



# LEADERSHIP

A Teaching Newsletter of Pastor Gregg Johnson and The Mission Church Ministry • Staff

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## The Prayer of Jabez

**Pastor Gregg Johnson**

**Read 1 Chronicles 4:9-10**

Great leaders think differently than other people think and pray differently than others pray. They may be ordinary people, but by their unique thinking and bold praying, they achieve extraordinary ends. Such men are not common, they are unique. They are leaders.

Jabez was a man of such quality. Scripture sets him apart as "more honorable than his brothers." Why? Because he was driven by a singular ambition: to achieve his fullest potential for God—to lay hold of that for which Christ has laid hold of him (Phil. 3:12). It was this ambition that compelled Jabez to pray such a radical prayer and brought such an incredible response from God.

*"Oh that You would bless me indeed;  
That You would enlarge my territory;  
That Your hand would be upon me;  
And that You would keep me from evil that  
I may not cause pain.."*

**OH, THAT YOU WOULD BLESS ME INDEED**

*Psalm 5:12, "For You, O LORD, will bless the righteous; With favor You will surround him as with a shield."*

When Jabez prayed for God's blessing he was asking to be positioned under the constant stream of God's favor and privilege. This is the concept portrayed in Ps 5. The Hebrew word used for "favor" carries the idea of someone of authority over another looking favorably upon that person and using their power and resources to fill that person with privilege, satisfaction and increase. Consider Pharaoh and Joseph, Nebuchadnezzar and Daniel, Xerxes King of Persia and Mordecai.

If there is one thing a leader needs in order to lead effectively, it is the blessing of God. When Moses set out to lead Israel through the wilderness he prayed, "If Your Presence does not go with us, do not bring us up from here (Ex. 33:15). Moses understood that before he could lead, he needed to be blessed. The task before him could not

completed with mere human ability, talent or charisma, it required the supernatural equipping of God.

While it is true that tribulation and suffering can be noble means to spiritual perfection, we must never lose faith in the fact that our heavenly Father wants to bless us with good things. Of course, there are times when God chastises those He loves—every parent disciplines his child. However, as a parent of five children I must confess that most of the time I want my children to be happy and blessed. In fact, because I love them so much, I do whatever I can to ensure their lives are filled with more joy and provision than wantonness and suffering.

It is no different with our Father in heaven. Luke 11:13 says, "If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him!" God wants to bless us. Jesus Himself reveals this in Luke 12:32: "Do not fear, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." Additionally, Psalm 115:12-15 says, "The LORD has been mindful of us; He will bless us...He will bless those who fear the LORD, Both small and great. May the LORD give you increase more and more, You and your

the profound effect of producing people—even leaders who see themselves as incapable of being blessed and expect only to be denied or suffer lack.

Sadly, the church is filled with leaders who have a crippled perspective of God's character. Rather than living under blessing, they settle for "living under miracles." This is not

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as spiritual as it sounds. Miracles are what God sends to get us out of trouble.

At the end of each month we need a miracle to get us out of financial lack. Each week we are hoping for a miracle to repair family fractures. When God heals us of one sickness, another comes forcing our need for another miracle. Living under miracles means we go from crises to crises needing constant divine intervention to keep us afloat. What is more, leaders who live under miracles, by virtue of their spiritual authority, bring their followers under this same dynamic. In the end they develop a community of faith that lacks the constant flow of God's blessing and exists in a perpetual state of neediness.

I don't want to live under miracles, I want to live under blessing. I want to exist in a perpetual state of God's unlimited provision and lead my followers into the same—much like the Israelites who journeyed through the wilderness under the covering of Yahwey's blessing. They didn't need to pray for healing from heat stroke because there was an ever present cloud sheltering them from the sun's heat. They didn't need to

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ask for food because He gave them a daily portion of heavenly manna. They never even had to ask for clothes, sandals or protection from enemies. Dt. 29:5-8 says, "And I have led you forty years in the wilderness. Your clothes have not worn out on you, and your sandals have not worn out on your feet. And when (giants) came out against us to battle, (I conquered them and gave their land to you)" Living under blessing means God constantly looks favorably upon us and uses His

ask for food because He gave them a daily portion of heavenly manna. They never even had to ask for clothes, sandals or protection from enemies. Dt. 29:5-8 says, "And I have led you forty years in the wilderness. Your clothes have not worn out on you, and your sandals have not worn out on your feet. And when (giants) came out against us to battle, (I conquered them and gave their land to you)" Living under blessing means God constantly looks favorably upon us and uses His

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## The Prayer of Jabez, con't

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power and resources to fill us with privilege, satisfaction and increase.

Are you a leader who seems to be lacking God's blessing? Do you feel frustrated in your calling and seem unable to achieve the destiny God has appointed you to? James 4:2 reminds us, "You have not because

you ask not." We lack God's blessing because we lack the "asking." There are unlimited provisions and eternal blessings stored up in heaven just waiting for us to petition their release. If we don't ask in faith for them, we won't receive them. Hebrews 11:6 says "But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him." John Wesley confirmed this when he said, "God does nothing on earth except in answer to believing prayer." Our Father stands ready to pour out His provision upon us—but He waits for faith that asks. His perfect will for us is a place of abundant blessing and privilege—but we settle for His permissive will: a place of neediness and limitation.

### AND ENLARGE MY TERRITORY

2 Chronicles 16:9: "For the eyes of the LORD run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to show Himself strong on behalf of those whose heart is loyal to Him."

