

OTHER BOOKS WRITTEN BY PASTOR CHRIS JORDAN:

BOOKS:

1. Supernatural: Contending for Signs and Wonders Today
2. The Beausejour Pulpit
3. The Visitation (2012)
4. The Voyagers: Mutiny on the Fellowship (fiction, 2012)

MINI-BOOKLETS:

1. Church, It's Time to Grow Up!
2. Faith in Focus: The Newspaper Columns 2011
3. Foursquare Foundations: Our Statement of Faith
4. Fullness of Joy and Rivers of Pleasure
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FAITH BUILDING MINI-BOOKS

THE BLESSED LIFE



PASTOR CHRIS JORDAN



About the Author

Chris grew up in a little house on the Canadian prairies in Rouleau, Saskatchewan. Although he first became a Christian in August of 1989, it wasn't until September of 1990 that he radically committed his life to Jesus Christ. For the next year, Chris attended *Solid Rock Ministries* in Regina, a powerful little church pastored by Erwin Dyck and Dave Koop. In January of

1992, Chris attended *Christ for the Nations Bible College* in Surrey, BC. After only a year and a half of Bible College, he started interning at *Victory Christian Centre*, where he served as the youth pastor for four years. Two of those years were also spent as a prayer minister working for *KCM Ministries*. In March of 1995, Chris married his best friend, Liza Woods.

In January of 1997, Chris enrolled in *Pacific Life Bible College* (PLBC), and came on staff at Bible Fellowship Church. For the next ten years, he served that local church as youth pastor and Christian Education Director. During that time, Chris was the chapel speaker for the primary students at *Regent Christian Academy* (RCA). He also taught several Bible classes at RCA, and filled in as a substitute teacher for many other subjects as well. In May of 1999, Chris graduated from PLBC with a Bachelor of Arts in Pastoral Leadership. After graduation, Chris taught Bible Research and Hermeneutics as an adjunct professor at Pacific Life for the next eight years. In September of 2006, Chris and Liza pioneered the *Revolution Master's Commission* discipleship program at Bible Fellowship.

Two months later, Chris received the call from the Lord to pastor *Beausejour Community Church*. Because he had just started the RMC program at Bible Fellowship, he felt he needed to complete the first year of this discipleship school before moving to Beausejour. So in January of 2007, Chris was installed as the lead pastor of BCC and started travelling back and forth between BC and Manitoba. In July of 2007, Chris and Liza moved to Beausejour with their four children: Caleb, Tori, Austin & Hannah.

Pastor Chris has a passion to teach and preach God's Word. He published his first book, "Supernatural: Contending for Signs and Wonders Today" in June 2010. He is currently working on a book on the life of Jesus called "The Visitation" and a youth fantasy fiction novel called "The Voyagers: Mutiny on the Fellowship."

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By Chris Jordan

Hunger and the Need for Revival: God's desire is that this latter day's church would be greater in glory than the early church. It's time to contend for a fresh outpouring of the Holy Spirit in our midst today and pray for revival.

Redigging the Wells of Prayer: If we want to see the same power – signs, wonders, healings and miracles – as the church in Acts, then we must have the same priority of prayer as they did.

With Jesus in the School of Prayer: Jesus wants to teach us how to pray. When we spend time with Jesus in the secret place, prayer becomes an exciting adventure.

Church, It's Time to Grow Up! God has given us an amazing gift in the Bible. When we feed upon His Word, we will grow spiritually and become more like Jesus.

Fullness of Joy and Rivers of Pleasure: There's something missing in the church today. It's called JOY. God wants us to experience fullness of joy, and rivers of pleasure.

The Blessed Life: God's desire is that we would experience the blessed life – where we would be happy, supremely blessed; and spiritually prosperous – with life-joy and satisfaction in God's favour and salvation.

Origins #1: Creation: Is there more scientific evidence that supports the Biblical account of creation or the theory of evolution? The Origins series considers this question and more.

Origins #2: The Fall: If God is good, and He created everything, and the original creation was very good, then why is there death and suffering in the world?

