

Jones, Laurie Beth

The Path

2. Introduction: Why You Need a Mission Statement

Jones opens *The Path* by arguing that knowing your mission is the most vital thing a person can do. She frames a mission statement as a written-down reason for being—for a person or a company—that guides every decision. The chapter previews her simple, fast process for writing one and promises case studies of people who found and fulfilled their missions.

Key takeaways

- People's number one deadly fear is having lived a meaningless life; finding and fulfilling a mission answers it.
- A mission statement is a 'template of purpose' used to initiate, evaluate, and refine all your activities—covering work, personal, and leisure life alike.
- Jesus is offered as the model: one sentence defined everything he did, and it told him how to act in hard moments (e.g., the woman caught in adultery).
- The modern workplace shows the cost of missing missions: downsizing, 'wongsizing,' burned-out executives, and people climbing ladders leaning against the wrong wall.

- A mission is career insurance—once you know why you're here, jobs become a means to the mission, not an end.
- Jones's process is fast: people finish a statement in hours, not months, because clarity is power.
- You are always living either your own mission or someone else's.

Passages worth keeping

“A personal mission statement acts as both a harness and a sword—harnessing you to what is true about your life, and cutting away all that is false.”

The book's core image of what a mission does for you.

“You are either living your mission, or you are living someone else's.”

The challenge the whole book is built to answer.

How it connects

The chapter's argument leans on Jesus as the master example, tying secular mission-statement thinking to a spiritual purpose: knowing your calling shapes not just what you do, but who you become.

Scripture referenced

- **John 10:10** -- 'I came that they might have life... abundantly'— cited as Jesus' one-sentence mission statement.
- **John 8:1-11** -- The woman caught in adultery; Jesus' mission ('not to condemn, but to give life') guides his response.