

Desires for spiritual growth *Quality: Average)

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Preacher: Pont, Philip

[0 : 00] It's entirely on the Lord, for his help, we ask your attention to the first book of Chronicles, chapter 4, and verses 9 and 10.

First book of Chronicles, chapter 4, verses 9 and 10. Jabez was more honourable than his brethren. His mother called his name Jabez.

Saying, because I bear him with sorrow, Jabez called on the God of Israel, saying, O that thou wouldst bless me indeed, and enlarge my coast, that thine hand might be with me, and that thou wouldst keep me from evil, that it may not grieve me.

And God granted him that which he requested. The scriptures are silent in the most part.

Anything more of this good man. The name Jabez is only written three times in the scriptures, and are found in this book.

[1 : 19] In chapter 2, there is a part of Israel called Jabez. But in this chapter 4, that is all you and I shall read of him.

Nowhere else in the scriptures of truth is he mentioned. And what is more, we do not know anything about his brethren, other than this, that they had brethren.

But what the scriptures tell us is that he was more honourable than his brethren. And whether that means providential, we are not to know because we are not told.

Biblical writers and students of the scriptures believe that he might well be, perhaps hold a position in life, which was an honourable position.

Some say that he might be a doctor of the law, as Gamaliel was in the Acts of the Apostles. But be that as it may, where the scriptures are silent, so must we be also.

[2 : 33] But in spiritual things, for we must indeed meditate at this time, and through this service at least, on what is spiritual rather than what is providential.

And it is very obvious and very evident that he was honourable in the sight of God. Jabez was more honourable than his brethren, and his mother called his name Jabez, saying, because I bear him with sorrow.

Now, such that fear the Lord are under the blessing of God in their soul and in their circumstances.

My thoughts went to that chapter in Samuel, the first book of Samuel. And the Lord speaks there in that very solemn chapter where the sons of Eli were to be destroyed because they were sons of Belial.

The priests of the temple were not only unbelievers, but they were idolatrous. And they were also walking a path which was a shame to their profession and for which God frowned upon and which they were destroyed for their sin.

[3 : 54] But in that chapter we read this, those that honour me, I will honour. You see now the substance of this word. And you will see here, therefore, that it is because that grace of God is found in the soul that those that honour God, God will honour.

And that is true, my friends, in the spiritual and in the temporal path that they shall walk. Well, that is all I want to say really upon what is a description of such a godly man.

If you look at the book of Job, you will find there that his reputation was as equally as, in God's sight at least, it was equally as good.

For we read that Job was a man who was perfect and upright, that was he was complete. An upright and one that feared God and eschewed evil.

That is the character reference of all that fear God, all whom God will honour in their pathway and who he will honour in their soul with eternal blessings.

[5 : 11] I've often thought, you know, we make such a lot today, I suppose, perhaps we always have done, but more so today, in this day of high education.

There's such a lot of emphasis placed on profession and calling. And, oh, may the Lord so bless the rising race with divine appearances in providence for them, and that they may see their way as appointed of God.

My friends, but there's far more important things when one reckons with eternity, that this may be your blessing and now my blessing, that it is one whom the Lord calls honourable.

Jabez was more honourable than his brethren. He had something that they had not. But I desire the Lord's most needful help that we might look at this tenth verse then, where the expression of that grace is seen, where the evidence of that eternal life is found, and where the very desire of his soul is ordered and decreed, and the prayer itself is indicted of God.

And the basis of it and the foundation of it is the Spirit's leading, but it's the content of it. My friends, it's the content.

[6 : 46] Your prayers, if you have prayed as you enter this sanctuary, is heard in heaven, has it any relationship to such a prayer as this?

Has it any evidence that it is the same gracious teacher that taught Jabez to pray, that has taught you and me to pray? And Jabez called on the God of Israel.

There was evidently too in Jabez's soul a work of grace and a work of faith. The God of Israel was not to him an unknown God, although his forefathers were obviously gracious and grace-taught men.

