

## LeaderImpact Podcast Ep. 6 Garth Jestley

### Lisa Peters

Welcome to the LeaderImpact Podcast. We are a community of leaders dedicated to optimizing our personal, professional, and spiritual lives to have impact. This show is where we have a chance to listen and engage with leaders from around the world who are living this out. We love talking with leaders so if you have any questions, comments or suggestions to make this show even better please let us know. The best way to stay connected is through our newsletter at [LeaderImpact.ca](http://LeaderImpact.ca) or on social media at LeaderImpact. I'm your host Lisa Peters and we welcome to our LeaderImpact Podcast Garth Jestley.

Over the course of his career, Garth has held many senior leadership positions in investment management, venture capital, corporate banking, international project financing, private debt placement, and investment banking. After serving as vice president-project financing at Bank Montreal and vice president of Citibank, responsible for corporate banking in Eastern Canada, he joined Middlefield group in 1985 and for many years he served as CEO of the group's core investment management business. After stepping back from his full-time duties at Middlefield in 2012, Garth assumed the role of executive director of LeaderImpact for several years. This involvement was a catalyst for his recently completed book *More Than Your Business Card*. Garth is currently vice-chairman of Middlefield group and special advisor to the senior management team. He also serves on the national board of directors of Teen Challenge Canada and the board of Catch the Fire Church in Toronto.

Garth and his wife Mary are involved in various church leadership roles around the world. They place a high priority on family and in particular enjoy spending time with their children and grandchildren. Join us now for a conversation with Garth as we chat about our relationship with money in personal, professional and spiritual lives, welcome to the show, Garth.

### Garth Jestley

It's good to be with you, Lisa.

### Lisa Peters

Well, it is I'm kind of excited about this because I'm not sure about my own relationship with money. So this might turn into a counseling session for Lisa. So, we're going to kick off with, why don't you introduce yourself to our listeners and tell us a little bit about yourself.

### Garth Jestley

Sure. So I grew up in Vancouver on the West Coast and grew up in a quite a well-to-do family. My father was a very high-profile lawyer. And early in life, I don't know why it happened, but I got very caught up in academic performance. So I graduated at the top of my school, went into UBC in pre-med. So I finished the pre-med program and I wrote the medical entrance exam and then I had to face up to the fact, which I hadn't thought about too much, that I can't stomach the sight of blood. So that was the end of my medical career probably should have thought a little bit more about that right? But the good thing that came out of that is I met my

wife Mary in Physiology 201. She was in rehabilitation medicine and so we met one another through a mutual friend and that led to our getting married in Vancouver in 1969.

I had to of course come up with another direction for my life. Because I'm no longer going to be Dr. Jestley so I went to my friends. I wasn't following Jesus at the time that came later in my mid-30s and so I consulted with my friends and they said you know you should take an MBA. And I said what's an MBA? And as far as I can recollect, they said we don't know but it's got something to do with business and you're really good at math. So you know, exhibiting about the same amount of due diligence as with my medical career that was good enough for me. I got some scholarships and we moved to London Ontario, to what is now the Ivey School of Business in part to just start our new lives as a married couple together. We had great family relations so we weren't really trying to escape them. But we thought that provided a good start separate from the family.

So came out of the MBA and launched into a forty-plus-year career that you've summarized there in the financial services industry in various different facets, different roles. And along the way, Mary and I created a small tribe. So we have four kids and nine grandkids and they're all our kids of course are growing up. In fact, our oldest grandkids are getting close to growing up so that's a quick thumbnail of my personal life.

### **Lisa Peters**

All right. Now because we were going to talk about your relationship with money I do want to ask you because I know you have written about your mom. And in your book, you've written your mom treated every nickel like a manhole cover when it came to Spending. So How did those early years form your ideals about money?

