



# The Word at Work

## A Life Above Average

### Reading the Word

*Key Text:* 1 Chronicles 4:9-10

*Key Point:* Our lives as Christians should not be mediocre and average. God's word clearly tells us that he wants us to prosper and be successful. Do you realise it is not a bad thing to be ambitious and to ask God expectantly to enlarge your life? Are you ready to expand your thinking?

### Understanding the Word

Remember God's word to Abraham in Genesis to go and find the Promised Land. Imagine the excitement that this journey of faith created in him. Something now gripped him and gave him a fresh purpose, it made him feel happy and alive. Something bigger than himself was now his focus.

Unfortunately many people's lives, in particular adult lives, are marked out by sadness and despair. Somewhere along the way they have lost their sense of adventure. Imagination and wonder have been removed by the hard knocks of life.

In Ezekiel's vision of the temple (Ez 41:7) the rooms are wider at each successive level. Do you feel contained? Then go higher where there's more room.

**1 Chronicles 4:9-10** What made this Jabez stand out from the list of names that go before and after him? What made him above average?

1. *Jabez was more honourable than his brothers*

First of all any godly ambition for expansion must be rooted in good character within ourselves.

2. *His mother had named him Jabez (pain).*

He always had this negative statement over his life.

3. *Jabez cried out to God "Oh that you would bless me".*

Average was never an option for Jabez. Something within him refused to be held back by his handicap.

4. *"Enlarge my territory".*

Territory = status, wealth, power. Firstly he was specific. He knew what he was stretching for, this was not some pipe dream or fanciful thinking. Secondly he wasn't afraid to ask. James 4:2, Jer 33:8.

5. *"Let your hand be with me".*

Jabez realised that as God gave him more territory this would bring more responsibility. The presence of God will be needed more not less. Heb 12:2 reminds us "*fix your eyes on Jesus*".

6. *"Keep me from harm so that I will be free from pain".*

Jabez knew that as God fulfilled his dreams and ambitions that he would be shot at and attacked. Average can always hide in the crowd. But we are called to stand out from the crowd. But see 1John 4:4.

7. *And God granted him his request.*

God's intention is for us to be successful and prosper. See Prov 28:25, 13:21, Eph 3:20.

### Doing the Word

*To Discuss:*

1. Some people would say that Jabez was selfish to ask God to bless him personally. Was he?
2. Why do you think God granted him his request?

*To Do:*

1. Have you decided that you are born to be more than average? If so what are you stretching for? (It should be exciting but not stressful)
2. Ask God to bless your life and enlarge your territory.

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