Origins #3: Dinosaurs in the Bible: If God made the dinosaurs with all other land animals and human beings on day six of creation, are there dinosaurs mentioned in the Bible?

Unlocking the Mysteries of Revelation: The Revelation of Jesus Christ is one of the most interesting books of the Bible. This message will give you the keys to unlocking the mysteries of Revelation.

Foursquare Foundations: A look at our church's statement of faith.

Faith in Focus: The Newspaper Columns 2011: A collection of articles that were published in our local newspaper.

Proverbs: Wisdom for Daily Living: A 31 day devotional journey through the Book of Proverbs.

THE BLESSED LIFE: THE SECRET OF HAPPINESS

God's desire is that we would experience the blessed life – to be happy, supremely blessed; and spiritually prosperous – with life-joy and satisfaction.

Jesus said: "Therefore whoever hears these sayings of Mine, and does them, I will liken him to a wise man who built his house on the rock: and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it did not fall, for it was founded on the rock. But everyone who hears these sayings of Mine, and does not do them, will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand: and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it fell. And great was its fall." (Matt. 7:24-27).

When was the last time you had a good laugh? Think about that question for a minute. Maybe it's been a while since you've really enjoyed yourself. God wants us to enjoy life. I want to talk to you about the reality of the blessed life that God wants us to experience.

The one universal thread that runs through everyone's lives is the pursuit of happiness. This is one of the reasons why people turn to illicit sexual relationships, drugs, alcohol, looking for the higher high, trying to find satisfaction and fulfillment. But what is the secret of happiness?

Listen to this story, which sounds just wacky enough to be true: In New York City, there are eight million cats and eleven million dogs. New York is basically just concrete and steel, so if you have a pet in New York and it dies, you can't just go out in the backyard and bury it. The city said that for \$50 they would dispose of your deceased pet for you.

One lady was enterprising. She thought, I can render a service to people in the city and save them money. She placed an ad in the newspaper that said, "When your pet dies, I will come and take care of the carcass for you for \$25." This lady would go to the local Salvation Army and buy an old suitcase for two dollars. Then when

someone would call about his or her pet, she would go to the home and put the deceased pet in the suitcase.

She would then take a ride on the subway, where there are thieves. She would set the suitcase down, and she would act like she wasn't watching. A thief would come by and steal her suitcase. She'd look up and say, "Wait. Stop. Thief." My guess is the people who stole those suitcases got a real surprise when they got home. Many of us are like those thieves; we grab at what we think will bring us happiness only to find that it just doesn't quite deliver. (Scott Wenig, Preaching Today).

That story is a great illustration of so many people who, in their quest for happiness, are grabbing at the suitcase that the world offers, but when they open it up, they realize too late that those things don't really satisfy. In this message, we are going to look at the teachings of Jesus in His sermon on the mount that give us the secret to happiness – living the blessed life.

What does it mean to be blessed? There are many different ideas about what it means to have a blessed life. What does it mean to be happy? For some people, they think this means to be rich or famous, or successful in their jobs or families. What is happiness?

Pastor Barry Buzzza says: "I define happiness simply as fulfillment and overflow." (*The Secret of Happiness*). In Psalm 23, one of the most famous chapters in the Bible David said, "You anoint my head with oil. My cup runs over (overflows with blessings)." (Psalm 23:5).

"To the inspired psalmist, happiness was a fulfilled life, and his cup was full... The cup (represents) my life. When it's full, I am fulfilled and therefore happy." (Barry Buzzza). I like this concept of the blessed life being overflow. Not just full, but overflowing and abundant. Drinking a full cup of Tim Horton's coffee is satisfying. We're talking about the blessed life here.

When David said, "My cup runs over," he wasn't just talking about a cup of coffee – he was talking about his life. He said, "My life overflows abundantly with the blessings of God." What a great picture this is to understand happiness and fulfillment. This speaks of having so much of the blessings of God in our lives that we are living in the overflow. It's no longer just me being blessed, but the rivers of living water of God's blessings are flowing out of my life and splashing onto the lives of others.