### **Garth Jestley**

Correct. My mom did treat nickels like manhole covers. You know she was a child of the depression and despite the fact, my father was very successful. He was also a bit of a risk-taker. He was always financing early-stage mining ventures and things like this. So I think she looked at herself as the keeper of the finances of the stability and the family. So she did treat nickels like manhole covers. I remember each year despite the fact we lived in a very tiny area of Vancouver that is extraordinarily expensive today, you know she'd buy my two outfits for school each year I can still remember it. There's the new shirt, new pants, so on and so forth. So I think out of that, and of course, keep in mind Lisa was not a believer, I had no thought about God, and his involvement in my life or his involvement in provision. So I think the beliefs that crystallized from that experience was that first, it's all up to me like I got nobody else to depend on. We're very big believers in those days that you know when you got married when you moved away from home. That's it. You moved away from home. You're no longer looking to the parents even if you get into trouble. So you really are on your own. No concept of God and so that caused me to be very careful with money I would say. Very diligent on it looking at money. Very I would call it prudent but I think some might just say stingy. It certainly was not into giving whatsoever because to me it was very important to preserve what you had. It all came down to me. I couldn't depend on anybody else. And the main thing that I could do, this is early on right I didn't have capital to invest, but the main thing I could do is to really watch the spending try to save and just remember I do I have nowhere to turn

not to my parents not to anybody else so that really influenced my views of money. And indeed and we can get into this it changed quite radically when I became a follower of Jesus but you know there's kind of echoes. I mean you know it takes a long time to drain that out of the system I must say. And even though, and we can get into this, we've been on a journey of generosity for many decades nonetheless I would say I have to watch myself because you know that old person can notwithstanding that my identity has changed, that old person can rear his ugly head from time to time and I have to watch that.

**Lisa Peters**

Yeah, I think a lot of people can identify with you, with I'm doing it on my own. You know who maybe haven't who don't know of anyone else will take care of them. You know, maybe they don't have parents but they would never ask and they would never pray and you know? So I think you make a great point there early on that's that's what your thinking was.

**Garth Jestley**

Well and in fact, if I could tell you just a little story to bring that point out further. So we bought our first house in Toronto in 1974. We paid, and it was an enormous sum, I didn't have a cent and the sum was \$35,000. These houses in that area it's worth a lot of money. You measure in millions, not \$35,000 but that's what it cost and so the bank gave me a mortgage. The vendor took back a note. So I only needed \$5000 more to close the gap. So I phoned my dad and I don't say this disrespectfully to him because he was very successful but he was very tied up and loan guarantees and so on and so forth so he didn't have, even though I went to him I didn't go to him saying you gotta help me I just went to him and said is it possible. And very quickly I discovered that it wasn't. I wasn't going to push that. So, fortunately, I went to the bank and they said well this person's early in his career so he'll lend him the money. So I bore it 100% of it but that was the one and only time I went to my family and it was great trepidation and it wasn't desperately bail me out. I wouldn't have gone ahead with the transaction if I'd not been able to get the money, obviously.

**Lisa Peters**

Yeah, oh good share Garth. So I'm gonna go into your personal. You did start a little bit about it but tell us a little bit about your, sorry your professional journey. We're gonna move into that your professional journey. And were there any pivotal turning points that moved you forward?

**Garth Jestley**

Sure. So as you've summarized I worked with four different companies for over 42 years. I think it was the first 3 were large institutions Prudential of America. There's a common thread for all 3 of these institutions I might add. I wanted to work for the best in whatever area I went into I wanted to work for the world leader. I was very hung up on excellence on being with the best that's where you learn the most and that's and it's just something about being associated with the best because one of the things I discovered early on, it's not really, you. It's the institution you represent that has all the credibility. So all 3 of them Prudential of America was the largest insurance company in the world at that time and they together with Morgan Stanley had invented the debt private placement. Caused quite a bit of disruption in Canada but they'd invented it so I was working with them and that was the area in which and so at a

very young age literally in my mid-20s my boss was sending me out to meet with CEOs and CFOs of companies way senior to myself. And he delegated authority to me within constraints to deal with them. So it was very encouraging early on.

I was then one of the first people hired by Citibank when they launched in Canada. Citibank was at the time the largest, most profitable, most international and I think the most powerful bank on the planet by a long ways. The Canadian banks used to speak to me if they wanted to get into certain countries. They just couldn't get in to see how I could help them. So I worked with them and I just it was a love affair at first sight because I wasn't following Jesus but all I knew is I wanted to get to the top as fast as possible. And they, you know in my first month, I think in Toronto this guy comes through the office his name's John Reid and he shakes my hand and he was a really old guy like I was in my twenty s and he was in his 30 s like he was, might have been 33 or 34. So he shook hands in that you knew he was kind of a big wig with the bank. Well not too many years later he became CEO of Citibank, the largest bank on the planet. So that was very exciting for me the fact that and I used to talk to people ultimately I knew all of the CEOs of the Canadian banks. I used to talk with some of them from time to time and they'd always go. They were just amazed. They could not understand why how this bank could identify people so early and then give them such authority. It was just not in their institutional DNA.

