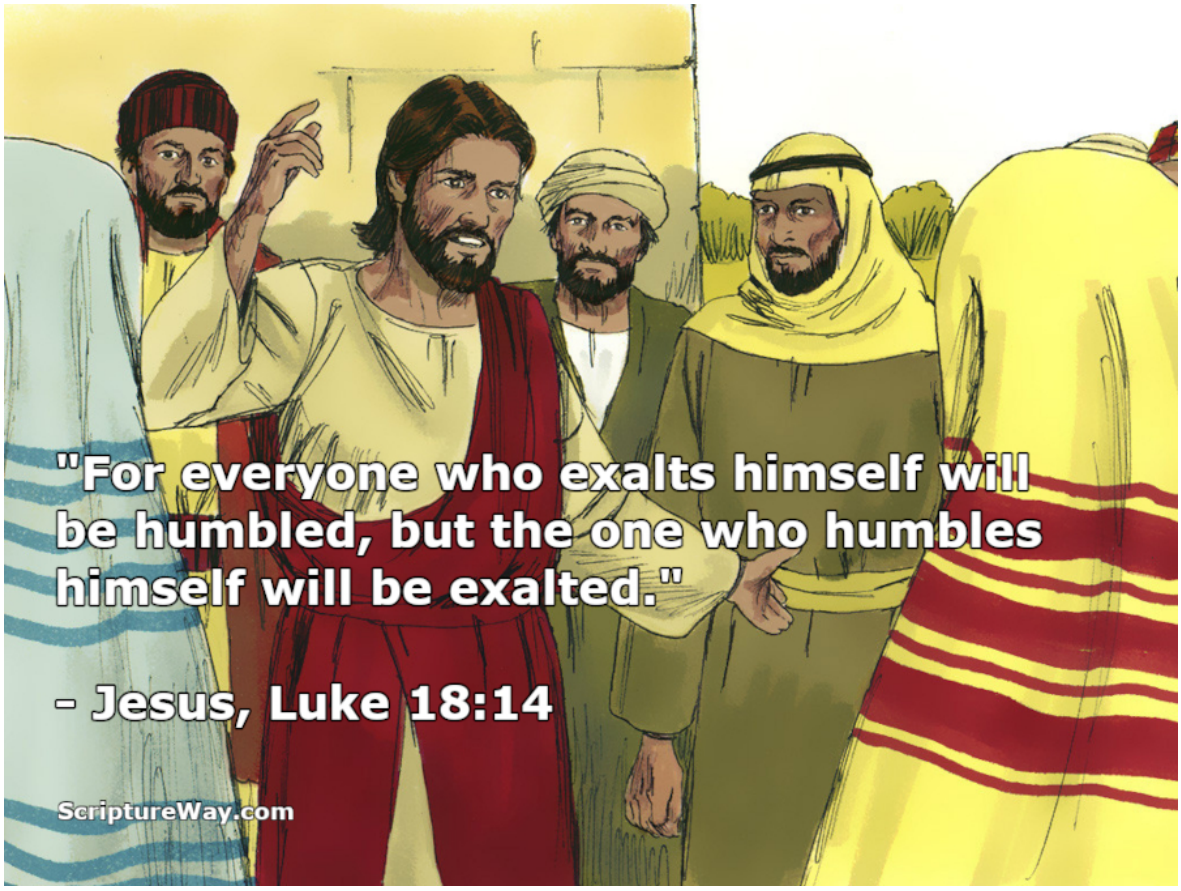
“Bible Verses About Humility and Being Humble”

24 August 2024

Compiled by Mr. Whitney V. Myers

Image source: Sweet Publishing / FreeBibleimages.org



Everyone who exalts himself will be humbled - Luke 18:14 - FreeBibleImages - Used under license

This article presents 22 Bible verses in the Old and New Testaments which discuss the subjects of "Humility" and "Being Humble."

Humility is a key virtue in our relationship with God. As Christians, we learn from the Bible that we are humbly dependent on God's Son, Jesus Christ, and not on our ourselves. Jesus is our example of selfless humility and service. We exalt him, not ourselves.