God is looking for people to enlarge that through them He might enlarge His kingdom. There are far too many spiritual under-achievers sporting a false humility in the church today who believe that any ambition toward increase is prideful and needs rebuke. When ambition is for the glory of God, it is honorable. 1 Timothy 3:1 says that if a

man aspires to the office of bishop—when he

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desires to expand his abilities and influence for the kingdom of God—it is a good aspiration. In Matthew 25, the Parable of the Talents shows us that God not only gives to each man according to his ability but expects them to yield an increase in

their field of service. In fact, God pronounces judgment upon and holds accountable those who do not become enlarged. Scriptures are clear

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on this point: not only does God want us to be enlarged for His purpose and glory—He expects it.

It should be noted that God is the only one who determines our enlargement. The Hebrew word for territory also means border; it is also found in Dt. 19:14: "You shall not remove your neighbor's landmark, which the men of old have set, in your inheritance which you will inherit in the land that the LORD your God is giving you to possess." In the Old Testament, God had given each tribe a territory. The families of these tribes were limited to its borders and they were forbidden to enlarge it themselves. Now, in the New Covenant, each of us has been given a certain sphere of responsibility and corresponding level of authority. Just like in the law, it is not up to us to pridefully exert our personal agenda and expand our own territory. Even Paul said, "I am careful not to overextend my authority" (2 Cor. 15:14). We must remain humble before God and wait for Him to enlarge us in His own time.

The essential truth to learn here is that Jabez did not seek enlargement for himself—he sought enlargement that he might make a greater impact for the kingdom of God. He wasn't interested in acquiring abundance so his life would be more comfortable; he wasn't simply looking for a bigger house or deeper pockets because he was materialistic. Jabez wanted more resources so he could accomplish more for the Lord.

The only other place where we read the name "Jabez" is in connection with a city of that same title. See 1 Cron. 2:55. God had so enlarged this man that his once small territory became a renowned city. But it was not a city where Jabez was the rich guy and everyone envied him. It was a city built for the Scribes (*And the families of the scribes who dwelt at Jabez*). The scribes were the teachers and

transcribers of the laws of God. They were the equivalent of our present day clergy or church leaders. That's right—the city of Jabez was a school of leadership that trained up leaders for the kingdom of God. In fact, Jewish history teaches that Jabez was a teacher of the law who had many disciples, hence the city bearing his name. God wanted to enlarge Jabez so He could enlarge His kingdom through him. This is the heart of the Spirit of Jabez—it says, "Lord, everything You've put under my care—enlarge it that Your kingdom might be enlarged through it!" When Jabez committed all that he had to the service of God, He enlarged it dramatically.

This is a truth that leaders must impart to their followers—especially those who are not clergy. This truth is not merely for pastors and ministry leaders; this is for all of God's people. Christian businessmen need to understand the principle of enlargement, financial investors need to see it, real estate developers, administrators and managers, parents and teachers—everyone who has a sphere of responsibility that can be used for God's glory needs to grasp this truth. God wants to enlarge you and that which is under your care that you may use it to enlarge His kingdom.

"Does that mean I should pray for increase in my business ven-

tures and investment portfolios?" Absolutely. If you trade stocks, you should ask God to enlarge the value of your dividends. Not so you can buy a new boat—but so you can enlarge the kingdom of God. If you work in sales, believe God for an enlargement of cliental and increase of new accounts—not so you get a bigger house or newer car—but so you can fund the advancement of the Kingdom of God. God wants to enlarge you, so you can enlarge his kingdom. Dt. 8:18 declares, "And you shall remember the LORD your God, for it is He who gives you power to get wealth, that He may establish His covenant (in the earth). In 2 Corinthians 9:8: "And God is able to make all grace abound toward you, that you, always having

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all sufficiency in all things, may have an abundance for every good work." God wants to pour abundance upon us that we may do His "good work."

The essential element about enlargement to always bear in mind is "motive"—why do we want

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### What Does an "Attractive Church" Look Like?

#### The University of North Carolina surveyed these 10 characteristics:

- Has a congregation with a "joyful spirit," where people enjoy being part of the community
- Is welcoming and accessible to everyone
- Has innovative, thoughtful worship
- Instills values of a true Christian community
- Is aware of the diversity of its members and open to adapting to various groups
- Places emphasis on true spirituality and a deep relationship with God
- Has broad lay involvement in making decisions
- Believes in tradition, but isn't static
- Uses Scripture-based teaching, not "feel-good" religion
- Confronts members' problems

Source: The Denver Post

## God The Creator

### Rich Langford

Every 5-year-old Sunday School student knows that God is the Creator. Anyone who has read the first sentence of the Bible knows that is what that book teaches. *Genesis 1:1 In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.*

As is true for the other attributes of God, however, we should never be so satisfied that we grasp the significance of this role that we fail to return to it as we mature as Christians. In this instance, a study of God's role as Creator also tightens our understanding of His other attributes.

In his epistle to the Colossians, the apostle Paul expands on the description of the Creator that is found in *Genesis. Colossians 1:15 He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. 16 For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him. 17 And He is before all things, and in Him all things consist.*

Normally, this passage is used as a proof of the divinity of Jesus. For now, however, let's consider what it tells us about God and His creation.

First, it tells us that God is the Creator of all things (verse 16). Paul is very careful here to define

"all things" as both those that are natural and those that are supernatural or spiritual. His inclusion of "thrones or dominions or principalities or powers" is intended to remind us that God also created the angels (including Lucifer and his demons).

From here we derive our first key point – if God created everything then there is nothing that could have created God. God, therefore, is super-creatural. This means that He is above or outside of creation, both natural and supernatural, in a way similar to how the supernatural relates

**One of the greatest deceptions we fall under is the lie that because God interacts with us and seeks relationship with us that there is some common ground on which we stand with Him.**

to the natural.