So, my friends, so that blessing was found in his soul. And Jabez called on the God of Israel. Oh, my friends, to call on him.

Call of him because the poor man was in need. And it wasn't the need that brought him to call on the name of the Lord. It was the gracious Spirit's influence.

[7 : 57] You'll find plenty of people out in the world that have need, but there's no calling on the God of Israel. And there's plenty of times, if you look back in your life, you that hope in the mercy of God, that you had many a time of great need, but there was no calling.

But here we have both need and calling. Here we have both burden and concern and a cry in the soul and from the soul unto the God of Israel.

And here we have also the influence of the Spirit of truth. The Apostle wrote, The Spirit himself helpeth us in our infirmity, for we know not what to pray for as we ought, but he'd help Jabez in his infirmity.

And there was also that grace of faith that was accompanied in the prayers of Jabez. And he called on the God of Israel, the end of the verses, and God granted him that which he requested.

And we have something else, therefore, to consider for a moment. He asked what God would give him. He asked what God would give him. Have you been brought there?

[9 : 16] Oh, you can make long prayers. If you're able or able to speak before God, you may make long prayers. But are they divine ordered prayers?

Are they the Holy Spirit's instruction and teaching and indicting in your own soul? Or you'd be just as bad as the Pharisees, because that was their reputation, that they were known for their long prayers.

But such a prayer as this, very short but effectual, was the evidence that it was a Holy Spirit and a gracious taught prayer.

And Jabez called on the name of Israel. And he called out of need. And he laid the burden of his prayers before the God of Israel.

And to my mind, as we shall read this prayer again and again through this day, if not through this morning service, we might see that it is not just a few well-spoken words that has been gathered together by our ability to speak.

[10 : 26] There is emphasis, there is burden, and there is care, there is concern, and there is exercise in it. It's not just a following on of repetition.

Oh, beware of repetition. Oh, may the Lord ever teach you to pray against repetition. But oh, the burden of this man's cry. And Jabez called on the God of Israel, saying, Oh, that thou wouldest bless me indeed.

There's such an emphasis, there's such a power in those words, there's so descriptive of the condition that he was in. What condition was he in? Well, he was needy, that was evident.

And he was in himself, evidently poor, poor in spirit, I mean. There's nothing here to give us any light on what his circumstances was. But this is his soul.

And this is the condition of his soul that brought him to pray. And you know, too, my friends, real prayer is very person.

[11 : 34] Very person. It so surely must be. You know, before, it is well to bear one another's burdens and so fulfill the law of Christ.

Of course it is. We would ever try to lay the matters of other people before the Lord. The state and condition of their pathway or situation should be a burden to us and we should lay it before the Lord.

But it comes down to bedrock truth, you know. It comes down to this most important thing. Oh, that thou wouldest bless me indeed. Oh, I truly desire you all to be blessed.

I truly do. And those that form this cause of truth and church lay with great weight upon my soul. My friends, but when I come down to those private devotions, those devotions and prayers that you never hear, my friends, the state of my soul is first and foremost.

Oh, that thou wouldest bless me indeed. Well, my friends, it was said and it is recorded rather in the word of God of one Solomon who the Lord spoke in a vision to him and said, Ask what I shall give thee.

[13 : 00] What would you ask for? What would you ask for? What would be the substance of your reply? What would it be that brought you before God and said, Well, now, this is what I need, Lord.

These are the things that I require. I can't do without these things. Other people have them. I haven't got them. What would they be? What would they be?

My friends, if you was gracious, it would be your soul. It would be the matters of your soul. When you hear, my friends, of the Lord blessing other people in their souls, bringing them into liberty and into the possession of gospel blessings and walking in the light of his countenance, does it not stir up a spirit of prayer within you that you might also find those same blessings resting upon you?

Oh, that I would have blessed me indeed. Well, now, my friends, the hymn that is based on this text speaks about those things which he asked.

the more I looked at this text before I found a hymn, actually, and I've carried this text now for several days. But, my friends, what is the blessing that will take you to glory?

