

Favour With God

by Joshua Daniel

The sermon emphasizes the importance of looking at the big picture and trusting in God's plan for our lives, rather than focusing on our circumstances and fears.

Duration: 1:07:44

Topics: "Gods Favor", "Christian Values"

Description

This sermon focuses on the concept of being highly favored by God, drawing parallels from the biblical account of Mary's favor with God despite her humble circumstances. It emphasizes the importance of looking at the big picture through God's perspective rather than being consumed by immediate circumstances, highlighting the need for faith, obedience, and a deep understanding of God's favor. The sermon also touches on the themes of freedom, morality, and the responsibility to uphold Christian values in a world facing moral decline.

Transcript

If you will please turn to Luke 1st chapter, we see this passage in which the angel tells Mary, Hail thou that art highly favoured. The Lord is with you. Blessed art thou among women.

28. You know, folks, we are highly favoured in that we have the knowledge of the Lord Jesus. You know, favour from God, why has it become so cheap? You know, favour from a professor, favour from an employer, and the favour, suppose some favour comes to you today, and you are selected as a functionary, an additional functionary in the cabinet in Washington, D.C., a very special appointment, you will feel highly favoured.

But the circumstances in which Mary received these words are very humble circumstances. 29. Here she was, a country maiden.

What were her qualifications from the university? None whatever. You know, sometimes I see preachers who do not have university degrees, and the poor fellows at some point in their life, they begin to feel that they have, they're somehow second class. And so they say, Hey, I wish I had studied more.

Certainly, had they studied the word of God more, and applied their hearts unto wisdom, they would have been better preachers. True. But when I look at the scriptures, I see some very simple people who are highly favoured.

On what grounds were they favoured? I, the Lord, look on the heart. I, the Lord, look on the heart. Yes, we are favoured, but not by our circumstances, not by our additional qualifications or faculties and talents, but on the basis of our faith and obedience to the word of God.

30. So, folks, what do we see here? Thou art highly favoured. Fear not, Mary, thou hast found favour with God.

Verse 30. You have found favour with God. Now, we like the favour of society, the favour of friends, the favour of big people, but what do we see? The favour that comes from God.

We think very little of that favour, it looks like, but not Mary. Mary banked everything upon this favour that came from God. That was her bank.

You know, people are afraid about which bank they will go to today, and the soundest banks seem to be tottering in the midst of a sea of red ink. Too many losses. But, Mary, you have found favour with God.

Now, suppose Mary just looked at this picture as we would see it. Her position in society was pretty insecure. In fact, the possibility of a death sentence from frowning Pharisees seemed imminent, but did she look at the small picture? No.

What are we doing all the time? I tell you, I'm not able to get people out of this habitual concentration upon the small picture. They don't seem to look at the big picture. God has to look at the big picture.

God looks at the big picture. God is the big picture. So, he does not look at things, oh, it's 10.30 on Sunday morning, the snow is coming down, the temperature is going to dip further, and so there's going to be chaos on the roads, and there are going to be pile-ups on the highways.

Well, God looks way beyond that. It's not just the circumstance of the moment. We look at the circumstance of the present moment, and we feel alarmed.

We panic. Yes, panic is the word. What is that? No faith.

My Lord controls the big picture. Now, he is putting me into the big picture. You know, a girl of 20 took up a very big assignment.

She went all the way to a small place, I presume, in Alabama, and she had a peculiar creature to train, Helen Keller, deaf and dumb, totally unresponsive. Nobody could teach her, throwing the food in the plates, and this girl, Miss Sullivan, began to work on this little girl of seven years, incorrigible, unteachable. By the age of 10, she was writing letters to the biggest people in the world, communicating in French and several other languages.

My dear friends, we never hear of such people, and that one woman, what hope she brought to how many people, all because a girl of 20 invested her life and said this can be done. You see, she couldn't be taught the word water. She was taken to the well house, and as the water was pumped, Miss Sullivan would write on the palm of this girl, water, water, water, water.

At last, this girl understood, oh, this is water, and she became a person that brought hope to millions of people. You know, we don't look at the big picture. We look at the small picture, and then despair or panic.

Is that the Christian way? Is God at all there? Is God in the equation? No. You're just looking at it from through your eyes, with your thinking, with your fears, with your perspective, not with God's perspective. Now, this is the tragedy which has happened, not only in individual cases, but nationally.

You know, historians have already begun to say, like all the great empires and nations that came to a crescendo of greatness, and then inevitably declined. Historians have already begun to say that America is on the skids. I remember a friend of mine, a pastor in Manhattan, many years ago, as I sat with him on the platform, he stood up and said, America is on the skids.

You know, there were one or two people who were smirking, smiling, and this was almost 35, 40 years ago. He was such a godly man. I had first preached for him in his church in London, and then he became the pastor of perhaps the most prominent church in Manhattan.

Well, you know, folks, it does not matter to people. They don't look at the big picture, they only think of the small picture. Myself and my pocket book.

Now, did the pocket book figure at all in the Christmas story? No, it didn't figure at all. This perhaps could be summarized as a very disadvantaged family, deprived of even the necessities of life. But did they look at the small picture? They looked at the big picture.

Hereafter all generations will call me blessed. 49th verse, please. For he that is mighty has done to me great things, and holy is his name.

