

# Who Has Found Favour With God ?

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- [ 0 : 00 ]     So if you have a Bible, you're finding your way to Exodus chapter 33. And so God has rescued Israel from slavery and he's protected and provided them all the way here.
- And they've now made a covenant with God at Mount Sinai. And he has made a covenant with them for them to be his treasured possession.
- And then within days of making that covenant, Israel were unfaithful. And so in Exodus 24, all the people in response to this covenant and the vows, they said, all that the Lord has spoken, we will do and we will be obedient.
- This was like their vows. And Moses then took blood and threw it on them to mark the covenant. And then he went up the mountain to meet God for 40 days, receiving the stone tablets and instructions for a tabernacle so that God could dwell in their midst.
- This is like signing the marriage documents and arranging their dwelling together. Yet as Moses was up the mountain with God, they were down the mountain with the golden calf that they had made, breaking their covenant, cheating on God, making a God of gold to be in their midst.
- [ 1 : 49 ]     And they're caught. Moses comes down after God tells him what they're doing. And they're caught in idol worship.
- And Moses is furious. The people are punished. And then the next day, at the end of chapter 33, Moses says to the people, you've sinned a very great sin.
- And now I will go up to the Lord. Perhaps I can make atonement for your sin. And that's the context with which we're in this morning.
- Exodus 33 continues this discussion that Moses has with God, while Moses is trying to make atonement for their terrible sin. Exodus 33.
- The Lord said to Moses, Depart. Go up from here, you and the people whom you have brought up out of the land of Egypt, to the land of which I swore to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, saying, To your offspring I will give it.
- [ 2 : 57 ]     I will send an angel before you, and I will drive out the Canaanites, the Amorites, the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites. Go up to a land flowing with milk and honey.
- But I will not go up among you, lest I consume you on the way, for you are a stiff-necked people. When the people heard this disastrous word, they mourned, and no one put on his ornaments.
- For the Lord had said to Moses, Say to the people of Israel, You are a stiff-necked people. If for a single moment I should go up among you, I would consume you. So now take off your ornaments, that I may know what to do with you.
- Therefore the people of Israel stripped themselves of their ornaments from Mount Horeb onwards. Now Moses used to take the tent and pitch it outside the camp, far off from the camp.

And he called it the tent of meeting. And everyone who sought the Lord would go out to the tent of meeting, which was outside the camp. Whenever Moses went out to the tent, all the people would rise, and each would stand at his tent door, and watch Moses until he had gone into the tent.

[ 4 : 13 ] When Moses entered the tent, the pillar of cloud would descend and stand at the entrance of the tent, and the Lord would speak with Moses. When all the people saw the pillar of cloud standing at the entrance of the tent, all the people would rise up and worship each at his tent door.

Thus the Lord used to speak to Moses face to face as a man speaks to his friend. When Moses turned again into the camp, his assistant Joshua the son of Nun, a young man would not depart from the tent.

Moses said to the Lord, See, you say to me, Bring up this people, but you not let me know whom you will send with me. Yet you have said, I know you by name, and you have also found favor in my sight.

Now therefore, if I have found favor in your sight, please show me now your ways that I may know you in order to find favor in your sight.

Consider too that this nation is your people. And he said, My presence will go with you, and I will give you rest. And he said to him, If your presence will not go with me, do not bring us up from here.

[ 5 : 29 ] For how shall it be known that I have found favor in your sight, I and your people? Is it not in your going with us so that we are distinct, I and your people, from every other people on the face of the earth?

And the Lord said to Moses, This very thing that you have spoken, I will do, for you have found favor in my sight, and I know you by name.

Moses said, Please show me your glory. And he said, I will make all my goodness pass before you, and will proclaim before you my name, the Lord, and I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will show mercy on whom I will show mercy.

But, he said, you cannot see my face, for man shall not see me and live. And the Lord said, Behold, there is a place by me where you shall stand on the rock.

And while my glory passes by, I will put you in a cleft of the rock, and I will cover you with my hand until I have passed by. Then I will take my hand away, my hand, and you shall see my back, but my face shall not be seen.

[ 6 : 43 ] Amen. This is the word of the Lord, and we pray his blessing upon us. So there are three main sections in this passage.

Firstly, in verses 1 to 6, we have a disastrous word. And then in verses 7 to 11, we have a distant tent.

And then in verses 12 to 23, we have a devoted mediator. And so let us run through them. A disastrous word.

So after the situation cools down, they are commanded to leave Sinai and go to the promised land.

