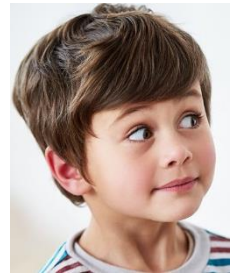


Our three sons were all quite different from each other. One was very practical, mischievous, had to be kept an eye on and would have a go at anything. Another was a 'copycat' who would follow the practical one around and copy everything that he did. The other would usually just sit and watch what the other two were doing but would not join in unless bullied to do so; he was a 'bookworm' who was far more interested in reading a book than joining the antics of the other two. One or other might need extra attention because of illness or a problem but generally I treated them all the same and did not have a favourite.



One night there was a serious fire in the adjoining terraced house. Fortunately there was no damage to our property, but the next day it set me thinking which of the three boys I would rescue if I could only rescue one of them. Since I had no favourite what a choice I would have to make. I decided that the practical one would find his own way out, the 'copycat' would follow so I would have to rescue the other one who would be sitting there like chips doing nothing!

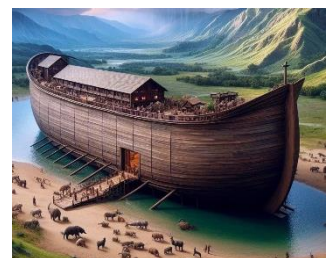


Does God have favourites??????

He does not treat us all the same, but is that because He has favourites? Most definitely not. God loves us all equally, so much so that He created each one of us uniquely. Each individual is different from all of the other millions of people He has brought to life. If this is the case, then why does He treat some differently from others?

There are a number of instances that we can read about in the Bible where it says, '.....*found favour in the sight of the Lord.*' This does not mean that these people were God's favourites, but that at a certain time He gave favour to them for a particular reason. God wants to have a relationship with each one of us and when a person pleases Him by making a special effort and goes out of his way to enhance that relationship, then God grants him a favour in some way.

One of the first people whom we can read about is Noah. God was upset at how people were behaving, but we read that Noah found favour with God because he was a righteous man. God then went on to save him and his family at the time of the flood. God did not do this because He loved Noah more than everyone else, but as a result of the deep relationship that Noah had with Himself.



When the time came for Moses to lead the Israelites out of Egypt, God not only planned to bring them out safely but also caused the Egyptians to favour them by giving them gold and silver jewellery and some clothing. When



you think about it, this was a very strange thing to do, but then, God does not always do things in the ways we expect. He always has a reason for doing what He does because He knows each one of us intimately and knows the future plans that he has for us.

Jeremiah and bad news

In Jeremiah 16 we read how God told Jeremiah to give a message of real doom and gloom to the people because they were worshipping idols and were no longer listening to the one true God who had created them. Jeremiah had to tell them about all of the bad and unpleasant things that were going to happen to them because God said that He would show them no favour whilst they were living their lives in that way. On a positive note though, God also said that if they mended their ways and returned to Him, then He would protect them from their enemies, restore them and would be with them.



When an angel spoke to Mary, the mother of Jesus, his first words were, “Hail, O favoured one, the Lord is with you.” We read that she was ‘greatly troubled’ by this greeting and wondered what it was all about. Poor Mary was only a teenager at the time so the fact that an angel had even come and spoken to her would have been scary enough! The angel then repeats that she has found favour with God. Wow – What a thing to be told. She is then informed what the result of God’s favour is going to be. (Luke 1: 31) *‘You will conceive in your womb and bear a son and you shall call His name ‘Jesus’.*’ Even after that declaration she would probably be wondering to what the angel was referring. We can see the sort of relationship that Mary had with God because, despite how she must have felt after the angel’s explanation, her words were, “I am the handmaid of the Lord, let it be to me according to your word.” No wonder she found favour with God.

None of us are God’s favourite, but all of us have equal opportunity to gain His favour by deepening our relationship with such a loving God.

Psalm 84: 11 – 12. *For the Lord God bestows favour and honour. No good thing does the Lord withhold from those who walk uprightly. O Lord of hosts, blessed is the man who trusts in Thee.*’

Proverbs 3: 34. *‘To the humble He shows favour.’*

Apart from Jesus, who is your favourite person in the Bible about whom you enjoy reading?

My favourite Psalm is 139. Which one is your favourite?