

3 Amazing Things God's Favor Does in Your Life

When good things happen to unbelievers, they call it luck; when good things happened to believers, we call it favor. As Christians, we don't consider ourselves to be lucky because we know we are blessed—highly favored by God. When God was grieved with all mankind, “Noah found grace [favor] in the eyes of the Lord” (Gen. 6:8. The Hebrew word translated “grace” is also translated “favor” and is used interchangeably in other scriptures. One man found favor with God and saved the entire human race. That's the importance and impact of divine favor.

Proverbs 12:2a proclaims, “A good man obtains favor of the Lord.” How can we gain God's favor? Grace, by definition, is “unmerited love, unearned divine favor.” None of us deserves grace. It's similar to salvation in that it is a gift. All we can do is put ourselves in a receptive position with right attitudes of the heart (i.e., faith, obedience, sincerity, gratitude, repentance, humility) and simply believe it and receive it.

Psalms 5:12 declares, “For You, Lord, will bless the righteous; You surround him with favor like a shield.” God placed a wall of favor around Job that Satan could not penetrate. In fact, he complained to God, “Have You not made a hedge around him, around his household, and around all that he has on every side?” (Job 1:10). Of course, we know God temporarily lifted that hedge and allowed Job's faith to be severely tested. In the end, though, God gave him double for all his trouble. God's favor overcame his unfavorable circumstances.

How many accidents have been avoided in your life due to the unseen hand of providence? The devil desires to destroy your

life, marriage, family, health, finances and all that is valuable to you. He plots to trap you in addiction, trip you with temptation, drive you into depression or suicide and bury you in a premature grave. But something, no, someone, has prevented it—God’s shield of favor around your life.

Jesus stood in His home synagogue in Nazareth and read Isaiah’s Messianic prophecy—“The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He has anointed Me . . . to preach the acceptable year of the Lord” (Luke 4:18-19). The NASB renders this phrase “the favorable year of the Lord” while the NIV words it “the year of the Lord’s favor.” This is a reference to the year of Jubilee, which occurred every fifty years in ancient Israel (Lev. 25). It was a year of rest when debts were forgiven, slaves were freed, land was restored back to its original owners and God granted such a bumper crop in the 48th year that it sustained them for the two years following: the 49th year (a sabbatical year in which no crops were planted or reaped) and the 50th year (Jubilee). The good news is we don’t have to wait for 50 years to experience Jubilee. In Jesus, every day is a spiritual Feast of Jubilee—a time of divine favor released. Ponder these points on favor from the life of David:

1. God’s favor finds people who have a pure heart. When the prophet Samuel went to Bethlehem to anoint a new king over Israel, he was impressed with Jesse’s sons. The three oldest were soldiers in Saul’s army, fine specimens of humanity. These strong studs fit the bill—tall, dark and handsome. But God’s favor passed over the strapping, strutting soldiers and found a sincere, shepherd-boy singer instead. The Bible describes David, “Now he was ruddy, with bright eyes, and good-looking” (1 Sam. 16:12). Ruddy means “reddish of hair and complexion.” He looked different than his siblings, but God noticed something else was different too—his pure heart. God’s favor has nothing to do with

your age, race, height, weight, hair color, money, talent, or credentials. It's all about the condition of your heart! Why did God love a red-headed harp player so much? It had nothing to do with his hair or his harp; it was all about his heart. For, in God's eyes, the heart of the matter is the matter of the heart! His song lyrics provide some insight—"Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me . . . a broken and a contrite heart—these, O God, You will not despise" (Ps. 51:10, 17).

2. God's favor opens doors of opportunity. A search was made, auditions were held, and David was summoned to the royal court to play music to soothe King Saul's tormented soul. Saul recognized God's favor (something he had lost) on David and hired him as his personal armor bearer and musician. David was a skilled singer, songwriter and harpist, but he had more than mere talent—he had divine favor and his anointed music drove demons away from King Saul. That same favor took David from the pasture to the palace. If we develop our gifts and walk in divine favor, doors will open for us too. "For promotion and power come from nowhere on earth, but only from God. He promotes one and deposes another" (Ps. 75:6, TLB).
3. God's favor can overcome the disfavor of people. Not everybody is going to like you, but that's alright. David's brothers resented him. Notice the hostility, "Eliab's anger was kindled against David, and he said, 'Why have you come down here? And with whom have you left those few sheep in the wilderness? I know your pride and the evil of your heart. For you have come down that you might see the battle.'"
"David said, "What have I done now? Was it not *only* a word?" (1 Sam. 17:28b-29).

The Living Bible expresses Eliab's hatred even more

emphatically: "What are you doing around here, anyway?" he demanded. "What about the sheep you're supposed to be taking care of? I know what a cocky little brat you are; you just want to see the battle!" David obeyed his father, assisted his brothers and cared deeply about his country and was still criticized. After slaying Goliath, he became an instant national hero. All was well until King Saul became insanely jealous of David's newfound fame. He tried to kill him on three different occasions. When David fled, Saul mounted a massive manhunt and placed a bounty on his head. David became Israel's most wanted fugitive. When he had two opportunities to kill Saul he refused. Years later, after Saul was killed in battle, David was finally appointed King over Israel. Friend, perhaps you've faced rejection, criticism, abuse or mistreatment by a spouse, sibling or friends. Remember, God's favor can overcome the disfavor of other people. If God is for you, who can be against you?

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