And at first, it seems encouraging because God is saying to them, the wilderness is not your home. God promised a home that would be flowing with milk and honey.

[ 7 : 46 ] The wilderness is not your home. This is encouraging at first. If you follow Jesus, know that this world is not your home. He is making a place for you in his father's house and in his kingdom that is flowing with more than milk and honey.

So God said that he will send an angel to go before them, and he will drive out all the evil nations that inhabit the land. It all sounds good. Until God drops the bombshell, I will not go among you.

This is a disastrous word for them. Their sin, like an affair, has caused a great rift in the relationship. Now, I want you to imagine that you suddenly got a letter from Jesus.

Among all the bills that land on your doormat, you got a letter from Jesus. And this letter said, Dear Fill in the blank.

Dear Jean. Dear Anne. Dear Jeanette. Dear Ruth. Dear Jan. Dear Ian. Dear Jean. It's about time we get you to your heavenly home.

[ 9 : 02 ] The place that I have prepared for you. The place I have promised you. It's about time we get you there. So prepare yourself. And I will send an angel to bring you there.

Wouldn't that be exciting? But then you read on in this letter and Jesus says this. It's time to get going to your heavenly home. However, know this.

When you get here I'm not going to be with you. I can't be in your presence. You are just too sinful. And I am holy. So, you can go but I'm not going to be with you.

I wonder how much that would bother you. Would it bother you? Getting heaven without the king of heaven? For many people in the world it might not seem like a disastrous word.

The promise of a land flowing with milk and honey without needing a relationship with God. So, John Piper once said if you could have heaven with all the friends that you ever had and all the food that you ever liked and all the leisure activities you ever enjoyed and all the natural beauties you ever saw and all the physical pleasures that you ever tasted could you be satisfied with heaven if Christ were not there?

[ 10 : 30 ] Is that not a challenging question to every one of us? Because of course every good gift comes from God. These are good things.

But good things mustn't be divorced from the God who is the giver and source of all goodness. because without him even good things can become a snare. For instance, gold in and of itself is not a bad thing.

God gave them the gold that they had but they used it to make a golden calf when it was supposed to be used for the tabernacle. It's a mark of the sinfulness of humanity that we take good things and we use them in ways that God did not design in ways that are not glorifying to God and in ways that are not for our own good.

Don't we do that with many good things? Another example in our culture today is sexuality. It's designed as a good gift from God but we use it in ways it's not designed for in ways that don't glorify God and in ways that don't do us good.

Do we not do that with many other things? And so the point being we were not made just to use things for fleeting pleasure even good things.

[ 11 : 53 ] We were made for our relationship with the good God who made us. We were made to know God and to know one another to love God and love one another and to glorify God and enjoy him forever.

The chief end of man. So would you be satisfied with heaven without Christ? You see at least Israel found it a disastrous word that God would not go among them.

One of the reasons they made an idol in the first place was because they wanted a God in their midst. They realized the privilege of having God as a guiding light a strong protector and a faithful provider.

And so sorrow over sin and a broken relationship with God is a good sign of repentance. To know that having God is far greater than having gold is a good thing.

And Moses especially knew this. Moses especially knew this as it says in Hebrews 11 that Moses chose to be mistreated with the people of God than to enjoy the fleeting pleasures of sin.

[ 13 : 00 ] He considered the reproach of Christ to be greater wealth than the treasures of Egypt. And Paul says the same thing. Whatever gain I had I counted as loss for the sake of Christ.

Indeed I count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. It is a surpassing worth to know God than to have all the riches in the world.

Yet one of the reasons God said he would not go with them is not just a punishment but it is also a great mercy because a holy God among a sinful people would result in them being consumed.

You see some people wonder why God cannot just show himself more? Why can he not just be with us? If God is so loving why does he demand anything from us?

Can he not just accept us as we are? No. If God were to be among us without dealing with our sin we would be utterly consumed. Not because he is some intolerant short tempered capricious God.

[ 14 : 11 ] But we will see in the next chapter that he is gracious and merciful. Slow to anger abounding in steadfast love. Yet by nature he is completely holy. Completely holy.

He cannot not be holy. It is who he is. He is perfectly just and righteous. And by sheer power of his nature. Anything unholy would be completely burned up and consumed in his presence.

It is only by mercy. By sheer mercy and grace that he makes a way for us. For our sin to be dealt with in order that he would bring us safely to himself.