[14 : 26] What is the mercy that you will feel to need if you're a living soul? If you're a dead soul, you will ask for spiritual, you will not ask for spiritual things.

If all your heart and affection is rested upon this world and its affairs and concerns and possessions, well, my friends, you've not got a place in this verse 10 nor in verse 9 either.

But if you're a living soul and you are concerned as we sang in that hymn regarding the eternal state and where shall it be that you will occupy eternity in heaven or hell, my friends, I believe you will begin with those things which in themselves are a hindrance to that glorious place where Jesus is.

O that thou wouldst bless me indeed with forgiveness, with pardon. To take the word of God in the Gospel of Luke and that well-known case of the publican and the publicans were supposed to be very well off because they were embezzlers of money.

They took money from their own nation. They charged as they would to the taxes for the Romans and so on. They were very wealthy. And all that was swept aside in that dear man's prayer, wasn't it?

[15 : 55] God, be merciful to me, a sinner. O that thou wouldst bless me indeed with forgiveness. you know, as you come to chapel on Sundays, some of us look back on the week and have to say indeed thankfulness to the Lord for his mercy, for his preservation, for his care, for every provision, for our comfort in life.

But then we have to say this, and in thankfulness I believe and trust that was not dealt with us after our sins, nor rewarded us according to our iniquity.

If sin lies with burden on your spirit, it will be this, that you will be asked to be removed. O that thou wouldst bless me indeed.

The Lord's people are a blessed people, of that there is no doubt. that they are blessed with so many blessings which are in Christ Jesus.

And my friends, if you are by grace a needy soul, those blessings which are in Christ Jesus, you will seek to know.

[17 : 14] Now, the Lord Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners. And by his sufferings and death and resurrection, his people are delivered from their sin.

That's what his name means, Saviour. For he shall save his people from their sins. But if you are a gracious character, your prayer will be, put me amongst his people.

Grant me the blessings that they are blessed with. Grant me the mercies that they speak of and enjoy. Grant to me that what thou blessed them with, thou wilt bless me with.

My friends, to be blessed with forgiveness for the pardon of sin, for the putting away of iniquity. And that is no light, matter, my friends.

It is no small blessing. It is not something insignificant. My greatest concern often is because, you know, at the end of our prayers we ask for forgiveness.

[18 : 18] Why don't we ask them for forgiveness at the beginning of them? If they were such a burden to our spirit as I hope and pray at times they surely are, they will be the first things we pray for, not the last things.

They are more important to us, my friends, than everything else. If you are troubled with sin, my friends, you will have the frown, not the smile of God. But if you are troubled with sin and you bring them to the Lord as the Spirit enables you to do so and to plead his own holy word.

And my friends, there is a most gracious promise for a coming sinner to plead. If you look in John's epistle, it says, if we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

Oh, who but those who know the burden of sin do not have to daily and more often than daily have to plead for forgiveness. But when you plead for forgiveness, you know, you are bringing to the Lord the means of forgiveness.

You are laying before the Lord those things which indeed he has provided in his own blessed son. We read that chapter in Genesis for this reason.

[19 : 40] because Jacob wrestled with the angel and that angel was Christ. And you read the exercise of Jacob.

There was no giving up on that exercise, that wrestling, that burden that was laid upon him to wrestle with the angel. And I will not let thee go, he said, except thou bless me.

Oh, is that with us? My friends, are we just giving lip service to such a word as this? And we read this too. It was whilst he was wrestling.

And we read this. And he blessed him there. My friends, have you got such a time? And do you desire such a time? I hope I could say all of you, the Lord knows your hearts.

My friends, oh, that I would bless thee indeed with forgiveness. That he might show you by faith the means that is provided for forgiveness.

[20 : 39] That your eye by faith might spy the Savior on a cross at Calvary. That you might be brought to see in him and only him is forgiveness found.