Copyright 2024 Whitney V. Myers. This article can be freely downloaded from the www.ScriptureWay.com website and be reproduced for non-published and not-for-sale applications. Please include this copyright notice. 24Aug2024

The Bible verse quotations on this page are taken from the English Standard Version (ESV) on the BibleGateway site unless noted otherwise (Ref. 1). If you would like to see a verse in another translation, click on the link provided, and then select the translation you would like to see.

Bible Verses About Humility

Old Testament

In the four verses which follow, "humility" means "gentleness" and "meekness" (Ref. 2).

Proverbs 15:33 - "The fear of the Lord is instruction in wisdom, and humility comes before honor."

Proverbs 18:12 - "Before destruction a man's heart is haughty, but humility comes before honor."

Proverbs 22:4 - "The reward for humility and fear of the Lord is riches and honor and life."

Zephaniah 2:3 - "Seek the Lord, all you humble of the land, who do his just commands; seek righteousness; seek humility; perhaps you may be hidden on the day of the anger of the Lord."

New Testament

In the New Testament, the Greek word translated as "humility" has multiple, simultaneous meanings. Humility includes "having a modest opinion of oneself" (Ref. 3). Humility means we look not only to our own interests, but also to the interests of others *(Philippians 2:4). For the believer in Christ, humility means we exalt Christ, and not ourselves.*

Acts 20:18-19 - "You yourselves know how I lived among you the whole time from the first day that I set foot in Asia, 19 serving the Lord with all humility and with tears and with trials that happened to me through the plots of the Jews."

Ephesians 4:1-2 - "I therefore, a prisoner for the Lord, urge you to walk in a

Copyright 2024 Whitney V. Myers. This article can be freely downloaded from the www.ScriptureWay.com website and be reproduced for non-published and not-for-sale applications. Please include this copyright notice. 24Aug2024

manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called, 2 with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love."

Philippians 2:3 (NASB 1995) - "Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind regard one another as more important than yourselves."

Colossians 3:12-13 - "Put on then, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience,
13 bearing with one another and, if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive."

1 Peter 5:5 - "Clothe yourselves, all of you, with humility toward one another, for 'God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble.'"

Note: The Greek word translated as "clothe yourselves" in 1 Peter 5:5 means literally to tie around or gird on a slave's apron (Ref. 4, Ref. 5). Note that the Lord Jesus girded himself with a towel before he washed the disciple's feet (John 13:3-4). As followers of Christ, we are to clothe ourselves with humility. Humility prepares us for service, and service tests our humility (Ref. 6).

Bible Verses About Being Humble

Old Testament

Exodus 10:3 - "So Moses and Aaron went in to Pharaoh and said to him, 'Thus says the Lord, the God of the Hebrews, "How long will you refuse to humble yourself before me? Let my people go, that they may serve me."'"

Note: In Exodus 10:3, the Hebrew word translated as "humble" means "to be bowed down" (Ref. 7).

2 Chronicles 7:14 - "If my people who are called by my name humble themselves, and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and heal their land."

Note: Humbling ourselves before God has both national and personal

Copyright 2024 Whitney V. Myers. This article can be freely downloaded from the www.ScriptureWay.com website and be reproduced for non-published and not-for-sale applications. Please include this copyright notice. 24Aug2024

implications. Humbling ourselves before God requires repentance of our iniquity and "making amends" for (accepting the guilt for) our iniquity (Leviticus 26:40-42, Ref. 8). In 2 Chronicles 7:14, the Hebrew word translated as "humble" means "bringing ourselves low into subjection" (Ref. 9). 2 Chronicles 34:27 is similar.

Proverbs 11:2 - "When pride comes, then comes disgrace, but with the humble is wisdom."

Note: In Proverbs 11:2, "humble" means "modest" (Ref. 10).

Daniel 4:37 - "Now I, Nebuchadnezzar, praise and extol and honor the King of heaven, for all his works are right and his ways are just; and those who walk in pride he is able to humble."

Note: Nebuchadnezzar learned his lesson about humility the hard way. He had to eat grass for seven years until he humbly recognized God, the King of heaven (Daniel 4:19-37, Ref. 11).

Micah 6:8 - "He has told you, O man, what is good; and what does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?"

