[00:00:00] **Gary Spicer:** Well, it's great to be with you again this morning. Hang on, we're just getting everything sorted out. Everyone. Sleep well? Well, it wasn't overwhelming, but anyway, it's great to be here again with you. If you're here for the first time this morning, welcome. My name's Gary Spicer and been a pastor for 35 years.

[00:00:20] Not pastoring church now, but leading a number of ministries and just wanting to see an impact in the marketplace for Jesus. There is so many people out there waiting to hear Jesus. And what you are involved in is so exciting too because what you're doing in the maritime ministries, you're touching people of, there's art and that's just tremendous.

[00:00:40] What I'm gonna speak to you about this morning is the title is Walking in the Favor of God. We Plan something, but then when we set our journey, we definitely need the favor of God upon where we go, what we do, who we touch. And I've learned, you know, that I am not enough. Him in me is much better than Gary alone.

[00:01:05] And we have to sometimes invoke and invite the favor of God so that when we tell our story, our story is full of him, not us. If it's all about us, then we are on a self-seeking journey, aren't we? We're on an egotistical journey that is just about what we represent. And all my life I've just said, Lord, here I am wholly available for you.

[00:01:31] As for me, I wanna serve you Lord. And I think, you know, when we reach heaven, I've always got these words in my mind. You know, I want to hear those words. Well done, thy good and faithful servant. Don't tell me anything else. Just I want to hear that because I've lived then a life of living to please God, not myself.

[00:01:52] And it's a challenge. But also I know that I also want to be representative, and I know you do too, of being involved in seeing lives transformed you. And I can't transform any life, but him and us, for the spirit of God all over us can see lives transformed. Amen. And I was talking with someone yesterday just about the whole thing that I have not been called to save anybody, neither have you.

[00:02:17] But I've been called to sow seed, water seed and allow the Holy Spirit to bring forth the life that he plants in each of us. Yeah. And that's our journey. Sometimes we may witness and we may go away, and it may be they never got saved, but perhaps God was just using you either to sow a seed or water a seed and someone else reap.

[00:02:40] I found many times when I've reaped many of sown seeds in that person, not just me, we are part of his process and we need to have his favor on our lives. Amen. I'm trying to talk slower. You may notice I am trying to be disciplined and not let my passion overtake me this morning. What I want us to do before I get into this word, you know, as I said yesterday, it's great to have Helen Shell and George with us who work with me and the ministries and just that we represent.

[00:03:15] But both George and shell have been a product or have come through a lions program that we run, which is all about launching pioneers and also entrepreneurial spirit. We want to feed it for the kingdom. Even if we've seen business people come on the course, make lots of money, there has to be a kingdom purpose on why they make money.

[00:03:35] Hear me in this country. I dunno what it's like in others, but there's a real poverty spirit and a self-centered way of what I've got. I'm going to keep, and God has called each of us to be a river, not a reservoir. Something that flows into us and can flow out of us. Amen. And you know, we've seen that and these guys just great rivers for the kingdom of God.

[00:03:59] And George, you know, didn't start great. And I'm gonna get him to just give his short testimony this morning and I think you'll be really impacted because the great thing is it's not how we start our lives, it's how we finish that is really the key. And in the middle of that is redemption, the cross forgiveness, brand new start.

[00:04:20] And even though the devil will come to us and remind us of our past often, praise God, it's cleared, it's paid for. We are clean, we're blessed. George, come and share your testimony. Let's welcome George.

[00:04:38] **George Herrera:** Thank you.

[00:04:39] Thanks, Gary. Good morning everybody. It's such an honor and a privilege to be here with you guys.

[00:04:44] And just a big thanks to Cameron for inviting us. And yesterday was my first sailing experience, and I absolutely loved it. It was so cool. But Gary was right. Just about the way that we start our lives, sometimes we don't have a choice. And you know, for me I grew up in California and my father was a cocaine addict.

[00:05:01] He was a crystal meth addict. My father was an alcoholic. He was a very angry, very violent man. And he had a short fuse. He was often angry at me and my mother. And he used to beat my mother in front of me. Used to beat me up a lot as well as a child. And my mother is schizophrenic, so she suffers from severe mental health issues.

[00:05:22] And so growing up in a house like that our household was just not a nice place. And as a, when I was still young, I, where I'm from, we say I got off the porch, which means that I just went out into the streets, out into the estate and I just started hanging around. But in California, when you do that, there's nothing but gangs.

[00:05:39] And so I was 13 years old when I joined the gang. I was 13 years old when I became an alcoholic. When I started doing drugs, when I started smoking cigarettes. And I was 13 years old when I started getting involved in gang related activity. And I remember when I was 15 years old, I was at I was at a house party and at this point, me and my cousins, we were in the gang and we were doing a lot of bad things.

[00:06:00] And there was some older guys I. From the neighborhood. And they were like my age now. They were in their thirties, I was 15 years old, and they got fed up with us and they literally started telling everybody, when we see George and his cousins, we're gonna kill 'em. Right? And, you know, back in them days, death threats for us was like a everyday thing.

[00:06:16] So I'm at this house party, I'm walking around, I'm drinking, I'm smoking, I'm just, I'm, I'm on my ones, I'm by myself. I'm having a good time, and I'm talking to somebody. And then all of a sudden I hear a voice from behind me and the voice says, yeah, what's up now? And I turned around and I was surrounded by six grown men, the men that were looking for us.

[00:06:36] And and in that moment, and when I saw 'em surround me, and I knew what type of guys they were, I already knew what was gonna happen. I dropped my, my drink and I just started fighting. So I just set pace right away. Boom, boom, boom. I started punching. I hit two or three guys and in my head I was like, oh, I'm gonna win this fight.

[00:06:51] Right? And, I was mistaken. And what happened is that after I hit the first two, three guys, they literally just all hit me at once. They group assaulted me. They had me on the ground, they were beating me up. And at 1.2 of the guys grabbed my arms, they pinned me down to the ground, and a third guy came up and he started to stab me.

[00:07:09] And I'm being stabbed in my side. And I remember in that moment, I just kinda like looked up into the night sky, and in my head I thought I was gonna die. Right? I see this guy coming for like the, the fatal blow. And in that moment I'm just kind of say, saying bye, right? And I was very lucky that my cousin came at that moment, and the dude who was over me, about to stab me, my cousin comes and he just boom, hits him with the upper cup.

[00:07:32] My other, my other cousin comes, he pulls out a gun, he starts shooting in the air, ba blah, blah. And everybody just kind of dispersed. I was able to get up and defend myself and just kind of finish fighting and everybody kind of ran away and everybody left the scene. And when I tried to go back into the house, what happened is that one of my friends, she's standing at the door and she's looking at me and she looks so panicked and she's like, oh my gosh, are you okay?

[00:07:54] And I was just like, yeah, I'm cool. I'm cool. She's like, are you sure you're all right? I said, yeah, I'm all right. She's like, are you sure you're okay? And I was just like, you know, what is she on about? And I, I had completely forgot that I had actually got stabbed because of the adrenaline. And when I looked at myself, I was covered in blood from head to toes.

