

JESUS, Career Counselor: How to Find (and Keep) Your Perfect Work

By Laurie Beth Jones

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Written to help readers get, find, and keep the work they love, *JESUS, Career Counselor* weaves
together practical self-help concepts, intriguing stories, relevant statistics, and Bible scriptures.
Divided into four sections centered on the four natural giftings or personalities of people, this book
explores twelve dreams that God has for each individual--including rise, risk, roar, renew, regenerate,
rejoice, relate, and more. It then instructs readers in how to realize each one of these dreams, no
matter their natural inclination.

As individual personalities of Fire, Earth, Water, and Wind are explored, the book explains how
the *Fire* of excitement translates to Leadership Skills, how the *Earth* of grounding translates into
Good Habits and Character Development, how the *Water* of life-giving becomes Relationship Skills,
and how the *Wind* of release becomes the Creativity and Innovation, which are in high demand in
every industry in the world today.

Readers will learn how to discover their four greatest talents and create their personal Talent Shield,
which will help them choose a meaningful career based on their Life's Mission Statement.

Each chapter serves as a free-standing career guidepost, and includes Career Exercises, pertinent
Word Definitions, Career Choices for individual gifting, Self-Quizzes, and Reader Study Guides.

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly
She taught readers how to be Christians in business. Now Jones, business consultant and author of the bestselling *Jesus CEO*, is helping readers find their ideal careers. Jones encourages readers to cultivate a vocation in which they can naturally and joyfully be fruitful. Each of the book's chapters describes one of 12 dreams the Holy Spirit has for humans: to renew, revive, risk, etc. This framework doesn't offer a step-by-step process for job hunters; instead, it exposes the big questions anyone should face before making career decisions. No beach reading here: readers will work through auxiliary activities and apply ideas through reflection and action. Employing biblical examples and her own experiences, Jones coaches readers, directing them to decipher what bubbles up inside and can be poured into the world from your soul while you're working. Recognizing the complexities of career hunting, she also offers practical advice, résumé-writing techniques, and categorical prayers. For the many who are out of work or for those who just need a change, Jones's wisdom may stir them to view work in a new light. *(May)*
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About the Author
Laurie Beth Jones is an internationally recognized best-selling author, speaker, inspirational life coach, and trainer—offering small group, online, and one-on-one training. Previous titles have spent more than thirteen months on the Businessweek bestseller list and have been featured in *The Wall Street Journal, USA Today, Time Magazine, CNN Financial,* and more.

A business-development coach and consultant to CEOs and organizations, Laurie Beth has conducted training or provided leadership products for major companies including Tyson Foods, Purina-Nestle, Neiman Marcus, Pfizer, Citi Financial, and American Express.

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CHAPTER ONE
RISE

rise 1 a: to assume an upright position especially from lying, kneeling, or sitting **b:** to get up from sleep or from one’s bed **2:** to return from death **3:** to appear above the horizon **4:** to extend above other objects **5:** to exert oneself to meet a challenge <*rise* to the occasion> **synonyms:** see *spring*

The word *rise* is used more than 164 times in the Bible. It is the foundational premise of Christianity. It is the essence of everything Jesus says, teaches, and does. (It is also considered a *feminine* word form in the original Hebrew.) And yet, do we rise? Sure, we may get up in the morning and begin trudging through our days, but do we truly rise, into our fullness, our magnificence, our glory?

I will never forget the spring day I watched my three-day-old sorrel filly, Little Pistol, lying in the grass. Her shell-shaped nostrils were flaring in and out as her baby fluff mane caught the morning sun. She had her head resting among dandelions as she stretched out in the warmth of the day. As I stood there watching her out my picture window, something happened.

Suddenly both her little ears flew forward, and I could see her body lift itself up as if by giant puppet strings. She poised for a moment, standing perfectly on point. Then she suddenly leapt into the air and with her feet

barely touching the ground began to run full speed around the pasture, kicking out sideways to the left and right, bucking and whinnying … fully and suddenly aware of what it meant to be a horse, alive. I tell people: on the first day, she was born … but on the third day, she *arose*.

I am wondering if you have yet truly *risen* into your giftedness. Are you aware of the many gifts God created in you, for you to express and enjoy?

Or are you trudging along in your career, unable even to make eye contact with your boss lest he or she notice and fire you?

Are you laboring in a parallel career, one which lets you get close enough to smell the artist's oils and frame her paintings yet can't take up the paintbrush yourself?