Robert Frost wrote in his poem *The Road Not Taken*:

I shall be telling this with a sigh,
somewhere ages and ages hence:
Two roads diverged in a wood, and I,
I took the one less traveled by,
And that has made all the difference.

You've got two choices – two roads that are set before you. The world's road offers money, fame, power, popularity, sex, drugs and alcohol – as the road to happiness, but the end of that road is destruction. The road less traveled is the narrow road that leads to life... to the blessed life.

The Lord says, "I call heaven and earth as witnesses today against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing; therefore choose life, that both you and your descendants may live; that you may love the Lord your God, that you may obey His voice, and that you may cling to Him, for He is your life and the length of your days." (Deut. 30:19-20).

When we choose to obey God and His Word, we are choosing to live the blessed life. God has given us so many rich promises in His Word. My prayer for you is that the Lord would help you to experience everything in the abundant, blessed life that He has made available for you. Live the blessed life!

the principle of the Kingdom of God that says, “You will receive what you give.” If we give mercy, we’ll receive mercy. If we give forgiveness, we’ll receive forgiveness. This is the principle of reaping and sowing – we will receive what we give.

“8 Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.” To be pure in heart doesn’t mean we don’t ever sin, but when we do sin, we are quick to repent and receive God’s forgiveness.

“9 Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God.” The peacemakers called the children of God because Jesus is the Prince of Peace, and our Heavenly Father is the God of Peace. Peacemakers are called God’s children because they are acting like their Father. The Bible says that we are called to pursue peace with all men. Unforgiveness hinders us from receiving the blessings of God.

“10 Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness’ sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.” When we choose to live right, we will experience persecution. I’m not saying that once we start living our lives according to the Bible that nothing bad will ever happen to us. But no matter what storms or troubles may come in our lives, there will be that inner joy – the joy of the Lord that is our strength.

THE ROAD TO THE BLESSED LIFE:

“Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor stands in the path of sinners, nor sits in the seat of the scornful; But his delight is in the law of the Lord, and in His law he meditates day and night. He shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that brings forth its fruit in its season, whose leaf also shall not wither; and whatever he does shall prosper.” (Psalm 1:1-3).

God has placed before us the road – the pathway – to the blessed life. You need to choose whether or not you are going to walk on that road. Jesus said that there are two roads before us: “You can enter God’s Kingdom only through the narrow gate. The highway to hell is broad, and its gate is wide for the many who choose the easy way. But the gateway to life is small, and the road is narrow, and only a few ever find it.” (Matthew 7:13-14). The secret to happiness lies in being on the road to the blessed life. What road are you on?

We’ve got to get rid of the ‘crumb mentality’ that we have in Christianity that says, “God just wants us to have the crumbs, just barely get by, hang on and let the devil beat your brains out until Jesus comes back and then one day we’ll be in Heaven.” That’s not God’s plan for us. God wants us to experience the blessed life – happy, satisfied, overflowing.

Pastor Barry Buzza says to picture your life as a tank that holds water, with an input valve at the top, and an outflow valve at the bottom. He says, “The tank is my life. The water inside is my current level of fulfillment. When it is up to the top, I feel great. When it is three quarters down, I feel tired and run-down. When it is half-full (or half-empty depending on my outlook) I feel sad, discouraged, depressed, angry or fearful; and when it is one quarter full, I feel overwhelmed. I begin to think that life doesn’t make sense, maybe even like I don’t want to live anymore. There is an input valve, which pours water into my tank. That input flows from God, a loving family and friends, career satisfaction. The outflow comes from the drain on my emotions, mind and body that flows from everyday life. I lose even more vitality and courage in times of consistent stress or crisis...when I am habitually sinning or in conflict with (someone).”

Our happiness is gone when there is too much outflow, or too little input in our lives. During those seasons of our lives, we need to fill up our cups again with the blessings of God, so that we can experience the abundant, blessed life that Jesus has promised to us.