[00:08:10] I mean, I was just literally, I was leaking blood outta my side. In California, if you go to the hospital with a knife or a gunshot wound, you have to file a police report. And if you don't file a police report, the police filed charges against you for not cooperating. Now, me, back in those days, I didn't want any of that type of drama.

[00:08:28] I didn't wanna snitch on nobody, so I didn't go to the hospital. Instead, what we did is we went to the pharmacy. And we got, you know, I was young, I was still silly. I was trying to act tough. So we got a little bit of Bacardi, kept drinking, got some alcohol, some hydrogen peroxide, and I put all of that stuff on the wound.

[00:08:44] What my friend did is that she got some super glue and she opened up the wound and she put a super glue inside me, dumped it like she emptied out the whole thing, closes the wound, and then she put super glue on the top of it to close it. And that is how we, that's how we stopped the bleeding. The problem was, is that I just kept drinking that night and I just kept partying that night.

[00:09:06] So it was about six, seven in the morning when I kind of realized is maybe this wasn't a very good idea and I had all this super glue on my side. So what I did is I ripped the super glue off, and then what happened is that I just had a big, I had a hole on the side right here by my rib cage. I, I was running around like that for three days.

[00:09:26] After three days, it got infected. I had it was, I started to turn green, like Helen's jumper. I mean, I, I looked like I looked like a zombie. I had puss coming outta my side. I had high temperature. I was throwing up. I was dying. And one of my friends, he comes up to me, he says, like, he's like, bro, you're, you're literal.

[00:09:43] You're gonna die. I said, I know, but I can't go to the hospital. What do we do? And he tells me that he takes bullets outta people so that he, he can patch me up. So I said, cool. Come, come over to my house. I moved outta my house, my parents' house when I was 14 years old, 'cause of the abuse and everything.

[00:09:57] And I had my own apartment. I had my own flat. And so we go to my house and I thought, I thought my friend was gonna come with like a little doctor bag, like a first aid kit. He didn't come with none of that. Instead, he literally just came inside, went to the kitchen and he put a, a kitchen knife on the stove, on the hob.

[00:10:13] And he got the kitchen knife really, really, really, really hot. And so I just gripped the oven handle. I put a rag in my mouse and he just came up and he just pressed the hot knife against my sights. And he just burned it closed. The problem is he never actually did this before. So when he pressed it against my side, when he, when he, it is really bad.

[00:10:35] When he pressed, when he pressed the knife against my side, he let go. So now the knife was stuck on me. So I started, I, that's, that was the point where I started panicking. I'm like, ah. I was like, get it off, get it off. So he comes and he just rips the knife off me. And do you know what, like, I'll never forget the smell of my flesh cooking.

[00:10:54] Like it smelled like a, it smelled like, like barbecue pork or something like that. That was the smell, honestly. It was, yeah. Hopefully not. But the crazy thing is, is that, do you know what? It killed the infection. Like it actually cured, like it sealed the wound. It killed the infection. I started doing jumping jacks.

[00:11:15] I was like, I'm back. And boom, I went out and I, I hit road. I was out with the homies again that same night. And the truth is, I continue to live my life like that for several years, I got a hundred stories like that until one day I hit rock bottom. Because of my substance abuse issues, because of my bad character, I had pushed everybody away and everybody had taken a step back until one day I realized that I was just completely and utterly alone.

[00:11:42] I didn't have anybody around me. I had nobody I could count on, no friends, no relatives. Everybody was gone. And I hit a really dark place in my life, really, really dark place in my life. And I was like that for a while. One day I was walking back to my flat and there was a young man from my neighborhood, he seen me and he could just look at me and he could tell that there was something wrong.

[00:12:04] And he saw me and he's just like, yo, George, are you okay? And I ignored him at first, but he just kept calling my name. So I turned around. I was like, what do you want, man? And he's just like, are you all right? In that moment when he asked me if I was okay, I was shocked because I realized it had been years since anybody asked me how I was doing.

[00:12:23] And you know, I grew up around the type of men where, you know, we weren't, we weren't allowed to talk about our feelings. We weren't allowed to be vulnerable. But in that moment, it was the first time in my life that I actually opened up and I spoke about everything that was going on with me. And I really thank God for that young man because you know, thank God he wasn't the type of Christian that, you know, told me to read this scripture and pray this prayer and everything's gonna be okay.

[00:12:47] Thank God he wasn't the type of Christian that told me that, you know, God is gonna take your mess and he's gonna give you a message. Thank God he didn't do any of those things. Thank God he wasn't the type of guy to like, try to just take me to the pub, right, and buy me a pint and just kind of forget our problems.

[00:13:01] Instead, what he did was he just listened. He listened to me for like 40 minutes. I had a big old moan about everything that was going on, and at the end of it, he said something like this. He says George, I want you to know something. He said, I'm a Christian. And even though I'm a Christian, I still suffer.

[00:13:18] I still go through really difficult things, but it's because of my faith in Jesus Christ that I have hope for a better tomorrow. He said this, he says, ever since I've met you, I've been praying that we could be friends for the rest of our lives. But what I've been really praying for, he said, is that one day I get to greet you in heaven.

[00:13:37] And when he said that to me, it just, it shocked me. It hit me. And I, nobody had ever spoken to me like that. Nobody had ever cared about me that much in my entire life. And I realized in that moment that this young man had something that I didn't, he had hope. I had no hope in my life. I had no meaning. I had no purpose.

[00:13:55] And I feel like hope is so important. I believe that we need hope as much as we need food and water, and we find our hope in Jesus Christ. And I told him in that moment, I said, listen man, I don't even know what you're on about. I have idea what you're talking about. I never even been to a church my whole life.

[00:14:11] You have something that I need. I realized in that moment that he was being genuine. This wasn't a transaction. He genuinely cared for me. And I said, I need what you have. And he said, great. All we have to do is pray. And so I prayed in that moment for Jesus Christ to be my Lord and Savior. I repented of my sins and slowly I began the journey.

[00:14:31] I started you know, going to church, started going to Bible studies. I started volunteering at church, getting involved in ministry. Eventually I came to England to go to Bible college. I did an undergraduate degree in youth ministry, and then I did a master's degree in leadership. And it was along that journey that actually I started the Lions program.

[00:14:50] And the Lions program for me was so life changing, so pivotal that I needed people like Gary that just believed in me, that believed in the calling that God had put on my life. I needed people like Gary and the other Lions and the other people, me, and Shell did it in the same year. And I needed people like Shell in my life that believed in the projects that we were doing, that believed in the way that God was working innocent through us, and that was the way that I worked out my salvation.

[00:15:15] So thanks folks. Nice being here.

[00:15:19] **Gary Spicer:** Powerful. The only reason I wanted George to share that, not so you've got all green yourselves about everything that's going on in the knife and everything, but the power of hope. The power of hope that you and I carry. We talked yesterday about it's not the ministry, it's the message.