And then I went to the Bank of Montreal which their leadership had just been taken over by Bill Mulholland from Morgan Stanley. It was the first time BMO was having real management issues so they went outside to New York Morgan Stanley and Bill Mulholland came in and he was a real military commander. Very sharp guy and he set up the unit that I was a leader in. So it was to do the really, really, big hairy difficult deals in those days. It was real money today. It's nothing but you know in the hundreds of millions of dollars or billions of dollars that's you know with maybe 1 billion or 2 billion project loans internationally.

So all 3 of those were working for first-rate organizations and then two of my former colleagues at Citibank asked me to join them in an entrepreneurial fledgling enterprise in investment management. So I ended up there. For most of my career 27, 28 years. But going back to the pivotal issue. I have to bring my wife Mary into this actually and I know this overlaps into the spiritual. I have a hard time with this disaggregation of personal spiritual and then and professional because to me Jesus is the center of it all. So I have a hard time disaggregating them. So one day, just after I joined Citibank one evening actually, Mary over dinner said Garth, I have something to announce to you. And I'm going Okay, you know more children on the way? What is this? And she said I've decided to follow Jesus. Long pregnant pause. Yes I don't know if this is politically incorrect but the male mind goes rather slowly and I'm kind of pondering this. And the first words out of my mouth were Okay. So does that mean you're going to go down to the corner of King and Younge in Toronto and hand out Bibles? So naturally, she didn't and I wasn't actually, it was not and I mentioned this in the book, it was not actually sarcastic. It actually was very sincere that I could see the change in her like this wasn't a matter. She's going to the local church around the corner this was she was fulfilled. She was excited and that continued on and on so I found that really interesting but of no relevance to me directly.

**Lisa Peters**

I get that from people. They see it in their partner. They see how happy they are and they want to be part of that. So it's funny that you say had no relevance to me.

**Garth Jestley**

Yeah, no I was totally fixated, like a typical MBA in my era. I don't know if it's still the same, although I've gone to speak in the MBA class I've just not asked the question, but in my era it was You're going to the top as fast as possible. Like oh no, I'm not CEO and I'm four years out you know. I still remember the first MBA reunions. They were very difficult you know talking to people and who are you know, busy disclosing how far they've got and on the trajectory to CEO. So to me, that was you know so that my whole life was caught up in that thing. And so what happened was move from Toronto to Montreal down to New York.

And along the way I was a total goals setting kind of person. My whole life existed in setting goals, meeting or exceeding goals, being rewarded through financial rewards, advancement all that. So that was my life. That was my self created purpose. So when I was in my 20s, I set a goal that I'd become a vice president of Citibank within 3 years. So zipped around down to New York back to Toronto. And one day this communication comes from Bill Spencer who was then the chief, no he wasn't the CEO excuse me he was the president of Citibank worldwide to the effect that the board of directors had approved my appointment as a vice president of the bank. So that was exciting. I was a young guy like the Canadian banks were just like what's going on here. And this is before title inflation so it was actually quite a meaningful title. So I was excited naturally because what's my identity? And then all of a sudden this question hit me and the question was Is that it? You know is that my purpose in living? Is that actually the meaning of my life? Like I'm kind of like this and then in the next instant the follow on question was, or not so much a question it was more a revelation I would say, that when I got to be the senior vice president of Citibank the same question would occur.

So literally I think in one instant the stool was knocked out from under me. I've put it subsequently that you know I saw three pillars as it were underpinning my life. One was my identity. My identity was essentially and what I did in my business card that was my identity. My purpose was defined in terms of setting and exceeding goals and that was my purpose. And my motivation was all the rewards that went with achieving the goals. So literally all of that imploded in one instant.

So you know I went home that night. I had a little bit too much to drink and because I was trying to reignite the feeling of elation I'm supposed to be feeling. So I was very I was a pretty dissatisfied lad although I didn't really communicate that openly to anybody and even to Mary. But I was really inside struggling with the whole issue of meaning and purpose. So I don't know if you want to go into this in the next section. But this leads on to the next, the big spiritual event in my life.

