

## Can You Handle Favor?

As I emptied one of the small bags of jewelry I'd just purchased, I felt a wave of excitement hit me. I picked up each item individually and marveled at its beauty. Each piece of jewelry was unique, but they were all beautiful. As I lowered each item, I began to realize that I'd be placing them in my jewelry containers, only to be held again when I was ready to wear each piece. It almost felt like a waste of money, but in my heart, I wasn't regretful. Each piece would one day have its turn to adorn me, and I knew I'd be happy that I made those purchases on that particular day. But for now, they had to be put away.

I looked at many of the purchases I'd made over the last year, and I noticed that I can be a little excessive. When I decided to stock up on shoes, I went overboard and bought enough shoes to start a small shoe store. When I decided to stock up on perfumes and body sprays, I bought enough scents to bathe a few elephants. When I decided I needed more jewelry, I bought enough jewelry to bury myself under. As I looked around, I realized that many of the items I had were more than a year old and had never been worn by me; nevertheless, I repeatedly told myself that I would wear each item one day. One day, I'll be glad I purchased each item. One day will be the perfect day for everything I have. But what if jewelry could think and feel as we do? What would an unworn piece say as it was overlooked over and over again? How would my "new" shoes fair when they saw me repeatedly wearing my "favorite" shoes? What if my perfumes had names? How would Flourish feel when she noticed me wearing Sweet Kisses again? Would she feel neglected? Would she feel unloved or unappreciated? Would she lose her fragrance as her attitude began to stink? Thankfully, these items do not feel, hear or smell; otherwise, we'd all have some explaining to do.

Let's talk about you. How do you feel when you see someone getting blessed over and over again? Do you ever feel overlooked by God? Do you ever feel unloved or unappreciated, and does your attitude rise up as a stench in God's nostrils? The truth is: We often delay wearing those things we value the most. Sure, God loves us all the same, but some of us are favored by Him, just as David was favored by Him. But think about all David had to go through to live in God's favor. Being the youngest of his father's sons, David was anointed to be king by Samuel because God had rejected Saul as king. This was not only extraordinary, but it was considered out of order, according to Jewish customs. The oldest son was always the one to get the birthright or any positions handed down by his father, but David wasn't being blessed by his earthly father. He was being blessed by his Heavenly father. Could you imagine the atmosphere around his father's house when his older brothers realized they'd been overlooked? More than that, do you think David's brothers could have endured the trials David went through? Some of the trials of David include, but are not limited to:

- Goliath was a giant who wanted to slaughter Israel, and David had to go up against him.
- King Saul and his army set out to kill David, even though David loved and respected Saul.
- Saul and his son, Jonathan were killed in war. David was so close to Jonathan that the Bible

says their souls were knit together.

- David lost his firstborn son with Bathsheba, but of course, this was because David had committed adultery with Bathsheba and set her husband at the front of the war to be killed.
- David's son Amnon raped his daughter Tamar.
- Two years later, David's son Absalom killed his brother Amnon and ran away.
- Absalom returned to kill his father David, and plotted to steal his throne.
- Absalom was killed when his head got caught up in a tree.
- More than seventy-thousand Israelites fell victim to a plague and died because of David's demand to have Israel counted.

Of course, those are only a few of David's trials, and they weren't little obstacles that stood in his way. David's problems were so great that most people today wouldn't be able to endure them. David was favored by God; therefore, David went through many trials and tribulations. David was favored by God; therefore, David was chastened (corrected) by God, and at the same time, Satan often stood up against David.

How many days were there when David looked upon the people and wished he was just an ordinary man? How many days did David wish that one of his brothers had been given the crown instead of him? How many times did David wish he was never born? We don't know this, but what we do know is that David suffered greatly because of the anointing on his life. You see, David was favored by God; therefore, David was not overlooked. David was like that pair of shoes you wear over and over again because they are comfortable. Even though those shoes are just about worn out, you continue to wear them because they are your favorite shoes, and you like the way they feel on your feet.