Yet what happens to a people who are stiff-necked? What happens to a people who are stubborn and rebellion against God? Well they will not have gold or God in the end.

And if they get even a glimpse of the promised land it will become a desolate ruin for those without God. The end for those who continue to rebel against God is nothing but darkness.

[ 15 : 25 ] Darkness in hell. The presence of God is a dangerous thing for sinners. Hebrews 10 says it's a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.

Our passage says if for a single moment I should go up among you I would consume you. And so God has shown mercy to withdraw.

And the people mourn when they hear this and they take off their ornaments. That is they take off their jewelry. Because having God is better than having jewelry.

And these ornaments, these jewelry was probably more of a snare to them. They were using this jewelry and using it for idol worship.

But outward appearance doesn't impress God one bit. What does impress God? Is it not a broken and contrite heart? God will not despise a broken and contrite heart.

[ 16 : 28 ] A people yearning after God rather than material riches. Who do you want to be? You want to be a person yearning after God or yearning after riches?

And so we move on to verse 7, a distant tent. The ironic thing is that their efforts to make a God who is among them only push the real God far out of the camp.

You know what it's like in our world. People push God out of every part of society. We don't want God in our schools. We don't want God in our government.

We don't want God in our cities. Take away your mottos of us flourishing because of the word of God and the praises of his name. Everywhere in culture we don't want God and so he's far out the camp.

God will not be among them. Like all of us, they had to learn a very real lesson that God is not like all the other gods of the nations.

- [ 17 : 31 ] A God of our own making is not a God at all. And so God, when they try to make this golden calf, he's not like other gods. He cannot be represented in a statue or an idol.
- He's the living and almighty maker of heaven and earth. He is the infinite, immortal, eternal, self-existing, invisible creator of all things. How can he be represented in a golden statue?
- How can he be compared to an idol or contained in a golden calf? He cannot. And so as Solomon said, when he even made the grand temple that he made, Solomon said to Hiram, the king of Tyre in 2 Chronicles 2, he said this, the temple that I'm going to build will be great because our God is greater than all the other gods, but who is able to build a temple for him?
- Since the heavens, even the highest heavens cannot contain him, who then am I to build a temple for him except as a place to burn sacrifices before him?
- See, Solomon knew this temple was not going to contain God. He's not like all the other gods. In fact, this grand temple is just a place to burn sacrifices. But God, the true God, cannot be contained even by the highest heavens.
- [ 19 : 00 ] And so the Israelites actually thought that they could make God in their midst. How foolish, how absolutely foolish. Any attempt to make God in our midst, even if we think he's contained in a book or whatever it is, you cannot box God in.
- He's the maker of all things, invisible, immortal, infinite. They didn't realize when they were doing that that God was actually giving Moses a plan so that he could in some way be dwelling among them in the tabernacle.
- So Moses made a tent for meeting God far outside the camp and he would meet God there. It was not the tabernacle, this was a temporary tent between the Sinai mountain and the tabernacle being made.
- And it says everyone who sought the Lord would go out to the tent of meeting outside the camp. Isn't that encouraging? Verse seven, everyone who sought the Lord would go out to the tent of meeting.
- God is still giving them an opportunity to seek him. And yet the only way they could seek him would be through a mediator, through Moses. How often do we seek the Lord on things?
- [ 20 : 22 ] How far would we go out the camp to seek the Lord? It reminds me of the covenanters who would go out into the wild places and secret meetings to seek the Lord and be together at great risk.
- God would think of I don't know if you've ever been to any of the covenanter sites and think what kind of footwear would you need to go out there? Probably nothing that we're wearing this morning.
- Out in bogs and stuff like that. How far would you go to seek the Lord? Yet how can we seek God when he cannot be near us because of our sin and we cannot be near him because of his holiness?
- Who can mediate for us? There needs to be someone who can mediate. There needs to be one who unlike everyone else has not rebelled. One who is a righteous man, a faithful servant of the Lord.
- One who has found favour with God. You see the people could go out to the tent but the pillar did not descend for them. Only for Moses.
- [ 21 : 32 ] The people wouldn't stand at their door. When you went out to the tent. But when Moses went out, the people would all watch anxiously at their doors. And when the pillar of cloud descended at the tent for Moses, all the people would bow down at their own tents.

And unlike everyone else, God would speak to Moses face to face as a man speaks to his friend. There's only a couple of people in Scripture who are regarded as a friend of God.

Can you think of any? Abraham, perhaps David, a man after God's own heart, Moses, no one else spoke to God like Moses face to face as a man speaks to his friend, and perhaps Enoch who walked with God.

