

Favor for a Lifetime

Psalm 30

I will extol you, O Lord, for you have drawn me up
and have not let my foes rejoice over me.

O Lord my God, I cried to you for help,
and you have healed me.

O Lord, you have brought up my soul from Sheol;
you restored me to life from among those who go down to the pit.

Sing praises to the Lord, O you his saints,
and give thanks to his holy name.

**For his anger is but for a moment,
and his favor is for a lifetime.**

Weeping may tarry for the night,
but joy comes with the morning.

As for me, I said in my prosperity, "I shall never be moved."
By your favor, O Lord,
you made my mountain stand strong;
you hid your face; I was dismayed.

To you, O Lord, I cry,
and to the Lord I plead for mercy:
"What profit is there in my death, if I go down to the pit?
Will the dust praise you?
Will it tell of your faithfulness?
Hear, O Lord, and be merciful to me!
O Lord, be my helper!"

**You have turned for me my mourning into dancing;
you have loosed my sackcloth and clothed me with gladness,
that my glory may sing your praise and not be silent.
O Lord my God, I will give thanks to you forever!**

Today the psalmist said:

**For his anger is but for a moment,
and his favor is for a lifetime.**

This verse struck me. For in our world today, how often is anger for a lifetime and favor for a moment?!

People often hold grudges for a very long time, even a lifetime! *I will never forget what that person did to me!* And holding onto that bitterness and resentment in their heart.

Remember the feuding families, the Hatfields and the McCoys? (If you don't, Google them and read their story!) That was a feud that went beyond lifetimes to generations of the family.

And even when we don't mean to, how often do old hurts come roaring back into our lives, causing trouble in our relationships with others?

Yes, anger can last a lifetime!

And how about favor? You could have done a lot of good things, but what have you done for me lately? It seems like the good we do can vanish as quickly as the morning mist, but our sins hang on and on.

That's the way of it in our world.

But not so with God! He is exactly the opposite. *His* anger last only a moment, but His favor lasts a lifetime. What a wonderful verse for us to ponder and know the love of God for us.

The superscription to this psalm says that it is "a song at the dedication of the temple." The temple was the place of God graciously dwelling with His

people. He wanted to be with us to share His holiness with us in the forgiveness of our sins. That forgiveness would be accomplished by His Son, Jesus, on the cross. There, on the cross, all the anger and wrath of God against our sin was poured out upon Jesus. In those few hours (or moments), all the wrath and anger of God was poured out, so it is finished. It lasted a moment (which is not to underestimate its enormity!), but it is now finished.

So now for us, in Jesus, there is forgiveness. There is the favor of God. And unlike the anger and wrath that was poured out then on the cross, God's favor lasts a lifetime! When you come to church, His favor (not anger) is there for you. When you pray and repent, His favor is there for you. When you read His Word - yup, more favor! And it will never run out. As I said in a sermon recently, **God always has more forgiveness than you have sin.** And that will always be true. Because Jesus' death on the cross atoned for the sin of the world. Every sin of every person of every time and every place. Just before He died Jesus said, "It is finished." And it was. God's wrath and anger, and our sin.

So rejoice! Or as the psalmist put it at the end of this psalm:

**You have turned for me my mourning into dancing;
you have loosed my sackcloth and clothed me with gladness,
that my glory may sing your praise and not be silent.
O Lord my God, I will give thanks to you forever!**

Lord Jesus, thank You for atoning for my sin on the cross. Help me always to repent of my sin and rejoice in Your favor and forgiveness. When I am tempted to hold a grudge, remind me of Your favor and help me to forgive. And when I despair or life is difficult, bring to my remembrance that You have promised to be with me through it all and that I am not alone. Fill me with gladness always, that I praise Your name now and forever. Amen.