

## Paul's Aims in Life

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What do you aim for in life? A better education or job, more money, a bigger house, a marriage or family? Paul's four heavenly aims are found in Philippians 3:8-12. Let's take a look at them.

First, Paul said "that I may gain Christ and be found in him". To gain (or win) Christ means to make Christ our own and to appropriate him in our life. We are "found in him" when we are baptized into Christ and put on Christ (Galatians 3:27).

Second, Paul said "that I may know him". To "know" Christ is not mere intellectual or book knowledge. We "know" Christ when we have a close, obedient fellowship with him (1 John 2:4).

Third, Paul said "I may attain unto the resurrection from the dead". To "attain" means to be raised with the righteous dead. We "attain" to this righteous resurrection when we live and die as a righteous person (John 5:28-29).

Fourth, Paul said "that I may lay hold". Paul wanted to lay hold on (seize) the calling and purpose that Jesus had for him. We too need to seize our work for the Lord wholeheartedly (Numbers 32:12).

Paul's four aims can be your aims too, but we have to be changed like Paul was changed. A change (conversion) in Paul led to a change in Paul's aims. What do we need to change today? - *Chris Reeves*

## Sentence Sermons

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- It takes a mother eighteen years to make a man out of her boy, but another woman may make a fool out of him in less than twenty minutes.
- It is not enough to love the flowers of your life; you must also hate the weeds of your life.
- What a man possesses is not nearly as important as what possesses him.
- Put on a heart of compassion.

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## THE WARFIELD BULLETIN

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For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh, for the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh, but divinely powerful for the destruction of fortresses.  
- 2 Corinthians 10:3-4 -

# The Prayer of Jabez

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Now Jabez called on the God of Israel, saying, “Oh that You would bless me indeed and enlarge my border, and that Your hand might be with me, and that You would keep me from harm that it may not pain me!” And God granted him what he requested.  
- 1 Chronicles 4:10

## Jabez of First Chronicles

The prayer of Jabez might be overlooked because it is located within a dry mass of dead names found in 1 Chronicles 1-9. However, if one will take the time to read this portion of God’s word, he will find several rewarding lessons.

Bruce Wilkinson wrote *The Prayer of Jabez* in 2000 which started a religious marketing phenomenon (a well-known website, clothing, mugs, etc.). What can we learn from this brief biography? What can we learn from the four petitions in Jabez’ prayer?

## Jabez the Man

There was some difficulty surrounding Jabez’ birth which caused his mother to name him “Jabez” (meaning, he causes pain). Yet, Jabez was “more honorable” (a man of weight) than his

brethren.

We learn that people who come from past difficulties and hardships can live honorably in the sight of God. People can repent of their past (1 Corinthians 6:9-11), forget their past (Philippians 3:13-14), and be different from their past (Acts 17:11).

We also learn that the honorable life is the life of prayer (1 Thessalonians 5:17-18). Jabez prayed for specific things and he prayed with boldness and confidence in God. Let’s see what he prayed for.

## Jabez the Prayer

The first petition: “Oh that you would bless me indeed...”

Jabez asked to be blessed by God. We need to ask God to bless us both physically (Philippians 4:19) and spiritually (Ephesians 1:3).

The second petition: “enlarge my border...”

Jabez was not here making a selfish, covetous request (James 4:3), but a request for the promise of God’s land inheritance (Exodus 34:24; Deuteronomy 12:20; 19:8; Isa. 26:15). We need to ask God to “enlarge” what he has already promised to

Christians: opportunities, talents, responsibilities, forgiveness, mercy, etc.

The third petition: “that your right hand might be with me...”

Jabez asked God for his providential hand of protection and guidance (Ezra 7:9). We need to ask God to providentially protect and guide us through life (1 Peter 5:6-7)

The fourth petition: “that you would keep me from harm that it may not pain me!”

Jabez asked God to be kept from the harm (evil) which leads to pain and sorrow (Proverbs 23:29; Galatians 6:9). We need to ask God to keep us from evil influences (Proverbs 30:8-9), the evil one (Matthew 6:13), evil knowledge (Romans 16:19), and the evil works of men (2 Thess. 3:2).

## Jabez the Answer

“And God granted that which he requested” (1 Chronicles 4:10). God stands ready to hear and answer the honorable follower (Ephesians 3:20; 1 Jn. 5:14-15). God gave Jabez blessing rather than sorrow. Friend, he will do the same for you! - Chris Reeves