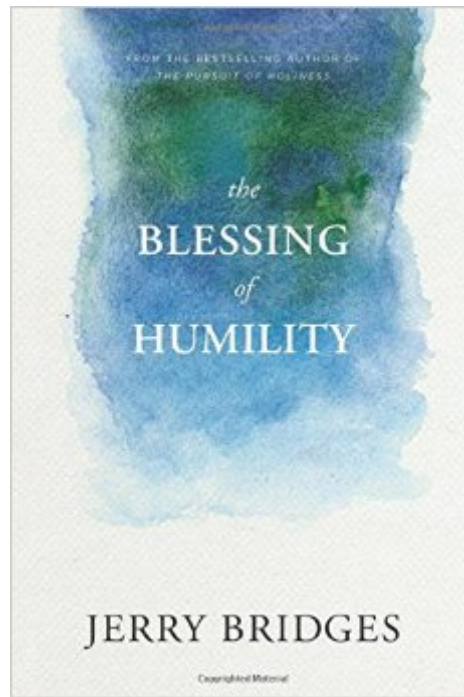


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The Blessing Of Humility



Synopsis

We all admire humility when we see it. But how do we practice it? How does humility—the foundational virtue of the normal Christian life—become a normal part of our everyday lives? Jerry Bridges sees in the Beatitudes a series of blessings from Jesus, a pattern for humility in action. Starting with poverty in spirit—an acknowledgment that in and of ourselves we are incapable of living holy lives pleasing to God—and proceeding through our mourning over personal sin, our hunger and thirst for righteousness, our experience of persecutions large and small, and more, we discover that humility is itself a blessing: At every turn, God is present to us, giving grace to the humble and lifting us up to blessing.

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Customer Reviews

If there is one author I can read over and over again, it is Jerry Bridges. I became a fan of his books ever since I read *The Pursuit of Holiness*. I have read almost every book he has written and hopefully will finish everyone of them. Earlier this year, Jerry Bridges departed from this world to meet the Savior face-to-face. Many bloggers, including myself, wrote about how Bridges have influenced them. Many on social media posted their favorite quotes from him and he was even a trending topic on Twitter. After Bridges's death, I learned that he wrote one final book, which it was not called that at the time, but now it is. If there is one word to describe Jerry Bridges, it would be humble. He always made sure God's glory was magnified through his writings, the sermons he preached, and in the life he lived as he walked with Jesus. His last book happens to be on humility, which is called, *The Blessing of Humility*. Bridges begins the book by saying humility is the second

most frequently trait taught in the Bible. He wrote, "All other character traits, in one way or another, are built upon love and humility." No one is more qualified to teach (if there truly was one) about humility than Jerry Bridges himself. Bridges taught that Jesus was the most humble man who walked the earth. He not only taught humility, He also lived it. Bridges goes through several passages of scripture that teaches about humility in the Christian life. God also promises to give grace to the humble and exalt those who are humble. Bridges uses the bulk of the book to go back to the beatitudes taught by Jesus on what it means to be humble.

I wonder if *The Blessing of Humility* is Jerry Bridges's final book. It was published posthumously, but soon enough after his death that it's very possible there was still another work somewhere in the editing process. Either way, a book on humility would make a fitting final work for a man who taught and exemplified that very virtue. "The character trait of humility is the second-most frequently taught trait in the New Testament, second only to love. At one time I counted fifty instances of love taught, either by precept or example, in the New Testament; I counted forty instances of humility. I regard these two traits as the foundational stones of Christian character. All other character traits, in one way or another, are built upon love and humility. Yet we so seldom hear any message or read any books on these two subjects. I think this is because they are so intimidating to us. Any honest Bible teacher, whether in speaking or in writing, realizes how far short he or she comes to exemplifying either of these character traits, so there is a reluctance to teach on a subject where one has made so little progress." This is understandable, of course, even if it is not excusable. It is difficult to teach with confidence and authority in an area where the teacher is so aware of his failings and shortcomings. And yet humility is the king of virtues and one every Christian must pursue. At some point every teacher or preacher owes it to himself and his students or congregation to research, teach, and full-out pursue it. Bridges insists that a life of humility is not an option for a believer to choose or reject. It is a command of God.

I've appreciated many of Jerry Bridges' books because they are level-headed, full of Scripture themes and texts, centered on the gospel, and because they are not trendy or faddish like many Christian books today. I also like how Bridges always emphasized the fact that we have a "dependent responsibility" as Christians to follow the Lord Jesus: we are responsible to follow him, but dependent on his grace and Holy Spirit to do so. In his final book (posthumously published) *The Blessing of Humility*, Bridges echoes many of these same themes from his other books. In around 100 pages, Bridges talks about Christian humility as displayed by the beatitudes (Mt. 5:3ff). After

giving a brief summary of the Bible's emphasis on humility, he gives examples of what that humility looks like by focusing on some of the phrases in the beatitudes. Bridges doesn't talk about every phrase in the beatitudes; mostly he focuses on the first half of each beatitude and doesn't really discuss the last half. To be honest, this was a slight disappointment for me, but it wasn't his plan to give a commentary on the beatitudes. (As a side note, I'm not impressed with the publishing quality of this book. The book feels quite flimsy since the cover is thinner than a cheap paper plate!) This book isn't groundbreaking, but it is a simple, clear, and helpful series of lessons on Christian humility. Bridges nicely emphasized the gospel, that through faith in Christ we are justified - our sins are forgiven and we are credited with Christ's perfect righteousness. Based on that, we should desire and seek to grow in holiness, which includes humility. He notes that through prayer, God's Word, and the Spirit's help, we grow in Christ-like humility and our pride will slowly die.

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