

Happiness and Humility: A Most Unusual Pair

Happiness and Humility are two words that don't seem to fit together. They essentially *feel* like opposites because it hurts to submit to authority and go through humbling situations and seasons of life. But humility really *does* bring us happiness! I'll tell you why.

A humble person has the freedom to be wholly and completely who they are. They don't have to impress anybody. They don't feel pressured to be perfect or see themselves in competition with other people. They simply want to be the best version of *them* that they can be.

And that's what God wants for you and me. He doesn't see one person as more important than another. He gives us each the gifts and talents that we possess, as well as our privileges and position in life. It all comes from Him! So whether we are highly gifted in some area or we have an impressive job title, we are no more valuable to God than someone who seems to have fewer talents or whose work seems insignificant based on a worldly viewpoint.

Meekness, which is a form of humility, is another word that's often misunderstood. A lot of people think it means weakness, or letting other people walk all over you. But meekness is actually strength under control. It's leaning on God to get you through tests and trials that, without His help, would be impossible for you to get through. I think it's encouraging to know that God would never ask us to humble ourselves if He hadn't done so first.

Jesus is our great example of meekness.

The Bible says that He, "Who, although being essentially one with God and in the form of God [possessing the fullness of

the attributes which make God God], did not think this equality with God was a thing to be eagerly grasped or retained, but stripped Himself [of all privileges and rightful dignity], so as to assume the guise of a servant (slave), in that He became like men and was born a human being" (Philippians 2:6-7 AMP).

Jesus was wholly God. He had no sin or worldly defects. Yet He humbled Himself and became human so that God's work could be carried out in the earth.

Jesus humbled Himself to the fullest...but look what happened.

Philippians 2:8-10 (AMP) says, "And after He had appeared in human form, He abased and humbled Himself [still further] and carried His obedience to the extreme of death, even the death of the cross! Therefore [because He stooped so low] God has highly exalted Him and has freely bestowed on Him the name that is above every name, that in (at) the name of Jesus every knee should (must) bow..."

God exalted Jesus to the highest place of honor in Heaven. And when you and I humble ourselves to carry out His plan, God lifts *us* up, too.

The Bible says that humility comes before honor and pride goes before destruction (Proverbs 15:33; 16:18). And from time to time, we can expect God to test us in the area of humility.

Maybe you work at a place where you're the one and only believer and most days it's unpleasant to be there. Maybe you'd prefer to take another job, which you could, but you know in your heart that God put you there for this season in your life, and you're going to stay because it's where God needs you.

Maybe someone you know has disrespected you or mistreated you and you'd love to get them back, but you're doing the right thing and waiting on God, praying prayers of blessings over

them, because you trust God to bring about justice in your life.

We need these kinds of situations salt-and-peppered into our life every now and then. There's something about human beings. We just can't seem to stay humble if all we have are blessings and success, because we start to think it's all about *us*!

Out of all of the Christian virtues, humility is probably the most difficult to develop. It's something that has to be worked into us, just like a seed needs to be watered and nurtured in order to grow. We need to study humility, spend time with God, and go through tests where we have to apply it. But it's so worth it!

Matthew 11:29 tells us that through humility we find rest for our souls.

When God asks you to humble yourself *time and time again* and you feel like there's absolutely no way you can continue to do it, lean on Him to receive the strength you need.

1 Peter 5:6 (AMP) says, "Therefore humble yourselves [demote, lower yourselves in your own estimation] under the mighty hand of God, that in due time He may exalt you."

God has so much that He wants to do in your life. He wants to give you favor and bless you in amazing ways. But first, we've got to humble ourselves. We've got to show Him that we'll do whatever He asks us to do with those blessings. Otherwise we run the risk of hurting other people, rather than helping them see the beauty of the loving, faithful, giving God that we serve.

Humble yourself...and at the right time, God will lift you to a place of extraordinary freedom.

Joyce Meyer is a *New York Times* bestselling author and founder

of Joyce Meyer Ministries, Inc. She has authored more than 100 books, including Battlefield of the Mind and You Can Begin Again (Hachette). She hosts the Enjoying Everyday Life radio and TV programs, which air on hundreds of stations worldwide. For more information, visit .