

Unless The Lord Builds (Psalm 127)

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[0 : 00] Psalm 127, a song of ascents of Solomon. Unless the Lord builds the house, the builders labor in vain.

Unless the Lord watches over the city, the guards stand watch in vain. In vain you rise early and stay up late, toiling for food to eat.

For he grants sleep to those he loves. Children are a heretic 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. Thank you.

Hey everyone. Oh, that's loud. Nice to meet you all. My name is Michael. So I am not a pastor. So I just want to clarify that. Thanks for giving me a promotion, by the way.

[1 : 06] Like I come across here and I just upgrade automatically to pastor. So I'm a ministry apprentice, which what it means is basically I'm in training to potentially be a pastor. We'll see how that goes. I'm towards the end of that training three-year period at my local church, which is called Auckland EV, Auckland Evangelical Church.

But look, coming across here, it's always nice. I've come once before, so you may have seen my face around. This would have been some time ago last year.

It's always nice visiting a Chinese-English congregation like yours because I come from a church background very similar to you. So even though right now I worship in a church that makes ethnic groups.

But yeah, I used to be part of the Brit of Life Chinese Church just down the road over there. So that was my kind of heritage and upbringing in the faith.

And yeah, I have lots of fond memories. So it's like coming here is almost like a taste of coming home. It's very sweet. So thanks for welcoming me and having me here. Today we are getting into the psalm, very short psalm.

[2 : 12] Thanks, Mariah, for reading that. Great reading, by the way. Today we're going to look into this idea of unless the Lord builds.

That's kind of how this psalm starts, right? And I'm going to put it to you that this psalm, five verses, it's got a lot of depth to it. It's kind of like an ogre. Ogres have layers, remember?

Shrek, has anyone seen Shrek? Yeah, yeah. Ogres are like onions that have layers. Because this psalm is not like an ogre because it's ugly, because it's really beautiful, right? This psalm is like an ogre because it's got lots of layers.

And so what we're going to do today is we're going to unpeel the layers from the outside in. We're going to work our ways from the outside in. So before that, let me pray and we'll get started. Father God, thanks for giving us the church.

Thanks for giving us one another that every Sunday we can gather here. And yeah, we thank you for that. We're able to gather in a place where we don't have to worry about our safety, where we don't have to worry about police or people banging in and trying to disrupt our worship of you.

[3 : 23] Yeah, we want to give thanks for that. And we also want to give thanks for your word, which still is so relevant to our lives today. And Lord, today as we look into this psalm, Psalm 127, we do ask that, Lord, your spirit will work in our hearts.

That even if I personally might speak and stumble up and make things not clear, that you will clarify it in each and every one of our hearts today. In the name of Jesus we ask. Amen.

Great. So as I said, we're going to work from the outside in. So let's start with the outer layer of the psalm. And really at the outer layer of the psalm, it's about two things. It's very clearly about two things.

First, verse 1 to 2 is kind of about work, right? Building a house, building a city, providing food on the table. And then from verses 3 to 5, it's all about this idea of a family, children, right?

It's the idea of, you know, having basically progeny or people to continue on your name. So those are very true, very important things, right?

[4 : 27] Work and family. In some ways, some people might argue those are the two most important things about life, especially people of our ethnicity, right?

Chinese people, Asian people, we really value work and family. And so this is very relevant to us, I think. This psalm is all about what it looks like to look to God for these things.

So let's start at verse 1. We'll read this. 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. 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. Now, the first thing we read here is that God is a worker, right? He's the one who builds a house.

[5 : 24] So if any house stands, we have to say God is the one who built it, who made it stand. This building, why is it standing? Because God built it. If any city is secure, God is the one who kept it safe.

God's the one who watches over the city. If there's ever food on the table when you go back home tonight, why? Not because mom and dad worked or not because you worked and earned the money and bought the groceries and able to cook a meal.

Because God actually provided for you, right? We say all things come from God. That's why we give grace before meals. Because we want to acknowledge that God is the one who provides. And even funnily enough, it says the ability to sleep.

That's a gift from God. Now, we have to recognize that God is at work in these almost mundane ways, right? Because sometimes, I have to say, we like to, our attention is more drawn to the spectacular.

Things like the miraculous or whenever we hear things of a miracle, we're like, oh, cool. I want to hear more about it. And you kind of go, oh, I want to experience a miracle. I want to see something supernatural.

