



## Approaching God

### Begin your time with an opening prayer

Take a moment to quiet your heart and ask God to help you experience his presence today. Ask Him to free you from any distractions as you begin to read and meditate on today's passage.

## Psalm 127 - Work

### Passage Introduction:

Work is a major component in most lives. It is unavoidable. It can be either good or bad, an area where our sin is magnified or where our faith matures. For it is the nature of sin to take good things and twist them, ever so slightly, so that they miss the target to which they were aimed, the target of God. One requirement of discipleship is to learn the ways sin skews our nature and submit what we learn to the continuing will of God, so that we are reshaped through the days of our obedience. Psalm 127 shows both the right way and the wrong way to work. It posts a warning and provides an example to guide Christians in work that is done to the glory of God."

Eugene Peterson - *A Long Obedience in the Same Direction*

## Bible Reading, Study & Meditation - Read the passage slowly 2 or 3x's.

Start with Engaging the Text: Take a few minutes to highlight, circle, or underline key words.

**Psalm 127 - A Song of Ascents (NIV) - 1** Unless the LORD builds the house, the builders labor in vain. Unless the LORD watches over the city, the guards stand watch 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** Children are a heritage from the LORD, offspring a reward from him. **4** Like arrows in the hands of a warrior are children 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 opponents in court.

## Questions for Reflection & Meditation

- When it comes to work, what two extremes are most people tempted to fall into? What do you think vs. 3-4 tell us about our role and the effort we put into "creating" children?
- How does the confidence that God is the ultimate worker/builder/provider bring new meaning, creative, and freedom to the work God has for you?
- After meditating on the passage what are 3 or 4 key areas in life where God wants you to bring God-glorifying work to bear in the world around you?

## Psalm 127

### Passage Summary - (From The ESV Transformation Bible)

Although the people of God are commanded to “build” (v. 1a) and “watch” (v. 1b) and “toil” (v. 2) and bring forth children (vv. 3–5), they must always remember that their labors are in vain apart from the enabling and sustaining grace and power of God. As our Lord Jesus reminds us, “apart from me you can do nothing” (John 15:5).

We exercise our human responsibility along with complete and utter dependence on God. Neither one cancels out the other. Our labor does not preclude either the need for or the legitimacy of God’s sovereign oversight, just as the display of God’s sovereign and gracious power does not render our labor superfluous. Psalm 127 reminds us that as we labor to build, and watch to protect, and toil to eat, and bring forth children for blessing, our ultimate and perpetual dependence must be on the God who alone can make these efforts succeed and bear fruit for eternity.

How good God is to give us meaningful work! But how good God is also to strengthen our hand, and instruct our minds, and direct our steps so that what we do will accomplish what he alone knows is best. This psalm places a special emphasis on the blessing of children (vv. 3–5). Those who are led to marry and then granted the privilege to raise children should see these little ones as evidence of God’s blessing—they are, in the end, his children, not ours. Yes, we bear and raise them, but then we shoot them out as arrows (v. 4) to land in the places God designs. Indeed, even our children, the fruit of our most consistent and diligent labor, come from God, are matured by God, and are to be used by God. All of life is God’s abundant grace to us.

### Key Takeaway:

As you read today’s passage, what are 1 or 2 main takeaways that you wrote down that you want to take with you? How would you briefly summarize your observations and meditations for today?

### Close in Prayer:

Close by turning today’s Psalm into your own prayer. Over the past couple of days we’ve given you some prayer prompts to get started. Now try to write some of your own prayers here using sections of Psalm 127 as a guide using the theme of work.

- vs. 1 *Unless the LORD builds the house, the builders labor in vain. Unless the LORD watches over the city, the guards stand watch in vain.* (Turn this into a prayer of praise or thanksgiving)
- vs. 2 *In vain you rise early and stay up late, toiling for food to eat— for he grants sleep to those he loves.* (What might you need to confess or ask for in light of vs. 2)
- vs. 3-5 *Children are a heritage from the LORD, offspring a reward from him. Like arrows in the hands of a warrior are children born in one’s youth. Blessed is the man whose quiver is full of them. They will not be put to shame when they contend with their opponents in court.* (This verse encourages us to put our greatest efforts into people work. Pray for people you can invest in and help to grow and nurture.)