

A Lifetime of God's Favor

“Sing to the LORD, you saints of his; praise his holy name. For his anger lasts only a moment, but his favor lasts a lifetime; weeping may remain for a night, but rejoicing comes in the morning.” Psalm 30:4-5

“There's always a silver lining.” This popular encouragement is offered during particularly rough patches of life to point an unfortunate person to look for any good that might arise from the situation. To be honest, it is not a phrase that I ever found very uplifting. When things look bleak, my first instinct isn't to look for positives!

Much of what goes on in the world around us could be considered “rough.” Foreign affairs are rocky and many countries are unsettled. Financial woes cause stress from college up through retirement. Violence, crime, and a lack of decency affect our society. Marriage and family bonds are eroding. Christianity and Scripture are openly mocked and Christians are persecuted. However, these issues are nothing new to our world. Ever since the Fall in the Garden of Eden, humans have been plagued by the results of sin.

What God sees in this world that he created gives him every right to be angry. He should be angry when believers are executed for standing up for the Bible. He should be angry when people are mistreated and harmed. He should also be angry when we stick our noses into other people's business and chip away at their reputation through gossip. He should be angry over each of our sins.

God should be angry with us. But he's not. In fact, we read in Psalm 30 that “his anger lasts only a moment, but his favor lasts a lifetime.” Because Jesus took God's wrath in our place on Calvary's cross, we are gifted with a position of honor and love as God's dear children. God's righteous anger has been shifted away from us, and we now instead are showered with forgiveness and grace.

For the children of God, the “silver lining” encouragement is actually one that fits. Yes, life on this earth presents many causes for weeping. Sin and its effects are still present, and the devil never fails to do his worst. Yet, “our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all” as Paul wrote in 2 Corinthians 4:17. In heaven, “[God] will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away.” (Revelation 21:4)

We are God's people—not because of what we have done, but because of what Jesus did in our place. With this assurance, the troubles we encounter while in our temporary home on earth can't shake us. We will know hardship and sorrow, but it will never be able to diminish the rejoicing that we will experience when we reach heaven and enjoy the unending lifetime of God's favor. Sing the praises of the Lord!

Prayer:

Dear Father, when we look at our lives and the world around us, our consciences tell us that we deserve your anger. However, we know through your Gospel promises that we enjoy nothing but your favor because of Jesus. Keep our eyes focused always on our heavenly home. Amen.

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