[6 : 30] And that's good and all. You know, we are, Christianity is a religion that believes in the supernatural. The core of the foundation of our faith is built on the idea that some guy didn't die, but he rose from the dead, right?

So supernatural is definitely part of our faith and our religion. But at the same time, we've got to recognize that God works in a whole variety of ways. God works in a million mundane and ordinary ways to provide for us, to help us.

And so we've got to recognize his unseen hand in these things. It's really easy for us to take it for granted that, you know, it's us doing all the work, building a city, building a house, us providing the food and putting the food on the table.

Especially those of you who work actually earn an income and actually do that yourself. Some of you actually live currently as dependents on your parents. And so there's a sense in which you kind of already experience that, hey, how am I getting all this for free, effectively?

Because someone else is providing it for you. And ultimately, it's God who's doing that. So God is the one who raises the sun. He's the one who sends the rain.

[7 : 39] He's the one who grows the crops so that we can have food. He's the one who gives us every breath we breathe, right? And that's the song we sang, the first song, I believe, we sang today.

A wonderful song which just sings about, you know, the idea that every breath we have is from God and now we give it back to God. Our very first breath, when you were born, when you came out of the womb of your mom, that first breath is a gift from God.

And every second breath, third breath, the millionth breath, is all God's given to you. Until you take the last breath and that breath goes back to God and you'll be with God. It's a beautiful idea that God is the one who sustains our everyday lives in mundane and ordinary ways.

So that's the first part. Now when we move to the third, verse three to five, the psalm takes a pivot, right? Takes a turn, starts to talk about family. And specifically, it talks about having children.

Children are a gift from God. Now, I recognize that for a lot of us in the room, having children is something like way, way, way, way down the line, right?

[8 : 50] Some of you in high school and so you're like, you're not thinking about having children just yet. Hopefully not. But some of us here might be, you know, thinking about potentially having the children somewhere down the line.

You're thinking more about, oh, how can I find a partner? How can I get married, start a family by first finding a wife or a husband? See, what this psalm is not saying is that God is only involved in the process of procreation, you know, the act of creating a baby.

God is also in the process of this whole idea of starting a family, this whole idea of creating families. God is the one who first put the first man and woman together, and he's the one who put every following man and woman together in marriage.

And he's the one who brings forth every child. It's a gift from God. The entire process belongs to God. So he's the one who creates the families, but also we learn verses 4 to 5 that he is the one who makes these families secure.

See, in here, children are described as arrows in the hand of a warrior, right? And that's interesting because it's like, I think about my son right now. I think about my son who's almost two.

[10 : 10] He's not quite an arrow, right? He doesn't provide me much defense if I'm in trouble. Like, I can't be like, oh no, shield me, Emmaus. That doesn't... So what does this mean?

So, well, first of all, we've got to acknowledge that God has given us children as a long-term investment, first of all. At first, they feel more like liabilities. And some of you here are children still, and you know, you're still a liability, to be honest.

Come on. But eventually, you become an asset, right? Eventually, you no longer depend on your parents. Eventually, you'll become independent. Some of you here are working.

You know, you're long past depending on your parents. You're earning your own wage. You're like, cool. Yeah, I'm now independent. But, you know, it gets to a point where we no longer depend on our parents.

One day, our parents will depend on us, right? One day, your parents might be old, and they'll be, like, struggling to get down the stairs, or they're actually going, oh, help me read this, like, this legal document.

[11 : 13] I can't understand it. Or maybe you're going through that right now, because your parents don't speak English. So maybe they're needing you already. Whenever that day comes, whether it's today, whether it's, you know, 20 years down the line, remember the fifth commandment, which says, honor your mother and father.

We have to realize that God has given us to be arrows in the hand of a warrior for our parents. We are to provide defense for our families.

We're supposed to stick together. We're not supposed to forget our parents. We're supposed to honor them in their old age. So God is the one who creates these families.

He builds robustness by producing children. Now, so what we have seen so far, and I want to say in this outer layer of the psalm, remember we're kind of, like, peeling the layers of an onion, right?

So on this outer layer, we see that God is a worker. God is the one who works in all things. But also God is a family maker. He's the one who creates families, makes them safe and secure.