In his one offering which was acceptable to his Holy Father, the Church of Christ was delivered from the condemnation that sin brings and indeed from the justice that is meted out against sinners.

they were delivered from that justice. He was delivered for their offenses and was raised again for their justification. Oh, this one blessing of blessings, this one mercy of mercies that you might be blessed with.

A testimony and a seal for glory. There's no going to glory without it, my friends, and there's no going to hell with it. Oh, that thou wouldst bless me indeed.

It shows clearly and definitely, my friends, the life of God in the soul. But then, too, the blessing of forgiveness, if I might so say, is a comprehensive blessing.

[21 : 55] The means of forgiveness, my friends, is complete pardon. It's a wonderful mercy, my friends, but there's a little word that makes up such a blessed account of forgiveness in that same chapter in John's epistle and the blood of Jesus Christ.

God's Son cleanseth us from all sin. That's a lovely word, that little word, all. You take it out, my friends. You remove it from the scriptures for a moment.

Take the little word all out. If you know, my friends, what advantage would the enemy have on your exercised soul? What advantage would he gain?

He'd say, well, it doesn't say all, but it does say all, my friends, and that's where the blessing lies. But, oh, the cost of forgiveness. the cost that indeed was the Saviour's life and his precious blood, and that's what it costs, that one soul should be forgiven, let alone the whole church of Christ.

Oh, that thou wouldst bless me indeed. Did you come to chapel seeking a blessing? Was that your cry when you come to chapel? Is it now? When you look at the Lord's people, I love to meet among them now, the poet said, and at thy gracious feet to bow, though vilest of them all.

[23 : 25] But can I bear the piercing thought, what if my soul should be left out, when thou for them shalt call? Dear friends, if you feel the need of forgiveness, you'll know the burden of iniquity, and you'll know it rests heavy upon the heart and upon the conscience, that your conscience might be washed and cleaned and found clean, that your sins, though many, shall be forgiven.

Do you know every soul who knows forgiveness have found that forgiveness, my friends, in sorrow, in grief, and in burden, in laboring, and in exercise?

It's something, my friends, which will bring you to the very edge of distress and despair, to the very edge of it, the exercise of it, but oh, the blessing of it, oh, that thou wouldst bless me indeed.

And everyone that's Christ is blessed with it. Everyone for whom Christ suffered for, is blessed with it. They shall seek it and shall find it.

They shall be called to pray for it and long after it. They shall be called to bring their sins to the Lord and they shall be called to be distressed by those sins.

[24 : 56] I love that hymn, you know, I know we repeat it often, but it says, the more I strove against sin's power, I sinned and stumbled but the more till late I heard my Saviour say, come hither soul, I am the way, lo, glad I come, and thou blessed lamb will take me to thee as I am, nothing but sin I thee can give, nothing but love shall I receive.

it was in love to his people that he died and rose again, it was in love that their sins, though so hideous, heinous, so great a load, was so solemnly laid upon the Saviour when he suffered under the sense of them in Gethsemane, when he prostrated himself before God, sweat as it were, great drops of blood falling down to the ground, there he became the burden bearer of the sins of his people, but it's the Spirit's work to teach you this, it's not any man's work, my friends, it's the Lord's work, oh that thou wouldst bless me indeed, and enlarge my coast, what does it mean?

What would it mean to you if the Lord taught you J. this is prayer? would you know what it means and enlarge my coast?

Is it something that we might have more of this world then? That he might extend his mercies and his blessings in providence that we might possess more?

That what we have, they will be added to with other blessings and favors that will make us perhaps like Job, one of the greatest men of the east?

[26 : 51] Not so, these are spiritual things, not so my friends, and enlarge my coast. If you look at these words just for a moment, well this is my view, and I trust it is as the Lord shows me, my friends, the coast is your bound, isn't it?

You know, whatever you think of United Kingdom, it's got its bounds, and the bound is the coastline, and everything of the kingdom is within those bounds.