**Lisa Peters**

I think you know a lot of people can identify with getting to the next step and still feeling empty. Getting to the next step and it's like they keep climbing the ladder. And I loved your title inflation. That's good. But yeah, they know they get to vice-president then it's empty and

it's like what's the purpose? So I'm gonna yeah so we'll get back on that. But, so you have been involved in bankery and that's my friend Mary Weimer's word, you've been the bankery world for a large part of your working career and you have written the concept of significance was inseparable from success based upon what I accomplished, the recognition of others, my bank account, and my possessions. So my question is I want to chat about your relationship now with significance, success, and money where you started at the beginning of your career to now.

### **Garth Jestley**

Sure? Well, that does get into the spiritual side right? Because it's really that is Jesus centric. It's got nothing to do with a concept or a philosophy or even conduct. It really is you know, everything changed in a moment in a flash when, and again we can come back to that. But if you want to just land the plane in terms of you know where am I now, you know my significance is in my identity. I mean I am a child of God. I am eternally loved. I'm totally accepted. I'm invaluable beyond comprehension. Totally forgiven and fully equipped to share my faith. So my significance totally changed. It was no longer in those things which you just cited which is a very accurate rendition of how I felt about those things at that time but I would say it's totally changed. Now by the way that does not mean that I don't care about success in the typical way the world measures. I measure return on investment. My company was very successful. Ultimately I was able to sell my interest and it was a very profitable undertaking for me and it measured the success that we were experiencing as a company, you know, identifying needs you know, coming up with value-added propositions to meet those needs and all of that's tied into traditional success. And you know I'm to this day, I'm very big on goal setting. I'm very big on you know where am I going to be the next year. You know what are the goals? What are the specific goals and so on? But again back to that issue of significance, to me, it all relates to identity. And to me, it's actually inseparable from identity as a follower of Jesus.

### **Lisa Peters**

Yeah, I had a question I was going to bring up later but I'm going to bring it up now because you wrote, and I loved reading all of your stuff. There was an article you wrote, "10 Common Obstacles Christian business leaders encounter and how to overcome them". And so you just made a comment about business. You can still be a business person and be a Christian. So your number one false belief was business is not a legitimate calling. And I think of your comment earlier about you know you asked your wife, You're gonna go down to King and Younge sell Bibles like you think you have to give it up all you got to go on a missions trip and I think what you're saying is, No business is a legitimate calling so I just wanted you to talk a little bit about that.

### **Garth Jestley**

Sure, yeah, sure, let me give you a little story from my youth. So, when I was thirteen years old in my class, it was what did they call that guidance class, my guidance counselor said some of you the effect of if we didn't know what we were going to do with the rest of our lives we were in deep trouble. Now that's a rather curious if not dubious proposition given we were thirteen years old and a lot of people in their 30s today struggle with that question. But I went home in

a panic. My dad as I mentioned earlier was a very very successful lawyer and so I consulted him I wanted to know what he had to say about this. And he said well you know obviously you know the most noble of your vocational options are the professions so you can go into you know medicine or law, or architecture, engineering. He even mentioned Christian ministry. I wasn't paying any attention to Jesus at the time so that didn't mean much to me. So I was doing extremely well in every single course and I enjoyed every course I was taking but that year if you had to push me my favorite course was biology. So I said oh I went in the next day I said I'm going into medicine. Got the guidance teacher off my back and that was the end of that and that literally is the amount of thinking that went into my medical aspirations.

So I think that it's common in culture, not just within the church, but it's common in culture to have a less than rosy view of business. It's not viewed by many as that noble. And so when you get into the Christian domain, followers of Jesus, you know for many and I think it's based on a misunderstanding of the gospel and of how the free market is quite consistent with the gospel and so on and so forth, lots of problems because guess what humankind is broken. That's why we need a rescuer but you know it's not intrinsically bad. But I think this is a big issue for the church and not just in leadership. I was at my church recently to do a book signing and I would say most members of the church, it would be a relatively small cohort who are involved in positional leadership, senior leadership but there are quite a few, but most of them are in business.