[12 : 26] Now, what does this mean for our lives? Well, I take it, what this means is that if we really believe this, we'd be less anxious in our day-to-day lives.

Now, I'm not sure you've realized, in this whole psalm, everything's written in the third-person perspective. You understand what I mean by third person? Yeah. There's no I.

There's no you. It's just them, or he, or she. One exception to that, which is in verse 2. So if you have a look at verse 2, it says, In vain, you.

This is the only time in this whole psalm that the psalmist turns to address you, the hearer. See, I think this is the point of contact that this psalm has with our lives, which is this.

It says this. Let's read it. 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.

[13 : 24] What this is saying is that the psalmist is critiquing us who are workaholics. Some of you might be that. I don't know. That maybe you are not trusting in God's sovereignty, in God's work.

Maybe you're not trusting that God is the one who's holding everything together. Holding your every breath. Holding your everyday life. Now, we can overreact.

We can kind of over apply this to our lives by going, Oh, great. So since God is at work, let me just sit back, watch TV, and God will just drop food at my doorstep like Uber Eats.

Right? Like, that would be a bad application of this. This is not saying we should just be lazy because God will provide anyway. No, we have real responsibility to work. We really do.

But God is not calling us to work anxiously as though our lives depend on it. God is calling us to work, recognizing He is the first worker. He is the most important worker.

[14 : 27] He wants us to work trusting in Him that He is the one who works. So we co-work with Him. God doesn't want us to work anxiously.

And that's kind of why He invented sleep. Now, I'm not sure if you thought about this. Like, isn't it crazy just how much sleep we need in our lives?

Like, a third of our lives is spent sleeping. So, average, I think, age lifespan now is about 80 years, maybe. So, a third of that is 24 years.

24 years. That's how long you're going to spend just sleeping. It's a lot of unproductive time, right? Like, have you thought about just how inefficient you are as a machine, if you are a machine?

Like, do you have any device? Like, think about an iPad or on a phone. Do you have any technology that needs to sleep a third of the day, like eight hours a day, in order to function properly?

[15 : 27] If you had something like that, you'd probably return it to manufacturer. You'd be like, this has a serious flaw, right? You'd be like, this has got a bug in it. But God is the one who designed us to sleep.

God is the one who designed us to sleep. So, we've got to say, eight hours of sleep, that is not a bug.

I can sleep eight hours a day and know that that is not a bug. It's not a design flaw. That is a perk of my design. That is a feature. That is how God has created us to serve.

So, it's not a flaw that we need to sleep. In fact, sleep has this extra function that teaches us something.

It trains us to do something. It trains us, what? To recognize that, first, we are not God, because we need to sleep. Second, it teaches us that there is a God. Because when we sleep and we kind of clock out, someone is looking after the world.

[16 : 31] It teaches us that we don't have to hold everything in our hands and control everything. Because someone else is controlling everything. He's holding everything together. So, we get to just check out and be like, God, I'm so glad that I can go and check out.

I can clock out because you're looking after everything. Isn't it amazing that every night you get to just kind of practice this idea of trust. Just like, God, I give it to you.

I give it to you. I can't hold it. I can't, you know, I'll die if I stop sleeping. So, I give it to you. Is that how you go to sleep at night?

Sometimes maybe you're a little bit more anxious. Maybe you're a lot more anxious. But I want to challenge you today. Maybe you think about sleep is actually God's gift to us.

But also, it's an exercise of faith. Every night we get to grow our faith. Every night we get to go, okay, here's one way I get to grow my faith. Trust in God again. Because I get to say, God, you got it.

[17 : 36] I'm going to go clock out now. See, God doesn't sleep. So, we can sleep. So, at the outer layer of this psalm, the psalm teaches us that we ought not to be anxious.

We ought to trust God. And we ought to learn the art of sleeping for the glory of God. And our own good. Because we really need it. Now, let's unpeel this outer layer.

We're going to go to the inner layer of the psalm now. So, as I said earlier, this psalm has a lot of depth to it. Now, we began earlier by kind of just making a very plain assumption.

By assuming that when it talks about work, when it talks about family, we just assume that it's talking about our work. And our family, right? And that's quite natural. We kind of read something and immediately think about ourselves.

But what if the Bible isn't primarily about us? What if the Bible is not primarily about our work and our family? What if it's about something else?

