

8 Habits That Inspire Biblical Humility

Yeah, 2020 was awful. Everyone battled cabin fever and isolation as the world shut down. The election to end all elections ran its course, and a fractured nation steeped in anger and frustration.

This excludes the true sadness of many lives ended by a virus or its taxing of the health care system. This excludes the endless angst and anger over the true COVID impact. Businesses shuttered, struggling to keep the doors open amidst the shutdown. Life and death aligned with political ideology and partisanship. 2020 was a weird year indeed—the weirdest I can recall, tough days for sure.

Difficult times wear us down mentally and emotionally. I would also add existentially. Some folks ponder the sense of it all and our place as hope fades. Yet God allows difficult times for a reason. We learn many truths including the source of hope. And while God is our source, that should also impact how we live and react.

So I started thinking about the word “humility.”

Humility is defined as the quality of being humble and means putting the needs of another person before your own and thinking of others before yourself. It also means not drawing attention to yourself, and it can mean acknowledging that you are not always right.

I like this definition as it highlights the true humility outcomes of sacrifice, avoiding or sharing the limelight, and knowing your limitations.

Our humble calling in Scripture states:

“Humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time” (1 Pet. 5:6).

That is Peter talking after God (and life) humbled him.

What does humility require:

1. I listen to others.

Specifically, my hope is to listen and learn from others. This includes areas I consider to be my expertise. In fact, those areas should be ripe for different perspectives.

2. I absorb arguments/beliefs that disagree with my own.

Escape the echo chamber! My plan includes engaging in conversations with different-minded folks as well as reading books with beliefs contrary to my own. This research includes analyzing how people emerged from backgrounds distinct from my own. The hope is this will forge a deeper understanding of my beliefs and why I hold them.

3. I recognize the contribution of others.

I am thinking work, calling and the home especially in this category. It is more blessed to give than receive, and sharing glory is one of the greatest blessings. My plan extends beyond words to deeds with rewards for those who contributed to building God’s kingdom.

4. I appreciate God’s creation.

This came to me while watching *Soul*, the latest Pixar offering. Simply put, appreciate life. I remember being a kid who just appreciated playing, trees, the grass, whatever. Kids have a way of minimizing angst over the present calamities and future responsibilities.

5. I identify and work on my weaknesses.

2021 is not for the faint of heart! This is why I take a look

at what I can do better and never let excuses get in the way of progress.

6. I challenge myself by stepping outside the comfort zone.

I choose a skill or activity that is new; therefore, my early failure is guaranteed. I will need good ole sweat equity to improve as much as listening to the wisdom of others. I also need a good capstone goal that encompasses each step.

We all have skills to hang our hat on, but we also have those tasks better left to others. I want to zero in on that latter group and challenge myself to be better. The possibilities are wide open at the moment, but technology and organization are the clubhouse leaders. My wife might add communication to my list, but I didn't think to ask her yet. Who knows, this category could lead me to actually working on a car!

7. I count my blessings.

I count my blessings daily and name them. I keep a running list. I do whatever it takes to express gratitude to God for blessings large and small. And like No. 4, my focus is on the small things we all take for granted. Frankly, 2021 should be about taking nothing for granted, especially God's bounty.

8. I avoid comparing my blessings to others.

And nothing exalts our blessings like escaping the comparison trap. This may involve a family-wide Facebook ban, but our Creator blesses and challenges each of us distinctly. My call is to maximize my blessings for His glory.

One of my favorite biblical figures is Asaph. Asaph performed in King David's court, which afforded him the unique position of viewing the elite and the masses. Psalm 73 beautifully recounts Asaph's battle with envy, especially for the wicked. This is a good read for perspective.

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