

MORE LIFE

*...I am come that they
might have life, and
that they might have it
more abundantly.*

- John 10:10

LEARNER GUIDE

RELATIONAL DISCIPLESHIP



MORE LIFE works in conjunction with
GPS to reach Tennesseans for Christ.



Tennessee Baptist churches giving through the Cooperative Program make this ministry possible.

Overview

More Life Discipleship Overview

More Life Discipleship is designed to perfectly compliment the church's emphasis on More Life. The More Life Evangelism lessons train believers to share their faith and introduce a simple guide for evangelism.

More Life Discipleship Lessons explore what the Bible says about core Christian beliefs and practices for living life more abundantly. These studies will challenge students to grow deeper in their understanding of these basic beliefs and practices and become bolder in their witness for Christ. Each session teaches a simple method for Bible Study, designed to teach how to study and read their Bible on a daily basis. That simple method:

LISTEN (What God's Word says for my LIFE?)

INVENTORY (How does this apply to my LIFE?)

FORSAKE (What areas of my LIFE need to be adjusted?)

EXPLORE (What LIFE actions should I take and suggestions for Deeper Study?)

Each cycle of More Life Discipleship Lessons consists of 8 simple outlines and a corresponding guide for leaders. The materials are developed using a coach approach and are easily adapted to discipling individuals, triads, or groups and classes. These lessons will be delivered in a simple PDF format. In addition to the leader guide provided, additional interactive lesson plans to be used for small group and classes are available online. Corresponding sermons are available for each cycle.

Cycle 1: Bible and Prayer (Available Winter 2012 and designed to be taught during the second cycle of MORE Life)

Cycle 2: God, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit (Available Summer of 2012 and designed to be taught in the third cycle of MORE Life)

Cycle 3: Man and Salvation (Available Winter of 2013 and designed to be taught in the fourth cycle of MORE Life)

Cycle 4: The Church and the Ordinances of Baptism and Lord's Supper (Available Summer of 2013 and designed to be taught in the fifth cycle of MORE Life)

Cycle 5: Spiritual Warfare (Available Winter of 2014 and designed to be taught in the sixth cycle of MORE Life)

For more information or materials, please go to www.tnbaptist.org/morelife or call the Evangelism Department of the TBC (800) 558-2090.

More Life Discipleship: The Bible and Prayer
Learner's Guide
Your Journey in More Life Continues
Session One

Congratulations for completing a previous semester of More Life evangelism training and for making a commitment to further growth as a Great Commission Christian through More Life Discipleship. In the More Life Evangelism Training you learned the importance of praying for the Lost and what it means to be on mission with Christ. You also learned how to share your story and how to use the More Life Transfer Guide. You gained valuable experience in making the most of evangelistic opportunities, as well as in sharing More Life in everyday situations. You learned and practiced additional skills in using the More Life Transfer Guide.

Remember the More Life Transfer Guide is designed to be more than a tract. It allows you, the user, to transfer the conversation and the decisions to be made to whatever is needed in the life of the person to whom you have made a connection. Example: If they are already a baptized church member but have never connected with a small group. The More Life Guide allows you to move the conversation to that decision point. Example: They may have made a decision as a child. You've heard their testimony and they are truly a believer but they have never been baptized by immersion. The More Life Guide allows you to move them to that decision and even record that decision to give to your church for follow-up.

Revisiting the More Life Transfer Guide

"A church that cares" _____

"1-888-Jesus2013" _____

"More Life response" _____

Following is a suggested approach in using the More Life Transfer Guide and taking a person through it. In speaking with someone you wish to witness to, ask, "What do you understand it takes for a person to have More Life here and go to Heaven when they die?" Listen, and then proceed. "May I share with you how you may experience life to the fullest?" Proceed to use the More Life Transfer Guide.

Read the section **Sin**. Say, "Our sin causes a separation from God, but Jesus paid for the guilt of our sin."

Read the section **The Gift**. Ask, "What hope does man have if he doesn't receive God's gift of More Life?" Listen for response.

Read the **Turn**. Say, "This gift isn't ours automatically. We must be willing to turn from our sin." Say, "Look at the greatness of God's love."