[00:15:38] And it's not the message of preaching, it's the message within us, the life of hope. And you know, people can see that in us. You know, you sometimes think, you know, we are invisible or people don't understand. But you know, often people are watching and seeing how we live, how we overcome, how we carry hope, that they will even question.

[00:15:59] And sometimes we are looking for times to witness and people are looking for people like us with hope. Not our own hope, but our hope in Christ. Amen. And so George is not just carry a great testimony, but he's living full on for Jesus and see other lives transform. Amen. And I appreciate you sharing that George.

[00:16:17] So I wanna talk to you this morning about walking in the favor of God. As I said, right at the beginning, the, the whole journey that God has called us to and called you to, you're gonna need the favor of God. You're gonna need him going before you. You're gonna need him with you. And you're gonna need, when you look back at regret his cross showing you, you're forgiven.

[00:16:43] 'cause I don't know about you, but when I've done things wrong, I, and I'm trying to do things right. I have whispers in my ears, who do you think you are? Who do you think you are? The whole con, the whole AC accusation comes back to us of like, do you know what you did? Do you know what you feel? Do you know what your attitude is?

[00:17:05] And in those moments of whispers from the wrong person, it can affect how we walk in God. It restricts our walk. And I just really want to include you this morning that on your journey, God is wanting to pour his favor into your lives. Amen. That he goes before you. He's with you, he's on the journey with you, and he wants you to succeed far more than anybody else.

[00:17:29] And not succeed and win for you, but for win for him, his kingdom extended and expanded. Amen. And just a few things here. I mean, you know this, but we live in a brand driven world where we wear things with certain names on them. And sometimes the whole thing with the society we live in, certainly in the western world is, will you wear my brand?

[00:17:53] Will you advertise my brand? Apple says this, Apple's strap line is think different law. L'Oreal, which is obviously cosmetics, it's because you are worth it. Tesco, which is a supermarket in England, says Every little helps. No, just do it. Marmite. Does everyone know what Marmite is? Love it Or hate it. Hate it.

[00:18:23] Hate it. Yeah. I knew we'd get some comments there. As a Christ follower Favor is our brand. Hope is what we carry. And so as much as people wear brands to bring identity, our identity needs to be blessed and favored. Now, I'm gonna explain some of this because favor and blessed doesn't mean everything goes right.

[00:18:49] What it means is his favor is with us, even in the valley. His favor helps us keep walking through difficulty, and we need to understand this morning that if we are to complete the journey God's called us to, we are gonna need his favor upon our lives. Amen. Isaiah 61, I wanna read this to you. It's one of really my mantras.

[00:19:13] It's, it's a, you know, God put this in the Bible for me. You know, sometimes you've got scriptures and it's like, that's mine. Well, this is mine. The spirit of the sovereign Lord is on me because the Lord has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to bind up the broken hearted, to proclaim freedom for the captives and release from darkness for the prisoners, to proclaim the the year of the Lord's favor and the day of vengeance of our God, to comfort all who mourn and to provide for those who grieve in Zion, to be stow on them, a crown of beauty instead of ashes testimony this morning from ashes to be well.

[00:20:02] I dunno if he's that beautiful, but you know what I mean. Inside

[00:20:08] the oil of joy instead of mourning and the garment of praise, instead of a spirit of despair, they will be called oaks of righteousness, a planting of the Lord. For the splendor, for the display of his splendor. What a great exchange transformation that each of us sit here today, that we once were something and now was someone else that we once had no hope.

[00:20:37] But now we have hope. And the whole thing, when God changes our lives, it's not just for us. Amen. It's that we would carry something to the world. Every person we meet, we carry something. And I get really frustrated. And as a pastor, I was really frustrated. When I see people receive Christ and they're miserable as anything, just hear me.

[00:20:59] That their problems define them, not actually the favor and the blessing of God. Now you and I today, we could have a testimony time of all our problems, and it would probably never end. Oh, I've got this one. I've got that one. And do you know that's here wise said Jesse. That's true. But the great thing of God's favorite is when we apply truth to what is true, we come into a different attitude and place.

[00:21:27] Like right now, you know I've, I've got loads of impossibilities in some of the things I'm doing. I'm sure you have too. There's things that you think, if God doesn't turn up, I'm in trouble. Now, you can see that as a bad place or a good place. Seriously, our attitude determines how we see things. So right now, you know, I've got some things.

[00:21:49] If God really doesn't turn up in the next couple of three weeks, you know, I'm really in it. I'm in trouble. And I'm sure you could say the same, but there's a hope, there's a favor that I believe God's put upon us and put upon me that he's working on my behalf right now while I even preach. He's working already in your tomorrow, not just your today.

[00:22:12] So what you go back to from this conference, you could say, well, it's been a great time we've met. I feel really encouraged. But you're still going back to the same challenge and the same problem. But hopefully you will go back with more hope and more understanding of God's favor on your life. Amen. I just, you know, as we come today and we come around God's words, we've gotta understand that our brand, our identity, needs to be favor blessed, and that we're overcomers.

[00:22:45] I just feel, you know so much of my spirit, that God doesn't look for perfect people. Well, we'd all fall short of that, wouldn't we? But what God does look for is overcomers. Overcomers. The Bible talks a lot about overcoming, well, you've gotta have a problem or an impossibility to overcome. So welcome. I. If you've got an impossibility, it's okay.

[00:23:13] It's an opportunity for God to demonstrate his miraculous power in and over your lives. Amen. And we walk with God and say, God, you've called me to this. You're walking with me in this, and I'm gonna see your power outworked and new miraculous power outworked over that problem. The problem's still there, but we're walking with a God who specializes in impossibility.

[00:23:37] Amen. Talk Jesse about my own son and just how much God saved his life. It seemed impossible. Now. The walking of the journey was painful and favor does not take us out of pain. It walks us through it. Really important. 'cause sometimes we are like the Western world. We want to press a button of God and get an answer straight away.

[00:24:02] All is well. But God just thinks in us on the walk. That becomes our story and our testimony. Amen. You know, when George found the Lord, it was great, but he had to walk a journey. Discipleship, understanding how God works, trust in him out of his brokenness into healing. You know, when we get saved, we're truly saved, but our pasts can still haunt us.

[00:24:30] When we're saved, we're forgiven fully, but I have to keep going back to the cross to remind myself that I'm truly forgiven. It's a journey. It's really important. We understand that. See, the good news in a troubled world is that God works from the inside out, not from the outside in. And so even the circumstances that we have today, you may carry on this journey of ministry, on this journey that the Lord's called you to.

[00:25:00] You know, the strength doesn't just come from circumstances being answered. It comes from a faith, a trust of being anchored in the Lord in a powerful way. God's favor is the guarantee of his presence and, and the provision of his power to accomplish his special purposes in and through our lives.