In Matthew 5-7, we have recorded the Sermon on the Mount – the most amazing sermon that has ever been preached in the history of the church. In this message, Jesus gives us the secrets to the blessed life. For eight weeks at Beausejour Community Church, we went verse by verse through this sermon, to look at how these teachings apply to our lives today. At the climax of His teachings on the blessed life, Matthew records Jesus as having said these words:

“Therefore whoever hears these sayings of Mine, and does them, I will liken him to a wise man who built his house on the rock: and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it did not fall, for it was founded on the rock. But everyone who hears these sayings of Mine, and does not do them, will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand:

and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it fell. And great was its fall.” (Matt. 7:24-27).

In this passage of Scripture, Jesus clearly identifies two different groups of people – take a look at your life and see which group you fit into. Jesus said the first group is those who hear His teachings and put them into practice, and these are the ones who are blessed. These are the ones who will have a rock solid foundation in their lives, so that no matter what storms come, they will not be moved or shaken. Jesus said the other group of people is those who hear His sayings, but don’t put them into practice. These are the people who go to church, hear the pastor preach His sermon, then walk away and neglect to put those teachings into practice. Jesus said that when the storms, winds and floods come into the lives of these people, they will be a mess.

Jesus never said that we would be free from storms in the Christian life. In fact, the opposite is true. In John 16:33, Jesus said, “These things I have spoken to you that in Me, you may have peace. In this world, you WILL have tribulation (trouble), but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.” Jesus said that even though we will have storms in life, we can overcome them. Many people have this wrong idea concerning victory in Jesus. They’ve heard that we are overcomers, more than conquerors, and they think that means we won’t have any trouble. Yet, every one of those images deals with conflict. There is a battle we fight, but we win. We fight, but we overcome. We fight, but we conquer. We fight, but there is victory in Jesus. A victor is someone who has fought and won. Don’t be surprised by the battle, don’t give up, lose heart, or lay down your weapons. If we fight, we will win.

Jesus says that storms will come, so where are you going to build your life? If you build your life on the teachings of Jesus, you will be blessed. Generally speaking, this statement is true of all of the Scriptures. When we obey God’s Word, we will be blessed. The immediate context of what Jesus was saying here is that we will be blessed when we obey the teachings contained in the Sermon on the Mount. These are the keys to living the blessed life.

Jesus said: “If you know these things, blessed are you if you do them.” (John 13:17).

here. He’s about to describe the qualities of the people who will be blessed. If you want to be blessed, Jesus gives us the keys here. The word blessed means happy, supremely blessed; to be envied, and spiritually prosperous – with life-joy and satisfaction in God’s favour and salvation. Does that sound good to you? I would love to be blessed, and God wants me to be blessed.

“3 Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.” This is the first key to living the blessed life. To be poor in spirit means we recognize our spiritual poverty. We need to recognize that we don’t have it all together, and humble ourselves and admit our need for God. This is the attitude that says, “I’m not good enough on my own, I need you Jesus to be my Lord and Savior.” What is the reward of the blessed life? It is not money, power, fame, or worldly success - it is the Kingdom of God!

“4 Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.” What does it mean to mourn? He’s talking about mourning over sin. When we recognize that God is holy, and we need to repent of our sins, and pray, “Father, forgive me, for I have sinned.” What does it mean that we shall be comforted? There is a peace that comes into your heart when you confess and forsake your sins. Nothing compares to the joy of knowing that your sins are forgiven by God. When we confess our sins to God, He has promised to forgive our sins, and to wash us and cleanse us from all unrighteousness (1 John 1:9).

“5 Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.” To be meek speaks of gentleness of spirit, bearing the fruit of the Spirit in our lives. This comes from spending time with Jesus. The more time we spend with Jesus in prayer, the more we become like Him.