Most people in church today are in business. I would say 75% or they're dependent on business. You know, maybe one spouse is working but they're dependent on business. I think I might be low. I was just talking with somebody, I was on a call with California and he said I think it's 90%. But whatever it is it's overwhelming. So what I would say is that a lot of believers in business view it as a placeholder until something more spiritual comes along. They in essence think that there's a hierarchy of callings at which the top is vocational ministry and that is totally untrue and is totally unscriptural. And I would have hoped the Protestant Reformation got rid of that but it hasn't. And it exists and you even hear it coming from the pulpit quite often. I've met a number of pastors not in the church I'm in now, but I've met a number of pastors over the years, and by what they say and do it's clear that they view the calling of Christians in business is to generate money for the church and other worthy causes. That is untrue. It goes without saying everybody is called to be generous after all God owns it all. So I'm sorry everybody's called to be generous and people who are successful in business often you know, generate outsized amount of money. But that's not a calling I mean of course we're called to be generous.

So I think the church would be transformed and the world would be transformed if Christians, most of whom are in business, woke up one morning and saying you know what, I'm called to this. And in fact, I would go further I would say if you actually can't say that business is your calling, whether you're just starting off in business or whether you own a business, whether you're a senior if you can't say that you better get on your knees because Jesus said follow me. And if you're not in your calling you better get on your knees and find out what your calling is but I would suggest that many of them, because of their giftings and so on and so forth, are in their calling but it is huge if one recognizes that it is a calling. I mean just think

you're going into the office one day and maybe you have to lay off a significant number of people in a division. Or maybe there's been, I've been through so many financial cycles that you know there's all those major problems going on. Well, it makes a huge difference if when you're going in you're going, I'm called to this. I'm called to this. I mean you know I remember when I was at LeaderImpact I was in a trading session with all the youngins. I was the old guy coming in as the executive director of LeaderImpact. But I remember the fellow who was teaching this session he said right at the beginning he said I want all of you to really, really be sure you're in your calling. And he said, To be clear I want you to be 100 % sure actually to be really clear I want you to be 100.0% sure not 99%, 100.0% sure. And over the two days, he came back to that point and he said it again several times. I want you to be sure you're in your calling.

And you know it makes such a difference if you can actually say, and I find most leaders in business who are Christians if you say give me the honest answer to this question. Okay, don't give me the one you know is probably the correct answer. I want you to tell me, do you could you say, do you say, Hey I'm called to business. Most do not. But they would say things like you know I'm gifted in this area. That's great. God's the one who's the source of gifts. You know I like to I want to conduct myself well because you know on the ethical realm? Well, I hope so. You're an ambassador it goes without saying you better. And you know it enables me to be generous and of course but God owns it all and he's enabled you but that's not a calling. So what I'm saying is that wherever we are where Jesus has called us he's asking us not to live for him but to allow him to live through us. And people need to, so I mean it's the fragrance of Christ. They need to know where you're coming from.

You know it's countercultural, particularly today it's so easy with the pressures to assimilate to the culture. And it really stands out and it's intended to be a standout. You know to quote one book I read by Paul Williams we're exiles on mission. It's always been the church. And even through the Old Testament, we're exiles on mission. And so we're called to be countercultural and people better know we're Christians. We're not secret service agents. That's my passion and that was the driver behind the book. So business is absolutely a legitimate calling. And moreover, it's an important calling and a lot of people don't even recognize its importance, right? They don't recognize that it funds everything. Oh no, well you know people pay taxes. No, no. Commerce generates the money that pays taxes. Well, the government services. No, no. Business generates it all. The not-for-profits. No, no. Business generates it all. So it funds everything. It's the source of innovation worldwide. It is the biggest engine of creativity globally as business and the influence is vast. So it's not only legitimate but important.

### **Lisa Peters**

And I think wherever you are in business if you have found your calling, it's important because we're not just talking senior management, CEOs. This is wherever you are if you have found your call. That just made me so happy. I Just feel my cheeks hurting because I'm smiling and my heart feels this. So thank you for sharing that?

Now as a professional I mean and while we were talking about your businesses and everything you've been involved with you've dropped a lot of names you know, just people

that probably were maybe a mentor to you or you know it helped you long. So my question is just is there a person in your life that has been a major influence in your spiritual journey?