Are you laboring in an uninspiring job, thinking that your lot in life is just to make enough to get by?

Then you need a jolt of faith, a spring in your step, because the God of you, in you, says, "Arise!"

To Rise … Is to Right What Is Falling

I believe that society consists of seven pillars, which exist to support and challenge the human family. They are:

1. Business
2. Education
3. Health Care
4. Faith and Service Organizations
5. Government
6. Mass Media
7. The Disenfranchised

Study these pillars for a moment. Now, close your eyes and imagine that one of these pillars starts to fall. You rush to help upright it. Which one is it? The one you choose may hold a clue to your *vocare*, your calling. Your work may ultimately touch them all, but chances are you will make your career home in one of these pillars.

If you choose to be a stay-at-home parent, for example, the pillar you are choosing is education. If you choose to be an artist, you are entering the business pillar. This excercise has helped many students, even as young as the seventh grade, to realize that their desires to be rock stars or sports celebrities must be narrowed down into a pillar that serves society in a realistic way. (By the way, the job descriptions for both rock star and sports celebrity are in the business pillar—a fact which adds math as a valuable component of study for even the dreamy-eyed wannabe celebrities.)

There is something innate in life itself that wants to rise. Today in my driveway, for example, I tripped. I turned to find the source of the uneven surface and found it was a root, connected to a tree more than ten feet away. That tree had an innate desire to grow and rise that was so strong it even broke through concrete. It is said that an oak-tree seed exerts the equivalent of three tons of pressure to upend the soil above it.

Boxing enthusiasts go to boxing matches to see not only someone get knocked down but, more important, get back up again, and *rise*.

When Jesus looked at the man lying by the pool of Siloam, he told him, “Rise, take up your bed and walk” (John 5:8 NKJV). This man had been lying by a pool for years, waiting for someone to stir the waters. Yet one word of hope and command by the Lord of creation caused him to suddenly find it within himself to no longer be a victim, but to rise.

Perhaps you are familiar with the image of the phoenix rising from the ashes, a sign of hope and renewal … or of Sandro Botticelli’s glorious painting *The Birth of Venus*, rising from the sea. You have within you the power right now to rise.

Let’s consider some biblical examples and some related concepts of this powerful word.

To Rise … Is to Grow

The land produced vegetation: plants bearing seed according to their kinds and trees bearing fruit with seed in it according to their kinds. And God saw that it was good.

—Genesis 1:12

Your work life is indeed a garden, or will be if it is done right.
Note
Make It Yours

Look around you right now, and ask yourself, *What is growing here? What seeds for future positive benefit am I planting? Am I growing? If not, what could I do to grow more?* (Write your answer here.)

To Rise … Is to Get Up and Go!

The LORD had said to Abram, “Leave your country, your people and your father’s household and go to the land I will show you.”

—Genesis 12:1

Perhaps you are being called to go elsewhere. Many of the people who ended up being God’s heroes had to relocate, including Moses, Joseph, Abraham, Nehemiah, Paul, and more. The list is long of people whose gifts were needed in different geographical locations.

Is your boss calling you to relocate or transfer?

Is God?

Sometimes indirect transfers are called something else, like being “laid off” or “fired.” (For Joseph, it

involved kidnapping and prison sentences, so hopefully yours is slightly less traumatic.)

It has been said that "geography is destiny." Look around at your particular geographical location and ask yourself and the Lord, *Is this where I can best serve and use my gifts? Or do I need to look elsewhere?*

I recently read a quote by D. H. Lawrence who moved to New Mexico after a visit to the artist Georgia O'Keeffe. He was transformed by this geographical shift. He said, "When I first saw the sun coming over the horizon in Santa Fe, something stood up in my soul, and I began to pay attention."

Are you being called to a new place, a place in which you can better pay attention to the story of your life? Or are you being called to pay attention to the power and majesty of the geography around you, right now? Sometimes, we live in a place so long, we cease to see the beauty and gifts that surround us.

To Rise … Is to "Rise to the Occasion"

Rising to the occasion means that we stand up straight and give our full attention and dignity to the issue at hand. Perhaps there is a confrontation that needs to take place that you have been avoiding. Perhaps, for example, you need to rise up and tell your mother or father that you really don't want to be a _____, but rather a _____. If so, please have the courage to rise up and tell them now, despite the shouting you fear may ensue. It could save you and them thousands of dollars and years of heartache.