“6 Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be filled, or satisfied.” We need to stir up our hunger and thirst for more of God in our lives. One of the reasons we don’t experience the blessed life is because we are so full of worldly things that we don’t hunger after God’s kingdom. We’ve stuffed ourselves so full of the things of the world that there’s no room for a hunger for God. This is one of the reasons why it’s helpful for Christians to fast, to stir up our hunger and passion for more of the Lord.

“7 Blessed are the merciful, for they shall receive mercy.” This is

The very next thing the Father did was to call for a party. He said, “Bring the fatted calf here and kill it, and let us eat and be merry; for this my son was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.’ And they began to be merry!” (Luke 15:23-24). The sad part of this story is that the older brother got angry at the Father’s prodigal nature so he wouldn’t even go into the party. (Prodigal is defined as: wastefully or recklessly extravagant; lavishly abundant. Really, it’s the story of the prodigal *Father*, not the prodigal son). “Therefore his father came out and pleaded with him. So he answered and said to his father, ‘Lo, these many years I have been serving you; I never transgressed your commandment at any time; and yet you never gave me a young goat, that I might make merry with my friends. But as soon as this son of yours came, who has devoured your livelihood with harlots, you killed the fatted calf for him.’” (v. 28-30).

The older brother was focused on serving: “These many years I have been serving you.” He said, “I was being faithful, working and obeying your commands the way I was supposed to, but you never killed a calf for me!” The Father responded so tenderly to this son. He said, “Son, you are always with me, and all that I have is yours.” There are two important truths here that he hadn’t realized. One was his inheritance. The Father said, “All that I have is yours!” Surely this was one of those jaw-dropping, eye-popping moments for this son. Then the Father said, “I am with you always.” This spoke of the blessing of the Father’s abiding presence. The son was so focused on serving, with his “work, work, work” mentality, “I’m just serving Jesus, but I’m not having any fun.” He missed the joy of the presence of the Father, and he didn’t know the wonderful inheritance that he had. That’s sad. I hope that you aren’t bound by a servant mentality. Yes it’s true that we are called to serve in the church: to be great in the Kingdom of God means that we serve others through love. We don’t do this because we have to as a servant, rather because of the fact that we know our Father loves us, and we want to serve Him – in response to His love.

THE BEATTITUDES:

“When Jesus saw the crowds, He went up on the mountain; and after He sat down, His disciples came to Him. He opened His mouth and began to teach them, saying, “Blessed...” (Matt. 5:1-2).

Jesus is about to give His disciples the keys to the blessed life

It’s not good enough to know the truth; we also need to obey the truth. Too many Christians are good at winning Bible Trivia contests, because they know the Bible truths, but they aren’t allowing those truths to transform their lives. I was listening to a sermon podcast by Pastor Wayne Cordeiro once called, “How to Love the Unlovable.” Pastor Wayne related this story in his message:

“I was in a counseling appointment with a man and his wife, and their marriage was going down, and after listening to him, I said, “You have to stop arguing with everything she says.” He said, “Well, I know that.” We went a little further along, and I said, “You need to stop criticizing her, don’t do that so much.” He said, “Yeah, I know that.” So we went on a little bit more, and I said, “You should take her out on a date once a year at least or something.” He said, “Yeah, I know that.” I was getting mad at him, and I said, “Well, if you know all of that, then what are you doing here in this office you turkey?”

The point is this – it’s not good enough to just know these things, we need to put them into practice. The problem is not that Christians don’t know what they’re supposed to do. We know what God’s Word says. The problem lies in getting God’s truth from our heads into our hands. We need to be doers of the Word! That’s why so many Christians aren’t blessed. Jesus said, “If you know these things (what the Bible teaches), you are blessed IF you DO them!”

Someone said once: “Life isn’t about how to survive the storm, but how to dance in the rain!” Too many Christians are so focused on just trying to survive the storms of life, but God wants us to get dancing, celebrating, and enjoying the abundant life that Jesus has made available to us. If we want to experience the blessed life, we need to build our lives on Jesus’ teachings, specifically His teachings in the Sermon on the Mount in Matthew 5-7.