### **Garth Jestley**

Okay, on the spiritual side. The biggest influence has been my wife Mary. It was really in the dedication of the book I dedicate it to her because really it was her example of Christ you know, being alive through her that led me to really seriously consider. You know it lent credibility to it. And moreover, Mary is incredibly knowledgeable about scripture and everything so she's been huge and I don't do anything or I try not to do anything important without consulting her. And she's my concordance and everything else. So I don't have to go to Google I just ask Mary. Well, she's played an important role and she kind of keeps me on track because I can be a bit impetuous at times in terms and certain things. So she's a great anchor. So she's without a doubt been the most important.

There've been quite a number of pastors that have played a role in my life. And I would say a common thread is all of them have been pastors who believe that everybody in the church is where is, what it does it say in the Bible we're the priesthood of believers. So we're all on an equal footing. And we have different roles and they've encouraged us you know, me and in business specifically. But also in mission work we've done in various continents and so on and so forth. So I wouldn't mention anyone. There's been a number that has been big.

2 or 3 people that probably had an outsized influence. Yeah, both of whom, one of whom I know reasonably well. The other I met but I don't know that well that one being Andrew Wommack and his ministries in the States. And you know when I talk about that we're not called to follow to, excuse me. We're not called to serve Jesus we're called to allow him to live through us. We're not called to live for Jesus. I really should give attribution to Andrew that's I'm quoting him. And you know that we live an exchanged life. Not just a changed life. But it's an exchanged life and it's an incredibly important concept. So that played a role.

And Os Guinness who's a very prolific author one of the major global Christian thought leaders. I got to know Os at the University Of Oxford when I did some coursework thereafter I sold my business. And then he came to speak for me actually LeaderImpact at a fundraising event and so he had a big impact on me. And in fact, specifically on this issue of calling you know, and again I cite this in the book with an attribution to Os Guinness, I remember he said to me one time he said You know every believer has the same primary calling. I said Oh really. Yep, that's to know God, to know his word, and to share the good news of Jesus Christ. He says now everybody has a secondary calling. Secondary calling is very important but is subordinate to the primary calling. So you know yours Garth, you're a businessman. You know mine I'm an author. you know blah blah blah. So I said to my pastor one time, you'll get a kick out of this. So I said, and he wouldn't mind my saying this, I said, So Steve you and I have the same primary callings. Yeah, yeah, yeah, we both are supposed to know God, know his word, and share the Gospel. I said and your secondary calling is you're a pastor. My secondary calling is I'm a businessman. And to me, that's a very important point because we're not exempted by virtue of having this professional life of stepping away from allowing Jesus to

live through us. And in fact, we're called to do that. We're called to know God to make him known to everybody including CEOs and everybody we meet on the street, right?

**Lisa Peters**

Yeah, oh thank you for answering that now I'm going to flip to your book. You've written a book called *More Than Your Business Card* which is now being studied by business leaders in LeaderImpact groups around the world. Can you tell us how it came to be written?

**Garth Jestley**

Sure, I resisted the idea of writing a book for sure. But when I was executive director of LeaderImpact I wrote 150 blogs, weekly blogs. And so I got a lot of positive feedback on those blogs. A lot of people said well you should write a book. To which I went right? So in event that was really the genesis. Ultimately I felt that God was speaking to me through these folks who were involved in LeaderImpact, that was his way of communicating to me. So I spent quite a bit of time thinking about but what the topic would be. I wrote 2 books actually. The first book didn't get published. The first book was totally aimed at people who don't know Jesus, leaders who don't know Jesus. Because I have a huge heart for that. But my publisher persuaded me that, while she was very diplomatic, she said it was a good book but she said it was maybe three books in one and maybe what I should do is really focus on believers and try to ignite them. So that was the genesis of the book and the heart behind the book is really to ignite followers of Jesus to respond to their call. Because I believe many in business are not treating it as a call. They are treating it as a bit of a placeholder. They've got their lives segregated into the personal and the professional and the spiritual. But in fact, I think we're you know we're to be integrated human beings and people are to... I mean my next book I'm going to write a book on, I want to interview people worldwide. Leaders in business who are recognized as highly successful, who've paid a heavy price for being Christians. That's a book I want to write because he calls us to pick up our cross and follow him and he said we're going to have troubles in this life and he said if they persecute me they'll persecute you. And so to me I like the example of believers who have paid a price in terms of some business trade-offs and so on and so forth to carry out the call. So that's the genesis of the book.