[00:25:23] It doesn't take us away, as I said, from the valley, but it keeps us walking in his intended purposes. It's not intended for your convenience or comfort favor, but for his purpose to be accomplished in your life. I dunno, in the Western world, we just want comfort, don't we really? If we're honest, we want an easy life.

[00:25:44] Hallelujah. No, God's just saying so. That's fine. Yeah. But we want an easy life. Really. We want a life without trouble. But the Bible tells me you will always have trouble, but you will overcome, and it's so important here that as we write on their favor, is a supernatural deposit of its presence and power in our lives.

[00:26:04] You can't go and buy it. You can't work it up. It's a gift from him, but you need it to accomplish his purposes in and through your life. Amen.

[00:26:19] For example, Noah found God's favor in the form of an arc that he built to preserve the human race, but people mocked him while he was building it. I don't know about you, but I'm sure you've been mocked sometimes. You crazy people doing this boat ministry. Why didn't you just get a house? What do you mean you've sold your house to buy the boat?

[00:26:42] You crazy people. You're not taking the sensible route. You know what the sensible route is, but something inside you bigger than even common sense. Sometimes it's pulling you into his purposes. It's saying, do this. Now, I do believe in the wisdom of counselors. I don't feel that we sometimes have to be so reckless, but faith is all spelt risk.

[00:27:08] Faith is all spelt risk. And so you know, Noah, God says, build a boat. He'd never seen rain. He didn't really know. He knew the Jew on the ground. The water had come forth from the the ground through springs, but he'd never seen rain. He didn't understand what a flood would be. Just think about it. He was a crazy man, but he heard God and he was obedient to God.

[00:27:35] Can I just say that the door, we open to the favor of God. One of the first doors is obedience. We say yes to God. When others around us may scoff, we say, yes, Noah found favoring God, but was mocked. And it wasn't just mocked for 10 minutes, actually haven't got the finger, but it was years. It took him to build the boat.

[00:27:57] He imagine getting up every day, oh, Noah, you stupid man, Noah, what are you doing? And people would bring it, be like a tose guide, wouldn't it? Let's go and see Noah and have a laugh every day. It'd wear you down. And sometimes we get worn down through obedience of doing the right thing. But I wanna encourage you today, the favor of God comes upon those who are obedient and feeds our spirit to overcome the mockus.

[00:28:29] Jesus was the perfect example of his father's favor, but it ultimately led to death. Joseph faced difficulty everywhere he went, but he found favor with God who was with him in every season of life. What I'm trying to say is today favor doesn't come to make you comfortable. It often comes with trouble, but favor comes to give us hope that we keep walking through the valley of trouble, to the place that God wants to take us.

[00:28:58] So again, today on your journey, you've planned it well. You're now walking and the first thing you feel is trouble, rejection, mocking, whatever it may be. You are in the right place, but don't become alone in doing good. The Bible says he never leaves himself forsakes and say, man,

[00:29:22] I dunno. You know, I love looking at revivals past and. Studying and seeing how God to, and there's a man, as you would probably know, called Evan Roberts, who was the catalyst for the Welsh revival many years ago. I've actually went to the chapel where, you know, he preached in Wales, and obviously it's not revival there now, but he was just amazing to go into that place.

[00:29:42] To go into the pulpit and think years ago the message wasn't just priest, but priest with fire. Where, where it didn't just change the church, it changed the whole of society. And if you read anything on the wild, it, it impacted every part of community and culture. You know, the pubs went outta business.

[00:30:02] They say the, the, the ponies that were pulling the carts of coal underneath suddenly stopped working because they found the people who was working with them was using a different language and not swearing anymore and they didn't know how to obey. It's a crazy world, but it changed culture. And Evan s, who was a catalyst, he said this.

[00:30:23] I read it in his book. He read this, which is really interesting. He said, one day I went to bed, Evan walked Roberts and awoke a lion, and he then writes A number of years later, one night I went to bed a lion and awoke Evan Roberts. It's a really interesting thing. Now, what am I saying there? There are seasons in life that we have to keep walking.

[00:30:50] We've gotta follow the cloud of his, of his direction in our lives. What he's asked you to do, you might say, I know the direction, and then he goes like that. Better to follow God in his ways, because he goes before us and sees what ahead of us. Also, those who carry a ministry and anointing today, this story says to me, everything has its season.

[00:31:14] God has seasons in our lives, and if we are in the right season, there's an anointing in favor upon us, but it can live from us. It doesn't mean God has departed from us. It just means, Hey Gary, I've got something new for you. I need to get your attention. You are walking and you've started to make your ministry the God, a God or the God, and I just need to get your attention because now what I'm gonna do, I wanna take this direction.

[00:31:42] Oh God, I'm enjoying this. It's not yours, Gary. It's mine. Your mine. And so I lead you. Yeah. But God, this is such a great ministry. You know, God, we can do great things through this. Yes. But I'm just gonna take you a different direction to bring you back into my way. See, God is a jealous God. He wants you more than your ministry.

[00:32:08] He wants you more than your vote. I. He wants you more than your desires, and he teaches us much on the journey ever. Roberts said one day, one day I to bed ever Roberts and I woke a lion. You know what the lion was? It was a confidence. It was a courage. It was, I can do anything through Christ who strengthens me attitude.

[00:32:30] It was like, I have the favor of God in this area to preach. People get saved. When I was in the chapel where the wow survival really was centered around, there was an old man there that's was the caretaker, looked after the building. I think he was as old as the building, but I never asked him how old he was.

[00:32:50] But it turned out that his great-grandfather was actually in the Welsh revival, that he just passed down a generation looking after the chapel. And I said to him, what stories have you been told? What were people crying when they worshiped God in such an anointed? He said, oh, they only ever cried one thing.

[00:33:07] I said, what did they cry? He said they'd raise their hands or they'd kneel to the floor and say, God, bend me, God mold me. And he said that was their constant cry. A submission of their will and acceptance of his will over their lives. And we can be passionate about what we do, but he's more passionate in who we are.

[00:33:31] And I think that's when I heard that, I thought, Lord, help me keep that attitude. Help me keep that attitude, Lord. Bend me, Lord. Mold me continually. 'cause if you've been around a few years like me, you know you never arrive. I might be better than I was a few years ago, but I'm still not good 'cause I need his grace Every day.

[00:33:55] Thoughts come into my mind. Things happen in my life where, you know, I wanna help God along and kill people for him. Because I'm getting frustrated and I think God needs a little bit of help. I'm sure you've never felt like that. They're getting in the way of vision. It's like, God, you have your breakfast.

[00:34:17] I'll sort them out. Of course we know God doesn't work like that, but that's how we feel. I'm, and every time I've tried to help God, I've got in trouble. I'll be honest and it's like, how did my wife just say true? Then I get a lot of trouble.

[00:34:39] Seasons of anointing. God gives his favor in different, it gives different anointings for specific seasons. The anointing you've carried over the last few years, God might want to give you a new anointing. There was a season when I would pray for people seriously and and many got healed. Then people would come to me and say, pray for me pastor, or pray for me.