[18 : 38] What if it's about someone else? Now, let me suggest to you that this psalm is really about a house, which we read about in verse 1, and a household.

Right? So, house, work, household, family. It's about a house and a household. But not our house and not our household. So, it's not about you thinking about your property investments or your dream home.

Nor it's about you thinking about wanting to start a family. Although, these are all good things. Owning a house, having a family are good things. But this psalm is not primarily about those things.

Because this psalm is about somebody else's house and somebody else's household. Now, there are two clues to show this. And they're both in the superscription.

Now, I want to say again, Mariah did an excellent job of reading the psalm. Because she read the psalm and she didn't skip the superscription, which sometimes people might skip. Right? The superscript says, a song of ascents of Solomon.

[19 : 41] See, this is actually in the original Bible in Hebrew. Some other parts of the Bible that you get in your Bible, like, for example, the chapter, paragraph headings, are actually not there.

So, this is more Bible than your paragraph headings. And this first thing we've learned from this superscript is that this is a song of ascents.

Which William has already helpfully unpacked for us. This is effectively songs that the Israelites used to sing when they make a pilgrimage from wherever they are up to Jerusalem. Which is their capital city, the city where the temple is.

And, you know, it's a track that's almost the distance, maybe, of Wellington to Auckland. I don't know. Might be shorter than that. Depends where you are, I guess. Yeah, and basically when they're singing the song, their direction, what is their goal?

Their goal is to head to Jerusalem, to worship at the temple. So, maybe, just maybe, the house being referred to in verse 1 when it says, Unless the Lord builds the house, maybe this house is the Lord's house.

[20 : 49] The temple. Now, the second clue in the superscript is this idea that this is a psalm written by Solomon. Now, Solomon, you might know, he's one of the kings of Israel.

He's the son of David, who's probably the greatest king of Israel ever. And Solomon doesn't write a lot of psalms. All right? So, there's probably only two. This one and then one other one that's written by Solomon.

So, it's quite... I think there's quite a lot of importance that this psalm is attributed to Solomon. And partly, I think, you've got to think, because he has a particular link to the temple.

He is the first king who built the temple. The first temple was built by Solomon. But also, notice in verses 3 to 5, when it talks about the sons, the children, the heirs, potentially, this is talking about Solomon and David's lineage, his descendants.

Potentially, the house being talked about as a temple and the household being talked about as the line of David. David's dynasty. Because Solomon is the first in that line of David.

[22 : 09] And so, I want to put it to you that this psalm is actually not about us. It's actually about God's house and David's household. David's family.

And what's at the core issue here is what is known as the Davidic covenant or God's covenant with David. Now, I just want to refer you to an Old Testament passage, 2 Samuel chapter 7.

We won't read through all of it, but I want to encourage you just maybe later tonight or, yeah, have a read. 2 Samuel chapter 7. I think it's one of the most important passages in the entire Old Testament.

Because this kind of grounds what's happening later. And in fact, this psalm is all about reflecting on this covenant that God has made with David. And so, I want to just summarize this chapter for you without reading it all.

You have some of it up there. But really, what starts this chapter is this. King David, he becomes king. And then he effectively has peace in his land. He's fought off all his enemies.

[23 : 12] And then he starts to reflect. And he's like, look, life is good now. I'm living in this house made of cedar, which is really quality wood. But God's ark, which is that ark of the covenant, the most holy thing in Israel at that point in time.

God's ark lives in a tent. So, I'm in this house of cedar, God's ark in a tent. And he was like, something's not right about that. And so, he goes to the prophet Nathan.

And he's like, maybe I should do something about that. Nathan's like, good idea. Go and do it. But then God comes back to Nathan and said, no, you go speak to David. And you say this. And so, he says a lot of things.

But let me just summarize what God says to David. He effectively says this. Look, bro, you had a good heart. But you're not going to build a house for me.

I'm going to build a house for you. This is what God says. You want to build a house for me? Good. But no. No, thank you. I'm going to build a house for you.

[24 : 18] I'm going to build you a household. And that's what God means. I'm going to build you a household, a lineage that will last forever. You will never cease to have a king on the throne.

And this king, your son, will not just be the king of Israel. He's going to be king of the world. He's going to rule on my behalf. So, the son of David is going to be God's king who rules in God's kingdom.