What's amazing about human nature is that we are creatures who often find a reason not to be satisfied from where we are. If we're overlooked, we complain about being overlooked. If we are favored, we complain about everything that comes with being favored. Think about that father who trusts one of his sons above all the rest. He not only trusts that particular son, but he favors him, so he's always sending him on errands. Sure, his brothers may feel unappreciated and unloved, but imagine what he feels like. He feels used, and he often wonders why his father gives him the bulk of the responsibilities. Most people would argue they'd want shared responsibilities, where everyone pitched in an equal amount of time and effort. But this just can't happen with all families because some sons and daughters cannot be trusted; therefore, the children who are trustworthy often find themselves carrying most of the weight. Which child would you say is blessed? It's the one with the most responsibilities, of course.

A lot of people go before the Lord and ask for one blessing after another, but what many do not understand is that responsibility comes with every new thing, every new mindset and every new realm they enter. Whenever we pray for something, God begins to remove everything and everyone from around us that's keeping us from getting what we've prayed for. Oftentimes, God removes people whose seasons have been up in our lives long ago. He removes jobs and material things that act as hindrances to us. In other words, He begins to prepare us to receive what we've asked Him for. But how

does the average person respond? They respond by rebuking the devil and trying to reopen every door the Lord has shut. People go back and re-establish friendships and relationships that God has said “no” to. People often go back and pick up mindsets that God has cast away from them, and after they've battled the will of God for their lives, they go back to God complaining once again about their situations. Many lose faith in God because they don't understand why they can't keep the things, people and mindsets that God is ripping away from them. Many turn back to what they know, and from there, they watch as God repeatedly blesses their sisters and brothers in the Lord. They watch as other Christians finally walk into their seasons to adorn the blessings that God had stored up just for them. They murmur, complain and gossip, thus causing themselves to be sent back into their wildernesses for that awful forty; whether it be forty days, forty months or forty years.

You see everything you want, but ask yourself this: Can you handle the favor of God? Because God chastens those whom He loves. Additionally, the enemy loves to attack God's beloved. Can you handle favor? Most people think they can until they've worn favor and found how heavy it is. Satan asked to attack Job, and Satan asked to sift Peter. Would you be comfortable with him specifically asking to attack you?

Imagine being a perfume bottle and sitting on the shelf for months and years at a time, rarely being worn by the person who purchased you. Imagine watching as a bottle sitting next to you is used almost daily, to the point where that bottle is almost empty. If you could move, would you push it from the shelf in hopes of it falling to the floor and shattering? What if you were a pair of shoes who's been overlooked? How would you treat the shoes that sit next to you if they happened to be your owner's favorite pair of shoes? Believe it or not, many believers find themselves in similar situations today. Many believers find themselves attacking other believers simply because they don't understand why God favors their sisters or brothers over them. But what many don't realize is the strength in the believer God is repeatedly using. That person has been through rough terrain again and again, and they've been worn thin; nevertheless, they did not break. They've stood in dirt and been cut by thorns; nevertheless, they haven't fallen apart. No matter what they've been through, they've withstood the tests of time, but many of the people who cry “unfair” are people who could not withstand even a small portion of what that person has been through. One of the worst things that God can give a person with little to no understanding is favor because they won't understand all that comes with it. Most people see all of the material and manifested things, but few know the price that person had to pay to get to where they are.

As I looked at the jewelry once again, I realized that each piece is beautiful to me, and that's why I chose it. I intend to wear every item one day, but there are certain pieces that can match just about anything I wear. There are certain pieces that can withstand everywhere I go. Then again, there are certain pieces that could not go with me everywhere, and are only to be worn on special occasions. What I've realized is each piece has its day, but only a few pieces are worn by me often, and the pieces I wear often are stronger than the rest.

The next time you see someone with the favor of God graced about them, ask yourself (or the Lord) what that person has been through. What price have they paid for the anointing and favor on their life? But one thing I urge you not to do is envy them, because one surefire way to cure envy is give the envious soul a portion of the anointing on the person they envy. Remember this: Some people want what's in someone else's life, but they can't handle what's on their life. Ordinary people often wish to be extraordinary because they don't understand the ramifications of what they are asking for, but extraordinary people often wish to be ordinary because of the price they've had to pay just to wear that favor.