Read the section **The Way**. Ask, “Does this make sense to you?” Listen. Ask, “Is there any reason why you couldn’t receive God’s gift of eternal life?” Listen. Ask, “Does this prayer express how you want to respond to God?”

Read the prayer. If they are ready, say, “I would like to pray this prayer with you,” and immediately bow your head and proceed in thanking God that they want Jesus in their life. Then encourage them to pray or lead them offering the written prayer to God.

Not _____ will be ready to receive Christ. Help the class to know what to do if the person does not receive Christ.

If the person is not ready to invite Jesus into their life, encourage them by letting them know you do not have to be present when they give their life to Jesus. When they sense Him speaking to them and they understand they need Him, they can pray anywhere and receive Christ as their Savior and Lord. You may say, “I would like to pray,” and immediately bow your head and thank God that they were gracious to allow you to share Christ with them and that they will soon open their heart to Him and enjoy the More Life that He has planned for them.

Remember it is a glorious victory just to share the gospel, whether anyone does or does not pray to receive Christ.

If the person does pray to receive Christ, follow up with the emphasis on Baptism, Connecting with a Church, and getting involved with a Bible Study Group.

Say: The following is important to help you to obey Christ and grow in your faith. Then, read the part of the Transfer Guide that speaks of Baptism, Belonging to a Church and Groups. You will want to take it **one section at a time**.

After the baptism section, you may ask: “Is there a local church that you are familiar with, where you might want to be baptized?” Listen... then explain the importance of being a part of a local _____. Emphasize the importance of a church that faithfully teaches the truths of the Bible. You will want to invite the individual to attend church with you if you live in the same local area. Or, you may make suggestions of a faithful Bible teaching church.

Again, emphasize that it is an act of love to share with a person how they can be saved and have eternal life. We are not trying to manipulate the person, but rather offering them the greatest gift in the world...the Savior, Jesus Christ! Why should that be so difficult?

More Life Discipleship: Bible and Prayer
Learner's Guide
The Bible: A Guide for Behavior and Belief
Session Two

1. LISTEN (What God's Word says for my life?)

The scene is far too familiar. It's Saturday morning. You are busily trying to finish the chores around the house when you notice two well-dressed young men approaching your front door. It's decision time! What would you do? Here are some typical responses to a Mormon visitor:

- _____ "Because I am so unsure of what I believe, I do not go to the door until they have left."
- _____ "I answer the door with a bucket of cold water in my hand."
- _____ "I feel that they are intruding and it boils my blood."
- _____ "It makes me jealous that they are so confident in their faith."

If any of these phrases describe your response, be encouraged. You are not alone in the fog. When it comes to spiritual matters and the Bible, too many believers do not know what they believe.

It's one of the many reasons for More Life Discipleship. This series of lessons focuses on understanding the Bible and Prayer.

Read Hebrews 1:1-2. Identify the one source of revelation: _____. The Book of Hebrews begins like Genesis, with God as the subject of the first sentence. However, revelation is the emphasis here and not creation. Both of these accomplishments, of course, are the work of God. Creation was necessarily a divine act. God's self-revelation was no less so. If He had not revealed Himself and His purposes, no one could have ever discovered them.

We should note that the Old Testament revelation had been progressive, each truth adding to the preceding ones. But Jesus' revelation was final. **Read John 8:31-32.** Jesus reveals truth to us through the Scripture. When accurately interpreted, we have a solid foundation for belief and behavior. Only as we faithfully obey the Lord's teachings do we experience what He promised—"You will know the truth, and the truth will set you free." What truth will we know? Jesus said in John 8:12, "I am the light of the world. Anyone who follows Me will never walk in the darkness but will have the light of life." The truth is that Jesus is exactly who He claimed to be and that everything He said is absolutely true. He is God's Son, the promised Messiah. He is the only One God sent to provide the means of saving us from the eternal penalty of our sins.

Baptist Faith and Message Statement on the Scriptures:

The Holy Bible was written by men divinely inspired and is God's revelation of Himself to man. It is a perfect treasure of divine instruction. It has God for its author, salvation for its end, and truth, without any mixture of error, for its matter. Therefore, all Scripture is totally true and trustworthy. It reveals the principles by which God judges us, and therefore is, and will remain to the end of the world, the true center of Christian union and the supreme standard by which all human conduct, creeds, and religious opinions should be tried. All Scripture is a testimony to Christ, who is Himself the focus of divine revelation.

