

DANGEROUS PRAYERS

Big Idea

Pastor Curt – Part 4

Many are living life by a label someone put on you or a defining moment that happened to you. We have two choices in prayer—we can make prayer all about us, our past, and our problems, or we can make prayer all about God, His promises, and His purposes. Jabez chose the second option when he prayed a **Dangerous Prayer**. He didn't focus on the pain of his past. **Rather, he asked for God's blessing, influence, presence, and protection.** We should make these same requests of the Lord in order to fulfill the calling He has on our lives and our church. Motive matters - we don't make these requests for selfish reasons. Instead, we petition the Lord to bless us with more than we need so that we can be a blessing to others. We pray for influence so that we can do more to spread the gospel and build God's kingdom. We ask for God's presence because we know we cannot accomplish His purposes without Him. Like Moses, we should have the attitude that we don't want to go anywhere unless the Lord goes with us. Finally, we request protection because we know we cannot overcome the enemy's attacks without God. Jabez likely experienced tremendous pain in his life—he came out of the womb labeled as one who causes pain! But when Jabez prayed his now famous prayer, **he moved toward God and aligned himself with God's promises and purpose.** As a result, God granted his request, and Jabez received God's blessing, influence, presence, and protection.

Jabez was more honorable than his brothers. His mother had named him Jabez, saying, "I gave birth to him in pain." Jabez 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)

Discussion Questions

- The first part of Jabez's prayer is "Oh that you would bless me..." This sounds selfish. But Pastor Curt explained that "bless" means asking God "to deposit spiritual favor into our life." He listed three reasons to pray this. Discuss these and how God has done any of these in your life.
- Why do you think God granted Jabez's request?
- What is the motivation behind the requests you have presented to God? What steps can we take to ensure our motives are aligned with God's heart?
- Has God answered any of your prayers for more blessing and influence? Once He granted your requests, did you find that you needed more of His help to handle the blessings?

Prayer Focus

Ask God to grant you faith like that of Jabez. Ask the Holy Spirit to lead you in praying bold prayers that will change the world—especially the world around you!

Next Steps

Write down three particular areas of your life where you would like more blessing and influence to benefit others. Create a prayer plan to ask God for blessing, influence, presence, and protection in those areas. Ask other believers to stand with you in prayer for those areas.

Leader Tip

Try to recall specific times God has answered your prayers in the past. Share your personal experience as a way to encourage others to pray bold, kingdom-building prayers!