This leads us into the second key point; creation exists within God (verse 17). Just as the natural exists within the supernatural as evidenced by the ability of angels (supernatural beings) to travel in the natural realm as well as the supernatural, the creatural exists within the super-creatural. In the same way, just as the natural is constrained from entering the supernatural, so too the creatural is constrained from entering the super-creatural. Only God is super-creatural and it is not possible for anything else to enter into that place.

To bring this to a more practical level, this means that for the creation (both angels and men) the

fullness of attributes such as knowledge, power, and love are the extent to which God has them. For the sake of argument, if we were to assume that there was something that God did not know, it would not be possible for it to be discovered by any being existing within God's creation.

It is analogous to a discussion of a fictitious character in a book or a play. While an author may describe a character as the most brilliant person who ever lived, it is impossible for the character to actually display knowledge greater than that of the author of the story. The character's actual attributes exist wholly within the constraints of the author's own attributes. In a similar way we cannot know more than God. Nor, for the same reason, can any thing love more than God or display power greater than God's.

One of the greatest deceptions we fall under is the lie that because God interacts with us and seeks relationship with us that there is some common ground on which we stand with Him. We acknowledge that He is superior but our understanding of His superiority is more like our understanding of the superiority of a teacher over a student; a parent over a child; or a master over a slave. The deception, taken to its conclusion, leads to the blasphemous notion that it could be possible for the student, child, or slave to surpass or equal the teacher, parent, or master. It also promotes the idea that we can keep things secret from God or hide from Him the true intent of our hearts.

When we properly understand the difference between creator and creation, however, we can more clearly reconcile our relationship with God. When we understand that our very existence from one moment to the next is contingent on His will (*Colossians 1:17*), we better understand that everything we consciously do or say also happens contingent on His permissive will. We realize that there are no secrets from God and we see the foolishness of trying to fool Him.

Obedience and submission become simple common sense responses to a proper knowledge of our status as a creation. Worship becomes pure in the light of our acknowledgement of who God really is. *Jeremiah 9:23 Thus says the Lord: "Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, Let not the mighty man glory in his might, Nor let the rich man glory in his riches; 24 But let him who glories glory in this, That he understands and knows Me, That I am the Lord, exercising loving kindness, judgment, and righteousness in the earth. For in these I delight," says the Lord.*

This is a difficult and abstract concept to communicate but with the revelation of God as Creator comes

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deliverance, surrender, and peace.

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### QUOTEABLE LEADERS

Whole days and weeks I spent prostrate on the ground in silent or vocal prayer.

George Whitefield

No man is greater than his prayer life. The pastor who is not praying is playing; the people who are not praying are straying. The pulpit can be a shopwindow to display one's talents; the prayer closet allows no showing off.

Leonard Ravenhill

How shall I feel at the judgment, if multitudes of missed opportunities pass before me in full review, and all my excuses prove to be disguises of my cowardice and pride?

Dr. W. E. Sangster

If I had a thousand heads I would rather have them all cut off than to revoke.

Luther, at Diet of Worms

The church that is man-managed instead of God-governed is doomed to failure. A ministry that is college-trained but not Spirit-filled works no miracles.

Samuel Chadwick

The primary qualification for a missionary is not love for souls, as we so often hear, but love for Christ.

Vance Havner

Christian men and women, self-renunciation is the cardinal ethic of the Christian Church.

Dr. Charles Inwood

The more God's people reckon with the devil in their praying, the more they will haste of the liberty of the Spirit in dealing with the issues of life.

F. J. Perryman

## TO THE TIMOTHY: Being an Effective Mentor

**Pastor Nikil Adwalpalkar**

**Being and Effective Mentor: Father To Son**

Last month I talked about the principles involved in finding an effective mentor. This month I'll conclude with an article on being an effective mentor.

*"I hope in the Lord Jesus to send Timothy to you soon...I have no one else like him, who takes a genuine interest in your welfare. For everyone looks out for his own interests, not those of Jesus Christ. But you know that Timothy has proved himself, because as a son with his father he has served with me in the work of the gospel." Phil. 2:19a-22 N.I.V.*

During a grade school assignment, I wrote a letter to one of my father's upper level managers asking him to detail some of the benefits of working for the company and to describe the type of work the company did. A few weeks later I received a typed job description that answered all the questions a 10 year old could ever hope to know about his father's company. Looking back, I realize that out of all the people and careers I could have chosen to explore, I picked the one where my father worked. In that experience I got to grow in my relationship and understanding of my father. My father was, and still is the most special man in my life, and I wanted to learn to become a successful leader just like my dad.

Like a father to a son, all of us as leaders share (or will one day share) in the responsibility to spiritually father a new son or daughter in the Lord. We have all been given the responsibility of making disciples according to the Great Commission (Mt. 28:18-20.) However, there will be individuals that come up/get saved under our ministry that the Lord will ask us to closely mentor. These sons and daughters in Christ are the individuals who will go out into the world and begin serving in the place the where Lord has called them to minister. Others, like Timothy, may even become the

successor to the ministry you now lead! Therefore, it is crucial to understand the principles associated with training and teaching a spiritual son/daughter to become a strong leader in the Kingdom of God.

Today I'll offer you three principles to keep in mind when mentoring the individual that God has cho-

**Before pouring into someone, you need to ask yourself, "How has this individual shown that they are good stewards of what God has given them?"**

sen for you to disciple.

