

THE FAVOUR OF THE LORD

One of the greatest things we can have in our life is God's favour. We know the Lord loves everyone equally, but it seems that He has favorites. He showers them with special blessing and favour and people favour them also. The dictionary defines favour as to show preferential treatment, to give advantage to another, and to give special favours. Do we want God's favour to be strong and active in our life? Do we have faith for favour or trouble? Do we expect God and people to bless or curse us? We can have a rejection and persecution complex, expecting people to not like us and to treat us badly - and as a result it often comes to pass.

It is Christ-like to have favour working in our life: "Jesus grew in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and men" (Luke 2:52). Jesus grew in favour, not only with God, but also with men. The spirit of favour was upon Him. People favoured Jesus. People liked Jesus. Crowds thronged to hear Him preach. We all want to be like Jesus. To be like Him means that we should also grow in favour with people. Believe for God's favour to grow in your life. Don't believe that people will dislike you.

The first Christians had great favour which helped their witnessing to be successful: "praising God and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved" (Acts 2:47). Here we see favour flows when we have a spirit of praise.

Now when God's favour is on us, it will cause jealousy in others (as we will see with Joseph) but God's favour will protect you: ***"For surely, O LORD, You bless the righteous; You surround them with Your favour as with a shield" (Psalm 5:12).*** God will **surround us with favor as with a shield.** You need a shield for protection. Favour will protect you from the gossip and criticism of others. When they try to malign you, favour can protect you from the

ill effects of their malicious words. This shield of favour will not just protect you from the front but also the rear. It is a shield that **surrounds** you. Even when you don't know what people are saying about you, this divine favour will insulate you from damage. Confess this scripture often, especially when going to witness. Unless people favour us, they will reject the message we preach.

God's favour is one of the greatest things you can have upon you.

It is the supernatural touch of God upon your life and work, that marks it out as special, that causes it (and you) to be lifted up above the ordinary and stand out: **"For You *are* the glory of their strength, and in Your favour our horn is exalted"** (Psalm 89:17). Divine favour is the key to true and lasting success. Therefore we should pray for favour and receive it by faith as a blessing God wants for us: **"I entreated Your favour with *my* whole heart; be merciful to me according to Your word"** (Psalm 119:58).

Favoured People. Favour has its benefits.

Ruth caught a rich, godly man for a husband named Boaz. The Bible says: **"At this, she bowed down with her face to the ground. She exclaimed, "Why have I found such favour in your eyes that you notice me—a foreigner?"... "May I continue to find favour in your eyes, my lord," she said. "You have given me comfort and have spoken kindly to your servant, though I do not have the standing of one of your servant girls"** (Ruth 2:10,13). Let's face it: in order to get married you must have someone favour you. If you're single you can get this favour working in your life to find a spouse. Ruth was not exactly the best catch but she had great faith in God and had a right spirit. **"He who finds a wife (or husband) finds a good thing, and obtains favour from the LORD"** (Proverbs 18:22).

Bob Buess tells the story of a woman who wrote to tell him how bad everything was in her life. She was attractive but she could not get a

date with any of the boys. She had a negative spirit. Bob wrote back, "I don't blame them for not liking you. I'm afraid I could not like you myself." He wrote that to shock her. He got her attention. Then he told her to change her attitude about others and herself. He sent her scriptures about favour and told her to confess them about herself everyday. It worked. She wrote back to tell him that she was engaged. Whether you are a young teenager who feels lonely or a businessman who lacks customers, favour can work for you. But you have to let it to work by **faith**.

Joseph had Favour: The best story in the Bible about favour working in someone's life is Joseph. Everything started off bad with Joseph. Although he was the favorite (favoured) son of his father, his brothers hated him (jealousy). They sold him as a slave. Eventually he wound up at Potiphar's mansion. God gave Joseph favour with him, and so Potiphar placed him in charge of the entire estate.

“So Joseph found favour in his sight, and served him. Then he made him overseer of his house, and all that he had he put under his authority (Genesis 39:4). Later, Potiphar's wife falsely accused Joseph of rape, and so Joseph was thrown in prison: **“But the LORD was with Joseph and showed him mercy and He gave him favour in the sight of the keeper of the prison” (Genesis 39:21). Joseph did not let the circumstances get him down. He trusted God to give him favour. The warden soon saw the anointing on Joseph and put him in control of the prison. There by God's favour, he was able to interpret the dreams of Pharaoh's baker and cupbearer, which led to him coming before Pharaoh, interpreting his dream and becoming Prime-Minister of Egypt.**

Why did Joseph have so much favour with God and people? One key was his magnanimous and forgiving spirit. He had a big heart. He was generous in forgiving an insult or injury, he was free from petty resentfulness or vindictiveness. In all his trials he did not turn bitter, hurt and wounded as we can see from how he treated his

brothers when he had power over them. **God's favour flows from your spirit to others.** If your spirit is wrong and polluted then favour can't flow from you to others. Favour is not based on luck, but on a big heart. It's an anointing that you receive from heaven and flows out of you. Joseph had a good spirit about him. This is why God could give him much favour with so many people. He had reasons to become bitter, but he ignored them and chose to forgive people - even forgave his brothers who had planned to murder him.

If you become negative, thinking bad about others and yourself, then you need to change your attitude and expect better things about people and your life. Yes, people will let us down but God's favour will cover us and put us over, working all things for good (Romans 8:28). When you start to believe in God's favour, you will begin to have favour with others.

"The grace (favour) of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit, brothers. Amen" (Galatians 6:18). A similar word for favour is grace. Grace is **with your spirit**. If your spirit is negative, favour can't flow from you to others. **"He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water (including favour)"** (John 7:38). God wants His favour to fill us, flow through us and surround us.

Mary was Highly Favoured. **"The angel went to her and said, "Greetings, you who are highly favoured! The Lord is with you"** (Luke 1:28). **"But the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, you have found favour with God"** (v30). Why was Mary highly favoured? Notice later in the chapter Mary said: **"My soul glorifies the Lord and my spirit rejoices in God my Saviour, for He has been mindful of the humble state of his servant. From now on all generations will call me blessed (v46-48).** Mary had a humble spirit, full of praise, not complaints, criticism or bitterness. She said, **'My spirit rejoices.'** Favour works through a person with a rejoicing spirit.

A spirit of favour comes from the word: **“My son, do not forget my law, but let your heart keep my commands; for length of days and long life and peace they will add to you. Let not mercy and truth forsake you; bind them around your neck, write them on the tablet of your heart, and so find favour and high esteem in the sight of God and man. Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths”** (Proverbs 3:1-6)

“For whoever finds me (WISDOM) finds life, and obtains favour from the LORD” (Proverbs 8:35).

God’s word is put to work as we confess the Word concerning favour with God and people. By confession we renew our minds to the fact that God’s will for us as His children is to favour us. Confession of God’s favour gets us lined up with the spirit of favour so it can flow out of our spirit.

CONFESSION: “I have Christ in me so I am growing in wisdom, and in favour with God and men. Surely, O LORD, you bless the righteous (that’s me!); You surround me with your favour as with a shield. The grace and favour) of our Lord Jesus Christ is with my spirit, I am favoured of the Lord. I have a spirit of favour upon me. God’s favour is flowing out of my spirit. I have favour with God and man.”

God’s anointing on us will give us favour with others, His favour will mark us out as the apple of His eye. It will open people’s hearts to us to accept us and our message. Some may be jealous but shielded by God’s favour we need not fear, for God will turn things around for us.