

Song of Ascents (Ps 127)

“Unless the Lord Builds the House”

Psalm 127:1-5 Unless the LORD builds the house, its builders labor in vain. Unless the LORD watches over the city, the watchmen stand guard in vain. 2 In vain you rise early and stay up late, toiling for food to eat—for he grants sleep to those he loves. 3 Sons are a heritage from the LORD, children a reward from him. 4 Like arrows in the hands of a warrior are sons born in one’s youth. 5 Blessed is the man whose quiver is full of them. They will not be put to shame when they contend with their enemies in the gate.

This psalm addresses areas where most of us spend the majority of our time - the building, protecting, and providing for our household

- Building up your household - Oikos - building a family (“*build the house*”)
- Providing protection to your interests (“*watch the city*”)
- Earning a living (“*toiling for food to eat*”)
- Raising your family (“*children - a heritage from the LORD*”)

Three times he tells us that our efforts will be in vain
Unless the Lord builds...etc

The word vain is used three times in this short verse. The word vain comes from an unused root meaning to rush over; a tempest; by implication devastation:—desolate (-ion), destroy, destruction, storm, wasteness.

When We Build Without the Lord

We build on sand (remember the word vain has the idea of the destruction caused by a storm)

Matthew 7:24-27 “Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock. 25 The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house; yet it did not fall, because it had its foundation on the rock. 26 But everyone who hears these words of mine and does not put them into practice is like **a foolish man who built his house on sand**. 27 The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell with a great crash.”

- **Foolish** = GK Moros - dull, stupid, heedless, a blockhead, absurd

Unless The LORD builds...(Hebrew verb tense indicates that HE MUST do it and that it is a CONTINUAL PROCESS)

- Unless the LORD builds the house
- Unless the LORD watches the city
- He gives sleep to those He loves
- Children are a heritage of the LORD

Raising of Children

“Build the House” oikos = To Obtain Children - Establish a Family -

There is probably no area that has a greater impact on the environment of our home, as well as upon the long-term spiritual health of our children than the raising of our children; and yet it is probably the area more than any other, that parents are tempted to do in their own wisdom rather than relying on God’s wisdom.

Training & discipline done God’s way touches the heart of a child...we cannot afford to be foolish here - we need His help

Proverbs 22:15 Foolishness is bound in the **heart of a child**; but the rod of correction shall drive it far from him.

Foolishness is **Bound**: A primitive root; to tie, physically (gird, confine, compact) or mentally (in love, league)

Prov. 22:6 "Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old, he will not depart from it"

One of the meanings of "train" in the Hebrew is "**to touch the palate.**" This word may also be used to describe the technique used by mothers to train infants to appreciate and swallow solid food. Furthermore, the concept of "touching the palate" refers to the process of introducing new types of food to an infant--or "touching his palate" with what he needs.

To not raise our children God’s way leaves them with a heart bound in foolishness.

- **Self-Centered**

Proverbs 12:15 The way of a fool seems right to him, but a wise man listens to advice.

Proverbs 18:2 A fool finds no pleasure in understanding but delights in airing his own opinions.

- **Can’t Get Along with Others**

Proverbs 12:16 A fool shows his annoyance at once, but a prudent man overlooks an insult.

Proverbs 20:3 It is to a man’s honor to avoid strife, but every fool is quick to quarrel.

- **No Self Control**

Proverbs 14:16 A wise man fears the LORD and shuns evil, but a fool is hotheaded and reckless.

Proverbs 15:2 The tongue of the wise commends knowledge, but the mouth of the fool gushes folly.

Proverbs 29:11 A fool gives full vent to his anger, but a wise man keeps himself under control.

- **The Foolish Heart is one drawn AWAY from God**

Proverbs 10:23 A fool finds pleasure in evil conduct, but a man of understanding delights in wisdom.

Proverbs 15:5 A fool spurns his father's discipline, but whoever heeds correction shows prudence.

- **There is no future for a fool**

Proverbs 10:8 The wise in heart accept commands, but a chattering fool comes to ruin.

- **In contrast to the children in Psalm 127 - they will contend with their enemies in the gate...**

Proverbs 24:7 Wisdom is too high for a fool; in the assembly at the gate he has nothing to say.

