

Developing a Desire for More

I Chronicles 4: 9-10

Today is a special day for me and my family. I began my full-time ministry here one year ago on this Sunday morning. It has been a wonderful year. I am honored and privileged to have the opportunity to pastor this great congregation. I am convinced that God has blessed us abundantly.

As I thought of the past year and all that we have been able to accomplish with the Lord's help I was reminded that there is so much more that needs to be done. I am thankful for the blessings of the past, but I realize that they are not sufficient for today. I am pleased with what we have accomplished, but I am not entirely satisfied. I am convinced that one of the greatest hindrances and dangers within the modern church is complacency. I never want to reach the place that I am content with things as they are and have no desire to reach greater heights for the Lord.

We have grown in spirit as well as number, but we cannot abandon the work that God has called us to do. There are yet souls to reach and people to help through the ministry of our church.

Our text today is one that is likely familiar to most of us. There are just a few words in these two verses, but they reveal much about the man Jabez. We find that he was a man who was not satisfied with life as it was but desired more from the Lord. I want to consider the [principles](#) in the life of Jabez as we think on: [Developing a Desire for More](#).

I. The Position of Jabez (9) – [And Jabez was more honourable than his brethren: and his mother called his name Jabez, saying, Because I bare him with sorrow](#). This reveals the character and position that Jabez secured in this life. Clearly he was one who wanted to rise above the ordinary.

A. A Man of Recognition ([I Chron.1:1 – 4:8](#)) – If we had taken the time to read the beginning chapters of this book we would have discovered a detailed genealogy of the nation of Israel. For the most part it is simply a list of the children that were born to a particular individual, with a few insights to select people.

- After many verses devoted solely to genealogy we find a few words about the man Jabez. It appears that the lives of many had made little impact on the history of Israel as a whole, but this man's life was different. He stood out among the list of hundreds of names. Jabez's life was special. For some reason God chose to record a few specific details of his life for us. I am convinced that God was pleased with the desire Jabez had for more.

- I know that we are all important to our families and those we are close to, but it seems that very few ever rise above and leave their mark on society. Most live their lives and are forgotten with the exception of close family.
- As I consider my childhood in my home church I remember many who attended there and have now gone on to be with the Lord. Many of them were faithful to the house of God, but a few of them had a significant impact on my life. Some lived and left their mark for coming generations.
- How will our lives be remembered when we are gone? Will we have left a mark that others will see or will we be forgotten shortly after the grave has been covered?
- Fellowship Baptist Church needs those who rise above the average. We need those with a genuine desire for more. We need those who are not content just to occupy their space on the pew a few times a week. We need those who are committed to making a difference in the lives of people and living for the Lord!

B. A Man of Resilience – As we have discovered in the past names were significant in that day. His mother named him Jabez because he was born in sorrow. Jabez means “*the son of sorrow*.” It carried the idea of “*pain and affliction*.” All of his life Jabez was reminded of this each time he heard his name called. Many would likely have resigned their lives to defeat, feeling as if they were destined to be a failure.

- Jabez chose to be different. He chose to seek the blessing in life rather than being content with what the world gave him. He refused to let the circumstances of a particular situation dictate his life.
- We need those who will rise above in resilience for the Lord. We have all suffered pain and defeat at some time in our lives. We have all been hurt by those that we thought loved us. We have all been tempted to give up and abandon our work for the Lord. God uses broken vessels; Peter, David, etc.
- Difficulty and pain are sadly just a part of living. We must decide whether we are willing to accept defeat or determine a desire for more! The adversary would love to have us all throw in the towel and quit. We must continue in the race and carry on the work!

C. A Man of Reputation – [Jabez was more honourable than his brethren](#). That means “*to be heavy, or weighty, honorable*.” That does not refer to size, but moral stature! Jabez was a man of honor. He lived for the Lord and made an impact on those around him. Jabez had analyzed the situation and determined that there had to be more than what he currently had.

- He stood out in the crowd. Those who knew him knew where he stood. He was not a prophet or priest. He was not a valiant soldier, but he was known as one who loved the Lord and lived for him.

- I think you would agree that we need those of reputation in our day. We need those who will not accept the dictates of this world. We need those who are confident that God has much more for us and seek him for that!
- You don't have to be a well known preacher to make a difference. You don't have to have the ability to awe people as you teach. You don't have to be able to hit every note or play several instruments. These are all good and beneficial to the work, but God can take an ordinary life and accomplish extraordinary things for His glory!
- I can assure you that some of the folks who impacted me the most did so in a quiet way. They were not out front, but their lives made a difference! Some rarely spoke publicly, but when they did, it was worth hearing!