2. **INVENTORY** (How does this apply to my life?)

Read the Baptist Faith and Message Statement again and write two or three truths that God is revealing to you.

In the foreword of the *Reader's Guide to the Bible*, David Platt wrote, "The Bible contains one grand story of one global God who is saving His people through one glorious gospel. *We need to know this story.* We need to see, understand, and comprehend how all the pages of Scripture come together in one overarching plot. Such knowledge, penetrating both our hearts and our minds, is essential for growing in Christlikeness."

If you were asked to share what you believe about the Bible, what would you say? Does what you believe reflect what the Bible claims of itself?

3. **FORSAKE** (What areas of my life need to be adjusted?)

"This is God's Word for God's People. Read. Listen. And Live." This statement is quoted by Mike Glenn, pastor of Brentwood Baptist Church, following the reading of the sermon text. Meditate on this statement and the lesson content. What is God saying to you?

Are you willing to commit yourself to studying the Scriptures so that you can bring your life in line with them?

4. **EXPLORE** (What life actions should I take?)

If God's Word is written so that we can know the truth and the truth will set us free, are you reading, listening, and living your life based upon the Word or God? What are some steps you can take to insure that your life is influenced by God's Word?

Suggestions for Deeper Study: Read John 16:13-15 and use the L.I.F.E. acrostic (Listen, Inventory, Forsake, and Explore) to analyze the text on another sheet of paper.

The Bible is a collection of 66 Books, written by more than 40 men. It fits together perfectly as written by one man because the author and our guide is the Holy Spirit. Close this week's study by praising God for his revelation of himself through Christ and His Word.

More Life Discipleship: Bible and Prayer
Learner's Guide
The Purpose of the Bible
Session Three

1. LISTEN (What God's Word says for my life?)

What separates Christianity from all other religions is its claim to an absolute written authority from God. Read 2 Timothy 3:14-17. In these verses we find the purpose of the Bible. The first line of this verse can be translated in at least two ways. It can state either that "every inspired Scripture is useful" or "all Scripture is inspired and [so] is useful." The context seems to suggest the second option as the correct one. Paul's point was that the Scripture, God's Word, is inspired and is therefore useful to its readers. The term translated inspire is *theopneustos*—literally, breathed out by God Himself or, simply, God-breathed.

By stating that Scriptures are God breathed, Paul established the Bible's claim as God's authoritative Word over all people. Denying inspiration of any words of Scripture is to deny the claim that all Scripture is inspired. Unless we believe the words of Scripture are inspired, we are left to our own imagination, our intellectual resources and opinions as to what is inspired. Its God-breathed character is what makes this Word useful in so many ways.

Paul concludes that the Bible teaches us what is true (teaching). Here especially, the Greek word for teaching probably refers to doctrinal teaching. Paul was especially concerned in the Pastoral Epistles, which consists of 1 Timothy, 2 Timothy, and Titus, about the need for effective teaching. He used this noun (*didaskalia*) fifteen times in these three letters and only four times elsewhere. Solid teaching about Christ and Christian living needed to be taught carefully to the Christians in Ephesus and Crete. The textbook for both of these "classes" was all Scripture, which is God-breathed.

His Word makes us realize what's wrong in our lives (rebuking). Scripture is a helpful tool for rebuking both doctrinal errors and their consequent wayward actions. The word includes exposing both teachings and deeds. Since the verb carries the sense of setting errors straight, this rebuking is not to be considered vindictive as its English translation suggests.

The Bible straightens us out when we get off the path (correcting). Scripture is also the most useful tool available for the task of correcting, bringing doctrine back in line with revealed truth. After all, Scripture is revealed truth. Neither human wisdom nor ingenuity can replace the revelation that is God-breathed.

It's God's way of guiding believers in His ways (training in righteousness). The Greek noun for training suggests an effort more serious than polite verbal instruction. Scripture is the ideal source for training that guides a person in the direction of righteousness.