**Key # 1: Make sure that both you and your son/daughter are faithful, available and teachable (F.A.T.) individuals.**

**Faithful.** *"Many a man claims to have unfailing love, but a faithful man who can find?" Prov. 20:6* The son/daughter that you mentor must be someone who is trustworthy and reliable. Before pouring into someone, you need to ask yourself, "How has this individual shown that they are good stewards of what God has given them? Can I really entrust a portion of my God given flock to this person?" An individual who is faithful will do their best with what they have been given until He gives them more. Make sure that the individual has a track record of commitment before choosing to mentor them. What is their ministry or church background? Are they someone that has been in 5 churches and 10 different ministries in the past few years without settling down? If so, they probably lack commitment and may only be faithful to you and the mentoring process for a limited time.

You yourself must be faithful to the mentoring process. Don't start what you will not be able to finish. Meet with your son/daughter on a consistent basis. It may be tempting to miss a week because you are "too busy to get together," but remember that your attitude of faithfulness and dedication is a model to your protégé in training.

**Available.** You need to have time together on a regularly scheduled basis. Set up a schedule and make sure that both you and your protégé can meet those requirements. When one applies for a job, one of the first things asked by the employer is the availabil-

ity of the applicant. If the applicant says that they can only work on a limited basis then another individual with greater availability will probably get the job. It's a good idea to write out a job description with the number of hours that you expect of your protégé to give you each week. Don't use this as a license to take

advantage of their time by expecting that they give you more time than they are capable of giving. Unless they will be receiving some form of compensation (stipend, meals, free admission to venues) you probably cannot expect more than 10 hours per week.

Your son/daughter must always feel like you are available to talk to them and spend time with them. There may be emergencies or other set times when you have scheduled event and will be unavailable. However, let your son/daughter know that you are always available should they ever need to talk or discuss an issue that they may be struggling with.

**Teachable.** A brother or sister with a humble and/or submissive spirit will be a prized pupil and dedicated follower. How does this person handle correction? In times of disagreement the true character of an individual will be shown. If the individual that you hope to mentor is someone that is easily offended, undisciplined and not able to handle

**Delegation allows you to make time for the more important priorities and also provides your protégé with an opportunity to manage a part of the ministry.**

correction, then you will be ineffective in your ability to properly teach.

The best way for you to teach your protégé is to be on the job. On the job training (OJT) happens every time you involve your son/daughter in something that you are doing in ministry. When you go on visitations, run errands, perform funerals, sit on committees, fellowship with other pastors, (etc.) don't forget to bring your Timothy along with you. They will gain so much from just being around a live ministry setting. Paul told Timothy, a young man who had been at Paul's side during many of his missionary campaigns, *"And the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable men who will also be qualified to teach others"* 2 Tim. 2:2. At the

same time that Paul taught the early churches the foundations of faith, church administration, and leadership development, Timothy probably sat at his feet listening and gleaning important truths for his own future ministry.

**Key #2: Make sure that you allow your son/daughter to share in the labor with you.**

*"But you know that Timothy has proved himself, because as a son with his father he has served with me in the work of the gospel." Phil. 2:21* What are some of the ways that you can delegate responsibilities to your Timothy in training? One suggestion is to make a list of all the things that you do during the course of an average day and delegate some of the smaller time consuming jobs to your son/daughter. Delegation allows you to make time for the more important priorities and also provides your protégé with an opportunity to manage a part of the ministry. In 2 Tim. 4:5, Paul told Timothy, *"...Discharge all the duties of your ministry."* Simply put, to enlarge your territory (1Chron. 4:10a) and to see that those under you are continually growing, responsibility must be entrusted to those who you mentor.

As our sons and daughters are faithful with what you give them they should be given more. When they have been faithful with contacting and loving assigned individuals in the body, you may want to consider giving them teaching opportunities. As they excel in teaching, you may want to assign them a group of individuals for discipleship. When you see spiritual and numerical growth in your son/daughter's disciples, it may be time to help them pioneer or takeover their own ministry.

Please note that this is process and not a formula for mentoring. Sometimes it may take months, even years before you feel that your Timothy is ready to move to the next level. The worst thing you can do is put someone in a place of spiritual authority that they are not ready to assume. While the pace at which each person expands and grows is different, the point is that you are always looking for opportunities to reward their faithfulness with greater opportunities

**Key # 3: Give Timothy your blessing as you release him/her.**

*"Command and teach these*

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**Prayer Corner: Please pray for Pastor Charles Kinusu Mulema of the Nairobi Gospel Center, Nairobi, Kenya, who has been visiting The Mission Church this past month. Pray that upon returning home to Kenya he will be able to implement the completion of construction to their new facility.**

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things. Don't let anyone look down on you because you are young, but set and example in for the believers in speech, in life, in love, in faith and in purity." 1 Tim 4:11 It is hard to let go of those whom we have trained but it is necessary. As leaders it sometimes seems like we work so hard only to have people desert us. "You know (Timothy) that everyone in the province of Asia has deserted me... (ref. 2 Tim. 15a)," the tired and weary apostle wrote. Now it was also time for Timothy to leave, but Paul was releasing Timothy, not being abandoning by him.

For those that we mentor, nothing can be more bittersweet than having to let go of the one's we've trained. We patiently watch them grow and mature into something only God could produce and then before we know it our sons/daughter are off to the place the Lord has called them. However, while we may never think that we'll be able to replace them, we must take comfort in knowing that this is the natural process in building the kingdom of God. Parents release children, teachers release students, and yes pastors release pastors. If we've done our job correctly there will one day come a time of releasing.

