent focus on 'What would Jesus do?'..." (Leadership By the Book, p. 188).

¹⁴¹ "Companies Embrace Jesus", op cit., p. 1.

¹⁴² Ibid.

¹⁴³ The Servant Leader, op cit., p. 41.

¹⁴⁴ Ibid, p. 113.

¹⁴⁵ Ibid, p. 52.

¹⁴⁶ Ibid, pp. 46, 45.

implementation (of leadership vision) you have the people closest to the customers—the object of your business—with all the power, all the capabilities to make decisions and to solve the problems. For example, Ritz Carlton is one of the great service organizations in this country. In the past at Ritz Carlton, every frontline associate had a \$2,000 discretionary fund that they could use to solve customer problems without consulting with anybody. That’s a powerful thing!”¹⁴⁷ (A couple of observations: a) In ministry, the main “object of our business” is not the “customers” [i.e. people], but God!, b) There may be a reason that Ritz Carlton’s practice of giving workers the power to spend large sums of money with no accountability is described as having occurred “in the past.” Having personally heard of and seen examples of misused funds during my lifetime, I would have great hesitation in mimicking Ritz Carlton’s practice. It could prove to be a source of great temptation, leading to sin—even though it makes for a nice anecdotal story).

j. **Promotion of a therapeutic “Addiction”/“Recovery” viewpoint.** For example: “All leaders have to confront personal pride. In fact, this ego trait...can become addictive... so we will always be ‘in recovery.’ (?) The first step to overcoming such addiction is to get your priorities in order... And if we’re not careful, we can become addicted to using fear as an easy method of manipulation and control to produce short-term results.”¹⁴⁸ As mentioned earlier, in Blanchard’s books even godly practices such as prayer and Bible study are labeled “addictions” e.g. “Below is a checklist of tools every servant leader needs ...(a) Set of **positive addictions** to solitude, prayer, and study of scripture, rest and exercise.”¹⁴⁹

k. **Coarse language:** “‘I was a hard nut to crack,’ replied Michael, ‘and I made it damn rough...’”¹⁵⁰

l. **Statements mimicking Rick Warren’s thinking, i.e. Statements based on defective translations of Scripture e.g. “make Jesus smile,” “make Jesus proud,” &/or Warren’s pragmatic “results-based” criteria for doing something:**

“I don’t need to know everything—just some key concepts that will get the results I want to make Jesus proud... ‘I want to show my gratitude to God by serving as a leader in a way that would **make Jesus smile** with pride.’ ... Carla put her arms around Michael and whispered in his ear, ‘You know what Michael, you’ve made me and Jesus smile with pride.’”¹⁵¹

“We want you to trust Jesus as your leadership model, so...you will **make Jesus smile**.”¹⁵²

“For instance, a congregation said they wanted to be a 24-hour-a-day church. The idea was that they had a nice facility and wanted to keep the rooms busy. But attendance was going down because the mission wasn’t something people there got excited about...At another church, the mission is clear and uplifting. At the beginning of every service the minister says, ‘We believe that a close encounter with Jesus of Nazareth can transform lives. **Our mission is to make Jesus smile.**’ Backing up that statement are clear operating values and theological values. Attendance has gone up. It’s a place where a community comes together with the main purpose of **making Jesus smile.** (?) A clear purpose or mission provides direction. Without clear direction your leadership

¹⁴⁷ Ibid, p. 55.

¹⁴⁸ Ibid, pp. 32, 35.

¹⁴⁹ Ibid, p. 114.

¹⁵⁰ *Leadership By the Book*, op cit., p. 113.

¹⁵¹ Ibid, pp. 119, 114, 188.

¹⁵² *The Servant Leader*, op cit., p. 11.

doesn't matter... When Walt Disney started his theme parks, he knew how to excite people. He said, 'We are in the happiness business—we make magic!' That clear purpose drives everything the cast members (employees) do with their guests (customers)... Walt Disney's picture of the future was expressed in the charge he gave to every cast member: 'Keep the same smile on people's faces when they leave the park as when they enter.' He didn't care whether a guest was in the park two hours or ten hours. 'Keep them smiling.'"¹⁵³ That's nice for a philosophy for a secular amusement park. But the verses used to support such comments are from poor translations that do not accurately render what is contained in the original texts.¹⁵⁴

