

Remnant Life Church  
February 8, 2026  
**The Large Blessing of a Small Prayer**  
1 Chronicles 4:9-10

- What constitutes a “Powerful Prayer?”
  1. Is it the length of it?
  2. How about the volume?
  3. Surely the sincerity or the eloquence!
  4. How about the person praying?
    - If they are famous
    - Powerful
    - Influential
  5. In reality, none of those things have anything to do with the power of prayer
  
- Jesus certainly talked about and demonstrated prayer a great deal
  1. He taught His disciples how to pray (**Matt 6:9-13**)
    - This should be called the Disciple’s Prayer
    - The Lord’s Prayer is in **John 17** when Jesus is praying in the Garden alone
  2. He would often go off by Himself to pray (**Mark 6**)
  3. He even talked about the right way to pray – having nothing to do with its presentation or wording
    - Jesus even gave them an example of the wrong way to pray versus the right way
    - He utilized the prayer of those He called the hypocrites as a contrast (**Matt 6:5**)
      - In the original Greek, the word hypocrite translates to an actor (appropriate)
      - His warning to the disciples is with regard to the focus of their prayer
      - To pray that way, the way they saw the Pharisees praying, was not about God but about the one who was praying
        - They would do that in order to be seen by other people so they would admire them
        - And Jesus said, that admiration is the extent of the blessing of that prayer
        - In other words, of no real value or power
      - Because God knows the motive of our hearts
      - Instead, Jesus said, pray in a way that does not draw attention to yourself but focuses on God (**Matt 6:6**)
  
- Many words are not necessary to pray a life-altering, circumstance-changing, blessing-filled, God-pleasing prayer
  1. Jesus said don’t just babble on with many words like the pagans do – chanting (**Matt 6:7**)

2. Some of the most powerful prayers ever prayed were contained within just a few words –
    - David - *Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me. (Psalm 51:10)*
    - Solomon - *So give your servant a discerning (or wise) heart to govern your people and to distinguish between right and wrong. (I Kings 3:9)*
    - Jesus – *Father, if you are willing, take this cup from me; yet not my will, but yours be done. (Luke 22:42)*
  3. And so, with that truth in mind, I want this morning to look at one of the simplest of prayers, yet a very powerful one spoken by a man who was nearly anonymous except for this prayer
- The first nine chapters of **I Chronicles** are not exactly light reading
    1. It begins by listing the descendants of Noah, then the families of Abraham and Isaac who was then called Israel
    2. Then the sons of David, the kings of Judah, the clans of Judah – each of the 12 and their descendants listed
    3. Then the temple musicians are all named and even the genealogy of Saul the Benjamite, the first king of Israel
    4. It basically reviews the entire family tree of the Hebrew people, the nation of Israel
    5. Within those first 9 chapters of I Chronicles, there are 1216 different names listed
      - Very little is said about them except that they lived, made someone who probably looked a lot like them, and then died
      - Very few made a mark or were worth remembering
  - Except, that is, right in the middle of it all, within the 4<sup>th</sup> chapter
    1. In that 4<sup>th</sup> chapter, after 44 more names, the droning briefly stops and the author points out one man – Jabez
    2. He doesn't offer an in-depth detailed account of his life
      - As a matter of fact, after reading about him you are left with more unanswered questions than what you know
      - We know this singled-out man was a man more distinguished than his brothers – but we don't know why
      - We know that it was his mother who named him Jabez because his birth was so painful – okay, but what happened?
      - And we certainly do not remember Jabez because of his eloquence
        - After all, his recorded prayer of note consists of only 29 words
        - Even God's recorded answer is only 5 words
      - Yet this simple prayer is held by many to be one of the most powerful prayers recorded in the Bible

### READ – I Chron 4:9-10

- While we can see that he was not a man of great note or accomplishment, what about him was special?
  1. He was not a warrior like his ancestor David

2. He was not noted for his wisdom like Solomon
  3. Not a great teacher like Peter
  4. Or a fearless missionary like Paul
  5. He was simply noted as honorable
- And he likely did not have an easy life
    1. His name literally translated means “pain”
    2. And in that day your name was the identifying label of who you were and it would often determine your life’s destiny
    3. So, here is a man that, growing up, did not have much going for him
    4. But at some point, things change so much that we are told he is honored among his family and blessed by God

