



The Shield of God's Divine Favor!

By Michael J. Burns

Psalm 5:12

12 *For You, O Lord, will bless the righteous; With favor You will surround him as with a shield.* KJV

Both the Old & New Testaments speak much about the ***Favor of God!*** The question that need answering is... ***What is God's Favor?*** My objective is to clarify and answer the following, ***What it is AND Do I Need to Understand It and Make Use of It?***

When I was a young teenager I had a group of friends in my neighborhood that I would hang out with and play all kinds of sports. Every so often, as we were basically bored and doing nothing, someone would yell out... **PILE ON!** There would be around 10 of us and they would grab someone and throw them to the ground and everyone would begin to pile on top!

More often than not I would usually be the one on or near the bottom of the pile! Not because I wanted to be, it was just that I was ***chosen.*** I can testify that it was not a pleasant experience and it seemed that I would not survive. Thankfully I did!

Growing up I was a pretty athletic guy and could play most sports well. When it came to playing sports in school or outside we would have to choose teams and there were always those who would be

chosen last. Mostly because they were not as athletic as some of the others. There were times I was one of the captains who did the **choosing**. Winning was the goal and I would try to pick those who would help bring about victory!

I came to learn the feeling of both being **chosen** first and not being **chosen** to be on a team until last. There are both negative and positive effects on a person emotionally as well as in their self-esteem. Truthfully that is how it is in all aspects of life!

The **Favor of God** has to do with God **choosing** us to be on His team so to speak. Paul said in **Ephesians 1:3-4**,

3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ,

*4 just as He **chose** us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love, NKJV.*

Jesus said in **John 15:16**, *Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you. KJV*

This is the essence of the **Divine Favor of God...God Choses Us!** We didn't **choose** God but He **chose** us. Let me clarify what I am and am NOT saying. Some believe that God **chooses** some to be saved and others are destined to go to hell. I DO NOT BELIEVE THIS AT ALL! When I say that God has **Chosen** us I mean that He has made a way for Everyone to be in His family.

The issue is that Not Everyone has Chosen to believe and receive what God in Christ has done for them. In **Hebrews 11:6 we are told that ...without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God **MUST Believe** that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him. NKJV**

Dr. Edwin Louis Cole said, “*When a man(or, Anyone) refuses Christ he robs heaven of his presence even though God wants them there!*” He went on to say, ““*Refusing Christ makes a man a participant in Satan’s anarchy against God!*”

People do not realize that **God’s Divine Favor** through Christ has made a way for them to miss hell and make heaven. They can live free from sickness, fear, lack, addictions, wrath, holding grudges & hurts, and any other type of bondage you could think about. God’s admonition, along with mine, is *for you to receive all that God has provided for you in Christ. Don’t die and miss out on eternity and the abundant life Christ came to give you in the here and now!*

In my humble opinion, one of the most powerful scriptures recorded in the Bible is **Ephesians 1:6b** where it says, *...wherein He has made us accepted in the beloved* KJV. There is only ONE other time where this Greek Word for ‘Accepted’ is used in the entire New Testament. It is found in **Luke 1:28** where it says of Mary the mother of Jesus, *And the angel came in unto her, and said, Hail, thou that art highly favored, the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women.* KJV

The Greek word for **ACCEPTED** is *Charitoō* and is translated in **Luke 1:28** as ***thou art highly favored!*** What are we being told here? That we are ***Highly Favored and Accepted in God’s Beloved even as Mary, the mother of Jesus was!***

Brother Mike I just can’t accept that I would be counted worthy in the same ranking right along with Mary the Mother of Jesus! I am not even in the same league as her! My friend may I say to you that man-made religion is the most likely culprit as to the reason that you and many others cannot and will not accept this great bible truth.

People have told me and quite honestly, I have had the same thoughts over my Christian journey, *You don’t know what I have done in my life and the mistakes and sins I have made and committed!* Our

ignorance of the scriptures is revealed in such thinking and statements.

Psalm 103:10 reveals, *He has not dealt with us after our sins nor rewarded us according to our iniquities.* AMP

You read that correctly! God, under the Old Covenant said that He DID NOT Deal with His people after their Sins nor Reward them according to their iniquities! Believe me when I tell you that the Children of Israel had a lot of things God could have remembered and rewarded them over. Things that were both sinful and iniquitous. The fact is this is how God under this New and Better Covenant of grace is dealing with us!

Are you familiar with **Hebrews 10:16-18?**

16 *"This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, says the Lord: I will put My laws into their hearts, and in their minds I will write them,"*

17 *then He adds, "Their sins and their lawless deeds I will remember no more."*

18 *Now where there is remission of these, there is no longer an offering for sin.* NKJV

Consider this Bible truth...God says, *I WILL NO LONGER REMEMBER your sins and lawless deeds(iniquities)!* The issue isn't with God remembering because He will not remember our past, but it is with us and our refusing to forget and forgive ourselves. It's been said and it's true, *We are our own worst enemy many times!*

God has **chosen** each one of us and given us His **Divine Favor!** Yet if we continue to exalt our opinion of ourselves over what God has revealed in His Word we will limit ourselves from experiencing God's desire to make use of us and cause us to be blessed to be a blessing!