The Bible is basis of our beliefs and doctrines. It is our standard for daily living so that we may be complete and equipped for His Work.

2. **INVENTORY** (How does this apply to my life?)

List the transforming uses of God's Word as they are described in these verses. Which of these uses do you need most in your life right now?

What is the desired result of God's Word teaching, rebuking, correcting, and training us for righteousness?

3. **FORSAKE** (What areas of my life need to be adjusted?)

In what ways do I show I truly believe that God's revealed truth is available to me in the inspired Word of God?

Can other believers sense that conviction through my knowledge of and dependence on that Word? Circle the proper response:

Yes Sometimes Seldom Rarely

4. **EXPLORE** (What life actions should I take?)

Take notes during the next sermon you hear and ask if God is:

- Teaching – helping you learn correct doctrine
- Rebuking – convicting you of false beliefs
- Correcting – convicting you of ungodly behavior
- Training in Righteousness – helping you to live right

Make a series of action steps in response:

Use the L.I.F.E. outline to explore 2 Peter 1:16-21. Some discredit the Bible because humans wrote it. How do these verses discredit the argument that the Bible is a human book and therefore is not to be trusted?

More Life Discipleship: Bible and Prayer
Learner's Guide
The Bible: God's Owner's Manual
Session Four

1. LISTEN (What God's Word says for my life?)

An old adage goes something like this, "When all else fails, read the instructions!" Thankfully, the iPad that my wife gave me for my birthday came with an owners' manual. Yes, I actually read the owner's manual from cover to cover. Many people purchase items like my iPad and never read the instructions. They rely on others to guide them when they get stuck.

Christians can be thankful that the Bible is God's owner manual for Life. Going to church and Bible Study can help you understand the Bible, but to become a fully devoted follower of Christ, every believer must spend time in God's Word daily. Read Psalm 119:9-16, 105 and Joshua 1:7-8. What do these verses teach about living according to God's Word?

If you want to prosper and succeed, you must spend time in God's Word. So, how do we do it? There are six ways we can spend time in God's word. They are –

Hear it,
Read it,
Study it,
Memorize it,
Meditate on it, and
Apply it.

A famous anonymous quote about the Bible says: *Read it to be wise, believe it to be safe, practice it to be holy. It contains light to direct you, food to support you, and comfort to cheer you. It is the traveler's map, the pilgrim's staff, the pilot's compass, the soldier's sword, and the Christian's charter.*

The psalmist's expressed purpose for learning Scripture was that he might not sin against God. Following God's directions in daily actions is not easy even when we know what His will is. Some of God's commands call for actions and attitudes that go against human nature and our selfish desires. For that reason God has made His will plain for us in His Word. Gratefully learning—not just casually reading—the Word is vital to anyone's obedience to God. The importance of this message is also evident elsewhere in the Old Testament. Read Deuteronomy 6:6-9; 30:14; Jeremiah 31:33. What do these verses teach us about the Bible?

By following God's owner manual, we can experience victory over sin, and can please God in all areas of our lives.

2. **INVENTORY** (How does this apply to my life?)

Recall a humorous personal experience in which you failed to follow the owner's manual and had disastrous results. If we truly believe the Bible has its origin in God and is His divine and inspired Word, then that belief should affect our daily lives. The Bible should be our "owner's manual" for life. Describe a time when God spoke to you through His Word.

Hear it, Read it, Study it, Memorize it, Meditate on it, and Apply it are six ways to spend time with God's Word. Evaluate where you are on a scale of 1-10 in each of these areas:

Hear	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Read	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Study	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Memorize	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Meditate	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Apply	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Based on your evaluations, what are actions could be taken to spend quality time with His Word?

3. **FORSAKE** (What areas of my life need to be adjusted?)

Psalm 119:11 is a promise about memorizing verses in the Bible. Write that verse as a prayer to the Lord.

Thank God for His owner's manual and affirm the Bible as God's Word.

4. **EXPLORE** (What life actions should I take?)

Study the following verses that describe God's word as spiritual food: 1Peter 2:2; Psalm 78:24, 119:105, ; Proverbs 7:2, 16:24, 25:11; Luke 4:4; Isaiah 55:10-11; Ephesians 5:26; Hebrews 5:12-14; I Corinthians 3:1-2; Read John 16:13-15. Use the L.I.F.E. acrostic (Listen, Inventory, Forsake, and Explore) to analyze what God is teaching you from these verses.