**Lisa Peters**

Wow. Can't wait to read that Garth I look forward.

**Garth Jestley**

So the title is *More Than Your Business Card*. The subtitle is *A Wake-Up Call* so it was intended as a slap, a wake-up call for leaders desiring to follow Jesus in the marketplace.

**Lisa Peters**

Did you ever have a slap?

**Garth Jestley**

I've had slaps. But I'm not sure I've had the spiritual slap. I've certainly had slaps. I've had situations in business where somebody came at me very irately and accused me of something. It was quite innocuous actually what it was. But it was that I went and called on a senior executive of Canada's largest life insurance company. This is the chief investment

officer whom he had introduced to us. And he roared into my office, I was the CEO by the way, but he roared into my office and he said How dare you! How dare you do this? You know I introduced him. And I looked at him and I went, Sandy, you're right, please forgive me, you're absolutely right. I didn't pull a CEO card like I said yeah, you made an excellent point. I was negligent. So I've had slaps you know where I've had to ask for forgiveness. That's part of living out old calling, right? And that's part of being authentic, right.

**Lisa Peters**

Yeah, yes, yeah, that was a great answer now. Are you involved in a LeaderImpact group right now?

**Garth Jestley**

I am.

**Lisa Peters**

And what are you studying because I think a lot of times people think oh they're studying just Christian books but we study amazing books. So I just ask.

**Garth Jestley**

Yes, I should be careful because it just so happens my group is going through my book. And I didn't nominate it either. The leader decided to go through my book. So that's what we're going through. But yeah, we've gone through, most of the books that we've studied in my group have been authored by Christians. There was one exception recently and of course there are things to be learned obviously from lots of authors provide useful input. But a lot of the books that we've done over the years now that I've been involved in LeaderImpact groups John Ortberg's books, things like this, you wouldn't know for sure that it's a Christian writing them except that he's coming from Christian values. So I'm trying to remember Lisa, and I can't remember what the last book we studied before this one. There was two back. It was written by someone who's not a believer at all. And in fact, but it was quite an interesting book. You know the theme that he brought out. So my own view is that the books as long as the leaders are followers of Jesus, and as long as they are mission true, I'm very big on avoiding mission drift which every business I know is involved in mission drift. And every ministry I've been involved with has mission drift occurring daily. So that's always a big issue but you avoid mission drift here by the leaders being followers of Jesus and regardless of the book being used that they're able to always through questions and leadership or whoever is facilitating the discussion. To tie in the relevance of faith in God to the discussion that's happened. So I think that's the most important aspect.

**Lisa Peters**

And if anyone is listening LeaderImpact has a list of books that you can study and I have just, I have loved every one of them from *Essentialism* to *Good to Great*. Right now we're actually doing and doing Braden's book *Becoming a Leader of Impact*. So good.

**Garth Jestley**

Yeah, and we did that one two or 3 books ago. Yes, it's an excellent book.

**Lisa Peters**

Okay, yeah, so I'm loving it. So obviously you know LeaderImpact is about your impact through your leadership. And have you considered what you want your faith legacy to be when you leave this world?

**Garth Jestley**

Fortunately, you asked me that in advance because I've never been asked that question. But my faith legacy I think on after reflecting on it, my faith legacy, I would just like to be known as somebody who loved God and loved people quite frankly. And that's a major core in the book that I've written is the way we respond to, the driver if you will, the why, the motivator, why would we even be open in such a very difficult environment political correctness. Why would we even do that? And the reason is love. We love God, John 14, by obeying him. That's how we love God and we love people by, you know, treating them as we would like to be treated ourselves and in particular sharing the Gospel. So love goes beyond just doing nice things and we're involved in lots of ministries around the world and we travel, we used to travel, around the world in ministries and you know we're involved in our journey of generosity and that's one way in which you love. But I think it's demonstrating love and particularly by helping people to see the relevance of faith in God, So I think that's what I'd like people to say about me not that he built this business or that he built that business but that he's known for love.

**Lisa Peters**

So I know I threw that question to you in advance because I want people to think about that one but it just came to me and there are people listening who you know they are not surrounded by people of faith followers of Jesus. They are not. And because you were the executive director a while ago of LeaderImpact. What advice would you give to someone who's listening and going I don't know what my next steps are. I mean we want to tell them to call LeaderImpact.

