



The Power of Prayer

Date: October 13, 2024

Text: 1 Chronicles 4:9-10

BIG IDEA

It is tempting in current culture to feel like we have to do more or be more; as if our discipleship journey is only as good as what we produce. We can easily fall into a striving or working mentality and forget that our power does not come from what we can do. God is not looking for more work, He desires our heart. He longs for us to turn to Him, trust Him, and rely on Him for our provision. Because it is only through Him that we can do and be all that we are called to be; through His power and strength we can overcome, conquer, and live faithfully.

Conversation Starter

- Do you feel this need to constantly produce? Explain.
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COMMENTARY #1

(Verses 9-10) Jabez is one of the most interesting characters from the Old Testament; yet, he is only mentioned briefly and only in this text. Biblical scholar Morgan notes that Jabez's story is a



refreshing interruption in the books that focus largely on the procession of power and government, wars and victory, and other larger issues. Here, we have a man of simple stock and lineage; not born to nobility or distinguished by titles. He was an everyday man who was regarded as honorable in the eyes of God. Why? Because he *prayed*, he *served His Maker*, and he *lived to do good*. (The translation for his prayer to “be free from pain” is more accurately translated in most versions as “to not cause pain.”)

Discussion Questions

1. How does it make you feel that Jabez was just an ordinary man (not noble or wealthy)?
 2. Why do you think the three things Jabez did in this text caused God to regard him as honorable?
 3. How do you do these three things in your own life? How can you start to?
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COMMENTARY #2

(Verses 9-10) Hebrew names carried significant weight in their culture. For some reason surrounding the circumstances of his birth, Jabez’s name was one associated with sorrow or pain. From the beginning of his life, Jabez was linked to grief, sorrow,



pain, and turmoil; it would have followed him wherever he went and could have become his identity had he let it. But he responded to this title differently—Jabez prayed. He did not pray for selfish ambition; instead, he prayed for four simple things.

First, to be blessed *indeed*; meaning he wanted to always recognize the blessing of God. Second, for enlarged territory; this was not for selfish gain but rather, he recognized his need for God to conquer the Canaanites. Third, he asked for God’s hand of protection and presence. Finally, he asked for God to keep him from causing pain and experiencing the brokenness his sin warranted. In this, Jabez recognized the evil in this world (no doubt because he had lived through much pain in his life), that he needed God to keep him from evil, and that the hand of God could transform the evil and pain of his life. God granted him these requests.

Discussion Questions

1. Why do you think it is significant that Jabez did not allow external factors to determine his identity? What “names” have you been given that often define you? (ex. addict, worthless, widow, unwanted...)
2. How can you work to recognize the blessings of God that already exist in your life?



3. Throughout all his prayer, Jabez recognized his complete dependence on God. How can you posture your prayers in the same way?
4. If you knew God would grant your prayer, what would you pray for?

GOING DEEPER

1. What is one way you can practice a deeper dependence on God this week? If you don't know how to do this, who is someone you could start a conversation with about it?
2. How does a person who is marked by his/ her faith in Christ publicly exhibit an identity in Christ? Who are some important people in your life modeling this for you right now?
3. What is the difference between worldly success and what "success" in faith looks like before Jesus?

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Sermon - [The Prayer of Jabez](#), Charles Spurgeon