Pick one of these verses to memorize and meditate on during the next week. Write that verse:

More Life Discipleship: Bible and Prayer
Learner's Guide
Pray Consistently
Session Five

1. LISTEN (What God's Word says for my life?)

My prayer life was shaped as a college student at Union University. Peter Lord led a revival at Union and I purchased a copy of a notebook that he wrote entitled *2959 Plan*. It is called the 2959 Prayer Plan because it requires 29 minutes and 59 seconds a day. I am indebted to this resource for giving me a plan that has given my prayer time direction and purpose. Read Matthew 6:9-13. In this prayer, Jesus said, *"This is how you should pray"* not what you should pray. He's giving us an illustration of things we should use in prayer, not this specific prayer to pray. Our prayers should include at least six parts:

PRAISE. BEGIN BY EXPRESSING LOVE TO GOD

v. 9 *"Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name."* Thank Him for who He is and thank Him for what He's done. Honor God by the use of His Names, such as Jehovah- Jireh, Jehovah-Shalom. Each name of God tells us something else about Him. Praying the names of God helps me focus on who HE is, not on who I am.

PURPOSE: COMMIT TO GOD'S PURPOSE AND WILL FOR YOUR LIFE.

"Your kingdom come, Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven." This is an acknowledgment that God is God and I am not.

PROVISION: ASK GOD TO PROVIDE FOR YOUR NEEDS.

Read Philippians 4:19. When you have a need, ask God for it. Be specific. Prayer is my personal declaration of dependence on God.

PARDON: ASK GOD TO FORGIVE YOUR SINS.

"Forgive us our debts". As the Holy Spirit reveals your sin, confess each sin specifically. Accept God's forgiveness. Read 1 John 1:9.

PEOPLE: PRAY FOR OTHER PEOPLE.

"As we have forgiven our debtors." Make a list of people you want to pray for. A standard practice is one day of the week, pray for your family, the next day for government officials, the next day for your friends, the next day for your church leaders, etc.

PROTECTION: ASK FOR SPIRITUAL PROTECTION FROM GOD.

v. 13 *"And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from the evil one."* We, as believers, face a

spiritual battle every day and Satan wants to defeat us through temptation and fear. Put on the armor of God each day and start every day praying for God's protection.

2. **INVENTORY** (How does this apply to my life?)

Our attitude about prayer has a direct effect on how we approach God's throne of grace and the kinds of prayers we pray. Some people approach God in prayer as they would a vending machine, thinking that if they use the right words, they can ask Him for anything and possibly get it. Prayer is far from approaching God as a vending machine; rather prayer is a privilege. It is direct communion with the sovereign God—lifting our very soul to Him who embraces, hears, and answers the prayers of His people.

How often are your prayers focused primarily on experiencing God's presence?

-----continuum-----
rarely often very often

Ask God to teach you to pray.

3. **FORSAKE** (What areas of my life need to be adjusted?)

Think about these questions:

Are you prepared to give God the best time of your day?

Are you prepared to experience a balanced prayer life?

What other ways did God speak to you during this study of Matthew 6:9-13?

Do your answers reveal areas of your prayer life that need to be adjusted?

4. **EXPLORE** (What life actions should I take?)

Some actions to consider:

Download the outline of Peter Lord's Prayer Guide from *2959 Plan* on the Tennessee Baptist Convention Website. Commit to spending 29 minutes and 59 seconds in prayer for the next month using this plan as a guide.

The Bible contains additional models of the kinds of prayers that believers of all generations would do well to offer to God. Use the L.I.F.E. acrostic (Listen, Inventory, Forsake, and Explore) to study the following Biblical prayers: Daniel 9:1-19; I Chronicles 4:10; John 17.

Suggestions for Deeper Study: Consider ordering a copy of Peter Lord's *2959 Plan*. It impacted my life and it will impact yours as well. Read Ken Hemphill's book on the Lord's Prayer entitled *The Prayer of Jesus*.

