



Prayer Pointers

1. Pray for our 'Gospel Sunday' with Michelle Hamilton on 18th July.
 - God's anointing upon Michelle's testimony of God's miracle and power.
 - we will be able to invite some friends to come to church.
2. Pray for the Nation.
 - Pray against any human scheme that wants to de stabilize State governments.
 - pray against threats of terrorist elements that want to cause racial and religious disharmony.
 - pray against politicians that fan racial discords.

Pray that God will shape Malaysia to conform to His Will and Purposes.
3. Pray for all that we will have a regular consistent devotional life – without which we may be weak, vulnerable and struggling with life itself.
 - pray that we will have such a spiritual discipline, from young to old alike and that we will not allow busyness as an excuse.
4. Pray for any other needs among us.

UNDERSTANDING CURRENT ISSUES

SUB THEME:

"UNDERSTANDING GOD'S BLESSINGS."



The Prayer of Jabez raised our awareness of one concept in particular:-that believers should be bold in their prayers for God's blessings. Some people tend to hesitate to ask God for blessings but requests that are made in the right attitude will reap divine blessings. In this study, we will consider the concept of 'good success' – how God

blesses his people and His divine expectations of what a truly successful and blessed person must become.

1. God blessed even the _____.

1 Chronicles 4:9-10 tells us several important things:-

- a. Jabez means “pain”. However, he was more honorable than his brothers. God blesses whomever He chooses, regardless of their background. He has a special care for those who are the least, the insignificant ones who would come to Him.
- b. God responded to Jabez’s prayer. It involved **material blessing (land), physical and emotional blessing (freedom from harm and pain) and spiritual blessing (God’s hand)**. That God chose to respond to Jabez’s prayer in all these ways is exhortation for us to pray, but it should not be taken as a ‘formula’ for blessings because God can bless us in different ways. God should not be taken as merely a ‘sugar daddy’ or a slot machine.’

Question:- The blessing upon Jabez was evidence of God’s hand. However, material blessing IS NOT ALWAYS evidence of God’s favor. True or not true and why?

Question:- Read the following verses.

- “The Lord did not set his affection on you (Israel) and chose you because you were more numerous than other peoples, for you were the fewest of all peoples.” Deut 7:7.
- “But Moses said to God, “Who am I, that I should go to Pharaoh and bring the Israelites out of Egypt?” Exodus 3:11.
- “But Lord,” Gideon asked, “how can I save Israel? My clan is the weakest in Manasseh, and I am the least in my family.” Judges 6:15.

What do you find in common in these verses? Let some of you testify of how you received the favor and blessings of God even though you felt so unworthy and it surprised you!

2. God has _____ of those He blesses.

As you read the prayer of Jabez carefully, you will be able to see that Jabez asked for his territory to be enlarged and ALSO for God's hand to be with him. The two are linked because anyone who saw the territory of Jabez would see that God was at work. And if Jabez was bold enough to ask for this blessing, he would likely be bold enough to testify of its source.

Question:- Consider the blessings of God that He has given to you. Think of as many ways as possible in which we can acknowledge that it has been God's hand upon us? Genesis 12:2, God said to Abraham, "I will make you into a great nation and I will bless you; I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing." What is obvious in this verse?

3. Those God blesses He also _____.

Discuss: Read 1 Tim. 6:5-10. In praying for God's blessings, what will be the pitfalls that we should avoid – that which this scripture warns us about? What are some of the specific things that are around us today that may fit this description of pitfalls?

Jesus' teachings are filled with warnings about materialism. To the masses on the hillside, he preaches, "Do not store up treasures on earth.....You cannot serve God and money." To the rich young man, he warns, "Sell everything you have and give to the poor....It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God."

Question: Is God against riches? What is He against? How should we live a balance life as we 'enjoy God's blessings? How do you think "tithing" can assist us to live a balanced life?

May we be truly blessed!

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