In fact, I'm going to call your son my son. I'm going to basically adopt him. He's going to be son of David is the son of God. And the son of yours, he's going to build me a house.

So, don't you worry about building me a house. Your son will build me a house. So, that's the covenant, okay? Basically, God says, I will build you a house, meaning a household. And your sons, so out of your household, your son will build me a house.

And he will reign forever as the king. So, that's the whole covenant that I think Psalm 127 is focusing on.

[25 : 24] It's this idea of God's promises and God's covenant with David. Effectively, the psalm, as the Israelites were singing, they were reminding themselves that God is committed to his promise.

God is committed to the promises he made with David. God will establish David's household and God's house will be built. Now, as you might be aware, some of you have read the Old Testament.

You know that David's household ends up in ruin. So, God's, basically David's sons, one by one, get worse and worse. They become more and more sinful.

And eventually, the whole dynasty, the whole kingdom is lost, right? Israel gets destroyed. They get exiled and taken away. The kingdom is lost. And even the temple that Solomon built was destroyed.

Now, I understand recently you guys have been looking in the book of Israel, which is a long time after this. So, this is after they've gone into exile. They've come back and they're now looking to rebuild. And actually, they are rebuilding the temple at that point, the second temple.

[26 : 32] But it looks like as though God has forgotten his covenant, right? It looks like as though God has abandoned Israel. Because even in Israel, at that point in time, there is no king that's sitting on the throne of David, ruling over the entire earth.

In fact, as you might have seen in Israel, the person in charge, humanly speaking, was the king of Persia, right? Darius, who's, you know, bossing everyone around.

So, has God forgotten his promises to David? Well, the New Testament answers that question. And it says, no. A resounding no.

Because Jesus is the son of David. Jesus is the Messiah, the one who comes in the line of David, who is not only David's son. He is God's son.

He is the one who builds the true temple, who establishes the kingdom of God. In fact, he's not just the one who builds the temple. He himself is the temple. Now, you might recall that one time Jesus said something like this.

[27 : 41] Very cryptic. He says, destroy this temple. While he was at the temple. He was saying, destroy this temple. And in three days, I will rebuild it. Pretty outrageous claim, if you ask me.

How could you rebuild a temple in three days? Even China can't do that. But you see, Jesus is not talking about the physical temple, right? Jesus is talking about himself, the body, his body, which is going to be broken for us.

That's what we kind of talk about when we have the Lord's Supper. He is the temple of God where people get to meet God. And he is the one who is going to be broken.

And he's going to resurrect on the third day. So he will rebuild the temple. And when Jesus resurrected, what we understand is he is the new temple. He is the place where all nations get to meet God.

He is the king in God's kingdom. But he is also the temple. The place where we meet God. See, the physical temple all along was just a toy replica.

[28 : 40] That's pointing to the real thing, right? So don't get bothered up about the temple. We have the better thing. We have the real deal, which is Jesus himself. And so we've got to say, when we think about God's covenant with David, and we think about the psalm being all about that covenant, we've got to say that Jesus is the fulfillment of the psalm because he's the fulfillment of God's covenant with David.

All the longing in the psalm, all the longing in the Old Testament builds up and finds its climax in Jesus. He is the son of David who is the son of God.

He is a true temple, as well as a true temple builder. Because Jesus is not the only temple. Now, we sang about, William also talked about, we, our bodies, we are the temple of God, right?

The New Testament actually likes to say the church, we as a whole, as a collective, we are the temple of God. In terms of proportion, the New Testament mostly think about us as a collective.

The body of Christ is the temple of God. So what we have to understand is this, that Jesus is the son of God. He is the temple of God.

[29 : 58] But in Jesus, when we trust in Jesus, we ourselves become children of God, sons, and also we become the temple of God ourselves. In Galatians 3, we read this.

For through faith, you are all sons of God in Christ Jesus. Notice it says sons of God. Now, you might have a translation that says something different. I just want to say to you, if you have children there, maybe just cross it out and write sons, because that's technically what's there in the original languages.

I know that, you know, some translations like to make it, you know, gender neutral and just like all-inclusive to everyone. But actually what we're missing there, if we write children, is we realize we're missing something.

We're actually devaluing what Paul is telling us that we are in Jesus. Because in the post-time, in the, you know, ancient world, daughters are worthless.