[00:35:02] You know, when I go out, preach. We know you can anointing him for healing. It's like I don't pray anything different. I'm not any better a man than I was before. But I pray people that get healed. And then one day I was praying for people and they didn't get healed. And what did I do? God? Well, what are you doing?

[00:35:19] God, you are embarrassing yourself. Of course he wasn't. He was embarrassing me and that my identity had come just hear me, right of praying for the sick. Now, I believe we need to pray for the sick, don't get me wrong, but the seasons of anointing that comes in our lives and what I'm saying this morning, to keep the favor of God, we've gotta follow the cloud and understand that anointings change in our lives.

[00:35:43] Some of you may just speak something to people who aren't Christians and they just get saved. Fantastic. Never stop sowing the seed, but don't put a demand upon God when God is moving you in a season.

[00:36:00] The common denominator in all these examples I've given you is that lot. The season of ministry would never have been achieved without the favor of God. And the same is true today. You and I need the favor of God. We need to understand our calling, but we also need to understand we can't achieve anything without his favor upon our lives.

[00:36:21] If everything is going well right now, thank God for the season, but it might change. Oh, Gary's given this really bad news this morning. Every impossibility is an opportunity for God to come answer the prayer and for you to have another section of your story walking with him. As George said, his testimony, his start was pretty bad.

[00:36:47] You may sit here today and you say, well, yeah, my start wasn't good either. In life I felt rejection. I I was not loved in the right way. That's not the end of the story. And you need not live in the past for the rest of your life. We have a world that is lost. We have a world that lives with rejection and the only hope is Christ.

[00:37:08] And we've gotta understand the message we carry doesn't just touch people, it transforms people. Amen. When people get to the cross and they find who Jesus really is, it transforms people and changes 'em for the rest of their lives. I believe that the favor of God brings divine appointments.

[00:37:29] It's about, I dunno, I suppose 18 years ago and Helen decided he wanted to do the three peaks. If you know what that is, climb well. Walk up the top three. Yeah, I was gonna say that, but thank you.

[00:37:49] And you gotta do it in 24 hours. So there was a group of people, Christian said, we're do this. She said, we wanna do it. I said straight away I ain't doing it. Sounds like too much like hard work. Is there a cafe at the top of the mountain? Yeah, there is a Snowden. Yeah. So anyway, set, set going and course the group we went from didn't do the planning.

[00:38:09] Well we started at Snowden when we should have started at Ben Nevis. We should have started up the north and worked down the hardest mountain first and then worked it down and the other one's in the late district Scarfe. Anyway, did Snowden did Scarfe got to Ben Nevis, of course, everyone was really tired and time was running out.

[00:38:31] She gotta do it in 24 hours. And the thing was that you know, Ellen was tired. I had not climbed any of them 'cause I'm a wise man, but it was struggling and the, and the team was struggling and so I decided to help. I would go up the mountain too, just to be a helper. Hadn't got the right gear, but I said to do it.

[00:38:56] Well, it gets halfway up. I'm exhausted and I'd only done half a mountain. I was exhausted. It was getting dark. And the other guys in the team were really kind of stride in ahead. We took water with us. We took nourishment two thirds away up we ran outta water.

[00:39:17] And I said, I can't do this. Let's just go back. And some would say, you know, Helen's strong willed. I should say she's stubborn. But she said, no, we're going on. And we got about three quarter and the team started coming back and they had some spare water and they'd give us water. Teamwork's good. Never try and do vision or ministry alone.

[00:39:39] Team works good. They gave us water had left. But then the last person passed us and we still were quite a long way from the peak. We started to it snow now beautiful in July, up on the top of the mountain. I'm thinking, why am I doing this? This is crazy. And I really started praying, Lord, I dunno why I'm doing this.

[00:40:01] We're gonna run outta water. We're not gonna make it. And it clouds started to fall on top of the mountain. So now we couldn't even see where we're going. We're thirsty, Lord. And this is true. We've got to near the top of the mountain, it's probably about 10 o'clock at night, so it stays light, obviously up the north, as you know from other nations.

[00:40:20] Long time in June, July. But it was starting to get dark and the clouds were coming down. I was getting really, I was getting desperate. I was thinking, this just ain't gonna work. Let's just go back. And suddenly this true story out of the clouds came a man. And he looked at me and he said, now you're doing Gary, not of our team.

[00:40:40] Not out of our team. I said, how are you doing, Gary? I thought it was an angel. I'm gonna sit this, I thought it was an angel come and met me, but he spoke in a black country accent, you know, like a Birmingham accent. Yeah, I'm alright you mom, how you doing, Gary? And so I said, hi, how you doing? I thinking, who is this man?

[00:40:59] And he said, it's Mark. Well, I know quite a few marks. I said, hello, mark. And he, sorry, say Mark. Say Mark. It would've been good one. Yeah. He said, it's Mark. I said, what are you doing up here? He said, what are you doing up here? I said, don't ask that question. He said, I'm up here for you. I said, what do you mean you are up here for me?

[00:41:24] He says, I'm up here raising funds for your mission in Albania. Which is true. He said, I've done a sponsor trip and I thought it was great. I'd need to meet Gary sometime to tell him how much it I've raised. I said, well, on the top of Ben Nevis at 10 o'clock at night when I'm really thirsty, he said, I've got plenty of water for you.

[00:41:44] Gave me all his water. It was the water and we were able to finish and go down. I never knew that man was doing that mountain that day. He never knew I was doing that mountain that day. Well, the world would say that was lucky. Nah, divine appointment, divine appointment. God had gone before us knowing what we needed, knowing what the trouble would be, and brought the answer, a divine appointment on that day.

[00:42:13] And I I wanna encourage you this morning, when we talk about God's favor, I wanna encourage you to pray for divine appointments. What's a divine appointment? A God appointment that you could never have arranged, A conversation you could never have planned, but takes darkness into light, takes death into life.

[00:42:32] That day, mark gave me water and he was even up there on the top of the, the highest British mountain doing something to raise funds for a mission that obviously I was leading at the time. I never knew that. That's not coincidence is it? That's when the favor of God is working, and I wanna encourage you today, whatever impossibility you have, just invoke divine appointments that bring the favor of God to your life that day.

[00:43:01] Simply, I needed water, but there's other days I've needed lots of other things, but as we all know, we die without water.

[00:43:12] See, today you may carry shadows that are challenges in your life. I. But I wanna include you. Don't be overshadowed by those things. I can't tell you how long they stick around, but I know a God who's already got the answer. And he's working on your behalf right now. Amen. That he's bringing the favor and the answer from heaven.

[00:43:33] It may take a little while, and in my time scale, God's always a little late,

[00:43:41] but his time is perfect as we know. And as we look back very quickly, four positions did you need to take to receive God's favor. Firstly, you, you need to live in the in obedience and faith. Not my will, but your will, Lord. Not my way, but your way, Lord. And that's a submission because sometimes I want to be cleverer than God's.

