

08.31.25: Psalm 127

Human Efforts and God's Blessings

Title: Human Efforts and God's Blessings

Scripture: Psalm 127

Main Idea: Human effort alone is insufficient to realize the blessings of God

Introduction:

- Psalm 127 is a significant psalm, short, challenges us
- Hebrew poetry, figurative language, what communicated and how communicated are both important
- There is a lot going on in this psalm
- It is a Song of Ascent – sung by his people as they were ascending to worship him, as they journeyed to Jerusalem and the temple to worship God.

Psalm 127: A Song of Ascents; of Solomon

1 Except the Lord build the house, they labour in vain that build it: except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain.

2 It is vain for you to rise up early, to sit up late, to eat the bread of sorrows: for so he giveth his beloved sleep.

3 Lo, children are a heritage of the Lord: and the fruit of the womb is his reward.

4 As arrows are in the hand of a mighty man; so are children of the youth.

5 Happy is the man that hath his quiver full of them: they shall not be ashamed, but they shall speak with the enemies in the gate.

- Fathers were leading their families up that hill to worship. Responsibilities given by God to that man to lead his family. They were commanded to report to God several times a year and not to come empty handed. They were to bring fruits of their work as an offering. They were to bring their families as they were a product of their labors.
- A Song of Ascent, of Solomon. Solomon knew something of building houses and homes, building the house, THE temple of the Lord, he built cities.

2 statements about Psalm 127:

- **Statement 1 - When we labor without God our best efforts are subject to failure, our efforts are vanity, futility.** (v1 *Unless God....in vain.*)
 - Building the house (v1), not about physical structure but the home.
 - David wanted to build temple for God. God told prophet Samuel tell David I have a message for him (*Have I ever asked you to build me a house, my tabernacle has been sufficient. Are you going to build a house for me? May I remind you that if I had not chosen you you would still be a shepherd boy. No, I am building a house for you.*) God is the one who builds, God is building a legacy.
 - The family was God's idea from the very beginning, before the law, before the nation of Israel, in the Garden of Eden God made the institution of marriage. It is God's original institution of faith. As we stray from this today, in our culture, we see issues as a result. We dare not come up with another plan that is outside of God's design and plan of marriage. We must not reshape it (we've done it with marriage, the family, our homes). Results are disastrous if we disregard God's plan.

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- NY Times article *The Boy Crisis* which is concerning the crisis of fatherlessness in our culture, raising boys to become men.
- V1 ...*except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain.* If the Lord is not watching over the city, all that is done is in vain. Jewish interpretation understood watchman not just as physical watchman but as men who instructed the people about God, to instill into our people a fear of God, instruct them, instruct about His law. Today cities and cultures are being destroyed from the threat within. Young men who haven't been trained to come up as adult men, causing hate and dissent.
- V2 *It is vain for you to rise up early, to sit up late, to eat the bread of sorrows: for so he giveth his beloved sleep.* Tension between work and rest. Throughout his word we see this. Work is of God, is a reflection of God, given to man and woman in the garden. Work is not a product of the fall, was a part of the garden. Our work is an act of worship to the Lord, as is rest. After the fall/sin, work changed drastically, became toil, sweat of your brow. Toil is exertion and frustration. God worked when creating the universe then he rested when it was complete. Cycle he has built into our lives, cycle of work and rest. This verse refers to people working too hard, too much. God says...rest. However, work and rest have the potential to be sin for us.
- We see work and rest in the life of Jesus. We need wisdom in order to balance work and rest. To avoid idleness and overwork. When we fail to rest we are saying that we don't trust God to provide for us. A blasphemist anxiety to do God's work for him. Rest becomes sin when it crosses over into laziness.
- John Goldengay, commentator, urges a simple message to the man who bears the burden of his household...relax, trust God, he is our ultimate provider.
- **Statement 2 - When we labor with God, we find ourselves investing in the next generation.**
 - 3 *Lo, children are a heritage of the Lord: and the fruit of the womb is his reward.*
 - 4 *As arrows are in the hand of a mighty man; so are children of the youth.*
 - 5 *Happy is the man that hath his quiver full of them: they shall not be ashamed, but they shall speak with the enemies in the gate.*
 - God's solution to our issue is children, they are a benefit, a reward, they are the house that God is truly building for us. Invest in children and future generations, legacy. Influence going out from the home, to the city, to the nation. Building block all goes back to God's original institution of marriage, be fruitful and multiple.
 - One of our pillars at FBCW is to strengthen families. Scholars who write about this chapter talk about the necessity of families. FBCW will invest in children. But 1.5 hours on Wed night cannot take the place of a home. We need to work with them from homes that are rock solid to see what that looks like and to change the trajectory of their lives towards that. Most important work we do is being reminded of the importance of family. We can pour into children even if not ours.
- Jesus said, apart from me you can do nothing. We need him in our family, our cities, in our internal struggles, we need him at every place where we find ourselves. Our labors to clean ourselves up, to come to God, our futile. We can't earn it. God gave his son, we need just repent, believe, come to him, and*I will give you rest.*

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- Lord can't be lord of our families, our cities, our nation until he is lord of our hearts. We must trust in him.