The term **Favor** in both the Old and New Testaments has the following usages and meanings.

FAVOR = *an act of gracious kindness; an advantage to the benefit of someone or something • the outcome was in his favor; an inclination to approve; a feeling of favorable regard; to promote over another; consider as the favorite; treat gently or carefully; bestow a privilege upon; good will or support, to show kindness to; a thing given as a mark of favor; to regard with favor.*

I will never forget when I was in the 10th grade of high school. I had recently made a full commitment of my life to the Lord Jesus and had a genuine passion for God. A passion I still have today over 43 years later! At the time I had a thought that my career would be found in computers. Personal computers did not exist and data processing systems still used *Punch Cards* to record information!

In our town we had a local paper that sold ads for cars, motorcycles, boats and a host of other things called the Buy-Lines Press. They sent word to my high school that they were interested in hiring some students in order to give them some experience. I was interviewed and didn't get the job at that time. The reason wasn't obvious at first but it became clear as I matured in life and in the Lord.

In those early days I wore my faith rather loudly on my proverbial sleeves and didn't use much tact. I took this job interview as an opportunity to share the gospel with the man who interviewed me. A few years later as I sensed the call of God on my life to the ministry I had made plans on attending Rhema Bible Training Center in Oklahoma.

At the time I had a job as a shipping clerk. The fellows that worked there were very worldly to say the least. They used profanity as if it were their first language, talked about their sexcapades, and even snorted cocaine while on the job! I attempted to share my faith with

them and eventually I lost that job. I believe that God had a plan though I couldn't quite see it then.

For two weeks I sat around my house at the age of 18 having been accepted to Rhema the following September of 1980. This was January and I needed a job to earn some money. My family was getting on me about not being diligent in looking for one though I had been praying about where I should apply. I kept having a sense that I should go down to the Buy-Lines Press to reapply but the incident that happened a few years ago loomed in my mind.

Finally I decided to go down there, I dressed for success and hoped that I would not be remembered from the 11th grade fiasco. When I went into the receptionist area and told them that I was there to apply for a job a senior lady came to greet me and then left to get me an application. The receptionist asked me, ***“Are you here to apply for the job we advertised in the newspaper?”***

I told her that I was unaware of their advertisement for a job position. She said that if the lady comes back and asks, tell her that you want that position. Sure enough the senior person came back with the application and asked me if I came for the job they had advertised. I said, ***“That is the job I wanted!”*** I did not lie I just said I would like to apply for that position. She then proceeded to tell me that they were in the process of interviewing another gentleman upstairs and she thought they were going to hire him!

After filling out the application I was interviewed by several people downstairs and even met the man who I tried preaching to a few years before. Thankfully he didn't recognize me at first! Then something unusual happened regarding ***God's Divine Favor*** on my life.

I went upstairs and met several other gentlemen and didn't say a word about my faith but just let my personality shine. I eventually went in to the Senior Vice Presidents office for the main interview. This is what happened...*I was told that they had just hired the gentleman who*

was interviewed just before me. Then he said that the other men I had met outside his office took a liking to me and they thought he should hire me.

He told me, “I think we will have to CREATE a new position for you even though we only wanted to hire one person! There on the spot I was given a job where none existed. I only worked there for 7 months before leaving for Bible School. During that time I was given 4 raises plus asked to come in on some Saturday's where I was given 2 1/2 times my salary in cash! This job was a major supply in me being about to move from New York to Broken Arrow, Oklahoma to attend Bible School!

This is my point in telling this testimony. ***God’s Divine Favor*** is something that affects our relationship with God but it also affects our relationships with our fellow man. ***Psalm 5:12*** reads, *For You, O Lord, will bless the righteous; With favor You will surround him as with a shield.* NKJV

When people come into contact with us they literally are coming in contact first with our ***Favor shield!*** The key is seeing yourself in ***Favor*** with God because He loves you and has literally made you His FAVORITE. *He will cause others to feel about you the way He does and His supernatural ***Favor*** will influence people to help you and do things on your behalf that they would not ordinarily do!*

I would admonish you to study the lives of people recorded in scripture and how the ***Favor of God*** worked in their lives. People like; *Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Moses, Esther, Ruth, Naomi, Job, David, Daniel, Jesus* and so many others. Once you see those in both the Old and New Testament who lived with ***God’s Divine Favor*** on their lives you will get a picture of how God desires to do the same for you!

Your Friend & Brother in Christ,
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