

DEFINITION**FAVOR****/'FĀVəR/**

gaining approval, acceptance, or special benefits or blessings

SCRIPTURE**Esther 2:17**

The king loved Esther more than all the other women, and she obtained grace and favor in his sight more than all the virgins; so he set the royal crown upon her head and made her queen instead of Vashti.

Luke 2:52

And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men.

BIG IDEA

FAVOR = Fast-track, Access, Vital relationships, Opportunities and Respect.

Have you ever met someone who seems to live life on easy street? Someone characterized by having the inside track on all the good things? Someone who seems to have every door of opportunity flung wide open before them, who finds success in everything they set their hand to? It's safe to assume that person was marked by favor. Favor is an invisible force that automatically attracts people, opportunities and provision into our life. To be marked by favor is to walk under God's covering and supernatural blessing. I like to call it the FOG (Favor Of God), because that's what it feels like. The FOG envelops you, covers you, permeates your surroundings and affects what you see and experience, and it is an expression of God's overwhelming love for us. The FOG produces uncommon success and effectiveness in our lives and places us in the right place at the right time with the right connections. Whatever environment or situation we find ourselves in, we see God's presence, protection and provision going before us.

The story of Esther's ascent to royalty is a picture of God's favor. She was an orphan who came from a place of poverty and loss. In the natural, she was the least likely to receive an invitation to the palace. But God's supernatural favor was upon Esther, and He carefully crafted her path to the king's side by guiding her through one open door after another. He provided her with wise counselors and elevated her esteem in the eyes of influential people. Her life shows us we don't become qualified for God's favor by our social status or circumstances; God bestows his favor upon us as a result of our relationship with Him and obedience to His word.

Despite the incredible odds stacked against her, amidst dozens of other young beautiful women, Esther caught the eye of Hegai, the king's assistant. Hegai demonstrated his favor by ordering that Esther be given the royal treatment: exquisite beauty regimens, special delicacies to eat, seven ladies-in-waiting selected from the king's palace, and the best room in the harem. As we see in this passage, favor gives us access to key people, provides important physical needs, and gives us the right support in desirable locations. Esther recognized the need for wise instruction and guidance in her preparation season and heeded the suggestions and advice from the king's assistant. This humility to ask for advice and willingness to learn from the recommendations she received gave her an edge over the other women, and she "won the favor of everyone who saw her."

CONVERSATION

Share or reflect on a moment in the past where you saw the favor of God on your life, where it seemed like every door opened for you, the path was easy, and you achieved a desirable outcome. What was it like to walk in the FOG?

WEEK 11

MARKED BY FAVOR



What areas of your life are you believing for supernatural favor? Are you facing seemingly impossible circumstances as you respond to God's call on your life? How can you apply the lessons of Esther's story to your current situation?

Bob Harrison said "one moment of favor can do more for you than working for an entire year." Discuss or ponder what you think he means by this statement.

TAKE AWAY

Esther's story is our roadmap for finding favor with God and man. To live a life marked by the FOG, we must be willing to ask for advice and be obedient and dedicated to the Lord. We must remember that living a life of favor is not only for our benefit but a means to fulfill God's purpose and make an impact in the world. We are called to be influencers and change-agents wherever God has put us. Esther was positioned for a purpose. God opened doors and gave her access to the most powerful and influential person in that kingdom for a reason. Ultimately, the favor she received would require her to take brave steps to help save her people. With great favor comes great responsibility.

Take some time to meditate on these scriptures:

Psalm 84:11

"For the LORD God is a sun and shield; the LORD bestows favor and honor; no good thing does he withhold from those whose walk is blameless."

Psalm 5:12

"Surely, LORD, you bless the righteous; you surround them with your favor as with a shield."

Psalm 90:17

"May the favor of the Lord our God rest on us; establish the work of our hands for us— yes, establish the work of our hands."

Proverbs 3:3-4

"Let love and faithfulness never leave you; bind them around your neck, write them on the tablet of your heart. Then you will win favor and a good name in the sight of God and man."

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MARKE'D

BIBLE STUDY

NOTES