I. The Position of Jabez (9)

II. The Prayer of Jabez (10a) – *And Jabez called on the God of Israel, saying, Oh that thou wouldest bless me indeed, and enlarge my coast, and that thine hand might be with me, and that thou wouldest keep me from evil, that it may not grieve me!* Here we have the prayer of Jabez. In recent times it has become a very popular portion of Scripture. I noticed that Jabez was very specific in his prayer. He knew what he desired from God.

A. He Prayed for Provision – His prayer for provision is actually two-fold.

1. Jabez Desired an Enriched Blessing – *Oh that thou wouldest bless me indeed.* Jabez sought the blessing of God. He knew that apart from God's blessing his life would be empty and void. It is interesting to note that the word "bless" and the word "indeed" are the same Hebrew word. He was asking that God would bless him with blessing.

- There is nothing selfish or arrogant about seeking the blessing of God. In fact we ought to desire His blessing in our lives. I need Him every day, every moment that I live and I desire His blessing in my life! God has much more than we currently enjoy, but we must seek that from Him!

2. Jabez Desired an Enlarged Border – *and enlarge my coast.* This was not a prayer of greed. Jabez was not seeking to gain advantage on those around him. I don't think he was praying for material gain, lands, goods, flocks, etc., at all. He was praying that God would enlarge his influence. He wanted to be used of God in greater and mightier ways. He wanted the Lord to open new doors of opportunity for him.

- We need to pray that God would enlarge our coast. We need to pray that God would move us out of our comfort zone into new areas of opportunity and ministry. I want to make a difference in the lives of people and I want to reach all that I can!

B. He Prayed for Power – *Oh that thine hand might be with me.* That is very simple and yet very profound. Jabez desired God's hand upon his life. He desired the power and presence of God to rest upon him. He didn't want average ordinary days; he wanted days filled with the power of God!

- I am convinced that we are well aware of the need for God's power in our lives and yet we continue to trudge along without it. We need God's presence and power in our lives and services more than we need anything else. If God isn't here, working and moving in our midst, then we have in essence met for a social gathering. We are no different than the world. But, if we can obtain His power in our lives and services then we have the potential to see great things through Him.

- I am tired of the status quo among the modern church. We feel as if we have it all figured out, but we have left God out of the equation. It is simple, if God doesn't do, it won't get done in a way that is meaningful and lasting. We can go through the motions, but it will profit little, if any.

C. He Prayed for Purity – *Oh that thou wouldest keep me from evil, that it may not grieve me!* Jabez was actually concerned about his spiritual life. He desired God to keep him from sin. He enjoyed his fellowship with God and he wanted to maintain that closeness.

- You will have to admit that Jabez was pretty ambitious in his prayer. He was seeking things that he desperately desired to obtain. He knew that if he was to have the blessing and power of God he would have to keep his life free of sin. He didn't want anything to stand in the way of what he desired.

- We need to take an honest look at our lives as well. If we really want to receive all that God has to offer, then we must be willing to pay the price and clean up our lives. The church has lost its power and conviction because of sin. If we are to experience God in mighty ways we must live lives of purity.

- *Is.59:2 – But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear. Jam.4:8 – Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double minded.*

I. The Position of Jabez (9)

II. The Prayer of Jabez (10a)

III. The Prosperity of Jabez (10b) – **And God granted him that which he requested.** God honored Jabez's request and gave him the desires of his heart. He had sought the Lord with a heart of purity and God had granted his petition. These were not selfish requests, or a desire to advance a personal cause, but a genuine desire for the Lord.

- God will honor those who honor Him. He will bless those who seek His blessing with a pure heart. If our motives and lives are pure God will bless.

Where do we stand today? What kind of life are we living and leaving for those who will follow? Do you genuinely desire the presence and power of God? Do you desire to live in a way that pleases the Lord?

Maybe you know that you are lacking and need to come and confess your sin before the Lord, seeking His forgiveness. Maybe you are here today and you have never trusted Christ as your Savior. He stands ready to heal and forgive if you will only come to Him.

Fellowship are you satisfied with the way things currently are? Is there a desire in your heart for more? Do you want to see God move among us in great and mighty ways? If so, why not come and ask Him to keep His hand upon us and enlarge our coast?