4. **UNQUALIFIED ENDORSEMENT OF QUESTIONABLE ORGANIZATIONS & INDIVIDUALS.** e.g. Mother Theresa: "'So if I understand what you're saying,' said Michael, 'God is far more concerned with our character and our leadership process than he is with our earthly success factors.' 'Yes,' the Minister answered. '**Mother Teresa** used to say, 'We are called to obedience, not to success.' 'She certainly was focused on spiritual significance, wasn't she?' said Michael. 'She was simply following Jesus' example in her particular vocation,' said the Minister. 'Being generous, having a servant heart, serving others, developing loving relationships—that's how Jesus calls all of us to live our life. Not only will you get a "**Well done, good and faithful servant**" when life's over, but also perhaps good earthly results as well.'"¹⁵⁵ "Thus, the Christian philosopher **Blaise Pascal** insightfully remarks, 'I have discovered that all the unhappiness of men arises from one single fact, that they are unable to stay quietly in their room.'"¹⁵⁶ "We would like to publicly praise: ...**Norman Vincent Peale**, coauthor of *The Power of Ethical Management*, for his important advocacy of positive thinking... (bolding in the original!)... (and thanks) *To all the people who have developed Alcoholics Anonymous-like groups to help to overcome people's addictions.*"¹⁵⁷

While Mother Teresa did many good things, she and her fellow nuns were devout Roman Catholics, devoted to praying to Mary, and they even said that if individuals wouldn't convert to Christianity, Hinduism would be ok. Blaise Pascal was a Roman Catholic philosopher and thinker of the past. Norman Vincent Peale was the "positive thinking" guru, who felt it was enough to simply "have faith"—regardless of the object of that faith, and who I personally heard state on television that there are many ways to get to heaven apart from Christ.(!)

5. **CONTRADICTORY STATEMENTS REGARDING SERVANT LEADERSHIP METHODOLOGY.** Throughout a number of Blanchard's books a "bottom-up" upside down pyramid structure is taught and trumpeted, i.e. that good leaders are there to serve the needs of, and support others in the organization, especially the underlings. **Yet when Blanchard talks about who sets the goals in any organization, be it a company, mission board, church or denomination, then suddenly the pyramid is supposed to be turned back right-side up, so that the leaders "call the shots."** In other words, it's a "top-down" organization at that point.¹⁵⁸ It appears that Blanchard and his followers want to have it both ways: the

¹⁵³ Ibid, pp. 46-49.

¹⁵⁴ e.g. "Noah was a pleasure to the Lord" (Gen. 6:8) from Rick Warren's "*The Purpose Driven Life*." (Zondervan Publishing House: Grand Rapids, MI, 2002, p. 69). The verse actually says: "But Noah found grace (or favor-NASV) in the eyes of the Lord." There is a huge difference between finding favor or grace from God, and being a pleasure to Him. Pleasing God is one thing, receiving His unmerited grace or favor, is quite another.

¹⁵⁵ *Leadership By the Book*, op cit., pp. 76-77.

¹⁵⁶ *The Servant Leader*, op cit., p. 88.

¹⁵⁷ Ibid, p. 204-205.

¹⁵⁸ Blanchard: "'I want to clear up some misconceptions about servant leadership.' ... 'In recent years, when I've talked to top managers about servant leadership, I sense some real resistance to the concept.' 'Why?' asked Michael. 'They assumed,' said the Professor, 'that servant leadership meant that they should work for their people and that their people would decide not only how to do their jobs but what their jobs were and when and how they should be done. To them, servant leadership sounded like the inmates would be running the prison.' They were probably, just like I was, worried that

leaders call the shots and set the goals and vision for an organization, but then they want to use “servant leadership” in order to get the common foot soldiers to buy into it and make it happen. Consider, for instance, the following statements: “*The traditional pyramidal hierarchy is effective for the visionary aspect of leadership. People look to me as their leader for vision and direction. While I should involve experienced people in shaping direction, I can’t and won’t delegate the responsibility for establishing vision and direction.*”¹⁵⁹ Such statements lend support to the problem mentioned earlier that “servant leadership” techniques can very easily become nothing more than a method of manipulation, i.e. a Christianized version of Postmodern “outside-in” “others-oriented” behavior used to get others to accomplish the agenda, goals and ends of a leader or organization.