So everything of grace, and everything of mercy, and everything of the favor of God, it is, as it were, contained in that appointed way and mercy that the Lord will so teach his people.

What does it mean, therefore, that the coast might be enlarged, increased? That you might have an increased knowledge of mercy, and increased knowledge of grace, that you might have greater possessions of spiritual things.

Tis of him I little know, one said, and are still less in joy, but that wouldn't satisfy a living soul, would it? The day in which we live is called the day of small things, and there's such a lot of settling down, almost as if that was the excuse.

[28 : 14] Well, it's only the day of small things. If your soul is alive, my friends, it's not small things that you will be satisfied with, but it will be great things, it will be real things, and it will be eternal things, and enlarge my coast.

Oh, it is of him we little know in comparison to what eternity shall reveal of Christ. It is of him we little know, really, if we should count his visits, and a child of grace will long for his visits.

Those times are blessing when it's Christ in your soul, and enlarge my coast, more frequent let thy visits be, and let them longer last.

Every visit is a token of heaven, you know, however brief it may seem to be. It's a token of heaven. But then, my friends, will not a child of God in his right mind, therefore, seek greater visits.

Those sacred seasons and times when time is lost sight of, the things of this world is lost sight of, the matters of tomorrow are lost sight of, and this communion with Christ, lost, although thou wilt bless me indeed, and enlarge my coast, that I might know more.

[29 : 42] You know, one of the most saddest evidences of our fall is ignorance, and one of the most saddest evidences, too, of our spiritual life, is how little we know.

The scriptures bear it out, you know, this is not the complaint which the word of God would speak otherwise, but there is a most sacred emphasis must be placed upon the little because the scripture says it's a little that a righteous man hath is better than the riches of many wicked.

My friends, you may say, well I seem to know so little. Well are you content to be satisfied with this little? If you've got a living soul, if you was hungry and now you go to your table at lunchtime, and if you was what we might call starving hungry, my friends, and all what was placed before you was but a minute bed, you know, hardly enough to satisfy the very thought of food, being blessed to your state and condition as you might feel famine, you would look at it I suppose and you would say, well I wish I had more than that, that won't satisfy my starvation.

If you was almost out of your health and strength with the distress of thirst, as some people are and have been when they are brought into most such adverse circumstances, well my friends, if you gave the person a sip, he'd say more, I want more than that.

if you were hungry and thirsty you would say, what I want is an abundance, really. My friends, that is just a poor example.

[31 : 38] The Lord so bless you in your soul with spiritual blessings, you will say to the Lord, oh that I knew more of this, oh that I possess more of these blessings.

blessings. If you had communion with Jesus Christ, you would say, but oh it is so finite these times and seasons, they are so limited, they are so brief, it's only moments if we should really discover anything of Christ Jesus and enlarge my coast.

My friends, that the Lord would grant you more of these blessings, more of his sweet fellowship with Christ, more of his conversation, feel a stronger union to Christ.

One of the things I suppose we speak among ourselves if we fear God is this of the Lord's conversation with us. And we might say something like this, well I believe the Lord spoke this, and I tell you this my friends, I lay you this truth, it's only about a line isn't it, it's only a few words that he speaks, he might speak a text out of the word into your soul, but there's only a few words.

My friends, I believe there is this, something that we should may the Lord grant to say, searching for it and longing after it, that we might hold communion with him.

[33 : 10] That's different my friends, a communion with him, a blessed communion, communion, as it were a spiritual conversation between our soul and Christ, and Christ to our soul.

Oh that thou wouldst bless me indeed, and enlarge my coast. And we too, often I feel so, you know, go back in days past, I suppose it's one of the many things that some of us do when we get older, we start thinking back in days past, but we think of those seasons and times in the church of Christ.

I had a godly father and he had a godly friend, and when he walked out of chapel, they walked home together, and they didn't talk about the weather. My friends, they didn't talk about what's going to happen tomorrow.