**Garth Jestley**

So you're talking about someone who might not be a follower of Jesus?

**Lisa Peters**

Yeah, they're a seeker. They're listening and they're like I want this, I want more I but I don't know what to do, Garth you know?

**Garth Jestley**

Well, you know I think that great the way you ask that question. I think it was Socrates who said the unexamined life is not worth living. Good old Soc. And I think he's right, I think he's correct. And if anybody's asking that the way you're saying it, just the way you said it, it means they want to examine their life. Unfortunately, there are so many people who are out there distracted by everything you know, we've had coronavirus, but even before coronavirus, you know devices. Everything's happening. Life is so interrupted. But if somebody's at that point where they're just kind of a bit troubled on the inside, like I don't know where I'd like to get some answers, I would say to them just look up LeaderImpact you know and and go into the website and that because we've got lots of groups right across the country and I can assure you and around the world. Yes, around the world and I can assure you that you will be

greeted with open arms. That in the groups, what is said in the group stays in the group. That I think for a lot of people one of the things they like about the groups is they're not there with other people in their own company right? So they can maybe be more open about certain issues that they're concerned about than in other types of settings. So it's a trusting kind of environment where anything's fair game.

You know questions I mean as you know Lisa from being in a LeaderImpact group I mean. There's nothing you'd like better than somebody asking a deep question. And you know the other thing is I would say, LeaderImpact, the underlying theme of LeaderImpact, is the messenger is the message. The reality is most people out there in business and leadership would not darken the door of a church. It just doesn't seem relevant to them and that particularly now that Canada is a post-Christian nation. So I think most people would not even consider darkening the door of a church but you know here you have a bunch of people, some of whom in the group I've because I've been in groups with lots of not yet believers but some of whom, you know, have experienced the relevance of faith. And to me, that's a wonderful thing because you're hearing people talk out of personal experience and personal relevance. And I think that has a much bigger impact on people than hearing of thus and so and oh here's you know, chapter and verse.

And I remember in one group I was in there was a fellow and somebody was facilitating the talk and this guy was vice president of a fairly big company. And I can't remember what the issue was, but whatever it was one of the people in the group started to just talk and you know he was really just talking out of his relationship with the Lord. I mean you know and I could see this guy's eyes bugging out of his head because he knew what he was seeing. He knew what he was seeing. This wasn't a thus and so and do this and do that. This was somebody living in relationship. And that made him hungry you know for more. And we've had, you know, various discussions since then but there's a difference in the authenticity and I think what they come to see is the Christian faith, which we believe is true, is highly relevant to their entire life including their business life. And you know I had about 14 or 15 people endorse the book. Virtually all of them are senior business leaders and I would say that you know they applied one of the reasons they're successful, actually successful, by the world standards as they are is because they put their faith to work. I mean it was living out their faith. It wasn't sort of I'm successful in spite of my faith or that's something alongside. It was because they were living in their true identity. So I think there is lots to it. Lots to be learned and hey you can always leave if you don't like it.

### **Lisa Peters**

Oh, thank you Garth for spending the last forty, fifty minutes with me. I loved listening to you. I loved about the calling and just the relationship how you know what it can change from. You know when you were younger, it was about success. It was about the climbing ladder to where you are now. It can change if you have that hunger. So thank you for taking the time with us to share today all right?

### **Garth Jestley**

You're most welcome Lisa.

**Lisa Peters**

Well, this concludes our podcast with Garth Jestley. We hope you enjoyed our time together and you can find Garth at [www.garthjestley.com](http://www.garthjestley.com). Well, LeaderImpact is a global movement dedicated to leaders having a lasting impact and we believe that true impact occurs when your personal, professional, and spiritual life is fully engaged. We have a network in over 350 cities from around the globe. We host live and virtual events throughout the year and we have a growing network of peer groups that meet weekly across these cities. Our podcast is just one of the ways to help you accelerate your growth as a leader. If you're part of LeaderImpact you can always discuss or share this wisdom with your group. And if you're not yet in a LeaderImpact group, we would love to have you. Check out groups available in your area at [leaderimpact.ca](http://leaderimpact.ca) or get in touch with us and we will connect you. Stay in touch with our newsletter at [leaderimpact.ca](http://leaderimpact.ca) or on social media. And remember, impact starts with you.