Like Paul we must release our Timothy's with the blessing of the Lord. Imagine how hard it must have been for a seasoned, experienced apostle who started the original gentile churches to release that burden to a young adult in his early years! However, showered amongst the two letters to Timothy are springs of encouragement and blessing. Fight the good fight. Guard the good deposit that was entrusted to you. Do your best to be a workman who is diligent and need not be ashamed to preach the truth. Preach the word in season and out of season. Fan into flame the gift the Lord has already given you.

Pastors and leaders your Timothy needs your blessing. One day they will move out into their own ministry. Have you prepared them? As one wise woman put it, "**You teach what you know, but you reproduce who you are.**"

**Nikil Adwarpalkar is the Youth Pastor overseeing the Youth Ministries in the Mission Church.**

**"All that is necessary for evil to triumph is for good men to do nothing."**

**—Edmund Burke, 18th century English political philosopher**

## The Prayer of Jabez; con't

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to be enlarged? James 4:3 reminds us, "You ask and do not receive, because you ask amiss, that you may spend it on your pleasures." Those who seek enlargement for personal gain and not for the advancement of God's purposes—will not be blessed by God. That doesn't mean they won't increase—many people

increase—but they do so without God's blessing. Proverbs 10:22 says, "The blessing of the LORD makes one rich, And He adds no sorrow with it." Be careful that your desire to be enlarged is not for you, lest you bring pain and sorrow upon yourself. I'll address this more fully in the final segment.

Finally, enlargement can only come to those with special faith. When Jabez looked out upon his small ranch with its little fields and tight boundaries, he was not limited by what he saw. People who achieve greatness, see things differently than the rest of us. Jabez looked upon his boundaries with vision—and vision looks with faith beyond boundaries, beyond the limitations of circumstance. He saw more than sheep fields and stone fences—he saw schools buildings, students studying, ministries launched and leaders raised up.

What do you see when you look out upon your territory? Is your expectation bound by what you see? Or do you have vision—the ability to look with faith beyond your limited circumstances and picture a special future? Let us be leaders who seek God's blessing and enlargement that we may enlarge His kingdom. Let us dare to dream of achievements, advancements and accomplishments that should set us apart as the leaders we're called to be.

### LET YOUR HAND BE UPON ME

2 Corinthians 3:5 "Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think of anything as being from ourselves, but our sufficiency is from God"

At first Jabez didn't pray this part of the prayer. It wasn't until he became enlarged that he realized that he was in over his head. He discovered that caring for 5 acres was different than caring for

500 and managing 10 employees wasn't the same as managing 100.

Experiencing blessing and enlargement does not mean you won't have any troubles. There are problems to solve, deadlines to meet, budgets to manage, and criticisms to answer. It is one thing to

**Spiritual promotion occurs when one is elevated to a place of greater influence and greater responsibility and entrusted with greater resources to make a greater impact for the kingdom of God.**

attain success; its another thing to maintain that success. Jabez knew that if he were to maintain the success of his enlargement, he needed the hand of God to be upon him. When he prayed for hand of the Lord, he was saying, "I can't do this thing on my own—I need God!"

The world may tell us that to admit such weakness is a sign of faltered leadership. But in the Kingdom of God, admitted weakness is the first step to spiritual promotion. James 4:6 & 10 says, "God resists proud, But gives grace to humble.... Humble your-

**The feeling that "you can't do it, this is beyond you, or you're in over your head"—is exactly what you're supposed to be feeling. If you're not feeling that, then you're not living where God wants you to be living.**

selves in sight of the Lord, He will lift you up."

Spiritual promotion occurs when one is elevated to a place of greater influence and greater responsibility and entrusted with greater resources to make a greater impact for the kingdom of God. But beware, the process of enlargement is not one of increased ability—it's one of increased dependence.

God does not first teach us, train and prepare us so that we

become sufficient in ourselves with ability. He doesn't give us all the talent, gifts and resources ahead of time and tell us "Now you're ready; now I made you a capable and qualified leader." Not at all. Usually, He does it just like He did with the disciples and the feeding of the 5,000—He drops you in the middle of situation that is beyond your ability and leaves it up to you to cry out to Him for help. He takes a captain over 50 and makes him a captain over 100 and forces him to realize he can't make it without divine intervention.. The intensity of his cry for help will determine the level of his success.

This is called dependence. Feeling it means you are right in the middle of God's will. The second you're not feeling it is the second you've backed away from His perfect will. The feeling that "you can't do it, this is beyond you, or you're in over your head"—is exactly what you're supposed to be feeling. If you're not feeling that, then you're not living where God wants you to be living. Bruce Wilkinson wrote, "As God's chosen, blessed sons and daughters we are expected to attempt something (so large) that failure is guaranteed—unless God steps in."

Why? Its this sense of desperation that releases God's power to accomplish His will and brings glory to Him. No one becomes great in the kingdom of God; we become dependent on the hand of God. Your neediness offered to Him is His unlimited opportunity—and He becomes great through you. 2 Cor. 12:9 says, "And (The Lord) said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness." Therefore ... I will ... boast in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.... I take

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**The tragedy of this late hour is that we have too many dead men in the pulpits giving out too many dead sermons to too many dead people. Oh! The horror of it. There is a strange thing that I have seen "under the sun," even in the fundamentalist circles; it is preaching without unction. What is unction? I hardly know. But I know what it is not (or at least I know when it is not upon my own soul). Preaching without unction kills instead of giving life. The unctionless preacher is a savor of death unto death. The Word does not live unless the unction is upon the preacher. Preacher, with all thy getting—get unction!**

**Leonard Ravenhill; Why Revival Tarries**

# The Prayer of Jabez, con't

(Continued from page 5)  
*pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in needs, in persecutions, in distresses. For when I am weak, then I am strong.*

**KEEP ME FROM EVIL, THAT I MAY NOT HAVE PAIN**

*Philippians 4:12; "I know how to be abased, and I know how to abound. Everywhere and in all things I have learned both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need."*

Not only did Paul know how to respond appropriately to adversity, he knew how to respond righteously to prosperity. As we enlarge, we must enlarge with integrity. The Prayer of Jabez is not just about being successful, it is determining that if God blesses and enlarges me, I will be a person, a leader, a businessman, a clergyman of integrity.

