

**“Living Above Average: Prayerful Ambition”**  
1 Chronicles 4:9-10

[Story of Diamond Jim Brady]

Are you living an average life? Are you just “getting by”? Do you want to live above average? Do you want to make a difference in life? God created you a unique, special person. For a matter of fact, you are one in 6 billion people! God wants you to live an above average life. God wants you to honor Him, making a difference in life. Today, we will read about a man named Jabez who had the desire to live above average; he wanted to stand out from others.

We read about Jabez in 1 Chronicles, in a genealogy of about 600 people. Why would God’s Spirit give honorable mention to a man who lived about 4,000 years ago? Because the Bible says that *“Jabez was more honorable than his brothers”* (4:9a). His name meant *“pain.”* Yet, Jabez wanted to live above average. What can we learn from this man named Jabez?

1. Prayerful Ambition (4:10)

*Jabez called out to the God of Israel: “If only You would bless me, extend my border, let Your hand be with me...”*

Jabez had a prayerful ambition to better his life. He called out to God for God’s blessing in his life. God created you and me to grow and expand and learn. Don’t allow pride or laziness or fear keep you from asking God to help fulfill your prayerful ambitions with good motives. Some pray the Jabez prayer for personal gain: more money, new car, bigger house, a job promotion, etc. You should have ambitions that honor God, that better yourself, and helps those around you. God has created you and me for excellence. A life without ambition or goals is a life that is boring and dull.

2. Prayerful Growing Faith (4:10)

*“If only You would bless me, extend my border, let Your hand be with me, and keep me from harm...”*

Jabez was a common man, with an uncommon faith in God. He had a name that was scorned. Can you imagine people calling you “Painful” or “Pain?” However, in spite of his name or any handicap he may have had, Jabez believed in the power of God. Faith is believing that God is who He says He is, and will do what He says He will do. Faith is believing God no matter what your circumstances. Jabez believed that God could answer his prayer, and God did. Do you have a growing faith? Do you believe that God is powerful and can do the impossible? You exercise your faith, and build your faith by trusting God in difficult times, specifically asking Him to help you.

3. Powerful Prayer (4:10a)

*“Jabez called out to the God Israel...”*

Jabez prayed a powerful prayer to God. He asked God to bless him, or give him favor. He asked God to meet his goals: extend my border. He asked God for protection: Let your hand be upon me, and keep me from harm. What are your goals? What are your needs? Pray, and ask God to help you. Is it your marriage? A wayward child? Health issues? Fear of the future or the unknown? Humble yourself before God in prayer, and ask Him to help you, to favor your prayer. God said, *“Call to Me and I will answer you and tell you great and wondrous things you don’t know”* (Jeremiah 33:3). Jesus said, *“Keep asking, and it will be given to you. Keep searching, and you will find. Keep knocking, and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, and the one who searches finds, and to the one who knocks, the door will be opened”* (Matthew 7:7-8). Jabez was an honorable man, with pure motives. He had prayerful ambition, prayerful faith, and powerful prayer. Make a commitment to God to live above average—ask God to bless you, and make you an exceptional follower of Jesus Christ.