

The favor factor - part 2

Romans 5:1-2 Therefore now having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ through whom also we have access by faith into this grace in which we stand...

We now have access into God's Grace. Many of us know that grace is free pardon and mercy but it is also free unmerited love & favor, approval, good will, liberality, divine ability. In the 1906 Webster it is friendship and disposition to oblige. In another word, when we are born again, God's stamp of approval and favor is on us. God's desire is now to bless us and do us good. This favor and approval are not earned by what we do or stop doing, it is a free gift from God that we don't deserve or work for, but we simply must receive it by faith.

We saw in the prior issue that Jesus walked in this type of favor. When He prayed His prayers were always answered. In *Luke 11:5-8*, He challenged the disciples to call God Father, to be bold in their prayers and dare approach Him anytime, like a friend who has the confidence to knock at your door at midnight to ask for some sugar or flour. Surely this friend knows that you have a willing and giving heart, and this is how we must approach God for He is a liberal giver. Jesus said : "You might not get up and give to him because he is your friend, but because of his importunity you shall rise and give him as much as he needs."

Many have interpreted the word importunity "persistence" and make it say something it doesn't. God doesn't want us to ask or beg again and again, persistently hoping to get His attention, but check out the word "opportunity". In Greek it actually means "boldness, shamelessness, or in modern day language "having the guts".

This is what righteousness is all about. Righteousness means that now we can approach God boldly without a sense of shame, guilt or inferiority. *Rom. 5:17* declares that through Jesus' death we received abundance of grace (mercy & favor) and the free gift of righteousness. Righteousness is not a process of spiritual maturity but rather it is a position of favor given to us at the new birth. You are now a child of God who has the right to jump on Daddy's lap knowing that He is always disposed to love and bless you.

But what happens when one sins and falls, does he lose his righteousness, is God's favor still upon him? If one is born a male there is no amount of disguise, make up or chirurgical intervention that can change that. Just like you are born a male or female, you are born again righteous... this is who you are, the righteousness of God in Christ Jesus.

When we sin, our covenant with God is not broken, we do not lose our nature and position of righteousness, but our fellowship has been broken. You see if I treat my husband wrong and hurt his feelings, our marriage covenant is not broken, is it? I am still his wife but our fellowship and intimacy has been breached. All I need to do is to humble myself and ask him to forgive me. In the same way God has made provision. *1 John 1: 9* says that if we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

Because we are righteous, Jesus said that we can come boldly to the Father. In *Luke 11:9-13* He proceeded to say that whenever we would ask it would be given, anytime we would seek we would find... Many think that this is just too easy and too good to be true but we must come to understand that we are "sons" of God and if sons then heirs of God through Christ. In fact when we approach God it is not a matter of God giving to us but rather us receiving what Christ has already purchased and given to us.

You see when Jesus died, He went to hell for 3 days, He conquered the devil, the power of sin & death, sickness, poverty. He triumphed over it all and rose up in victory with life, healing, prosperity and He gave it all to us. This is all part of our inheritance for us to enjoy now.

"Blessed be the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ who has blessed us with all spiritual blessings in Heavenly places in Christ Jesus." Eph. 1:3

"His divine power has given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness through the knowledge of Him.." 2 Pet. 1:3

"He did not spare His own son but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him freely give us all things?" Rom. 8:32

So now we can understand why Jesus said in *Mark 11:24* When you pray you must believe that you receive it (or that it has been given to you , that it belongs to you...) and you shall have it (or in another word you shall see the manifestation later). Thanks be to God who has showered us with His grace, His free unmerited favor, His good will, His liberality, His friendship, His disposition to oblige and bless us.

"Until now you have asked nothing in my Name, ask and you will receive that you joy may be full" John 16:24

"I will bless you and make your name great; and you shall be a blessing..." Gen. 12:2