When a person enlarges the demands upon them also enlarge—evil occurs when we fail to address these demands righteously. Whether the enlargement be in finances, business, family, or even ministry—it is accompanied by more pressures, greater temptations, and a host of responsibilities. Often these demands bring personal discomfort and sacrifice—the challenge is refusing to compromise one's integrity when faced by them.

As Jabez experienced enlargement, he faced difficulties and temptations that he never before understood or even knew existed.

The saying goes, "Higher Levels Bring Higher Devils." It is true. As God enlarges us, we will experience spiritual attacks and unique dynamics that we never before had to face and may not even be ready to handle. Jabez prayed, "Keep me from evil, that I may not have pain." He realized that enlargement was more than just being prosperous and respected; there were larger battles, more difficult decisions, and fierce trials that could sustain lasting, painful repercussions. Jabez wanted enlargement, but not if it was going to destroy him.

Similarly, we must determine that the only way we want God to enlarge us is if we can be enlarged without it ruining us. This means our first concern must not be with having more success, but with developing more character. Therefore, as a man enlarges, so must his character, i.e., if your ministry, finances or business enlarges, your integrity must enlarge as well. If a man's character does not enlarge with his

success then he will be "top heavy" and that success will topple him. Much like a tall New York skyscraper whose foundation is too shallow, his character is not deep enough to support his enlargement. The result is a successful, prosper-

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ous man who is motivated by the evils of personal gain. Like Jabez our prayer should be, "Lord, don't promote me into any position of enlargement that my character is not ready to support. Delay any advancement until my integrity as been matured enough to guide me out of evil and deliver me from pain."

Abundance can kill you if you're not ready for it. For some, financial success would be the worst thing in the world for them. Because their character has not been developed to support their increase, they would be unfaithful stewards and use their enlargement recklessly. They would buy new cars, bigger houses, boats and golf clubs and fill their lives with a host of distractions. Before long, they would be too busy sailing to attend church, give more time to their new house then ministry, and excuse themselves from tithing because now their tithing is "too big." Sadly, the church is filled with people whom God enlarged to "establish His

covenant" and instead they use their increase to satisfy the flesh. There are some of God's people whom God can't bless with financial wealth—because as soon as they got it, they would backslide. Dt. 6:10-12 warns us: "So it shall be, when the LORD your God brings you into the land ... to give you large and beautiful cities ..., houses full of good things, ... hewn-out wells ..., vineyards and olive trees ...when you have eaten and are full then beware, lest you forget the LORD who brought you out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage.

For others, the worst thing in the world for them would be business success. Because they have not yet learned simple integrity in life's basic applications, they would be unethical when it comes to the larger demands of business management. Dealing fairly with employees, reporting income, paying taxes, providing workmen's compensation,

liability insurance, honoring warranties are essential to maintaining godly success. But people who have not matured in integrity would neglect these standards, bring evil and pain upon themselves and ultimately reproach the Name of Christ. To these the Lord would say, "Better a handful with quietness than both hands full, together with toil and grasping for the wind; Ecclesiastes 4:6.

This same principle holds for singles who desire to be enlarged with a spouse or parents who hope for enlargement with children. If our character is not first enlarged, then

our marriages will be miserable and our children will be cursed. I have counseled too many pre-marital couples who are like two ticks thinking each other is a dog; each is focused on their own neediness believing the other exists only to meet their needs. Before we seek enlargement with family, we must seek the enlargement of our own character. God must bring us to a place of self denial where we can selflessly serve and love those who come into our lives with sincerity.

And what about those in ministry? God especially wants to enlarge their character because the pain they can cause effects not just them and their families but whole churches, entire communities and even the testimony of God Himself.

In 1 Timothy 3:6 Paul cautions that those who desire enlargement in ministry should "not (be) a novice, lest being puffed up with pride he fall into the same condemnation as

**If people are promoted into positions of spiritual authority and anointing before their character is matured to support that promotion, they call fall into the same rebellion that Satan fell into.**

the devil. In other words, if people are promoted into positions of spiritual authority and

anointing before their character is matured to support that promotion, they may fall into the same rebellion that Satan fell into. The saying is true: "Charisma can take a man to the top but only character will keep him there." All the great men of scripture who maintained their enlargement successfully were men whose characters were enlarged first. John the Baptist was hidden in the wilderness through his entire adolescence before he started to preach. Paul remained three years in Arabia in preparation; each of the disciples also stayed under Jesus' mentorship for three years. Even Jesus stayed hidden in obscurity for thirty years before the Father commissioned Him for ministry. Spiritual enlargement must not occur until one's character has been enlarged first.

In 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1, Paul gives a list of criteria that must be met in a person's character before they should be increased in ministry. He did this, not to be legalistic, but because he understood the temptations and struggles that came with spiritual promotion—especially in the ministry. Paul knew that if a candidate was not properly prepared and proven, he could fall to evil, bring ruin to the ministry and cause pain in many lives.