More Life Discipleship: Bible and Prayer
Learner's Guide
Praying Persistently
Session Six

1. LISTEN (What God's Word says for my life?)

Think about your usual responses to home projects, exercise, dieting, and budgets; do you *Stick to it Until the End* or *Give Up Easily*? What are some of the reasons why you persist or give up in these areas?

Read Luke 18:1-8. Jesus tells this story of the Unjust Judge to teach persistence in prayer. His desire is that we should pray and never give up.

The woman in the story was persistent and this persistence was instrumental in acquiring the justice she requested. If the unjust judge finally granted the persistent widow's request, how much more will a just God hear and grant the petitions of his followers who pray to him day and night.

Unlike the earthly judge, God beckons us to "come boldly." He is available any time we are willing to call on Him. He is faithful to hear and answer our prayers. It is very easy to recognize when God answers "yes" to our prayers. Sometimes it is more difficult to determine when His answer is "no" or "wait." Are we willing to persist in making our requests until we can hear God's answer?

Jesus' words moved me to prayer in verse 8, "Nevertheless, when the Son of Man comes, will He find that faith on earth?" Faith is a response which takes God at his word and acts upon it.

Jesus looked at Blind Bartimaeus, "Go your way; your faith has made you well." Another time, he looked at a Gentile woman and declared, "O woman, great *is* your faith! Let it be to you as you desire." Matthew tells the story of a centurion who lived at Capernaum who came to Jesus on behalf of his ailing servant. When the centurion responded, "*I am not worthy to have you come to my house, just say the word,*" Jesus replied, "I assure you: I have not found anyone in Israel with so great a faith!"

May He find that kind of persistent faith on earth in me and in you when He returns.

Read Philippians 4:6 and Hebrews 4:14-16. What do these verses teach you about praying persistently?

2. **INVENTORY** (How does this apply to my life?)

Check one or more of the statements about prayer that are especially meaningful to you.

- ☐ We are to be reverent in prayer, for we are in God's presence.
- ☐ Prayer includes listening to God as well as talking to Him.
- ☐ Thoughtful and concise prayer pleases God more than foolish rambling.
- ☐ Prayer commitments are to be made carefully and kept faithfully.
- ☐ Other: _____

Oswald Chambers wrote in *My Utmost for His Highest*: "Perseverance is more than endurance. It is endurance combined with the absolute assurance and certainty that what we are looking for is going to happen. Perseverance means more than just hanging on, which may be only exposing our fear of letting go and falling. Then there is a call to spiritual perseverance. A call not to hang on and do nothing, but to work deliberately, knowing with certainty that God will never be defeated."

What are your thoughts on this quote? What are you persistently asking God to do in your life? Why do you think God delays His answer even though you feel certain you are praying for something that would honor Him?

3. **FORSAKE** (What areas of my life need to be adjusted?)

Describe your feelings about this statement: God can always be counted on to hear and answer your sincere prayers.

Often our approach to prayer is one-sided. We talk to God, but we do not listen. Is your prayer life a one-sided conversation with God? Circle: YES or NO

When we approach God in prayer, we must also be willing to listen.

4. **EXPLORE** (What life actions should I take?)

Use the L.I.F.E. acrostic (Listen, Inventory, Forsake, and Explore) to study and examine some of the divine delays in answered prayer and how the writer responded to those delays:

- Psalms 13:1
- Psalm 69:3
- Psalm 119:82
- John 11:6, 21
- James 5:7
- 2 Peter 3:9

How should we respond when we believe our prayer is Scriptural and that our heart is right, but we do not see the answer to prayer? _____

More Life Discipleship: Bible and Prayer
Learner's Guide
Praying that Pleases God
Session Seven

1. LISTEN (What God's Word says for my life?)

God has revealed in His Word the type of praying that pleases Him. Among the descendants of Judah listed in 1 Chronicles 4:1-23 is Jabez, remembered for his short prayer to God. The abrupt introduction of Jabez suggests that he was well-known at the time that 1 Chronicles was written. Nonetheless, little is known about him now.