*“Change is a given. It will happen. Your organization will adapt or die. As a servant leader, you have to identify which changes are necessary to implement your vision, and then help people move in that direction. Change is rarely easy, but understanding the reactions people have to change will make implementation less difficult on everyone... People will feel awkward, ill at ease and self-conscious when confronted with change - Tell everyone what to expect...Structure activities that create involvement... Don’t try to sell the benefits of the change effort initially. Let people mourn their perceived losses. Listen to them... If pressure is taken off, people will revert to old behaviors. – Keep people focused on maintaining the change and managing the journey.”*¹⁶⁰

Apart from the serious manipulation problems inherent in the above statements, it should also be pointed out that here, as in many of Blanchard et al’s other management statements, they make the extremely serious theological mistake of equating “The Church” with an “organization” i.e. company, corporation, or business. The Church is not a business entity. It was founded by Christ (Mt. 16), born at Pentecost when the Holy Spirit came to indwell believers (Acts 2), and is a living organism (I Cor. 12). As one Christian thinker has wisely commented:

*servant leadership was about pleasing everyone,’ said Michael. ‘How did you answer their concerns?’ ‘I had to think fast,’ the Professor said, laughing. ‘All kidding aside, I was actually prepared... **it became clear to me that there are two aspects of leadership—a visionary part and an implementation part.**’... ‘Having a vision is important,’ said the Minister. ‘It’s a picture of the future that produces passion in the leader, and it’s this passion that people want to follow. The Bible says, ‘Where there is no revelation, the people cast off restraint.’ (sic)... ‘All great organizations have a visionary leader at the top who maintains a clear picture of the kind of organization it’s going to be. People are inspired by vision. Once they understand the vision, they can begin to move toward it and even inspire others.’... ‘**Did Moses go up on the mountain with a committee to get the commandments?**’ ‘Of course not,’ said the Minister, laughing, ‘otherwise he might never have come down.’ ‘Or maybe he would have come down with three commandments and seven suggestions,’ said the Professor, smiling. ‘**People look to their leaders for vision and direction, so the traditional hierarchy is effective for this part of leadership. While you want to involve your experienced people in shaping the direction, as a leader you can’t delegate this function. The responsibility for establishing vision and direction falls to you.**’... ‘**When it comes to performance planning, the traditional pyramid-like hierarchy should stay upright,**’ said the Professor. ‘In other words leaders at all levels represent the organizational goals, and therefore should have a major input on individual goals.’... ‘Does that mean people don’t get involved in goal-setting?’ asked Michael. ‘Do their leaders just tell them what their goals are?’ ‘Absolutely not, especially if they’re servant leaders,’ said the Professor...**But the impetus has to come from the servant leader. When it comes to day-to-day coaching, now the hierarchy starts to turn upside-down and servant leaders begin to work for their people. At that point the goals are clear and now a servant leader’s main focus is helping people accomplish their goals.’...**” (Leadership By the Book, pp. 120-121, 125, 128-129, 150-151). Compare the above statements with the following quotes, which promote the pyramid upside down concept: “‘When the job of a leader is to be responsive or to serve his or her people, that means that leader will give people whatever they need to win—accomplish their goals. If they need direction, they should get it. If it’s support they need, then that’s what the leader should provide...’ ‘My boss. About three or four times a day he comes up to me and asks, ‘Is there anything I can do for you?’ **He acts like he works for me.**’... ‘**It’s at this point,**’ insisted the Professor, ‘**where servant leadership really takes over. Now the leader is servant. Isn’t that what Jesus did?**’ ‘Yes,’ said the Minister... **In fact, when we talk about servant leadership, Jesus can serve as a model without even referring to his ultimate sacrifice.**’ (sic)” (Leadership, pp. 140-141).*

¹⁵⁹ Leadership By the Book, p. 174. cf. quotes in the previous footnote.

¹⁶⁰ The Servant Leader, op cit., pp. 65-67.

*“If Jesus Christ is true, the church is more than just another human institution. He alone is her head. He is her sole source and single goal. His grace uniquely is her effective principle. What moves her is not finally interchangeable with the dynamics of even the closest of sister institutions ... If Jesus Christ is the head of the church and hence the source and goal of its entire life, true growth is only possible in obedience to him. Conversely, if the church becomes detached from Jesus Christ and his word, it cannot truly grow, however active and successful it may seem to be. However spectacular its development, it will prove disappointing in the end. However celebrated its progress, it will prove ultimately a falling away. The authentic movements in the church are those that are set in motion by God’s decisive authority, especially the decisive authority of grace... **The church is more than spiritual and theological, but never less.** Only when first things are truly first, over even the best and most attractive of second things, will the church be free of idols, free to let God be God, free to be herself, and free to experience the growth that matters.”¹⁶¹*

¹⁶¹ Os Guinness, *Dining With the Devil*, Baker Book House: Grand Rapids, MI, 1993, p. 39.