

Favor

Today's lesson is on the favor of God toward us. He has taken away the enmity between us at the cross, so now there is nothing blocking the flow of His love, which He not only has but *is*. He has made us accepted in Jesus Christ it says in Ephesians 1:6. The Greek word used in Ephesians 1:6 is the same word used for Mary being highly favored in Luke 1:28. It might seem odd to some that we would be put on the same plane as Mary, but that is the way God looks at us. He is no respecter of persons (Acts 10:34). We are highly favored.

In examining favor more deeply, the Bible reveals that it is a shield, it is life, and we find it when our hearts are right before God:

Let them also that love thy name be joyful in thee. For thou, LORD, wilt bless the righteous; with favour wilt thou compass him as with a shield. (Psalm 5:11b,12)

In his favour is life. (Psalm 30:5b)

Let not mercy and truth forsake thee: bind them about thy neck; write them upon the table of thine heart: So shalt thou find favour and good understanding in the sight of God and man. (Proverbs 3:3,4)

It is no contradiction to say God's favor is not blocked and yet if our hearts are right before God we find favor. God loved us while we were yet sinners. It is us who aren't aware of His favor if our hearts aren't softened to Him. His love for us is above all that we can ask or imagine, but it is revealed to us through His power that works in us. What we do doesn't change how He thinks about us, but it does change how we think about Him.

By His grace He has given every man a measure of faith that through that faith we might come to Him. Unbelief negates faith so that we can't see the things that faith provides. As we grow in our knowledge of Him, we become aware of the exceeding great and precious promises given to us. As we follow His guidance He abundantly makes an entrance for us into His everlasting kingdom (2 Peter 1:3-11). This entrance is open to whosoever, by grace through faith, not of works, lest any man should boast.

To think we could earn this favor is to diminish the kindness God has shown to us through Christ Jesus and the exceeding riches of His grace. A little grace wouldn't have sufficed to fill the gap between us and God, and a plethora of good works won't satisfy the chasm of separation between holiness and the profane. God gave it all to save us. Once done, now He can show us His great favor. Hallelujah, what a Savior!