His prayer was not a self-centered appeal for material gain. Rather, he desired to please God instead of causing God's people pain. The prayer of Jabez contains four specific requests. He asked God to bless him, to enlarge his territory, to be with him, and to keep him from harm. The verb bless describes something that only God can do. Human choice or effort cannot achieve it. The verb means "to bestow with the power for success." While a superficial reading of this prayer might suggest that this was a self-centered request for personal ability, the Hebrew word maintains the opposite. Jabez asked God for what he himself could not do. In essence, his prayer was to experience more of the presence and power of God in his life. Rather than a desire for personal gain, it was a longing for divine revelation in his life.

Jabez's second request was for God to enlarge his territory. The Hebrew word for territory is rendered "coasts" in the King James Version. The word may refer to either a geographical border or to a territory as a whole. In either case the sense is the same. Jabez asked God to give to him more land. The biblical perspective of land does not regard it solely as a form of wealth. Instead, possession of land included a divine responsibility for stewardship of that land. God gave Adam the garden of Eden and then instructed him "to work it and take care of it" (Gen. 2:15). Thus, Jabez supplemented his request for a blessing with a petition for more personal responsibility.

Jabez's third request was that God's hand be with him. The terminology emphasized the power to accomplish a task. The human hand enables people to write, to make complex objects, to discern through touch, and to perform other innumerable tasks. It can be used as a weapon when made into a fist. Thus, the hand was an image for strength as the primary means of power. Jabez recognized that he needed help from God to be successful.

Finally, Jabez asked God to protect him from harm. The Hebrew word here means "evil," the exact opposite of "good." It is more comprehensive than wicked behavior. The word can also denote physical injury or a time of distress, and the latter is its meaning here. The words, "so that I will be free from pain," indicate that if God protected Jabez from harm, he would neither experience nor cause pain. The pain referred to here could be either physical suffering or emotional distress.

The passage concludes with a simple, yet profound, statement—God granted his request. The entreaty that Jabez made pleased God and Jabez received what he had requested.

2. **INVENTORY** (How does this apply to my life?)

Some people think that to personally ask for God's blessing would be selfish. However, Jabez's prayer was unselfish because his motive was unselfish. Jabez desired to be blessed in ways that only God could provide as God saw fit. At this point in your life, what is the blessing from God you desire most?

Do you talk with God about this blessing?

☐ no ☐ sometimes ☐ yes

Finish this sentence: I can pray to experience God's blessing in a way that pleases Him by . . .

3. **FORSAKE** (What areas of my life need to be adjusted?)

Things in your life which will hinder your prayers:

- Unconfessed Sin: Isaiah 59:1-2; Psalms 66:18
- An Unforgiving Spirit: Matthew 6:14-15
- Bitterness toward your mate and others: 1 Peter 3:7
- Not Asking: James 4:2
- Asking with selfish or other wrong motives: James 4:3; Proverbs 21:13
- Insensitivity to the Word of God: Proverbs 28:9

Do you have habits and attitudes in your life that might be keeping your prayers from being answered?

4. **EXPLORE** (What life actions should I take?)

To understand more about praying in a way that pleases God, use the L.I.F.E. acrostic (Listen, Inventory, Forsake, and Explore) to study Solomon's response in 1 Kings 3:5-15.

Later in his life, Solomon concluded that prayer entailed more than bringing requests to God. Honoring God by being silent and standing in awe of Him is also important in prayer. Read Ecclesiastes 5:1-7.

Suggestions for Deeper Study: Read the book, *The Prayer of Jabez*, by Bruce Wilkinson.

More Life Discipleship: The Bible and Prayer

Learner's Guide Summary and Review Session Eight

Week One The Journey Continues

Share the More Life Guide with the person next to you. Remember, emphasize that it is an act of love to share with a person how they can be saved and have eternal life. We are not trying to manipulate the person, but rather offering them the greatest gift in the world...the Savior, Jesus Christ! Why should that be so difficult?

Week Two The Bible: A Guide for Behavior and Belief

The Holy Bible was written by men divinely inspired and is God's revelation of Himself to man. It is a perfect treasure of divine instruction. It has God for its author, salvation for its end, and truth, without any mixture of error, for its matter. Therefore, all Scripture is totally true and trustworthy. It reveals the principles by which God judges us, and therefore is, and will remain to the end of the world, the true center of Christian union, and the supreme standard by which all human conduct, creeds, and religious opinions should be tried. All Scripture is a testimony to Christ, who is Himself the focus of divine revelation.

