

110721 "To Not Be in Vain" Psalm 127:1-5

Psalm 127 is the wisdom poem that many believers love to recite. This psalm is part of "the song to the temple" and is distinguished as Solomon's proverbs poem. Specifically, if you read the first part of Psalm 127, it seems like you are reading the message of Ecclesiastes: "Vanity of vanities, says the Teacher, vanity of vanities! All is vanity." - that there is nothing better in this life than to fear God and keep God's commands. Today, Psalm 127 addresses two themes. First, human efforts in ignorance of God are in vain. Second, parents who nurture their children with the Word of God are blessed.

Verse 1 says, "Unless the Lord builds the house, those who build it labor in vain. Unless the Lord guards the city, the guard keeps watch in vain." Here a house is more than just a building, it refers to home or family. The Hebrew words [Ben] means son, [Bart] means daughter, and [Bait] means house. They are all derived from a Hebrew word [Bana] which means 'to build'. Just as stone and timber form the building, sons and daughters build up the family. In addition, the city refers to all the order and human relationships in the world.

In other words, it is impossible for the family and the society to work well without the presence of God, and human efforts without God are only in vain! Of course, even without God, you may be able to get a good education, make a lot of money, and succeed worldly.

But what you should keep in mind is that this psalm was written by the King Solomon. Even though God had given Solomon an unprecedented wisdom and insight, he could not build a house. Solomon destroyed the house of faith. He was obsessed with worldly prosperity.

So he confesses. If God does not build a house (family, country, temple), no matter how strong the builders, no matter how stylish, or how splendidly they build a house, the house will not last long. Solomon was speaking from his experience. "Unless the Lord builds the house, those who build it labor in vain."

I enjoy cycling. The bicycle has two wheels, one front and one rear, and there is a hub at the center of each wheel, which serves to balance the forces of the spokes in the wheel. For the bike to run smoothly, it is crucial for the hub to be the balance of power. Likewise, God is the hub of our lives, and we need God (not at the corner but) at the center of our lives to correct the balance so that we can run well and live well on this land.

2. "It is in vain that you rise up early and go late to rest, eating the bread of anxious toil; for he gives sleep to his beloved."

In verse 2 again Solomon emphasizes that if you don't live with God at the center of your life, what you are doing is in vain. In particular, eating the bread of anxious toil means bread or the price that people have earned by their own efforts. The apostle Paul said, "whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God."

In verse 2, an interesting verse stands out. "For he gives sleep to his beloved." So, did you sleep well last night? If you're sleepy at work and sleepy while listening to the sermon, then you may think "pastor! God loves me so much!" Of course, God loves you, but that's not what this verse means. 'Sleep' in verse 2 does not mean indolence or languor, but peacefulness or rest that true believers gain through the life of faith. Another interpretation would be: 'God blesses, even when God's beloved sleeps.' Even when we sleep, God enlivens our spirit and our flesh, and

gives us rest. Jesus said, "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest."

In summary, if we ignore God, everything will be in vain, but on the contrary, if we acknowledge God in everything, everything is precious and everything is possible. And God gives rest and grace to those who invite God to the center of their lives.

3. Sons are indeed a heritage from the Lord, the fruit of the womb 우~엄 a reward.

It says children are not the possession of parents, but the inheritance of God. Parents have the responsibility of stewards to nurture and teach their children, whom the Lord has entrusted to them for a moment. In doing so, our children can be a true reward and blessing of God's enterprise. As a parent of two children, I know that this is not always easy. But I try not to forget these words. "They are not mine, but the Lord's. I am not to accomplish my purpose through my children, but discover God's will for them and aid in accomplishing God's purpose."

4. Like arrows in the hand of a warrior are the sons of one's youth.

Arrows aim at the target. In the Bible, sin means missing the target. It is sin to ignore God. Think about it. In the verse, the children born in one's youth are like "arrows in the hands of a warrior." When the arrows are unleashed, there is nothing more the warrior can do to direct their course. When our children grow up and leave our hands, there is not much we can do to help them. So we must pray earnestly for our children to stay within the presence of God.

Khalil Gibran, a famous poet, said, "You are a bow and your children are living arrows shot from you. Rejoice that you are bent under the hand of the shooter (God)."

We believe that when parents are bent, that is, when parents' hard work, dedication, prayer, and love are blessed with the touch of God, their children will bring love, virtue, and grace of God toward the world.

Dear sisters and brothers in Christ, this is the first Sunday of November 2021. How have your year been? Have you entrusted to your workplace, your home, your children to God? Did God keep you throughout the year, or were you just watching for yourself? 1 Corinthians 15:57 says, "But thanks be to God! He gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, my dear brothers and sisters, stand firm. Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain." I hope and pray that God will always be at the center of your lives and May God give you peace and rest.

Fairfield Grace, May God's grace and peace and blessing be with you and your family, and your business, and your studies, and with the lives of your children. Amen.