Perhaps you need to tell your supervisor that you don't want to take on any more projects right now or that you need flextime or that you won't be talked to in that manner again. Some people go to self-defeating extremes just to avoid unpleasant conversations. Don't let an unspoken need or feeling cause you to over-react and leave the whole job, industry, or area, when possibly a "risen" conversation could help alleviate or solve the matter.

To Rise … Is to Wake Up

Everything exposed by the light becomes visible, for it is light that makes everything visible. This is why it is said: "Wake up, O sleeper, rise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you."

—Ephesians 5:14

Scripture often implores people to wake up. It is one thing to open your eyes in the morning, and it is something altogether different to truly awaken.

Are you missing something right in front of your eyes?

Do you see the glory in the people around you? Do you ever just breathe in a moment and say, "Wow. I love the fact that I am here right now, in this place, doing this task, with these people in time"? Are you counting your blessings in your current job, or are you constantly looking for something better in some ill-defined "elsewhere"?

God told Moses to take off his shoes, for he was standing on "holy ground." Where you are standing, right now, is about awakening to the career possibilities and blessings lying right before you. When Jesus said, "Blessed are your eyes because they see" (Matthew 13:16), he was talking to you and me.

To Rise … Sometimes Demands a Group Effort

"All rise."

I attended an Anglican church service last week that had me on my feet more than sitting in the pew. It was highly interactive as far as getting up and down, and there was some comfort in being among a group of people who were all clear about what to do together.

Last night I attended a service in a cathedral. I closed my eyes and let my soul be carried as the voices of the congregation rose softly in waves of praise. Tears came to my eyes as people followed the priest's call for all of us to rise—together.

This summer I walked through a park in New York and was amazed to view about two hundred people doing yoga on their lunch hour, all taking various poses and positions at the command of their instructor.

Your career choice, whatever it is, takes place within a group of others. You are part of a community of people who are endeavoring to do something together as a team.

I remember one day being in a building shortly after the September 11 terrorist attack on America. I stood there wondering what it would be like to have the roof of this building collapse on me, as it did for so many workers that day in the Twin Towers. I asked myself, *Would I be proud to have it known that I was here, doing this work, on the last day of my life?* And another question arose: *Would this be the work I wanted to be doing if I knew it was going to be the last day of my life?*

Note

Make It Yours

Picture yourself rising up with your coworkers and your team, or your imagined team, right now. You are all saying something together about your work. What is it? Write it down here.

To Rise … Is to Be Elevated Above Natural Circumstances

Do you see someone skilled in their work? They will serve before kings: they will not serve before obscure men.

—Proverbs 22:29

If we are in the right place, doing the things we are meant to do, our work will allow us to *rise*. One of the most amazing videos about someone rising into their gifts can be seen on You-Tube. It is of a young man who obviously lacks a polished stage presence, who somehow made it through the *Britain's Got Talent* tryouts. He stands there, looking like the grocery clerk he is, and the panel of judges cast a dubious look at him and say, "You don't look the part. But go ahead and sing. We will listen."

This young man opens his mouth and out pours musical notes of "Nessun Dorma," a song from a beautiful Italian opera, and he sounds like a tenor who already has a recording contract. Tears come to the judges' eyes, and the audience slowly rises to its feet, in awe and honor of this young man's musical gift … nurtured perhaps in his garage … kept secret until now.

It is all of our dreams, I think, to somehow be noticed … to be summoned into halls of grandeur and power and recognition. Scripture tells of numerous heroes and heroines who were elevated beyond their natural

circumstance. Joseph was elevated out of prison into the ranks of serving Pharaoh. Esther was elevated out of the harem to become queen for more than a day. David was elevated out of tossing rocks at coyotes to bring down giants. So much of what the gospel of Jesus represents is this very notion: that we can somehow—in our current, nondescript, low-self-esteem selves—become elevated to reign with him. But that's our goal, of course, to be recognized by the King of kings, to serve alongside him, be his hands and feet. This is what will give us ultimate satisfaction.

If your goal is simply to become powerful, watch your step. Pride will trip you up. If, however, you become elevated because someone noticed you, saw in you the good and great and the potential of something more, be humble and grateful. True power rests in humility and gratitude.

Note

Make It Yours

Are you doing your job with such excellence that others see your gifts and call you out from the crowd? Have you acknowledged those who are mentoring you, or helping you become better at what you do or how you do it? Are you serving faithfully, with or without recognition? Can you continue to do so, knowing that God sees you, where you are, doing your work, in his honor? Write your response here, to these questions:

To Rise … Is to Plan and Prepare

Go to the ant, you sluggard;

consider its ways and be wise!