So having a son in a manger is a great thing, I presume. Or in her understanding, it was not the manger that she saw. It was not this humble partner, a mere carpenter, a man who was a nobody in society.

What am I going to live with this man? And is he going to be supposed to be the caretaker of this son whom God is going to give me? She did not look at the small, immediate picture. She looked at the big picture. Behold, from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed.

Now, I don't know at what picture you are habitually looking at. Now, one of the first things that God ever told Abraham was this. Abraham, I am your shield and exceeding great reward.

Now, insecurity has become one of the facts of life. As a matter of fact, it was in 1993. A little Presbyterian church in San Francisco was besieged by a howling, raging crowd.

We want your children. We want your children. They began to batter the doors while the people, all fearful, had bolted the doors within that small church.

We want your children. They took the garden furniture and began to batter the doors. Who were they? Who were they? In a heathen society, they would not be allowed to talk.

In a Muslim country, they would not be allowed to parade. They were homosexuals. We want your children, they screamed.

We have moved far beyond that, you know, today. At that time, it was a sensational event. But 15 years after, the highest places are infiltrated by these men who have chosen a lifespan which is roughly half the lifespan of the average American, and they refuse to see the wrongness of their choice.

We are living in such times. You know, Patrick Henry, it may ring a bell in your minds. He was called the golden-tongued orator who gave birth to the revolution.

Patrick Henry once said, this should not be, this cannot be repeated too much or emphasized, that America was founded not by religionists, but by Christians. Not by religionists, but by those that worship Jesus. You know, my dear friends, freedom, which is so extolled, can only be built upon the foundations of morality.

When morality breaks and is dismantled, then freedom is lost. You know, actually, Mr. Patrick Henry said in the legislation of the Legislative Assembly of Virginia in 1775, is life so dear or peace so sweet as to be purchased at the price of chains and slavery? Forbid it, almighty God. Then he added, I know not what course other men may take, but as for me, give me liberty or give me death.

You know, those words rang such a chord among the people. They said to arms, to arms, we shall shake off this slavery. All right, the rest is history.

But you know, I have not known a moment of slavery. I've never tasted it. I've never known it.

But I recall as I entered East Germany, Communist Germany at that time, which was very strong, and I saw how tense everybody was, and how my passport had to pass from hand to hand and be scrutinized by the guards. And then when I saw at the border the dogs and all passengers had to leave the car and step out, I sensed a fear. I said, I don't want this fear.

I want to be eating a cake at this time. So I made sure that there was a cake there. You know, and I said, I want to be enjoying a cake.

Well, all these people are in a state of great tension and fear at the border. I never knew such a thing. And I realized I had a newsweek or something, and I was not supposed to take any printed material into Communist East Germany.

I was never used to such a thing. So I had to find some secret place where to deposit or throw into the bushes. Everybody was monitored.

Cars were x-rayed. Oh, my dear friends, we have no idea how dearly freedom was purchased for us at Calvary. We have no idea.

I have never known. You see, friends, you could not send money out of East Germany. How could I do it? I couldn't take anybody into my hotel room because the room would be bugged.

What could I do? When I went to the post office and the woman saw that this was a little bulky envelope and I was mailing it, you know what she did? She took the postal stamps and stuck it over the flap of the envelope so that nobody who attempted to open the envelope could do so without betraying the fact that they had cut through the stamps or torn the stamps. The postal woman did that because she knew what she was up, what the country would do. And here was a stranger mailing a letter.

Oh, my dear people, the freedom which God has given us to take the Word of God to all creatures. We have squandered it. We have not valued it.

We don't know the freedom that Jesus brings. We don't value it. You will know the truth and the truth will set you free.

Give me liberty or give me death. We have been called to be free through this great Savior, free from lying, free from stealing, free from impurity, free. If the Son doth make you free, you're free indeed.

Poor Mary, she may not have known a lot of theology, but she knew that she would be blessed through the generations. People would call her blessed. Certainly, we should know when we are blessed and when we are cursed.

And today we live in a dark page of history when America does not know when she will be blessed or when she will be out of favor with God. May God help us to look at the big picture as we look at Jesus. Let us pray.

Let us tell God, Lord, I hardly know how much riches I have in Jesus, and I go after the small picture. I run after the little toys. I can't see the big picture.

Forgive my blindness. Oh, Lord, help us to see the big picture which you have for each one of us and all those who are joining us this morning in this worship everywhere. Oh, come to us.

Open our eyes to see Jesus. Henceforth, all generations will call me blessed. Give to us prophetic eyes.

Let us see as God sees, and let us know that you are our shield and you are our great reward. We ask in Jesus' holy name. Amen.

Oh, my father, have mercy on these people. Let them never be dumb dogs or blind watchmen. Please, father, give to us a sense of moral responsibility at a time when the nations are declining and signing their own death warrant.

Oh, my father, give to us that sensitivity. Nehemiah built the fallen walls of Jerusalem. Jesus died and rose again that we might have this new life, this peace, this forgiveness, this sense of being overcomers in spite of the gloom around us.

Please, Lord, let us not just fritter our opportunities away and squander our privileges. Oh, father, please let us be faithful sons and daughters. Hear our prayer in Jesus' holy name.

Amen. www.lefi.org

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