

APPLICATION

- What part of this teaching challenged you the most and why?
- What are you going to do differently this week?

PRAYER

- Reflect on how much God has blessed you over the course of your life – start by giving thanks to him for his incredible provision
- Pray the prayer of Jabez over yourself, your family and City Hill Church
- Pray that God would help you to make the most of the great influence that he has already given you on your frontline

NOTES

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

WARM UP

- If you could have any *one thing* in the world, what would it be and why?

WORD

Jabez was more honourable than his brothers, and his mother named him Jabez saying, "Because I bore him with pain." 10 Now Jabez called on the God of Israel, saying, "Oh that You would bless me indeed and enlarge my territory, and that Your hand be with me, and that You keep me from harm so that I will be free from pain!" And God granted him what he requested.

1 Chronicles 4:9-11

As much as we should never see God as our Cosmic ATM machine, whose job is to provide us with an endless supply of whatever we want, the Bible does teach us to ask God for blessing and favour. Recorded in 1 Chronicles 4 is the prayer of a man who did just such a thing, and in this week's lesson, we learn some important truths from him.

1. CHARACTER MATTERS

Jabez was more honourable than his brothers

1 Chronicles 4:9

We're interested in comfort; God is interested in godly character. As such, there is often a huge disconnect between the things we pray for and the answers God gives. The first part of call when asking God for blessing, is to ensure that we value what he values. 'Jabez was honourable' means that just – he valued what God values; he was a righteous man, his motives for seeking blessing were God-honouring. Nowhere in Scripture does God promise to give us anything we want, regardless of motive. Think about the things you want from God right now – what is motivating those desires?

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

2. BLESS ME INDEED!

"Oh that You would bless me indeed and enlarge my territory, and that Your hand be with me

1 Chronicles 4:10

It is good to ask God for blessing! Asking God honours him, because when we ask him, we "believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him." (Heb. 11:6).

Asking God is an acknowledgement that he is the owner of all things, that he is good and wants to do us good, and that we are wholly dependent on him for everything we need.

Yes, it must not be with selfish motives (James 4:3), and we should be prepared for God to say "No" or "Not now," but we should always be asking! And it's not just for material things either. Jabez was asking for influence as well – should we not be asking for greater Kingdom influence amongst our work colleagues, family and friends?

.....
.....
.....

2. KEEP ME FROM HARM

"and that You keep me from harm so that I will be free from pain!"

1 Chronicles 4:11

The final thing Jabez prays for is protection from harm. This is reminiscent of the line in the Lord's prayer that says, "lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil." Remember that we are in a spiritual battle. When you're distracted from your calling to be holy, to love God and to make disciples, remember that you have an enemy – and remember that however well he wraps up his enticements, he's only out to do one thing – cause you pain! So, this is not just a prayer for God to keep bad people and bad things away, it's really a prayer for him to fortify us from giving in to the lies and temptations of the enemy that can only cause us great harm.

.....
.....
.....