

FAITH REWARDS: “FAVORS”

THESIS: Favor The Lord

TEXT: Psalm 34:1-19

OPEN: In **Psalm 34:1-19** let’s discover how favoring the Lord and His word rewards faith.

1. FAVOR THE LORD BY GLORIFYING HIM THROUGH WORDS AND WORKS.

A. **Psalm 34:1-3** “I will extol the Lord at all times; His praise will always be on my lips. My soul will boast in the Lord; let the afflicted hear and rejoice. Glorify the Lord with me; let us exalt His name together.”

1. **Extol** (Hebrew: *barak*) means to bless, declare, or praise.

a. *Glorify the Lord by words of rejoicing.* What may we bless God about in prayer and proclamation?

1. **Psalm 34:4-7** “I sought the Lord, and He answered me; He delivered me from all my fears. Those who look to Him are radiant; their faces are never covered with shame. This poor man called, and the Lord heard him; He saved him out of all his troubles. The angel of the Lord encamps around those who fear Him, and He delivers them.”

a. **Heard** (Hebrew: *anah*) means to listen and then to answer or respond.

1. Bless God by declaring He answers prayer by delivering the seeker from all troubles.

b. **Application:** Enhance your rejoicing by studying Scripture to see how the faithful bless God in prayer and what they proclaim about Him to others. Witness to people how the Lord has been good to you.

B. **Psalm 34:8-13** “Taste and see that the Lord is good; blessed is the man who takes refuge in Him. Fear the Lord, you His saints, for those who fear Him lack nothing. The lions may grow weak and hungry, but those who seek the Lord lack no good thing. Come, my children, listen to me; I will teach you the fear of the Lord. Whoever of you loves life and desires to see many good days, keep your tongue from evil and your lips from speaking lies.”

1. **Fear** (Hebrew: *yir’ah*) means to respect or revere.

a. *Glorify the Lord by words of righteousness.* How may we show respect for the Lord?

1. **1 Corinthians 4:12b-13** “When we are cursed, we bless; when we are persecuted, we endure it; when we are slandered, we answer kindly.”

a. **Illustration: The Story of C.H. Spurgeon Repaying Insult With Blessing**

The late C.H. Spurgeon was passing the house of a bitter woman once and she greeted him with a volley of insults and curses. Smiling, the pastor said, ‘Yes, thank you. I am quite well.’ Undaunted, the “lady” burst into another string of curse words and insults. Spurgeon replied: ‘Yes, it does look as if it’s going to rain.’ Surprised as well as exasperated, the woman exclaimed, ‘Bless the man, he’s as deaf as a post! What’s the use of talking to him?’

2. **Ephesians 4:29** “Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen.”

a. **Building** (Greek: *oikodome*) means to benefit, be constructive, or strengthen.

1. A key to benefitting someone according to their needs is to listen, observe, and think – putting your mind on them. “Do unto others as you would have them do to you” *Matthew 7:12*) and pray for wisdom (*James 1:5-8*).

3. **Colossians 3:8-10** “You must rid yourselves of all such things as these: anger, rage, malice, slander, and filthy language from your lips. Do not lie to each other, since you have taken off your old self with its practices and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge in the image of its Creator.”

a. Renew yourself in the knowledge of God. It’s not about “being yourself” or the “best you”—what’s refreshing for you and to others is being more like Christ.

- b. **Application:** Summer Bible studies (all adults Wed. 6:30 pm & ladies/girls Sun. 3:00 pm)
- C. **Psalm 34:14-16a** “Turn from evil and do good; seek peace and pursue it. The eyes of the Lord are on the righteous and His ears are attentive to their cry; the face of the Lord is against those who do evil...”
 - 1. **Righteous** (Hebrew: *saddiyq*) means innocent, just, or upstanding.
 - a. *Glorify the Lord by works of righteousness.*
 - 1. **James 2:22-24** “Abraham’s faith and his actions were working together, and his faith was made complete by what he did. And the Scripture was fulfilled that says, ‘Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness,’ and he was called God’s friend. You see that a person is justified by what he does and not by faith alone.”
 - a. **Illustration:** (*Wendell Doty’s faith story after an accident – feels like hitting a home run, but one still needs to run the bases*)

CONCLUSION: Let’s glorify the Lord by words of rejoicing as well as words and works of righteousness. What’s the faith rewards? Immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine (Eph 3:20-21). Consider the stories of Sharon & June from my preaching days close to home in Virginia:

Illustration: (*The inspirational faith of Sharon Altizer and June Quesenberry*)

The Inspirational Stories Of Sharon Altizer & June Quesenberry

Sharon’s Story

When I was ministering with a church near my hometown in Virginia I was privileged to know B.J. and Sharon Altizer. I was first introduced to them through a traumatic situation involving their only child whose name was Jeff. He was 25-years old at the time of the wreck that claimed his life. He was thrown from the vehicle into a watery ravine where he drowned.

If that wasn’t bad enough, his mother Sharon found out soon afterwards that she suffered from a rare disease that Jeff had, too. Following that discovery Sharon had major surgery relating to a different illness and a few months later had to undergo reconstructive surgery after being kicked in the face by her horse. That’s not all. Shortly thereafter the father B.J. (Sharon’s husband) contracted a form of leukemia and was involved in a head-on collision that he survived with few injuries.

During the time B.J. was receiving treatment in the hospital for leukemia, Sharon told me: “We praise God because it could be worse and He has given us the strength to make it.”

June’s Story

When I was ministering with the same church in Virginia I also was blessed to know a woman named June Quesenberry. A year or so before I met June her husband passed away. The occasion for me meeting her was a tragic one. I attended the funeral for her only son whose name is Steve. He and his wife were shot to death on a mission of mercy involving a domestic crisis. The killer was notorious for other violent behavior. June’s 5-year old step-grandson witnessed this horrible crime in the backseat of his dying parent’s car.

Not long after this happened June’s only daughter whose name is Pat contracted Lou Gehrig’s disease. Pat had to eventually relinquish her duties as a school teacher and choir director of her church’s choir. More than one time in my conversations with June—she would say that if it weren’t for the good Lord—she wouldn’t make it.

Psalm 34:17-19 “The righteous cry out, and the Lord hears them; He delivers them from all their troubles. The Lord is close to the brokenhearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit. A righteous man may have many troubles, but the Lord delivers him from them all...”

CLOSE: Favor the Lord by glorifying Him through words and works. It's faith rewards.

