

# FAITH & FAVOUR

Am I the only one who likes it when they receive favour?

When you look around the world at the moment there is a lot that looks unfavourable. War, rising prices, poverty, disease, a lot of things that can bring uncertainty and fear. I want to remind us this morning that God is still on the throne and that he hasn't run out of Goodness or Grace, or Mercy or Favour. Let's start with Favour and then we'll move onto Faith, because Faith is the thing that plugs us into the favour of God.

## Favour

Definition of favour. - To look kindly upon someone or to treat them with special regard.

### 1) Examples of favour in scripture:

- Noah found favour in the eyes of the Lord - Gen 6
- Joseph found favour with the chief jailer - Gen 39
- God gave the Israelites favour with the Egyptian people - Ex 12
- Mary was told that she was highly favoured by the angel - Luke 1
- Jesus grew in favour with God and man - Luke 2
- The early church praised God and enjoyed the favour of the people - Acts 2
- Scripture shows that there is favour with both God and Man. Both of these have their origins with God. Favour comes from his sovereignty. He's the one who decides to show us favour and he's also the one who touches the hearts of those we encounter in order to make them favourably disposed to us

### 2) God loves to treat his kids kindly and with special regard.

John 1: 9-13

9 The true light that gives light to everyone was coming into the world. 10 He was in the world, and though the world was made through him, the world did not recognise him. 11 He came to that which was his own, but his own did not receive him. 12 Yet to all who did receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God— 13 children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband's will, but born of God.

- If you've believed in the name of Jesus and received him, then you're a child of God.
- If you're a child of God, then you're an object of his favour. And there is nothing you can do about it.
- In a healthy parent - child relationship, Parents have a desire to bless their children. We rightly favour our kids over the kids of other people. If that's our reaction to our kids, can you imagine how God views us?
- We don't have to imagine, He demonstrated what He thought of us by sending Jesus to die on our behalf.

John 3: 16

16 For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. 17 For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him.

- Perhaps this is difficult for you to accept or grasp because your relationship with your earthly dad wasn't good or maybe there wasn't any relationship at all. But I believe God wants bring revelation and healing in this area.
- We can only really understand this truth through the revelation of the Holy Spirit.

Romans 8: 14-17

14 For those who are led by the Spirit of God are the children of God. 15 The Spirit you received does not make you slaves, so that you live in fear again; rather, the Spirit you received brought about your adoption to sonship.[f] And by him we cry, “Abba,[g] Father.” 16 The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God’s children. 17 Now if we are children, then we are heirs— heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, if indeed we share in his sufferings in order that we may also share in his glory.

- There is no middle child syndrome in the kingdom.
- First child - they're the superstar - nobody can compete with them.
- Youngest - they're the baby, they get everything they ask for and can't do anything wrong
- The middle child however - forgotten, overlooked, left with the hand-me-down clothes
- When we understand that we're favoured Children of the King, we can go from victim to victor.

### **3) What does God's favour look like?**

a) Favour looks like Grace and Mercy

- Grace = God giving us what we don't deserve
- Mercy = God not giving us what we do deserve
- Grace is often defined as unmerited favour

Romans 3: 23-26

23 for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, 24 and all are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus. 25 God presented Christ as a sacrifice of atonement,[i] through the shedding of his blood—to be received by faith. He did this to demonstrate his righteousness, because in his forbearance he had left the sins committed beforehand unpunished— 26 he did it to demonstrate his righteousness at the present time, so as to be just and the one who justifies those who have faith in Jesus.

- Where would any of us be without the Grace and Mercy of God?

Psalms 103: 10-12

10 he does not treat us as our sins deserve or repay us according to our iniquities. 11 For as high as the heavens are above the earth, so great is his love for those who fear him; 12 as far as the east is from the west, so far has he removed our transgressions from us.

b) Favour looks like access. We can boldly approach his throne of Grace

Hebrews 4: 16

16 Let us then approach God's throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.

- Jesus has paid the price and bought our access into God's presence
- Favour is for the righteous - Psalm 5. God surrounds the righteous with favour like a shield.
- To be righteous is to be considered right in God's sight
- Not because of anything we've done but because of everything that He has done.

c) Favour lasts a lifetime

Psalm 23: 6

6 Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.

- The Hebrew word used here for follow is Radaph (raw-daph) - it means to run after or to pursue, often with hostile intent.
- God is out to get you with his Goodness and Mercy!
- We can expect and be should be looking for God's goodness and mercy in our lives.

d) Favour isn't fair but Favour isn't limited

- Economics is the study of the use of scarce resources
- Resources are limited, so if I have something then you can't have it. That's why Gas and Oil prices have shot up. Because there is only so much of these commodities available and everybody wants them.
- In the economy of God, there is no limit to the amount of favour available.
- Just because someone else is favoured, doesn't mean that there is any less favour available for me.
- This means we can get rid of jealousy and competition from our lives and rejoice and celebrate when we see the favour of God on someone else's life.
- I told some stories at the beginning of small examples of favour. But every time we bring a testimony, we're recounting the favour of God.

## Faith

**1) In one sense all humanity has found favour with God because the work of the cross is available to anyone who chooses to accept it.**

- However, it's by grace, through faith that this Salvation and favour become effective in our lives.

Ephesians 2: 8

8 For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God

- Everything in the Christian life is by grace, through faith. In fact scripture says It's impossible to please God without faith (Hebrews 11: 6)

- Think of an electrical socket and plug. If the favour of God is the electricity in the cable then grace is the socket (the thing that gives us access to the electricity) and faith is the plug (the thing that connects us to the access point).
- But hang on a second, if this depends on my ability to plug into God's grace then I'm done for!
- Good news!! Even the faith that we need to please God doesn't originate with us it's a gift from him!
- And how do we normally get our sticky mitts on a gift? We receive it!!
- This brings us full circle, back to the scripture we read at the beginning

John 1: 12

12 Yet to all who did receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God.

## 2) True faith impacts our actions and our words.

- Faith doesn't deny the situation but it chooses to trust and adopt an attitude that God is out to get us with his goodness and mercy, even when all the circumstances are screaming the exact opposite.
- One of the most powerful tools we have when it comes to releasing the favour of God in our lives is Praise & Thankfulness - 2 scriptures

Habakkuk 3: 17. 18

17 Though the fig tree does not bud  
and there are no grapes on the vines,  
though the olive crop fails  
and the fields produce no food,  
though there are no sheep in the pen  
and no cattle in the stalls,  
18 yet I will rejoice in the Lord,  
I will be joyful in God my Savior.

1 Thessalonians 5: 16-18

16 Rejoice always, 17 pray continually, 18 give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.

## Conclusion

Does enjoying the favour of God mean that everything in life will be great, and that we'll have no troubles? Absolutely not, but it does mean that we're favoured with his presence and that he will walk with us through all the ups and downs of life. And yes, he will bless us with the desires of our hearts. I'm pretty certain that each one of us can look back over our Christian lives and recount time after time when we've been on the receiving end of God's favour. But you know what, the greatest act of favour was the cross. Nothing else really matters. Just because you didn't get that

car parking space even after you prayed about it and decreed and declared (sorry, I'm being naughty) doesn't mean that you're not favoured. We need to look at the favour of God from the bigger, eternal perspective.