- **The most devastating of which is:**

Psalm 14:1 The fool says in his heart, "There is no God."

When there is no discipline, both Mom and Dad are grieved and disgraced

Proverbs 29:15 The rod of correction imparts wisdom, but a child left to himself disgraces his mother.

Proverbs 17:21 To have a fool for a son brings grief; there is no joy for the father of a fool.

1) My children are not mine - I am a steward and must be faithful
Children are the Heritage of the Lord

2) God has a purpose for your children's lives...You need a vision for your children

Having a quiver full is not an end in itself...**A vision for your children ... each to be a polished arrow in the quiver of the Lord...ready to be used for His purpose and glory**

Isaiah 49:1-3 Listen to me, you islands; hear this, you distant nations: Before I was born the Lord called me; from my mother's womb he has spoken my name. 2 He made my mouth like a sharpened sword, in the shadow of his hand he hid me; he made me into a polished arrow and concealed me in his quiver. 3 He said to me, "You are my servant, Israel, in whom I will display my splendor."

3) God has provided you influence - use it for good

Proverbs 17:6 Children's children are the crown of old men; and the glory of children are their fathers.

Toiling for food

We can become short-sighted and fail to labor in light of eternity

Luke 12:16-21 And he told them this parable: “The ground of a certain rich man produced a good crop. 17 He thought to himself, ‘What shall I do? I have no place to store my crops.’ 18 “Then he said, ‘This is what I’ll do. I will tear down my barns and build bigger ones, and there I will store all my grain and my goods. 19 And I’ll say to myself, “You have plenty of good things laid up for many years. Take life easy; eat, drink and be merry.”” 20 “But God said to him, ‘**You fool!** This very night your life will be demanded from you. Then who will get what you have prepared for yourself?’ 21 “This is how it will be with anyone who stores up things for himself but is not rich toward God.”

- **Fool** mindless, that is, stupid, (by implication) ignorant, (specifically) egotistic, (practically) rash, or (morally) unbelieving:

A Life Rich Toward God - *we cannot be foolish here*

1) Do not worry

Seek my kingdom FIRST and all these things will be added to you

Matthew 6:28-33 “And why do you worry about clothes? See how the lilies of the field grow. They do not labor or spin. 29 Yet I tell you that not even Solomon in all his splendor was dressed like one of these. 30 If that is how God clothes the grass of the field, which is here today and tomorrow is thrown into the fire, will he not much more clothe you, O you of little faith? 31 So do not worry, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘What shall we wear?’ 32 For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them. 33 But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.

2) Be Content

Pursue things of eternal value

1 Timothy 6:6-11 But godliness with contentment is great gain. 7 For we brought nothing into the world, and we can take nothing out of it. 8 But if we have food and clothing, we will be content with that. 9 People who want to get rich fall into temptation and a trap and into many foolish and harmful desires that plunge men into ruin and destruction. 10 For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil. Some people, eager for money, have wandered from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs. 11 But you, man of God, flee from all this, and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, endurance and gentleness.

3) Be Generous

Take hold of life that is truly life

1 Timothy 6:17-19 Command those who are rich in this present world not to be arrogant nor to put their hope in wealth, which is so uncertain, but to put their hope in God, who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment. 18 Command them to do good, to be rich in good deeds, and to be generous and willing to share. 19 In this way they will lay up treasure for themselves as a firm foundation for the coming age, so that they may take hold of the life that is truly life.

He stops every man from his own labor so that we may know God's work

By His grace he draws us away from our labor so we can KNOW HIS work

Job 37:5-7 God's voice thunders in marvelous ways; he does great things beyond our understanding. 6 He says to the snow, 'Fall on the earth,' and to the rain shower, 'Be a mighty downpour.' 7 So that all men he has made may know his work, he stops every man from his labor.

When we do what is in His Heart and Mind - he firmly establishes ["builds"] our house

1 Samuel 2:35 I will raise up for myself a faithful priest, who will do according to what is in my heart and mind. I will firmly establish [BUILD] his house, and he will minister before my anointed one always.