Only a few people in the history of humanity have been regarded as a friend of God. Consider for a moment what it would be like to be a friend of God.

Think of all the people in your lives. Who's been the closest friend that you've ever had? And think to yourself, what would it be like if you could just go around to God's house and speak to him face to face?

[ 22 : 51 ] Wouldn't that be brilliant? all the people in Israel did not have that privilege but one man did and Moses could go out to the tent and just have a conversation with the infinite maker of all things.

Is God not interesting enough that you would want to be friends with him? I think that would be unbelievable. Unbelievable. Would you not have some questions for God?

Endless questions. Just to hang out with someone who hung the stars in their place. Wouldn't it be amazing? Would you not trade in all the gold and worldly pleasures to be friends with God?

And we've got this other character in the story Joshua is kind of in between worlds. He wasn't complicit in the golden calf sin but he's not close to God like Moses.

Yet I think the mention of his name is a signal of his future role. He's Moses' assistant. He's a good and faithful assistant but only Moses is speaking to God like a friend.

[ 24 : 02 ] Only Moses is said to have found favour with God. When God searches across all the earth, who's found favour with him?

He's faithful. Moses is called the faithful servant of the Lord. And so only he can mediate. And so from verse 12 we're looking at a devoted mediator.

And this is just a glimpse of one of these conversations. So at the start of the chapter Moses is up the mountain and God tells him to go down and tell the people God's not going to go with them but they need to go to the promised land.

And then they all mourn and Moses makes this tent outside the camp and only Moses is allowed to meet with God and God speaks to him face to face and at the end of this passage we get a little taste of one of those conversations.

Moses could have washed his hands of the nation. He could have boasted about his superior relationship with God but instead he uses his favour to mediate for this people as sinful and stiff necked as they are he uses his own favour to mediate for them.

[ 25 : 22 ] To restore a relationship and to plead with God to be with them. Not just with Moses but to be with his people. I said before when we were going through Exodus in the last chapter in 32 that Abraham a long time ago mediated for the people on the basis that there might be a few righteous people.

Oh God what if there's ten righteous people? Even if there's five? He went from fifty all the way down. There might be a few righteous people but yet Moses mediates in the last chapter, chapter 32, Moses mediates on the basis that there's no one who is righteous but on the basis of God's reputation among the nations.

Immediately after the golden calf thing, Moses says to God what are people going to say about you? in the nations and yet in this passage an incredible thing happens.

Moses mediates on the basis of his own favour with God. Who is there on the face of the earth who can mediate before God on account of their own favour with God?

He speaks to God on the basis of what God spoke to him. Imagine standing face to face with God and being able to say, God you said I know you by name and you have found favour.

[ 26 : 50 ] Who can say that? Imagine being able to say that. Think of all the greatest celebrities. Now I know that God is all-knowing. Of course he knows our name but imagine all the celebrities, right?

Think of your, who would you love to meet? Who's the greatest athlete or musician or movie star or whatever it is, whoever it is, that people are lined up, crowds are there shouting their name, everyone knows their name, but imagine you're at a movie premiere or a concert line or wherever it is and that celebrity turns around and says your name.

Boris, I see you. Jeanette, it's you. Andy, imagine that person called out your name.

You know me? You know me? Everyone knows you but you know me? To be known by name, by the creator. Think about this, right?

You die, on the day that you die, you approach the gates of heaven and whatever your tradition is, Peter's standing there or an angel's standing there, it's just hypothetical, okay?

[ 28 : 06 ] I'm not saying anything theological here, but imagine you approach the gates of heaven and fearful of being found out because you know you're a sinner, an angel says, what are you doing here?

On what basis should you be allowed to enter in? What are you going to say? But imagine this, imagine before you even open your mouth to say, I'm guilty but Christ or whatever you're going to say, imagine before you say anything, God says, hey, I know him, I know her, it's you, come on in, imagine that, would that not be the most amazing thing?

That you don't need to say anything, but God would say, I know you by name, and you have found favour in my sight, come on in, well done my good and faithful servant.

So what favour Moses had with God, a faithful servant, see how concerned he is to be with God, for God to continue to be with this nation, no wonder he wrote in Psalm 90, Lord you have been our dwelling place in all generations, satisfy us with your steadfast love, that we may rejoice and be glad all our days, let the favour of the Lord our God be upon us, says Moses.