Now, sorry, sorry, you know, I know there's a lot of daughters here, there's a lot of girls. I'm not talking about my views. I'm not talking about our views today in today's culture.

[31 : 05] I'm talking about back in the Old Testament times, daughters are worthless, unfortunately. What everyone wanted is a son. And in fact, in some cultures, that's still the case, right?

What Paul is not saying is that one day when you are adopted into God's kingdom, when you go into heaven, when you go into the new creation, there will still be sons and daughters because then there will be a hierarchy.

Oh, sons are still more privileged and daughters are like next to nothing, worth nothing. Because if he said you're all children, then effectively there's a two-tier system in God's kingdom.

When he says you are all sons, he's looking at all the people in church, he's saying whether you're male, whether you're female, you are all sons.

There are no daughters in God's kingdom because you're either a male son or you're a female son because you are all God's most precious child. You're adopted, you are loved just like Jesus is loved.

[32 : 05] You stand in the place of Jesus, God's one and only begotten son. In God's kingdom, there is no tears, there's no hierarchy, there's no first class, second class, first born, second born.

We are all sons. We are all heirs. We are all received the inheritance because daughters don't get anything. So we are adopted into God's family as sons.

But also we are God's temple. Ephesians 2 has this wonderful passage, which kind of combines the idea of the house and the household that we've been thinking about in the psalm.

Let's have a read. So then, you are no longer foreigners and strangers, but fellow citizens with the saints, members of God's household, built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets with Christ Jesus himself as the cornerstone.

In him, the whole building being put together grows into a holy temple in the Lord. And you, in him, you are being built together for God's dwelling in the Spirit.

[33 : 15] Now, what Paul's saying here, he's combining these concepts that we are God's household, members of God's household, so family members, so we are part of God's family now.

But also notice, we are being put together as though brick by brick, stone upon stone, we are being built into a holy temple. So this is the idea of we are a house.

The church is God's house, which he dwells by his Spirit. See, God's been on a building project for the last 2,000 years. He's been building his church.

He's been building his house. He's been building his household. Every person that comes to trust in Jesus, who say Jesus is Lord, every person who comes to faith, that's a stone that's added to this monumental building, the greatest of all buildings.

God's house. So Jesus is building that. By his Spirit, Jesus is building this house for God. We are the building. We are the building project.

[34 : 22] We are God's sons. We are God's house. Now, I'm not sure if you realize, we've actually come around full circle. Maybe, you know, you're a little lost, but let's just retrace our steps.

First, we said on the outer layer of this psalm, it's about God's work in our lives, God's creating us, making families. And then now when we looked in the inner layer of the psalm, we said it's not really about us.

It's really about Jesus, how he's the son of David, who's the son of God. He's a temple, but also the temple builder. But also through faith in Jesus, when we become part of Jesus' family, we become God's temple.

We become God's sons. See, we've come full circle. We say it's not really about us, it's about Jesus, but actually, in some way, it is about us. It's about our reality, our identity in Christ.

This psalm is about who we are in Jesus. When we truly know him as God's son, when we truly know him, that he is the only way to God, the only way to have a relationship with God, the only way to meet God, to know Jesus, is to become God's son, and to become God's temple.

[35 : 40] Now, wrapping up, what does this all mean for our lives? Well, I want to draw out two implications for us. First, if we are in Jesus, if we believe and trust in Jesus, then we don't need to be anxious for anything.

Now, we kind of already saw this at the outer layer of the psalm, right? We talked about how God doesn't want us to work anxiously. He has given us sleep. Now, the inner layer of the psalm doesn't contradict the outer layer, right?

So, you unpeel the onion. What you don't find is an apple. You find the onion, right? You have to be consistent all the way down. All the way down, there is no contradictions to the psalm. The psalm continues to say, hey, the deeper truths in the psalm also tells us that we don't have to be anxious.

We don't have to be anxious for tomorrow because we have a Father in heaven. And this is the reason why this inner layer of the psalm has even more motivation for us to trust God because we have an even greater reason to trust God, right?

He's not just the God who's in charge or the God who's large, the God who's in power. He's our Father now. So, if you remember Jesus, He tells us to look at the birds of the sky, the flowers of the field.

[36 : 59] And He says, if God looks after those things, how much more will He look after you? Because we are now God's children. We call Him His Father, right?

