



# Saved for a Purpose: A Journey from Private Virtues to Public Values

*James A. Joseph*

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## **Saved for a Purpose: A Journey from Private Virtues to Public Values** James A. Joseph

The son of a minister, James A. Joseph grew up in Louisiana's Cajun country, where his parents taught him the value of education and the importance of serving others. These lessons inspired him to follow a career path that came to include working in senior executive or advisory positions for four U. S. Presidents and with the legendary Nelson Mandela to build a new democracy in South Africa. *Saved for a Purpose* is Joseph's ethical autobiography, in which he shares his moral philosophy and his insights on leadership.

In an engaging and personal style, Joseph shows how his commitment to applying moral and ethical principles to large groups and institutions played out in his work in the civil rights movement in Alabama and as a college chaplain in California in the turbulent 1960s. His time later as vice president of the Cummins Engine Company provided an opportunity to promote corporate ethics, and his tenure as Under Secretary of the Interior in the Carter Administration underscored the difficulty and weight of making the right decisions while balancing good policy analysis with transcendent moral principles.

In 1996 President Clinton selected Joseph to become the United States Ambassador to South Africa. His recollections of working with Nelson Mandela, whom he describes as a noble and practical politician, and his observations about what he learned from Desmond Tutu and others about reconciliation contain some of the book's most poignant passages.

*Saved for a Purpose* is unique, as Joseph combines his insights from working to integrate values into America's public and private sectors with his long engagement with ethics as an academic discipline and as a practical guide for social behavior. Ultimately, it reflects Joseph's passionate search for values that go beyond the personal to include the ethical imperatives that should be applied to the communal.

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