Week Three The Purpose of the Bible

- Teaching – helping you learn correct doctrine
- Rebuking – convicting you of false beliefs
- Correcting – convicting you of ungodly behavior
- Training in Righteousness – helping you to live right

Week Four The Bible God's Owner Manual

If you want to prosper and succeed, you must spend time in God's Word. So, how do we do it? There are six ways we can spend time in God's word. They are –

Hear it,
Read it,
Study it,
Memorize it,
Meditate on it, and
Apply it.

Week Five Pray Consistently

Our prayers should include at least six parts:

PRAISE: BEGIN BY EXPRESSING LOVE TO GOD

PURPOSE: COMMIT TO GOD'S PURPOSE AND WILL FOR YOUR LIFE.

PROVISION: ASK GOD TO PROVIDE FOR YOUR NEEDS.

PARDON: ASK GOD TO FORGIVE YOUR SINS.

PEOPLE: PRAY FOR OTHER PEOPLE.

PROTECTION: ASK FOR SPIRITUAL PROTECTION FROM GOD.

Week Six Praying Persistently

Oswald Chambers wrote in *My Utmost for His Highest*: “Perseverance is more than endurance, It is endurance combined with the absolute assurance and certainty that what we are looking for is going to happen. Perseverance means more than just hanging on, which may be only exposing our fear of letting go and falling . . . Then there is a call to spiritual perseverance. A call not to hang on and do nothing, but to work deliberately, knowing with certainty that God will never be defeated.”

Week Seven Praying that Pleases God

God has revealed in His Word the type of praying that pleases Him. Among the descendants of Judah listed in 1 Chronicles 4:1-23 is Jabez, remembered for his short prayer to God. The abrupt introduction of Jabez suggests that he was well-known at the time that 1 Chronicles was written. Nonetheless, little is known about him now.

His prayer was not a self-centered appeal for material gain. Rather, he desired to please God instead of causing God’s people pain. The prayer of Jabez contains four specific requests. He asked God to bless him, to enlarge his territory, to be with him, and to keep him from harm. The verb bless describes something that only God can do. Human choice or effort cannot achieve it. The verb means “to bestow with the power for success.” While a superficial reading of this prayer might suggest that this was a self-centered request for personal ability, the Hebrew word maintains the opposite. Jabez asked God for what he himself could not do. In essence, his prayer was to experience more of the presence and power of God in his life. Rather than a desire for personal gain, it was a longing for divine revelation in his life.

Jabez’s second request was for God to enlarge his territory. The Hebrew word for territory is rendered “coasts” in the King James Version. The word may refer to either a geographical border or to a territory as a whole. In either case the sense is the same. Jabez asked God to give to him more land. The biblical perspective of land does not regard it solely as a form of wealth. Instead, possession of land included a divine responsibility for stewardship of that land. God gave Adam the garden of Eden and then instructed him “to work it and take care of it” (Gen. 2:15). Thus, Jabez supplemented his request for a blessing with a petition for more personal responsibility.

Jabez’s third request was that God’s hand be with him. The terminology emphasized the power to accomplish a task. The human hand enables people to write, to make complex objects, to discern through touch, and to perform other innumerable tasks. It can be used as a weapon when made into a fist. Thus, the hand was an image for strength as the primary means of power. Jabez recognized that he needed help from God to be successful.

Finally, Jabez asked God to protect him from harm. The Hebrew word here means “evil,” the exact opposite of “good.” It is more comprehensive than wicked behavior. The word can also denote physical injury or a time of distress, and the latter is its meaning here. The words so that I will be free from pain indicate that if God protected Jabez from harm, he would neither experience nor cause pain. The pain referred to here could be either physical suffering or emotional distress.

The passage concludes with a simple, yet profound, statement—God granted his request. The entreaty that Jabez made pleased God, and Jabez received what he had requested.

Share and Celebrate:

Share opportunities to share the More Life Guide or the More Life app.

Celebrate lives that have been transformed by the teaching of More Life and the relationship evangelism begun during this session.