

What does it take to build "a house"?

1. s.o. to marry
2. Income
3. House/dwelling
4. Children

All four of these were problematic for me, but all were resolved with God's promises and providence.

Big Ideas

He is not suggesting that we shouldn't work and watch to show we have great faith. This is rather a divine partnership with God. We work and He works. "My Father is working ... and I am working." John 5:17

People with great abundance (like Solomon - and Americans today) are often concerned with purpose. But their lack of it can lead to all kinds of problems. Looking for purpose "in all the wrong places."

God is the true:

1. Builder of the house
2. Keeper of the city
3. Provider for the laborer
4. Multiplier of the family

(Keil & Delitsch) The unifying theme: the uselessness of all human effort which does not rely on the will, power, and goodness of the Lord.

Four aspects of human life are presented:

1. Social
2. Civic
3. Business
4. Domestic

A song of ascents, of Solomon

He Gives to His Beloved

Psalm 127

Vanity of vanities

You can work as hard as you want on this, but ultimately it's in God's hands.

You can be busy but not be productive or blessed.

Can we affect whether God also builds, protects, and maintains the issues of our lives? The rest of the Bible is about this subject! For starters: priority, obedience, and prayer.

In vain - to no end, pointless, dead end street, worthless, doomed to failure, waste of effort, empty, won't get the desired results, a fool's errand.

Why? It's bigger than your ability to accomplish and control. It's ultimate success is not determined by human effort (as necessary as that is) but by divine grace.

Everyone deals with the dilemma of their limits regardless of what their creed is. All people seek to influence what is beyond their control. Christians call out to God, but others turn to idolatry, the occult, their investments, or science and study.

1. **If you are single** - determine to put God first and make this a spiritual experience from beginning to end.

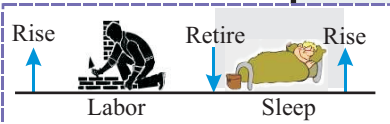
Replace fear with faith

2. **If you are married with kids** - it's a lot of work, but don't let busyness rob you of you cornerstone. Apply Deut. 6 **Put God first.**

3. **If you have been "successful"** in your marriage and family - **Give God the glory**

4. **If it's not going well** with your family - **Believe God can turn things around.**

By partnering with us in our labors



God has given us limits as an opportunity to trust Him.

Looks like a change of subject. But it is perhaps the main point.

By giving to us children and a legacy

To build and maintain a family you must do more than build and maintain a family. You must build and maintain a walk with God as an individual and as a family.

Not ashamed - Because even though you are old and gray, you've got these big strapping sons standing behind you ready to beat the snot out of them if your enemies treat you rudely.

There are many people that think, "I don't really need His blessing, and I'm not worried about His curse. I can do it all by myself."

Unless the LORD builds the house, they labor in vain who build it; Unless the LORD guards the city, the watchman keeps awake in vain. It is vain for you to rise up early, to retire late, to eat the bread of painful labors; for He gives to His beloved even in his sleep.

Behold, children are a gift of the LORD; the fruit of the womb is a reward. Like arrows in the hand of a warrior, so are the children of one's youth. How blessed is the man whose quiver is full of them;

They shall not be ashamed, when they speak with their enemies in the gate.

Is there a difference in how children are viewed today? In Bible times society was agrarian, requiring much manual labor. With more children you could accomplish more. They were also there to protect and take care of in your old age. They assured the the

continuance of your family line. No children = no future! The writer says that children are:

1. A gift, not a payment
2. An asset, not a liability
3. An honor, not a disgrace

BUILDS	GUARDS	LABORS
Construct	Conserve	Cultivate
Start	Secure	Service
Creation	Preservation	Consolidation
Establish	Protect	Maintain

Unlike his first three points, he does not say, "unless the Lord gives you children, you have them in vain." In the first three we can run ahead and make a show of accomplishment. But with bearing children, if God doesn't do it, it doesn't happen at all.

LABOR

FRUIT