It has no commander,

no overseer or ruler,

yet it stores its provisions in summer

and gathers its food at harvest.

—Proverbs 6:6–8

I once taught a leadership seminar where not one out of forty-five people had brought anything to write with or take notes on. I thought to myself, *No wonder their bosses are frustrated. These people do not prepare!*

Jesus was very big about people being prepared … he told the parable about the bridesmaids rising early and getting oil for their lamps so that when the bridegroom came, they would be ready (see Matthew 25:1–10). He wasn't just telling a wedding story—he wanted us to be prepared for him, at all times and in all places. (Note that he also did not allow the lazy bridesmaids to come into the party afterward!)

It's true that Jesus was anointed for his mission, but he also prepared for it. He memorized the Torah and knew Scripture so well that when tested in the wilderness he knew just the right words to speak to turn temptation away.

Are you getting to work early or scrambling in late?

Are you showing up at meetings without preparation, research, notes, anything to write on?

Or are you rising early to get the work done, to do the research, to be prepared for whatever question is asked of you?

Your Maker Wants You to *Rise*

Perhaps you have been knocked down—by events or circumstances. Perhaps you are just learning something—a task or a new career. Perhaps you feel like you will always be cornered by your fears or doubts. Perhaps you feel put down by others … family members or "friends." Perhaps age or illness, financial failures or lost opportunities have you feeling down. You feel more like a beached whale than a warrior.

I am telling you that it is Christ's desire to see you rise.

Rise up and stand for what is important in your life.

Rise up and gather others around you who want to make a change in the world.

Are you walking around under a cloud of discouragement and despair? It is time to rise and shine.

Have you suffered so many losses at work, in dullness and in paper cuts, that you feel your dignity draining out of you?

Your Maker tells you that you are to rise and shine.

Last night as I was writing, I had on my headphones, listening to my iPod. On came one of my favorite songs by Simon and Garfunkel, with the words "Your time has come to shine, all your dreams are on their way." I wondered who they were writing that song for? Finally, as I stared off into space I got the answer. They were writing it for me. And you.

Listen to this dream of the Holy Spirit, spoken through the prophet Isaiah:

Arise, shine out, for your light has come,

and the glory of Yahweh has risen on you.

Look! Though night still covers the earth

and darkness the peoples,

on you Yahweh is rising

and over you his glory can be seen.

The nations will come to your light

and kings to your dawning brightness.

Lift up your eyes and look around:

all are assembling and coming towards you,

your sons coming from far away

and your daughters being carried on the hip.

At this sight you will grow radiant,

your heart will throb and grow full,

since the riches of the sea will flow to you,

the wealth of the nations come to you; …

No more will the sun give you daylight,

nor moonlight shine on you,

but Yahweh will be your everlasting light,

your God will be your splendour.

Your sun will set no more

nor will your moon wane,

for Yahweh will be your everlasting light

and your days of mourning will be over.

—Isaiah 60:1–5, 19–20 (NJB)

Do not live beneath your own dreams, nor God’s dreams for you. I say to you, arise!

CAREER EXERCISES

1. Has anyone, besides Jesus, indicated he or she has an eye on you to rise into more responsibility or leadership? Name that person/those people. What do they admire in your work? If you can’t name people, why not? (Ask them.)

2. Where in your career do you need to rise? Perhaps you need to:

    - Seek a promotion
    - Apply yourself more to the tasks at hand
    - Add education to your résumé
    - See yourself in a new, higher light

- Other *(Write it here)*:

3. Identify three things that are keeping you from rising. These might include:
    - Fear of failure
    - Fear of success
    - False, negative self-image
    - Unclear path to the top
    - Unsupportive superior
    - Other *(Write it here)*:
4. Have you ever experienced a moment when, like my little filly mentioned earlier, you suddenly became aware of all your giftedness in just being alive? In being particularly, especially you? If so, when was that? If not, imagine what it would feel like *right now.*
5. Picture yourself as the crippled man lying by the pool. Jesus walks up to you and says, “Rise, [your name], take up your bed and walk” (John 5:8 NKJV). Will you do it?

A PRAYER FOR YOU

“I am feeling too heavy to rise—anywhere.”

Dear Lord, in prayer and meditation I
want to rise with you,
but my cloud never gets off the ground.
Help me shed my inhibitions, my fears,
and the heaviness of my low self-esteem.
Help me take my rightful place
as an heir to the throne,
and rise! Amen.

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Users Review

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