## 1 Samuel 4:5-10

**Now, here's what I saw as I read the story carefully. The people of God had the Presence of God (the ark), and they had the shout in the camp—and they lost the war! This contradicted everything I used to think about spiritual warfare. I used to think if we just got the Presence of God in the house and the shout of praise in the congregation, we would be guaranteed mighty exploits and great kingdom breakthroughs. But this account helped me to see something. The Presence wasn't enough! Even though they had the Presence and the victory shout, they still lost the war.**

**Here's the thought I'm submitting for your careful consideration: We need more than Presence. We need Glory. As we saw in this story, it's possible to have the Presence without the Glory. To complete the mandate of the Great Commission, we must see attention-grabbing, earth-shattering, hell-shaking, bondage-breaking demonstrations of the Glory of God.**

**Bob Sorge; Glory, When Heaven Invades Earth**

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### SO GOD GRANTED HIM WHAT HE REQUESTED

In Matthew 6, Jesus gives an example of a common prayer that all believers should pray. It serves as a model petition for every typical Christian to recite on a regular basis and covers the essential needs and functions of every day, normal life. The church has named it “The Lord’s Prayer.”

The Prayer of Jabez, however, is different. It is a cry from the hearts of people who don’t want to be normal any longer. Its not a common prayer for just any typical believer—it is meant to be a fervent, passionate yearning that screams from the unsatisfied lives of men and women longing to be all that God created them to be—to move beyond where they are into where they should be—to be enlarged, increased and equipping to advanced the kingdom of God for the glory of His Name. The Prayer of Jabez is “The Leader’s Prayer.”

The brief account of Jabez’s life ends with this testimony: “so God gave him his request.” The Prayer of Jabez moves God to respond—He has always been moved by people of faith who have vision beyond their circumstances.



Rev. Gregg Johnson is Senior Pastor of The Mission Church in New York, USA.

### REVIVING A DECLINING CHURCH (6 Keys to Resuscitation)

**Build Hope.** First, point to God—Jesus said, “I will build my Church.” Second, point to the church’s strengths. Third, point to churches that have turned around.

**Look forward publicly and backward privately.** In two of my past churches, the previous pastors had been forced out. Hurt feelings and tensions needed to be addressed, but not from the pulpit. Publicly, I pointed to the future we could share.

**Fix the facility.** Peeling paint and disrepair sends a message the church is dying. We tackled the most obvious disrepair immediately with a few gallons of paint and volunteers.

**Preach dynamic sermons.** I put more effort into sermon preparation than anything else.

**Emphasize prayer.** I agreed to pastor my present church only after the leadership committed to attending all church prayer meetings every Sunday evening.

**Develop new leaders.** I sought to move new people into leadership. They had new vision and were not part of previous factions.

By Stephen Grunland, San Diego California (Reprinted from UPDATE-North Carolina Assemblies of God District Newsletter)

## ENLARGING WITH INTEGRITY

### *Fulfilling the Ethics of Increase*

Being enlarged means that one is being elevated to a place of greater influence and greater responsibility where he or she is entrusted with greater resources to make a greater impact for the kingdom of God. One must always bear in mind that with these greater responsibilities also comes greater difficulties, greater temptations and greater opportunities to compromise righteousness.

Enlarging with integrity means that as one faces the demands of increase, he or she will remain faithful to the following ethical values and principles of godliness.

### *The Ethics of Increase*

#### **Give Glory to God**

Be careful not to allow your success to make you prideful or self sufficient. Always remember that it is God who has promoted and equipped you with the ability to sustain that promotion. Never speak words that lift up your abilities or draw focus upon your accomplishments

#### **Remain Ethical**

Ethics refers to standards of conduct (or standards that indicate how one should behave based on moral duties and virtues) which themselves are derived from principles of right and wrong. There are two aspects to ethics: the first involves the ability to discern right from wrong, good from evil, and propriety from impropriety; the second involves the commitment to do what is right, good and proper regardless of personal cost or sacrifice.

With enlargement come certain duties. They could be legal duties, financial obligations or responsibilities to people. The temptation is to neglect or avoid these all together because the cost is too high. Enlargement is more than just enjoying the benefits of success, it is being responsible enough to fulfill the demands of success.

#### **Be a Positive Role Model**

Enlarged people have high visibility and respectability because of their enlargement. As such they are held in esteem by others and are considered examples to be modeled—whether they like it or not. Therefore, those who are successful have a duty to use their position of esteem for good. They should serve as a worthy example and positive role model—especially for the young. Too many “successful people” such as athletes, musicians and actors have not recognized this ethic and have led (even unwittingly) many youth into drugs, premarital sex and crime.

#### **Demonstrate Respect Toward Those Around and Under You**

The way one shows respect varies, but its essence is the display of regard for the worth of people, including oneself. We have no ethical duty to hold all people in high esteem or admire them, but we are morally obligated to treat everyone with respect, regardless of who they are and what they have done — even if they don’t deserve respect. The reason is not because these undeserving souls are noble beings, but because we are. We have a responsibility to be the best we can be in all situations, even when dealing with the heinous.

Respect focuses on the moral obligation to honor the essential worth and dignity of the individual. Respect prohibits violence, humiliation, manipulation, and exploitation. It reflects notions such as civility, courtesy, dignity, autonomy, tolerance and acceptance. Resist the temptation to think your enlargement makes you better than others or puts you on a higher level in which you no longer have to give others respect or fair treatment.