In 2000, the American pastor and author Bruce Wilkinson wrote a book entitled *The Prayer of Jabez* with a subtitle of *Breaking Through to the Blessed Life*

- As you can see it is a very small book of only 92 pages
- And it likely was just something that Wilkinson wanted to do because of the impact it had on his own life and ministry
  1. The first printing was for 20,000 copies
  2. When those sold out the publisher, on faith, printed another 70,000 copies
  3. To date, the book has sold over 9 million copies
- It has not, however, been without its detractors
  1. Many claim that it is nothing more than an extension of the prosperity gospel
    - Some have said that it presents God as a type of Santa Clause that brings gifts to every good boy and girl who, according to the author, pray this prayer
    - Still others have stated that the prayer is self-serving and centered on the individual rather than the good of the kingdom, the church, or the people around us
  2. And while I think there is great merit to taking a cautious approach to prayer that can become centered on the blessing of self...
  3. ...I think there is more to this prayer than that
    - It is a blueprint of sorts for our prayers to become a powerful part of our lives that can also touch the lives of others if we pray with the right heart
  4. The prosperity of God is a blessing that He wants us to live within
    - But, once again, it requires that you remove from your thinking that God wants us all to be rich according to the world’s definition
      - Now some are called to have great earthly resources
      - Yet they are also called to give more to the kingdom because God has abundantly blessed them in a material way
    - But biblical prosperity is about every area of your life, not just your bank account
    - And certainly God loves to bless His children
      - Consider Solomon again
      - When God said what do you want Solomon’s answer we to be a wise and just king
      - God then said, in essence, “Good Answer!”

- Because you answered that way, I'm going to give you all the things that you did not ask for as well
  - God loves to bless His children
- So, if that is true, you might be then asking, then why do I not feel blessed?
    1. First – what is your definition of blessed?
      - If it is solely the amount in your bank account or the size of your car or house, or the absence of conflict or struggles, then you need to rethink your definition
    2. Second - we are told that many times we do not have from God simply because we do not ask of Him (**James 4:2**)

And so, what is it about this prayer that makes it valuable and unique even among the criticisms?

1. Oh, that you would bless me

- a. His prayer begins by asking of God
  - i. But here is where some people might begin to have a problem
    1. Jabez does not honor God first, as Jesus demonstrated in the Disciple's Prayer
    2. He begins with a petition
  - ii. What the detractors don't consider however, is that Jabez must already be a man of prayer
    1. We are told that he was more honorable than his brothers
    2. To be called honorable in the Bible was often another word for godly and just
      - a. David was called a man of honor
      - b. As was his general Abner
      - c. Jesus' earthly father, Joseph
  - iii. I believe that Jabez was already a man of prayer and knew not only how to pray, but to give glory to God
  - iv. We are never told not to ask God for things in our life - the key is to ask with the right heart and in submission to His will over your own
- b. Next, notice that what Jabez is asking for is very general, not specific
  - i. I believe this also demonstrates why he was honored
  - ii. He prayed, without saying it, You decide how to bless me.
- c. Asking in faith many times requires that you let go of the specifics even while still praying for the particulars
  - i. You may be praying about a particular situation in your life but that prayer should be about what is best for you according to God's wisdom and His will for you
  - ii. Jabez left the details of the blessing up to God
- d. This is also a prayer of confidence
  - i. A prayer of confidence and expectancy
  - ii. We should never pray and approach God in a reluctant or fearful way
    1. But with reverent confidence and certainty

2. **Heb 4:16** - *Let us then approach God's throne of grace with confidence...*
  3. **James 1:5** – *Ask God, who gives generously and without reproach*
  4. Finally, Jesus said in **Matt 7:7** – *Ask, and it will be given to you; seek and you will find...*
- e. Remember when you pray, you are not begging from a reluctant God, you are asking from a loving Father.