And so after mediating for the people, Moses shows that he practises what he preaches, he doesn't just think that this people need God's presence, he wants it for himself, he wants God, he desires God more than anything, he wants to know God more, someone like Moses, someone like Moses who knows God better than anyone else and he wants to know God more, he wants to see God's glory, a man who spoke with God face to face, as a man who speaks to his friend, and yet he wants to see more of God.

[ 30 : 16 ] Do you want to see God's glory? Do you want to know God more? God says to him, you cannot see my face, for man shall not see my face and live.

Man shall not see me and live. But yet, see how the Lord grants every one of Moses' requests, every one. And why does he grant Moses' request?

Because Moses found favor. He's pleased with Moses and so whatever Moses asks, God gives him. Okay, my presence will go. My presence will go with you and I will give you rest.

verse 17, the Lord says, this very thing that you have spoken, I will do. For you have found favor in my sight and I know you by name.

How amazing is that? If it wasn't for Moses, the faithful servant of the Lord, yet there is one who is greater than Moses. Hebrews chapter 3 says, Moses was a faithful servant in all of God's house, yet Jesus is a faithful son.

[ 31 : 28 ] Moses found favor with God, yet God said of Jesus, behold, this is my beloved son in whom I am well pleased.

I love him. Moses mediated without perfect righteousness, yet Jesus mediates by his own blood and his perfect righteousness. Moses could not see the face of God and live.

Yet Jesus was the only son at the father's side. John chapter 1 verse 18, no one has ever seen God, yet the son, the only God who is at the father's side.

Think of how close he was compared to Moses. Moses couldn't see God and live, yet Jesus was at the father's side from eternity past, and he has made him known.

Moses secured the presence of God to go with them, yet Jesus is God's presence with us. Emmanuel, God with us. And John writes, the word became flesh and dwelled among us, and we have seen his glory.

[ 32 : 39 ] Glory as of the only son from the father, full of grace and truth. Yet even then, that was a glory that was veiled in flesh. think of when his glory is unveiled.

Just now we see dimly. We only know in part. But we will be like him, for we shall see him as he is.

Amazing. So, whose favor are you relying on? If you're relying on Moses, he might get you to a place filled with, flowing with milk and honey.

If you're relying on your own favor with God, you're stuffed. But if you're relying on Jesus, the only son from the father, what favor he has with the father.

In this account, we see what is at stake because of our sin. Yet we see the only hope they had was Moses because he was one who did not rebel and he had favor with God.

[ 33 : 44 ] Who do you want to be in life? Do you want to be a rebel who would be consumed or a friend of God who could speak to him face to face? Do you want gold without God or do you want to be friends with the almighty infinite maker of the universe?

Do you want to see a land flowing with milk and honey yet not have God's presence? Or do you want to see a glimpse, even the smallest part of the glory of God that all creation can barely handle?

We are all rebels. All have sinned and gone astray and fallen short of the glory of God. We are sinners by nature. What favor have we before God on our own?

Yet see the difference the favor of Moses makes for the people. How much more will the favor of God's very own son make a difference for those who trust in him and who he pleads for?

Do you want to be known by God by name? You want to find favor with God? It is only found in Christ.

[ 34 : 53 ] And Jesus said those who confess me before men I will confess them before my father in heaven. And you want to be known by name by God?

There is nothing to be ashamed of with the name of Jesus. and we confess him before men and when we meet his father he will say I know you by name.

Well done. There is one who is presently meeting with God face to face on our behalf. Jesus the faithful son of God. And he says and let me close with this.

He says to his father this is how Jesus is praying for those who trust in him and his favor. This is the favor that Jesus has with his father. We see a glimpse of it in John chapter 17 when Jesus said father I desire that they also whom you have given me may be with me where I am to see my glory that you have given me because you have loved me before the foundation of the world.



Let me pray. Oh heavenly father what are the greatest things of this earth if not having your presence what are the greatest riches and pleasures on earth without your presence you're the one who gives to all mankind life and breath and everything how could we be satisfied with anything less than your presence and how should it be that sinners like us should be welcome into the father's house if not for a faithful son the lord Jesus Christ and so we thank you for sending your son that you would have a mercy on us that you would invite us into the most incredible relationship and incredible experience for eternity to be with you and to know you and to have favor with you through the son.

[ 37 : 09 ] Lord would we desire to seek you and to know you and to be your friend and to be a child in your house please help us to look to your son for he is the only one who has found favor that could bring that for us and we thank you that he has we thank you for Jesus in his glorious name.

Amen.