#### **Maintain Balance**

The danger of enlargement is that it completely absorbs the person being enlarged. He or she can become so focused on that which is enlarging them (business, ministry, finances) that they lose sight the other valuable aspects of their lives. Enlarged people must work hard on maintaining the three-fold balance of God, family and career. It is unfortunate that the casualties of success are usually one’s relationship with God and spiritual disciplines or one’s marriage and relationship with children. Do not allow the urgent needs of the moment tyrannize your life and crowd out the more important needs of life’s most precious assets.

#### **Remember the Tithe**

Tithing isn’t for God—He doesn’t need our money. Tithing is for us. The tithe (giving 10%) of one’s income to God is designed to hold us in a place of trust and dependence on God. It is this proportionate amount of one tenth that always ensures, that no matter how enlarged we become, we will remain surrendered to Him, reliant upon Him and not sufficient of ourselves.

Abundance can kill your faith if you’re not ready for it. Too many people find it easy to pay their tithe when their salary is relatively moderate—but when increase comes upon them and their salary has tripled, and so has their tithe, they think that their tithe is “too big” to give away. Their territory enlarged, but their faith in God did not enlarge with it. In fact, they become independent of God and sufficient of themselves.

Tithing is about ownership; it is about dependence; it is about “who is really in control of my life.” We need to tithe as we enlarge because it keeps us in a place of surrender unto God.

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## LEADERSHIP TEACHING NEWSLETTER

A Teaching Newsletter of Pastor Gregg Johnson and The Mission Church Ministry Staff

May 2001

### A NEW RESOURCE FOR LEADERS

Leadership Teaching Newsletter is a great new resource for pastors, missionaries and all who are engaged in Christian Leadership. This monthly publication is developed by Pastor Gregg Johnson and staff of The Mission Church and is provided free to all leaders of ministries who strive toward greater effectiveness in the ministry they serve. Leadership endeavors to fulfill the following values:

- TO EQUIP by providing teachings, insights and information to Christian leaders in foreign lands who are unable to access mainstream media.
- TO ENCOURAGE the body of Christ around the world by inspiring the church's leaders to persevere through challenges, adversity and even persecution.
- TO EXHORT men and women in leadership to demonstrate the example of Christ through godly devotion, love of the brethren and commitment to the family.

If you are a leader in Christian ministry and would like to be added to our mailing list, Please contact the Mission Church.

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### THE ELECTRIC CHAIR ILLUSTRATION

Unfortunately, most people today believe they will go to heaven on the basis of their own good works. They feel that trying to keep the 10 commandments, going to church, being honest, or helping the poor makes them "good enough" to receive eternal life. In contrast, scripture tells us "*For by grace you are saved through faith, and not of yourselves. It is the gift of God, not of works lest any man should boast.*" Eph. 2:8,9. The following illustration demonstrates how no one can save himself but must rely completely on the substitutionary sacrifice of Jesus Christ on the cross.

"Suppose, while taking a walk late at night, you are confronted by a young hoodlum who pulls out a gun and demands you to hand over your wallet: cash, credit cards and all. This you do and the young criminal takes to flight.

Fortunately, the thief is apprehended and charged, not only with the armed assault against you, but with a murder he committed later that same night. Eventually, he is convicted and sentenced to the electric chair.

Eventually, you start to feel compassion for the youngster, regardless of the hostile nature of his crimes. "Perhaps all he needs is forgiveness and understanding" you tell yourself. Finally, after recalling Christ's command to "love your neighbor even as you love yourself", you decide to try and help him.

You go down and speak to the judge and

say, "What can I do to save this young person? I'll do anything at all. I'm even prepared to give my life for him if it is necessary." The judge, well-known for his righteous character, replies, "That is commendable, however, you would not serve as a sufficient substitute. This criminal is guilty, he has broken the law many times. The only person who would be able to carry this man's guilt is someone who has absolutely no guilt of their own, like an innocent little child. "In fact," the judge says, "I would accept the life of your child to carry his guilt, that would be an adequate sacrifice."

You go home and agonize, you have but one child...a lovely young daughter. You pray, you wrestle with your decision; and finally you decide that if you really are going to love him, even as you love yourself, you are going to have to do this.

And so, you bring your child down to the prison where you are told that you must do the deed. You must shave her head. You must strap her into the chair. You must pull the switch. Your child looks pleadingly at you and says, "Mommy/Daddy, why are you forsaking me?" You cover your head and watch her twist, and writhe in pain as you pull the switch. Finally, it is over and she is dead. The guards inform you later that the guilty man who your daughter died for has been declared "not guilty" and set free.

This story perfectly illustrates what Jesus did on the cross for us. We were that guilty prisoner who had broken God's laws and commit-

ted personal offenses against Him. But, instead of serving justice by punishing me in hell, God the Father sent Jesus, the perfect, sinless sacrifice to bear out guilt and die in our place.

Now imagine how you would feel if several days following your daughter's execution, you see an interview on TV with the ex-convict whose guilt your daughter died for. And in that interview, the reporter asks the young man, "You were condemned to die in the electric chair, what happened, how is it that you are free?" And then to your astonishment, he replies, "Oh, it was all a big mistake. When the judge looked at the record of my life, he saw I really was a nice guy; there more people that I did not rob or kill than did; and in fact, there were many good deeds I performed like going to church and giving money to charities. After weighing my whole life, they decided I had done more good than bad and let me go...free of guilt!"

As you listen to these ridiculous words, there flashes into your mind a picture of your daughter writhing in pain as you pull the switch on the electric chair. And you know in your heart that the only reason he is free is because your daughter paid the price of his guilt—not because of his good deeds

The same way you would feel about that man is the same way Father God feels when we say that we are going to go to heaven because of all the good works we've done without any mention of His son."

*For God so loved the world that He gave*