[00:44:10] Sorry, God, don't need to answer that one. I know what I'm doing. Well, that we know that can be arrogance. But in a humility and a sense of, Lord, your ways are higher than my ways. Your thoughts are higher than my thoughts. And there we say, he who obeys instruction guards his life. This is in Proverbs 1916.

[00:44:30] He who obeys instruction guards his life, but he who is a contemptuous contemptuous of his ways will die strong scripture. We need to submit to his ways so that he can lead us.

[00:44:47] Making Jesus as you know, he's not just our savior, but he's our Lord. In other words, in a very contemporary, he's your boss. He's your boss. He doesn't boss you around 'cause he loves you so much, but actually he should lead you in every way. I had another divine appointment just a little while ago. I know we've talked about recruitments and you know, you, some of you guys want recruitments in the sense upon your ministries and volunteers.

[00:45:14] It's hard to get Well, you know, I need key people all the time in all that I do too. And sometimes you can't advertise or it doesn't work. Lord, we want your person, not our person. And it was just about two years 18 months ago, sorry, that I was in Portugal just having a, a bit of a break. And while I was there I like golf.

[00:45:35] I like to play golf. And so I decided that I'd go and play golf. But I was by myself. Helen doesn't play golf. I love golf. And I was just there by myself. So I rang the golf course and said, Hey, can I, you know, you've got a time I can play golf? And they said, yeah, of course you can play golf, but we'll put you with some people.

[00:45:53] I said, that's okay. So I got to the golf course and they introduced me to three men. One guy was about 55 years old, and then he got his son-in-law and his nephew with him English. That, you know, taught. So we started playing golf and I had a really good game of golf with 'em. Never met them before. Dunno who they were, but just played golf and had a good time.

[00:46:13] And at the end of the golf game, excuse me, at the end of the golf game, I shook his hand and I said, Ian, thanks for playing and enjoyed that, you know? He said, no, Gary, thank you. I said, okay. He said, no, you are a really good man. Well, who says I'm a good man? Jesus does. But a lot of people, he says, you're a good man.

[00:46:35] I said, thank you. He said, no, I've really enjoyed your company today. And he said, before you go, I need to say something to you.

[00:46:42] I said, okay.

[00:46:43] He says you're too good a man to go to Hell. And I need to tell you about Jesus.

[00:46:54] Ooh, yeah. Talk about divine appointments. I missed that one. And then I thought, I started to think, oh, Gary, you silly, silly man. You are, you're a minister. And you didn't even tell him about Jesus. And I shook his hand and I said, Ian, I need to admit that I love Jesus too. And actually I'm a minister and I should have told you we had a great chat.

[00:47:22] And then we went off and we didn't see each other. And then about a year later, I'm in church in Portugal, going to a church there just while we were there. And I see this guy across. And when the pastor said, oh, just go and shake Cooper's hand, he came across, said he hugged me for close that to be close.

[00:47:36] And then he said, he's Ian, same guy. I said, oh, are you Ian? And he got his wife there, introduced us. And I said, are you in? I'm on holiday. I said, I'll take you for a game of golf. He says, that'd be great. So three days later, two, we're playing golf on the 17th. If any of you know about golf, just about to tell.

[00:47:53] He said, Gary, I need to talk to you. I said, what's up here? He said, well, you don't know the job I do, and you've gotta remember I needed a key person for the war that I'm building. I needed a chief operating officer and finding a Christian to be paid what I can pay them. It's very difficult. And he said, I was in bed last night and he said, God really challenged me.

[00:48:13] I said, what's say? He said, well, I need to leave my work. He said, what I do? He said, I'm the CEO of the Royal Institute of Physicians in Great Britain. That's all the doctors and surgeons. He said, judge. I said, wow. Yeah, that's powerful. He said, I put buildings up and hospitals. And he said, I look after this.

[00:48:33] He said, but God's been challenging me. It's not enough. I need now to go into calling and I need to do something directly for Jesus. I said, wow. And he said the other thing, I was lying in bed and Jesus said, when you're playing golf with Gary tomorrow, tell him. 'cause he might just have something for you.

[00:48:53] Oh, no recruitment fees. Hallelujah. No money spent. Praise God. Divine appointment, he started three weeks ago, left his job now working, being the CEO for probably a third of the salary. Praise God,

[00:49:15] divine appointment. I could never have orchestrated that in Portugal. I've said to the people I worked with before, said, I've just gotta go to Portugal more.

[00:49:26] But you know, wherever we are, wherever you are, God has got the person and he's orchestrating miraculously through his favor over your life. You might be sitting there today. How am I gonna get this team together? How am I gonna get this person together, this skill? Bring it to him. I'm sure you are, but if it's not coming yet, there's a timing.

[00:49:47] God has. Remember his timing is perfect and Ian, in fact, his messaged me while I'm here. He said, I'm praying for you. He's just a great man. So he's not just a person that can do the job. He's a great partner and friend already, because you know, whenever I'm looking to take people on, there's three things I look for, character, competence, and chemistry character, that they carry the character of God in their lives.

[00:50:16] Competence, they can do the job, and chemistry I can get on with them and they can get on with me, and they're good team players. Every one of those three things is vital. When you're looking for people sometimes, and I understand why, and I've done it myself. I'm panicked into having somebody who can do one of those things or they can do the job, but a character is not Christlike, but we'll take them anyway.

[00:50:45] Trouble ahead. What's that song? There's Trouble Ahead. Yeah. Big Trouble Chemistry that they're not a Lone Ranger Independent wanna do it their way and no other way. This is team. We compliment each other. We don't compete with each other. Now, I'm sure you, some of you're thinking right now thinking, oh gee, I've got someone like that.

[00:51:10] Just a follow on. I say, okay, but you need to pray about that because some people can bring more trouble than triumph. Some people can bring a sense where you're spending so much time with that one person just to make it work, that it's tiring you out. It's a great tactic of the enemy to tire visionary people out with the wrong people around them.

[00:51:31] Just think about it. I'm not criticizing anyone today. I'm just giving you some indicators. The favor of God can work.

[00:51:41] Secondly, we need to have an ear to hear. What God is saying, we need to be able to discern his voice. John 10, 3 5. Is that up there? Yeah. No. Yeah. 12. That's a different one. Anyway, that'll do. Listen carefully. Unless a grain of wheat is buried in the ground, dead to the world, it is never any more than a grain of wheat.

[00:52:06] But if it is buried, it sprouts and reproduces itself many times over in the same way. Anyone who holds onto life just as it is, destroys that life. But if you let it go reckless in your love, you'll have it forever real and eternal. That's out of the message Bible. What a great few words there. That sometimes we've gotta let our ways die so that his ways can live.

[00:52:32] I said to you yesterday, you know, my, my mother died about 14 years ago and she died of motor neuro disease, which is a very painful disease, and it's not. As someone dies sometimes, as you know, it's the way they die. Suffering that really gets to us. And we go to God sometimes with great questions, which I have many times.