How much more precious are we to God than the birds of the air, the lilies of the field? So, this inner layer of the psalm gives us even more reason to trust God, even more reason that we should enjoy our sleep.

We should just be pro-sleepers, honestly, guys. The second implication of the psalm, and this one is slightly different to what we found on the outer layer, but not contradictory again.

If it's really true that the church is the temple of God in Jesus, if it's really true that this is the building project that God has been committed to for the last 2,000 years, and now we are part of His family, we are God's sons, we inherit this project as ours as well.

It's a family business. Jesus has called us to be part of this journey, which He calls the Great Commission, right? At the end of Matthew, He says, go and make disciples of all nations.

[38 : 12] He commits to each and every one of us the task which is committed to Him by the Father, is that we are here to do what Jesus has started, to build the house of God, to build the temple, to build the church.

So, I want to ask you, are you committed to this family project? Are you committed to this business of building up the church, building up the family, building up the temple?

And more pertinently, are you invested in what's happening here in your own local church, here at PCBC? Are you committed, and are you giving your heart, your energy, your time, your resources, your finances maybe?

Are you giving yourselves to this? Are you committed to the relationships here? Are you seeing this as something that's worthy, more worthy than your, if it's trying to build your own kingdom, building your own house maybe?

Whose house are you building? That's a question for us to all think about. Whose house are we building? Our house? Because our house, at the end of the day, is going to just rust, it's going to fall down.

[39 : 28] I can tell you, I'm a structural engineer, buildings are designed to last 50 years. Sometimes they last a little bit longer, but they definitely won't last the test of eternity. But I tell you, there is one house that will last the test of eternity, and that's God's house.

There's one house that is secure, that if you're in that house, you'll never have to be anxious, ever. That's God's house. Now, sometimes, it's easy for us to look at the church and feel unimpressed, right?

We look at church and go, ah, it's not that impressive, especially in our current culture. It's unpopular to be a Christian, it's unpopular to be so excited about church, when it's much easier to be excited about other things, right?

Other pursuits in life. The world throws all kinds of glittery things to draw away our attention. But do you realize this is the most precious thing on earth?

This is the thing that God is committed to. This is what's most precious to God. See, it takes eyes of faith to recognize that what is unimpressive, what is foolish, and maybe look stupid and weak and dumb and lame, this is what is precious in God's eyes.

[40 : 37] This is what is most powerful, what will last forever. the church which Christ has bled and poured out His life for. And so I want to challenge you to give yourself to building up God's house.

Give yourselves, devote yourselves, and most practically just to commit to be part of this community, to realize that, yes, God dwells in you, personally, as your body is the living temple of God, but also collectively we are the temple.

Experience that reality every week. And lastly, if we are building God's temple, let's just remind ourselves we don't have to build anxiously. I know a lot of us, a lot of you, might be heading out onto youth camp and maybe also a lot of other times of the year.

Things get busy at church, right? And sometimes you feel like you're serving a lot. Sometimes you feel like it's hard yakka. It really is. And then sometimes it's like, oh, hard yakka, but little reward.

Because you're not seeing change, you're not seeing fruit. But if I can encourage you, one thing is that if there's one thing you can bank on, if there's one investment that will never fail you, it's this investment.

[41 : 53] It might not be a fruit in the short run, but it will be a fruit in the long run. Jesus says, this is the mustard seed that grows into the biggest tree.

This is the house that you can depend that God is committed to. It's not unless God builds the church. No, He will build the church. And so what you give to this, it will not be in vain.

So you can rest that night knowing, hey, it's not all dependent on you and how well you do. Yes, give it your best, but you can trust God with the rest. Now, let's pray. Father God, we are so privileged to be invited in by your son Jesus to be part of your house, part of your household, to know that you as our king, to know you as our father.

We thank you that we have security in you. We thank you that we don't have to be anxious for anything, for you give us all things. And most importantly, you've given us your son, the greatest gift of all.

And so we pray that Lord, as we relish in the great gift you have given us, help us to relish in who we are in Jesus, that we are precious to you as sons and we are precious to you as your house.

[43 : 14] And would you help us, Lord, to live our lives in that reality, to commit our lives and our energies to love and serve you, to build up your kingdom and your church to throw ourselves at the family business.

Thank you. We pray all this in the name of Jesus. Amen.