Some of you might wonder why I preach Bible sermons at church on Sunday mornings. “Pastor Chris, we’ve heard through the grapevine that some churches don’t preach anymore. We’ve heard that in some churches, the pastor just sits up on a stool and reads stories from *Chicken Soup for the Soul* and quotes Oprah and Doctor Phil, and they don’t push the Bible on their people. Why aren’t we one of those kinds of churches?” Chicken Soup is not going to transform your life – God’s Word is. The Bible has the power to

change your life, if you let it. That's why we read, study, teach and preach from God's Word.

Before we go verse by verse through the Sermon on the Mount, let me give you a little bit of background to this message Jesus preached.

“And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all kinds of sickness and all kinds of disease among the people. Then His fame went throughout all Syria; and they brought to Him all sick people who were afflicted with various diseases and torments, and those who were demon-possessed, epileptics, and paralytics; and He healed them. Great multitudes followed Him--from Galilee, and from Decapolis, Jerusalem, Judea, and beyond the Jordan.” (Matt. 4:23-25).

Before Jesus sat down on the mountain to deliver this message, we see Jesus the Messiah, arriving on the scene: healing the sick, raising the dead, casting out devils, and transforming lives. Because He went about doing good and healing all those who were oppressed of the devil and changing lives, crowds followed Him. There was something about Jesus that attracted people to Him. If we are called to follow the example of Jesus, shouldn't we be attracting people as well? It's because we haven't allowed the light of Jesus that's in us to shine forth that we haven't seen more people come to Jesus.

Jesus came to reveal the goodness of God to people. He revealed the love of God the Father, telling people the Good News that God loves you, and God is love. In James 1:17, the Bible says, “Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights.” If you have one good thing in your life, it is a gift from your Heavenly Father. We have the wrong concept of God if we think He's just all about the rules. Christianity is about a loving relationship with God as a Father in Heaven who longs to give you good gifts. Jesus said, “If you then (as human parents), being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask Him!” (Matt. 7:11).

As a father I love to bless my children. I love to take them out for ice cream. I love to bless them with lots of presents at Christmas time. I'm not spoiling my kids rotten – I'm teaching them some-

thing about the generous Father heart of God. Bless your children! We're created in the image of God, and one of the reasons why parents love to bless their children is because God the Father wants to bless His children. If you were to ask any human parent what they want for their children, you might hear different dreams: “I want them to be a doctor, or a lawyer, or a teacher!” We all have different dreams for our children, but I guarantee you that every parent has one universal dream for their children: that they would be happy. Why would we not attribute that same character quality to God, our perfect and loving Heavenly Father? He wants His children to be happy as well. The foundation of our belief in a blessed life is a belief in the goodness of God.

When God created Adam and Eve, the first two human beings, He put them in the Garden of Eden. Eden is a word that means paradise or delights. That's the nature of God. Heaven is called Paradise – a place of everlasting joy. If you don't like joy, and you don't like the idea of happiness and the blessed life, don't go to Heaven. Heaven is called “The Joy of the Lord” (see Matt. 25:21). God is into joy and happiness, and we need to believe that about His nature.

Do you remember the story of the prodigal son? I prefer to call it the story of the prodigal Father. “There was once a man who had two sons. The younger said to his father, 'Father, I want right now what's coming to me.' It wasn't long before the younger son packed his bags and left for a distant country. There, undisciplined and dissipated, he wasted everything he had. After he had gone through all his money, there was a bad famine all through that country and he began to hurt. He signed on with a citizen there who assigned him to his fields to slop the pigs. He was so hungry he would have eaten the corncobs in the pig slop, but no one would give him any. That brought him to his senses. He said, 'All those farmhands working for my father sit down to three meals a day, and here I am starving to death. I'm going back to my father. I'll say to him, Father, I've sinned against God, I've sinned before you; I don't deserve to be called your son. Take me on as a hired hand.' He got right up and went home to his father. When he was still a long way off, his father saw him. His heart pounding, he ran out, embraced him, and kissed him.” (Luke 15:11-20, MSG).