## 2. Enlarge my territory

- a. This may sound more specific, but once again, that word territory touches on many things
- b. If you were to pray that right now, what would that mean to you?
  - i. Increase your business?
  - ii. Gather more nice things?
  - iii. Become a large property owner?
  - iv. How about to increase your influence for the kingdom over those in your life?
- c. I believe that greater influence, for God's purposes, is what our increased territory should focus on first
  - i. The kingdom of heaven grows outwardly as His people are empowered inwardly
  - ii. This aligns with Jesus' final command before He ascended into heaven
    1. **Matt 28:19a** - *Therefore go and make disciples of all nations...*
    2. Paul echoes this when he encouraged the people of the church in Thessalonica to...
      - a. **2 Thess 3:1** - *pray for us that the message of the Lord may spread rapidly and be honored*
      - b. That was his mission and greatest desire that he would influence others for the kingdom of God
      - c. That he would expand his territory
  - iii. Territory is everywhere that you are
    1. And wherever you are is an opportunity to have influence for the kingdom in the lives of the people around you

Oh, that you would bless me

Expand my territory

## 3. Let Your hand be with me and keep me from harm so that I will be free from pain

- a. To fully understand what Jabez is saying is to fully understand the meaning of two important words
  - i. The word harm, used in the NIV, is translated from the original Hebrew as evil
  - ii. Jabez is asking God to protect him from evil and the evil one
- b. Then the word pain also translates to grieve
  - i. Interestingly, however, it means not only to experience grief...
  - ii. But to cause someone else grief
  - iii. Jabez's prayer is not purely self-seeking after all

- iv. He is asking for God's hand, His presence to be with him so that he does cause God or anyone else a reason to grieve
- c. Jabez was calling for God to be with him
  - i. And if you are telling God that you know you cannot do anything of value or worth without Him it brings your heart to the right place and the correct posture of humility before Him
  - ii. This final segment of Jabez's prayer finds its expression in the prayer Jesus taught His disciples
    - 1. **Matt 6:13** – *Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil*
    - 2. When we pray for God to expand our territory we must also realize an important truth, we must also ask for His presence
    - 3. Expansion without His protection invites destruction
      - a. This is why so many ministries have failed down through the years
      - b. The expansion is given but the cry for and the recognition for the continued protection of God's presence fades and it leads to destruction
  - iii. Jesus says in **John 15:5** – *Apart from me you can do nothing*
    - 1. Paul writes in **2 Thess 3:3** – *The Lord is faithful...He will guard you from the evil one*
    - 2. And then of course in **Eph 6:10-18** we are given the components of our spiritual armor that protects us from the plots of satan every day
- d. And so, in this final, very important segment of his prayer, Jabez seeks God's presence
  - i. This is yet another example of the importance of you releasing control of the events of your life and turning them over to His will
  - ii. For it too is a simple yet powerful portion of this prayer...*Let your Hand be with me*
- e. It is a cry for God's protection...
  - i. From the enemy
  - ii. From those who would try and discourage you from pursuing the path of God for your life
  - iii. And even protection from yourself (your flesh nature)
- f. God's presence brings His protection and guidance for your life

And one other beautiful element of Jabez's prayer is that it is ultimately fulfilled in Jesus –

- O bless me
  - 1. Every spiritual, physical, emotional, and mental blessing is found in Christ
  - 2. **Eph 1:3** - *Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ.*
- Expand my territory
  - 1. Expand your influence for the kingdom of God
  - 2. Your testimony, your witness is what will expand your influence as others are presented with the power of Jesus Christ that brought change to your life
- His presence and protection
  - 1. We are kept by the power of God

2. **I Peter 1:3-5** - *Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, and into an inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade. This inheritance is kept in heaven for you, who through faith are shielded by God's power until the coming of the salvation that is ready to be revealed in the last time.*

One final, important note about this prayer

- God answered him – the last part of the 10<sup>th</sup> verse says this...
  1. *And God granted his request (I Chron 4:10b)*
- Jabez was blessed; his territory was expanded; and God was not only with him, but protected him
- Once again, a prayer for God's blessing is not a heavenly coin that you drop into God's vending machine
  1. I don't believe for a moment that Jabez's prayer activated some mystical, magical heavenly formula that we can utilize solely for our benefit
  2. The fact that God granted his request is a statement grounded in the firm theology of God's very nature
  3. God responds to prayers that are prayed in the assurance of faith, dependent on and surrendered to Him, and aligned with His will

The prayer of Jabez reminds us to always pray with boldness

- Not because of how we pray or who we are
- But because of who He is!