Note: In Micah 6:8, "humbly" means "modestly" (Ref. 10).

New Testament

Matthew 18:4 - "Whoever humbles himself like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven."

Note: For the Christian believer, to be humble means to be completely dependent on the Lord Jesus, and not reliant on ourselves (Ref. 3).

Matthew 23:12 - "Whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and whoever humbles himself will be exalted." (Luke 14:11 is similar).

Note: Jesus warns us about self-exaltation. As Christian believers, we are to exalt the Lord Jesus and not ourselves. See James 4:6 and James 4:10 below.

Copyright 2024 Whitney V. Myers. This article can be freely downloaded from the www.ScriptureWay.com website and be reproduced for non-published and not-for-sale applications. Please include this copyright notice. 24Aug2024

Luke 18:9-14 - "He also told this parable to some who trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and treated others with contempt: 10 'Two men went up into the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. 11 The Pharisee, standing by himself, prayed thus: "God, I thank you that I am not like other men, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even like this tax collector. 12 I fast twice a week; I give tithes of all that I get." 13 But the tax collector, standing far off, would not even lift up his eyes to heaven, but beat his breast, saying, "God, be merciful to me, a sinner!" 14 I tell you, this man went down to his house justified, rather than the other. For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, but the one who humbles himself will be exalted.'"

Philippians 2:5-8 - "Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, 6 who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, 7 but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. 8 And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross."

Note: Jesus is our supreme example of selfless humility. Jesus came "not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many" (Matthew 20:28).

James 4:6 - "God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble."

Note: The Bible presents pride as the opposite of humility (Ref. 12, Proverbs 11:2). Pride has "an overweening [arrogant] estimate of one's means or merits, despising others or even treating them with contempt, haughty" (Thayer's Greek Lexicon - Ref. 13). In contrast, God gives his grace [divine favor] to the humble (Ref. 14). Also see 1 Peter 5:5.

James 4:10 - "Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will exalt you."

1 Peter 5:5 - "Clothe yourselves, all of you, with humility toward one another, for 'God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble.'"

Refer to the note above about "Clothe yourselves" in 1 Peter 5:5 in the previous section, "Bible Verses About Humility."

Copyright 2024 Whitney V. Myers. This article can be freely downloaded from the www.ScriptureWay.com website and be reproduced for non-published and not-for-sale applications. Please include this copyright notice. 24Aug2024

1 Peter 5:6-7 - "Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God so that at the proper time he may exalt you, 7 casting all your anxieties on him, because he cares for you."

Note: Being humble before God and others facilitates our prayers; lack of humility on our part hinders our prayers.

Apply. In prayer and in your own words, thank Jesus for his example of selfless humility and for humbling himself to die on the cross for you. Ask Jesus to help you to live humbly in dependence on him and to help you serve others humbly in his name. In everything you do, exalt him, not yourself.

For further study
"11 Reasons Why Jesus Came Into the World" - John 3:17
"The Meaning of God's Favor" - Psalm 30:5

References
1. https://www.biblegateway.com/versions/English-Standard-Version-ESV-Bible/
2. https://biblehub.com/hebrew/6038.htm
3. https://biblehub.com/greek/5012.htm
4. https://biblehub.com/greek/1463.htm
5. https://biblehub.com/commentaries/pulpit/1_peter/5.htm
Pulpit Commentary - 1 Peter 5:5
6. https://biblehub.com/commentaries/maclaren/1_peter/5.htm
MacLaren Expositions of Holy Scripture - 1 Peter 5:5 - "The Slave's Girdle"
7. https://biblehub.com/hebrew/6031.htm
8. https://biblehub.com/interlinear/leviticus/26-41.htm
9. https://biblehub.com/hebrew/3665.htm
10. https://biblehub.com/hebrew/5732.htm
11. https://biblehub.com/hebrew/6800.htm
12. https://www.ligonier.org/learn/articles/virtues-vices-pride
13. https://biblehub.com/greek/5244.htm
14. https://biblehub.com/greek/5485.htm

Copyright 2024 Whitney V. Myers. This article can be freely downloaded from the www.ScriptureWay.com website and be reproduced for non-published and not-for-sale applications. Please include this copyright notice. 24Aug2024