

**Devotional Thoughts :: FAVOR MAKES FOR A DANGEROUS LIFE - Gary Wilkerson****FAVOR MAKES FOR A DANGEROUS LIFE - Gary Wilkerson - posted by sermonindex (), on: 2013/2/4 8:17**

The angel Gabriel spoke to Mary, the mother of Jesus, and said "Greetings, O favored one, the Lord is with you! But she was greatly troubled at the saying" (Luke 1:28-29).

I believe Mary was troubled when the angel spoke to her because she was aware of her people's history. She knew what had happened to the Israelites who found favor with God. The result was blessed, true, but it wasn't always pleasant. Consider these examples:

Abel found God's favor through his acceptable sacrifice to the Lord. But Abel's brother, Cain, was jealous because he did not find the same favor—and Abel paid with his life.

Noah found favor with God. He lived righteously in an evil generation and was spared the destruction of the flood. Yet every comfort that Noah knew in the world was wiped out. The story of his building an amazing ark wasn't some children's story; it was a sad story of judgment on a global scale. Although Noah and his family survived, they lost everything they held dear.

Lot found favor with God and was able to escape judgment. God delivered him from Sodom, a city poised to face fiery destruction. But by escaping, Lot lost almost everything dear to him, including his wife.

Joseph found favor with God and was blessed with prophetic dreams. But the very gift that marked Joseph's favor also angered those around him.

My point is that favor is dangerous—and Mary knew this. The Hebrew Scriptures made it clear in story after story: Favor can be accompanied by danger, hardship, pressure, persecution, pain, and tribulations. Sadly, much of the American church will not acknowledge this about God's favor. Many pastors teach that favor means being prosperous, having a nice house or car, never being persecuted, living without difficulties, always being on top.

Mary knew better and it showed in her response to the angel: "Behold, I am the servant of the Lord; let it be to me according to your word" (Luke 1:38). That is the response I want to have! No matter how dangerous God's favor is, I do not want to trade it for an easy, comfortable life. I do not want to be off the hook for trouble if it means missing His favor.

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