[00:52:50] But my mother, she, as I said yesterday, she had an ear to hear God even in a pain and a struggle. So much so that she just carried on worshiping God. And sometimes in your pain, in your trouble, sometimes in your difficulty, you've gotta have an ear to hear the sweetness of God's voice upon your life. The hope that he brings when he just quietly says to you, it's okay.

[00:53:13] It might be trouble today, but tomorrow's a new day. Every day has its grace and mercy. We may have to let some things die so that others let things live. But I want to encourage you today, whatever position you are in, God is chasing you with his favor over your life ministry. Amen. I love that song where he says, you know, he chases me.

[00:53:35] I said, God, you chase me. Am I that worth it that much, even when I turn my back on you? And he whispers in me and he says, you're worth it. And he whispers to each one of you today, you are totally worth it. Amen. Totally worth it. We need to have an ear to hear God. Can I say we do a thing on lines? It's called good idea, God idea.

[00:53:55] And that's all about listening. We can get carried away with some good ideas, but we wanna live and work and serve in his idea. Amen. And we need to recognize his voice. My mom, it's funny, she, she's been dead, what, 14, 15 years. If she was out in that kitchen now and I heard her voice, I would know if it's my mom or not.

[00:54:17] 'cause I've never forgot the sound of her voice. She'd been dead 15 years. But if she was just in there now and I suddenly heard her voice, I would recognize it. I lived with her for a long time. I listened to her. And you can think of the same thing. We can remember people's voices sometimes more than anything else.

[00:54:36] And what we've gotta do with God is we get into it with him, is learn to hear his voice and recognize it. You only get that through intimacy with God. It's not the doing, it's the being that helps us recognize his voice, living in the favor of God. As I said, he is not living in the absence of trouble, but being able to walk through every situation where I've put her obedience.

[00:55:01] I wanna say practically some things, there's a number of years ago where in England, so it's probably, it's about 20 years ago or something like that, but property was going, houses were going up in price loads just becoming so expensive and we decided we were gonna move housed that stupid time. And as we moved, we were gonna move house.

[00:55:26] We'd seen a house we really wanted, felt it was God, and sold our house very quickly. But the man who came to buy our house was a family man. And he looked me in the eye and he said, I. Gary, if you, if we shake hands today and you say you're gonna sell it to me, you promise you will. And I was a little bit impetuous.

[00:55:47] Really? I've learned a lot from this and I said, absolutely. I'll sell it. You and I won't pull out. What I didn't think about is that the people we were buying off would pull out and they pulled out and I was left in a dilemma. Do I keep to my word or do I cause my family trouble? Just hear me. It's a dilemma.

[00:56:10] I can argue myself out of each way. God wouldn't want me to cause my family trouble, but then I gave my word. Well, I kept my word. I left the house sold in, but we hadn't got a house to go to. In fact, Helen was pregnant with our first child. Brilliant. Simon. My mom and dad said, you can come and live with us.

[00:56:32] Great.

[00:56:36] Next dilemma. Helen has our first child while we were living with my mom and dad. Next dilemma, she should have been happy she was with the baby, not me,

[00:56:49] but I kept my word. It's dilemmas. You and I face dilemmas every day. Both seem good and both can seem bad. What do we do? Well, I kept my word it. I think it took us six months to find a house. So our first child was brought home to my family's house. Well, those who are mothers here today will know that you're nervous when you bring the first baby home.

[00:57:11] You're not sure what to do. And there's her mother-in-law just looking over her. Another dilemma. But we went through that season, found a house. Bought a house, which really liked, but it was a house and it was good. In fact, we're all for the provision. Lived there, then moved again. I. The next move was okay, but I'd always had a mystery about, I kept my word Lord, but I invoked so much trouble over my family.

[00:57:41] Was I wrong? Was I right? Anyway, it was 10 years later after this instance that we saw a home that we really loved, wanted a move again, and just saw this time Wheeler, but I could not afford it. It was just ridiculous. But a person who owned it was a person in our church. Good friends traveled with me a little bit when I ministered.

[00:58:07] Good man. And he rang me one day and he said, Gary, you said we're selling our house and we know you love it. I said, don't tease me. Frank's his name. He said, no. He said, would you come round and talk to me? I said, what? I said, what about it? He said, no, about the house. I said, Frank, I, I can't afford it. I can't get even close.

[00:58:28] I just wanna be un honest with you. He said, come around, have a cup of tea. As we say, we have a cup of tea.

[00:58:35] I went round, sat with him and his wife, Helen wouldn't come. She's too embarrassed or worried about what was gonna happen. Well, I sat in this house and he said, Ellie, you're so blessed. Our lives we're moving on because of work.

[00:58:48] I said, you understand that? But you know, we know you've loved this house for a good while. I said, yeah, yeah. He said you know how much we've got it up for sale for? I said, yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah. And he said, we want you to have it. I goes, yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah. He said will you buy off us? I said, no, no, no, no, no.

[00:59:07] I can't afford it. He said, how much could you afford? I said, Frank, our conversation stops. There we're friends. He said, how much can you afford? So I told him, which the house was up for about 140,000, which was cheap then. But we're talking lots of years ago. It's not now. And he said and I said. A hundred.

[00:59:30] He said a hundred. I said, yeah. Looked at his wife. I'm thinking, this is so embarrassing. He said, Gary, we wanna bless your life. You can have it for a hundred. Now that is beautiful, but I'm walking down the path to my car and God whispered in my ear, I'm no man's debt to go. You gave your word. I gave mine.

[00:59:54] You now have the home you wanted and you're blessed. And I'm blessed you. 10 years later, I could have died on the wrong mountain. Hear me of attitude to God just hit me 10 years previous. God, what are you doing? I gave my word trouble dilemma. God doesn't forget the seed. You sow in obedience and those seed always turn into his favor.

[01:00:19] Some of it just takes a little bit longer than you want. We moved into that home. We were so happy there for many years. Our children grew up there. I'm not saying any this just to be material. I'm talking about the favor of God, whether it be people, blessings, finance, whatever. You and I need the favor of God, but it is birth out of obedience to him.

[01:00:43] Keeping your word in an old fashioned way is still important. We live in a society where keeping your word really is not around. It's all about contracts. But if you give your word to someone, I wanna challenge you today. Keep it. And even if trouble knocks on your door, God is faithful to those who do the right thing.

[01:01:06] Amen And favor comes. Thirdly, live life with open hands. Generosity. Really important. Paul said this in everything I did. I showed you that by his kind hand work, we must help the weak. Remembering those. Remembering the Lord. Sorry. Yeah. Remembering the words of the Lord Jesus himself. It is more blessed to give than to receive.

[01:01:31] Can I say today you and I own nothing. He has the freehold of everything and he allows us to have a leasehold of what we have. I dunno if you understand that in translation, but freehold is, you know, when we, we buy something, we have a document that says it's ours, and then leasehold is something that we pay another person for who owns something.

