

Why Leaders Need to Constantly Pray for These 3 Things

First Chronicles begins with lists that include more than 600 names, yet Jabez stands out because he prayed and God granted his request. Don't you want to pray the kind of prayers God answers? Jabez's prayer was simple:

"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" (1 Chronicles 4:10b, NIV).

This prayer includes three specific requests that give us a great model for a leader's prayer life:

He Prayed for God's Power

Jabez realized he needed to rely on God because his own strength wasn't enough. Jabez specifically asked for more territory. Literally, he wanted more land. God wants you to be specific when praying for your goals, too. *Nothing becomes dynamic until it becomes specific.*

Does this prayer sound selfish to you? Jabez was ambitious. Ambition by itself is neither good nor bad. It's a basic drive that everyone has to varying degrees. The motive is what matters, and we can assume Jabez had pure motives because God gave him what he asked for.

God dares us to make big requests of him: "[God] is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine according to his power that is at work within us" (Eph. 3:20). Prayer can do what God can do. Stretch your faith and pray to the fullest extent of your imagination.

He Prayed for God's Presence

Leaders don't just need God's power; they also need his presence. This is what Jabez prayed for when he said, "Let your hand be with me."

Why is it important for a leader to know God's presence?

As your ministry grows, so will the demands, conflicts, temptations, relationships and challenges. Greater responsibility requires greater sensitivity to God's presence. You won't be able to handle everything on your own.

I can't tell you how many times I've often fallen flat on my face and prayed, "God, I'm too incompetent to handle the growth of this church. I cannot handle the responsibility. Yet if You are with me, 'I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me'" (Phil. 4:13, NKJV).

Don't ask God for more territory without also asking for His presence.

He Prayed for God's Protection

Notice Jabez says, "Keep me from harm so that I will be free from pain." This is an interesting request. Why do you think Jabez prayed, "Keep me from harm"?

This third prayer is the natural extension of the first two requests. Success invites attack. When your territory expands, your critics will multiply. Additionally, the closer you get to God, the more Satan attacks you. When we are attacked, fears rise to the surface. When we are distracted, we are less effective. God wants us to ask for his protection so we can lead and live without fear!

Jabez needed God's power, presence and protection. His humility is evident in all three requests. Pride is a temptation for any leader because it's easy to believe we don't need God. We would never admit this, but our prayers show differently. If we are not trusting God for big things,

where is our trust? {eoa}

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