

PRAY FIRST

The Transformative Power Of A Life Built On Prayer

LESSON 3 – THE PRAYER OF JABEZ

“Jabez was more honorable than his brothers. His mother had named him Jabez, saying, “I gave birth to him in pain.” ¹⁰Jabez cried out to the God of Israel, “Oh, that you would bless me and enlarge my territory! Let your hand be with me, and keep me from harm so that I will be free from pain.” And God granted his request.” 1 Chronicles 4:9-10 (NIV)

Many people have names that stick with them throughout their entire lives. This name might be a variation of their proper name that was given to them at birth or – as is more often the case- a nickname derived from a trait, quality or role they played growing up.

In ancient times, a person’s name often carried even more weight. It sometimes revealed circumstances that were occurring at the time of the person’s birth or the expectations that others held from him or her. Such is the case for a man mentioned only briefly in the Bible but who provides a timeless prayer model: JABEZ

The name Jabez sounds similar to the Hebrew word for pain. He had received this name from his mother, who explained, “I gave birth to him in pain” (1 Chronicles 4:9). But Jabez refused to become a victim of this troubling label given to him at birth. The prayer of Jabez reveals how to overcome pain and suffering by being deliberate about what we pray. His example demonstrates that instead of being bound by painful labels given to us in the past, we can forge ahead and ask God to bless us, be with us, and keep us in his care and loving embrace. Jabez wasn’t willing to settle for a life of pain and neither should we.

1. Pray for a blessing.

- A. “*Oh that you would bless me*” **1 Chronicles 4:10a**. In the Hebrew, the word for blessing is prosper, which means to be pushed forward further than we would be able to get on our own.
- B. We pray for God’s blessing so that we can be a blessing to others. Lord, give me more than I need so I can be a blessing to the world around me.
- C. Real biblical prosperity is not health and wealth, name it and claim it, blab it and grab it. It’s having more than we need so we can make an eternal difference in the lives of others.

Quote: “*O God and King, please expand my opportunities and my impact in such a way that I touch more lives for Your glory. Let me do more for You!*” ~ **Bruce H. Wilkinson**

2. Pray for influence.

- A. “*Enlarge my territory*” (**vs 10b**). Once God gives us his blessing, he wants us to take that blessing and use it to make a difference in other people’s lives.

- B. Our **inheritance** is for other people. We don't literally possess them or own them, but we have influence in their lives by being a blessing to them.
- C. If the **size** of your dream isn't intimidating to you, there's a good chance that it is insulting to God. *Lord, use me so that my life might make an eternal impact in the lives of others.*

3. Pray for **presence**.

- A. "Let your hand be with me" (**vs 10c**). The **hand** of the Lord is a biblical term used throughout Scripture for God's presence and God's power.
- B. If God gives you more than you need (**blessing**) and gives you influence, you're going to feel in over your head. You're going to need God's presence in your life.
- C. God blesses you, gives you influence, and then anoints you so that you can do what he has **called** you to do. *Lord, be with me because what you've called me to is too big for me.*
 - *You are blessed to be a blessing.* God doesn't bless you so that you can feel secure, compensated, or superior to others. Rather, he entrusts you to **steward** the resources that he has provided so that others will come to know him and experience the love of Christ. **Genesis 12:2b (NLT)** "*I will bless you and you will be a blessing to others.*"

Quote: "Believe in your ability to make a positive impact." – **Nelson Mandela**

4. Pray for **protection**.

- A. "Keep me from evil" (**vs 10d**). If you have a blessing, you can use it to influence; and if you have God's hand upon you, all of hell is not going to like it. We **need** God's protection.
- B. Some of us are under **attack** right now. We sense that the enemy has come against God's call and plan on our lives. So what do we do? We pray for God's protection.
- C. In **Philippians 2:10** "*That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth.*" Every **demonic** principality must bow at the name of Jesus. *Lord, strengthen me and rescue me from every attack of the enemy.*