

Ascend:
Seeking the Lord for What Awaits Back Home
Psalm 127

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July 17, 2016

Text Introduction: This morning we are continuing a series called, “Ascend.” This series is an expositional study of Psalms 120-134. Each of these Psalms has the heading “Song of Ascents.” Most believe that these are songs that worshippers sang as they made their way to Jerusalem for thrice annual special times of worship. If this is so, then we learn a great deal about what was on their hearts as they approached worship and thus understand what should be upon our hearts as we prepare to worship or just give attention to the subject of worship. We are considering one each Sunday for the weeks of this summer. Today, we are studying Psalm 127—perhaps the best known Psalm of this entire collection. I have to be honest with you—it’s my favorite.

Text: Unless the LORD builds a house,
its builders labor over it in vain;
unless the LORD watches over a city,
the watchman stays alert in vain.

² In vain you get up early and stay up late,
working hard to have enough food—
yes, He gives sleep to the one He loves.

³ Sons are indeed a heritage from the LORD,
children, a reward.

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

⁵ Happy is the man who has filled his quiver with them.
Such men will never be put to shame
when they speak with their enemies at the city gate.

Introduction: I have repeatedly said that we learn a great deal about what was on their hearts as they approached worship and thus understand what should be upon our hearts as we prepare to worship or just give attention to the subject of worship. I don’t want it to be lost on us that the theme of the family was upon their hearts. Consider the scene—national worship, national concerns, but here, the concern turns to their homes. Again, we examine that basic principle “so goes the family, so goes the nation.”

Upon their completion of worship, they were headed home and so rightly so, they were seeking the Lord about what awaited them upon their return home.

The Psalmist described God as the Lord 792 times. Today we examine God as the Lord of our Homes. Maybe today, your family needs to commit to God that you will allow Him to be the “builder of your house.”

We must recognize God as leader and Lord over our families.

God wants to have control in every area of your life. There are lots of ways that verse 1 and 2 could be applied—a nation, a church, a business, but it is in verses 3-5 that the Psalmist makes clear that most at issue in this particular case is the family.

Notice two key phrases:

- (1) Unless the Lord—The Lord must be the foundation of your family or your family is destined for failure.
- (2) In vain—Without the Lord, it will all come to nothing.

Notice Two Implications of How We are Likely to Build and to Protect.

- (1) Our own work
- (2) Our worry

Anything other than a foundation in the Lord is faulty and failing foundation. When I perform wedding ceremonies, I almost always tell the story that Jesus told to conclude the Sermon on the Mount. That's the story about the wise man and the foolish man. The wise man built on a good foundation. The foolish man built on a poor foundation. When the rain, wind, and floods came, the wise man's house stood while the foolish man's house fell. And Jesus said, "And great was its fall."

I then say, "Jesus gave us a promise and a warning in the same story."

Think of it this way: Jesus is the builder, the Bible is the blueprint, and worship is the maintenance plan for your family.

We must recognize our privileges and our priorities in our families.

3 Word Pictures Guide Us:

- (1) Gift—So family is from the Lord
- (2) Reward—So family is for our pleasure but still from the Lord
- (3) Arrow—So family is given to us on assignment to be guided

Rick Husband is an American hero. He was the commander of the ill-fated Columbia shuttle mission that exploded upon re-entry scattering parts over Texas and Louisiana. His wife put his story to words in the book *High Calling*. In the book, we learn that Rick was not only a great American, but also a great husband, father, and Christian. Though his commitment to NASA was obviously great, Rick never seemed to lose sight of the right priorities. The most inspiring part of Rick's story is that he taped different devotions for each of the seventeen days of his mission for both of his children so that he would not miss a day sharing with them spiritual food.

On landing day, here is what Rick taped for his daughter:

“It's Landing Day and hopefully, if the weather's good, I'll be landing today in Florida. I'm certainly looking forward to seeing you, Matthew and Mama.” Rick then read from Laura's devotional book and when he finished, he prayed for her. “OK, Laura, it won't be long before I see you! I love you very, very much...I'll see you in just a little while! I love you. Bye, Bye!”

Rick understood that his highest calling was the one given to him by his Heavenly Father.

4 Applications to Take Home

1. Every family needs the power of God.
2. Every child needs the blessing of a Godly family.
3. Every nation needs strong families.
4. And so, every church needs to equip families.

The stakes are high if we do not succeed.