[01:01:54] But we are renting, we're leasing it. We don't own it, but we can still use it or live in it. Yeah. You know what? Your ministry today is leasehold, not freehold. He holds the freehold of your life and your ministry. And I always say to God, if you own the freehold Lord, you've got the responsibility. Just remember, he holds the responsibility of your ministry, your life.

[01:02:19] Now we give our lives completely to him and then we trust him. But if we get too arrogant and go, this is mine. I've worked for this. I kind of find God comes and knocks on the door of my life occasionally and says, remember, I'm the free holder. You gave me permission to be the free holder of your life.

[01:02:42] You are just a lead holder. And I think it's a way to look at things sometimes so that we don't hold things too tightly. We take responsibility for what he gives us. But remember, it's not yours, it's his. And that's really important. We own nothing and then we have nothing to lose 'cause we gave our lives to him.

[01:03:05] I wanna challenge you today as we come to land in a moment, steward your life. Well make sure the eyegate, the airgate, and the mouth gate are, are steward wisely. What we say does count our words can create life and death. I, I stand there before you and it's like, Lord, help me. 'cause we all can react wrongly, but we need to steward that well.

[01:03:29] And fourthly, diligent living live diligently. Proverbs 21, 5 says, the plans of the diligent lead surely to abundance, but everyone who is hasty comes to poverty. I am a very impatient man. It's the fruit of the spirit you need to pray for me for. I could be driving a car and someone is going slow in front of me, and I don't say praise on Lord.

[01:03:58] I have a little bit of trouble. It's like, get outta my way. I can be in a line queuing up at a supermarket looking, which is the shortest and quickest. And even when I think I've chose the shortest and quickest, I always get in the longest and slowest. I'm sure you are the, and I'm like, oh, come on the way up.

[01:04:17] Why earth you doing? I could be the same with God. God, you asked me to do this. Where are you? Why haven't you turned up yet? When am I? Give me a time. And God says, trust me. Be patient. I'm already fighting for you. There's all heaven's already sorted the things out. It's just taken a little bit of time to come from heaven's earth.

[01:04:38] You got it. Walk close with God. Humility is the fuel for confidence. Proverbs 1224. This is just God telling me to close the, the hand of the diligent will rule while laziness will lead to forced labor.

[01:05:00] God doesn't like lazy people, eh, he still loves them, but he doesn't like laziness. But we still gotta remember, it's like in, in Britain. I'm not gonna get into politics, but you know, I believe in helping the poor. The Bible tells me to help the poor. The Bible tells me to really, you know, help provide for the poor.

[01:05:19] The laws be poor amongst you, so I get that. But I don't like helping the lazy,

[01:05:26] it's true. It's, it's something in me. But you also see here, God does not like lazy either. He didn't create us to be lazy. And I know in this room some of you're paying high prices and sacrifice too much. But let me tell you, as you work for him, as you trust him, his favor will be poured upon you, and he'll do the surprising things.

[01:05:46] Proverbs 21, 5 got it there. The plans of the diligent lead surely to abundance, but every one of his hasty comes to poverty. Well. It's very important that today on our journey, whatever journey we're on, you tap into the favor of God. The favor of God is nothing about favorites. God doesn't have favorites.

[01:06:10] He have favor, not fair. They're blessed over there. This man is so blessed. I'm so jealous of him. He gets everything he prays for. I pray all night, got nothing. My kids are following the Lord, but these kids aren't. What I'm saying is we get jealous. We become into a comparison, and the devil wants that. He wants us to compare, and the spirit of comparison leads us to a place of death.

[01:06:42] Now, it's not about comparison. The favor is for every one of you, and it comes out of obedience. It comes out of that diligent living. It comes out of that ear to here. It comes outta generosity in your lives. You say, well, Gary, I feel like you know, I'm trying to do all those things, but I've still not had favor.

[01:07:03] You'll get favor the house. I had to wait 10 years. In fact, I'd let it die because that's the other thing, isn't it? Don't die on the wrong mountain while you're living the journey with Jesus. The wrong mountains of arguments with God, arguments, perhaps with your spouse, family. Sometimes God says, leave that one with me and like me.

[01:07:29] I go, nah, God, I need to help you out and I'll ruin it. People today, God's favorite is for you today, his favorite is already being sorted out. It will become your story that people say, why did that good thing happen to you? It had nothing to do with you. It was his grace that poured upon your life. But it did come out of obedience.

[01:07:52] It did come out of you not trying to say, this is mine. It did come out of that place. Not my will, but your will not. Your ways are higher than my ways, and I believe today, and I'm gonna approach you all now. God's favor will be poured upon your life. That will be a great hand in the journey that God's called you to.

[01:08:09] Amen. God bless you. Why don't we stand?

[01:08:22] If you're not used to doing this in tradition, that's fine, but I'd just like you to raise your hands to heaven you don't wanna do, that's fine. This is nothing mystical. What we are actually doing is saying, not my will, but yours, Lord. And I believe in this room this morning. Some of you just need to lay some things down.

[01:08:41] You need to say no, God. Okay. It is yours, not mine. Some of you need to say that disappointment you, you're carrying. Okay, Lord. I'll give it over to you. That impossibility, Lord. I'm tired of it. Okay? Leave it with God. And also the prayer. Lord, can I receive your favor today over my life, my family, and all that you've called me to do?

[01:09:02] And I'm gonna pray right now that heaven who's heard our worship this morning that's in this place, God is here by His spirit. Amen, Emmanuel, God is with us. And as we do that, I'm gonna pray right now that each person raising their hand, you, you know what you're raising your hand for it's individual. God knows what you're raising your hand for.

[01:09:22] But I'm gonna pray and invoke right now that the spirit of God will fall on you, and his favor will be pushed right into you and you this week and in the next few weeks will have a story to tell. God turned up. I could never have done that, but he's turned up for me. Amen. Lord, this morning, I thank you for these good people.

[01:09:42] I thank you, Lord, that you've called them for such a time as this. I thank you, Lord that you put anointing on them to reach the lost and see lives transformed. I thank you, Lord, that the heart is so for you. And Lord, they stand here today and say, Lord, not my will be yours. And I pray right now, Lord, that your favor, which no one Lord can demand, but you give freely, will come upon each of these people, each of these families, Lord, upon the children and the children's children.

[01:10:10] Lord, it will come upon those that work individually and independently. Lord, there will be people brought to them, and no one will feel the spirit of isolation. I pray, Lord, today, that you are favor in provision. Jehovah Gyra, our provider will provide all that these people represent right now, Lord, we beat belief for breakthrough, but we need your favor, favor of God.

[01:10:32] Pour now into each of these people's minds and hearts. Help 'em to see things differently that you are so fallen. That you're already fighting for them while they sleep. In Jesus' name, amen. God bless you.

[01:10:52] **Cameron Springthorpe:** Great, thanks Gary. Okay, it's quarter to 11. So we're gonna stop now for a coffee break for a fika time. And there's a special fika treat.