They talked about what they heard. I won't be tired if any one of us interrupted or butted in. My friends, they were speaking of things as touching the king.

The godly conversation of the saints of God was edifying and profitable to them. My friends, where is the conversation now?

[34 : 29] Where is the godly conversation now? How often do you have true spiritual communion one with another and with Christ? Oh, that thou wouldest bless me indeed and enlarge my host?

You know, somewhere in the gospel it speaks about if all the books could be written of the life and work and purposes of Jesus Christ, the world couldn't contain them.

My friends, how much could you write down of the things of Jesus Christ that have been communicated by him through his spirit to your soul? How much a page would it fill?

how many pages would it feel? Oh, the desire surely for a living soul is more of Christ, more communion with him, more often to hear from him, more greater interest in him, and oh, how dependent we are upon the blessed Holy Ghost for this work, for as I've so often reminded you and read in the word, my friends, his work is to take of mine and to show it unto you.

Eternity will never be, and that's a misquotation really, surely, eternity will not be long enough, my friends, for the saints of God to express their love and their views of Jesus Christ will not be long enough, and yet eternity is endless and enlarge my coast whilst I travel here below, whilst I live out my life, my few days here on earth, may they be more and more filled with Christ and about Christ, may there be greater times of communion, greater times of hearing from him, you know Wendy, Peter wrote in his second epistle those familiar words, didn't he, but growing grace, if you had a child, if you saw a child born into this world, well within a few days and weeks and months, there are changes in it, it grows, the child grows, it becomes more hungry, it cries more for food, it has its feelings strengthened, and so we go on, my friends, but surely it should be so with spiritual children of God, but growing grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour

[37 : 10] Jesus Christ, oh if you truly are found in that word, blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness for they shall be filled, you will never be satisfied with what you know of Christ and what you know of salvation, and if you've got any evidence of any blessing, any communication from the Lord himself through his spirit, my friends, it will bring you to long for more and seek for more and to seek after these blessings and favours, that thou wouldest bless me indeed and enlarge my coast, you know there's no boasting in possessions, that must never be, what would be the effect, what would be the effect if the Lord should so answer this prayer now and through this day and at other times that you may have those blessings increased, those times and seasons made known to you, what would be the effect, well my friends, if you were a

Pharisee, you would go around telling people that you know a lot more than they knew, but if you were a child of God, it would be only to humble you, that would be the effect, you would feel your unworthiness more, you would feel more and more what a blessing it is to know anything, let alone have these communions with Christ, most favoured times you know for a child of God isn't always in his sanctuary, oh that it might be so, but some of the most favoured times my friends, it is like Jacob in that chapter we read in chapter 32 of the Genesis, my friends the most favoured time was this, and Jacob was left alone, most favoured times, but we must leave this word for now, and Jabez was more honourable than his brethren, and his mother called his name Jabez, saying because

I bear him with sorrow, and Jabez called on the God of Israel, saying, oh that thou wouldest bless me indeed, and enlarge my coast, and that thy hand might be with me, and that thou wouldest keep me from evil, that it may not grieve me, and God granted him that which he requested.

Amen. Amen. Notices today are that God willing, there will be a prayer meeting on Wednesday evening, and our pastor will preach next Lord's Day.

I'll sing our closing hymn, Hymn 237. Let us ask the important question, brethren, be not too secure, what it is to be a Christian, how we may our hearts assure, vain is all our best devotion, if on false foundations built, true religions more than notion, something must be known and fell.

[41 : 07] We'll commence singing from verse 2, hymn 237. Hymn 237. Hymn 237.

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[42 : 37] Hymn 257. Hymn 247. Hymn 257. Hymn 268. Hymn 257.

Hymn 269. Hymn 257.

SONG PLAYS tears To surrender the light of Jesus

Let the pleasure of the day Till if that Christ won't shall The hope of the saving THE END

Let just asmb■■■■ The rich was then tenido some Distrió Thank you.

[46 : 00] Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

[48 : 52] Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Thank you.