

**St. Luke Ev. Lutheran Church
Sermon by Pastor Anthony E.
Schultz
Pentecost 18 October 8, 2017
Psalm 127 EHV.**



Heading

A song of the ascents. By Solomon.

The LORD Builds the House

If the LORD does not build the house,

It is useless for the builders to work hard over it.

If the LORD does not watch over the city,

It is useless for the watchman to stand guard.

It is useless for you to get up early and to work late,

Worrying about bread to eat,

Because God grants sleep to the one he loves.

Indeed, children are a heritage from the LORD.

The fruit of the womb is a reward from him.

Sons born during one's youth are like arrows

In the hand of a warrior.

How blessed is the man whose quiver is full of them.

They will not be put to shame

When they dispute with enemies at the city gate.

People of God-rescued from the flaming lake of fire in Hell by the innocent blood of the very Lamb of God:

Tumbleweed tiny house RVs are for sale on the Internet! I think they are really what? Are you supposed to say, Cool! Or Hot! Or the incredibly overused Awesome! Do you call them Bad! When what you really mean wonderful? I really like these tiny houses. They are about the size of the college and seminary rooms I lived in for so many years. They are incredibly efficient! No space is wasted! There is a place to sit and work on your laptop, your I-pad – your smart phone that is smart enough to do anything all your other stuff used to do. You can have a huge flat screen. You have a place to make meals – a place to chop up fresh fruits and

vegetables – sustainable foods! You have a washroom with a shower that sprays water everywhere! There is a safe warm dry place to sleep with one of those special memory foam mattresses – that you can make go up and down every little bit! And what more do you need?! 20’ or 26’ long – with room for 3 people to sleep – for \$63,000 to \$73,000 – you can have it delivered anywhere you want! Today God’s Word reminds us – it isn’t the shape or the size of the building we live in that counts---it’s what happens inside those walls that matters! Today Psalm 127 reminds us:

The LORD Alone Makes Houses Homes!

- I. The LORD alone keeps us safe
- II. The LORD alone makes us prosper

The part of God’s Word we are concentrating on today is Psalm 127. Psalms – the Old Testament hymnal is full of confession, praise and instruction! Context is always important – context – what’s going on around Psalm 127? What is Psalm 126 about? Psalm 126 – the return of the captives – like the people who came back from Babylon after how many years? 70 years of captivity. Imagine going off into captivity in far away Babylon. If you were 20 years old when you walked to Babylon – you could be 90 years old – when King Cyrus sent you home. Could you walk a thousand miles? They didn’t have walkers back then! Would you tell your family – “leave me behind – I’m way too old. Go without me!” Or would you say, “I’m going home! I’m going home – back to Jerusalem – back to the land the Great I AM promised to Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Judah! I’m going back to the place some 6 miles north – like Watertown to Johnson Creek – if Creek was Bethlehem – where the Savior is going to be born. Take me home. I will die trying – die on the way – before I will give up on the Gospel promises of God!” Psalm 126 **When the LORD restored the captives to Zion, we were like dreamers. Then our mouths were filled with laughter, and our tongues with shouts of joy. Then they said among the nations, “The LORD has done great things for them.” The LORD has done great things for us. We are glad. Restore our fortunes, O LORD, like the dry gulches of the Negev. Those who sow with weeping will reap with joyful shouts. The one who walks along weeping, carrying a bag of seed to sow, will come back again with joyful shouts, carrying his**

sheaves. Trust in the powerful Gospel promises of God! His Gospel promises will never fail you!

King Solomon was inspired, led and guided and directed to write the exact words of Psalm 127. Can you imagine what it must have been like to be King Solomon? Your Dad was King David. The David of David and Goliath! The David of David and Bathsheba. The David who saw to the murder of Uriah and the denial of sin for the better part of a year – where the moisture inside his body and soul dried up like in the heat of summer! The David of David and his rebellious son Absalom. David who wrote the 23rd Psalm. More times than I can count – including the last two Wednesday nights – well into the night – beside the bed of someone the doctors thought was going to go home to heaven that night – I said in the KJV – **The LORD is my Shepherd I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures. He leadeth me beside the still waters. He restoreth my soul. He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake. Yea though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death I will fear no evil for thou art with me. Thy rod and thy staff they comfort me...and so? The valley of the shadow of death.** The NIV “*darkest place*” isn’t quite the same – and so? That was David – and then his son Solomon became King. Solomon who when he was granted a blessing from his Heavenly Father did not – *did not* ask for a long life, for good health, for great wealth, for the death of his enemies. Solomon asked for wisdom – literally a ♥ with ears! Wisdom to judge and lead God’s people faithfully! So the LORD gave Solomon wisdom and all the other blessings he didn’t ask for, too!

If the LORD does not build the house, it is useless for the builders to work hard over it. If the LORD does not watch over the city, it is useless for the watchman to stand guard. The *metaphor* – is one that Jesus used. Remember Jesus’ sermon on the grassy hillside on the north end of the Sea of Galilee? Pastor Kutz pointed to it last Sunday – when he was talking about our unconditional surrender to our Heavenly Father. At the end of the Sermon to literally thousands of people Jesus said, **“Everyone who hears these words of mine and does them will be like a wise man who built his house on bedrock. The rain came down, the rivers rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house. But it did not fall, because it was founded on bedrock. Everyone who hears these words of**

mine but does not do them will be like a foolish man who built his house on sand. The rain came down, the rivers rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell – it was completely destroyed. When Jesus finished speaking these words, the crowds were amazed at his teaching, because he taught them as one who had authority, and not like their experts in the law. Matthew 7:24-29 EHV. We are helpless on our own. We stumble and fall again and again. We make the most basic and fundamental mistakes. Jesus died on the cross for all the times we took the easy way out – building on shifting sand. Jesus died and rose again to forgive us. And Jesus died and rose again to make us strong to do what needs to be done. When the LORD blesses our efforts wonderful things will happen! Our houses will be homes – safe, warm, bright from Jesus’ forgiving love! Our houses will be homes – where a husband will love his wife like Christ loved the Church and gave himself up for her. Homes – where there is not the abuse of alcohol. Not drinking beers or Old Fashioned~s or Martinis or wine – and then come the coarse and crude and even blasphemous words. Not the beers or the wine – and then comes the “hugs and kisses” with people that you aren’t married too. Or the beers and then comes the angry frustrated words and the pushing and shoving and slapping and punching the people we promised to love under all circumstances. Read your Bible – come to church – say your prayers and help your neighbor and your faith will grow stronger and stronger as you live life connected to Jesus!

It is useless for you to get up early and to work late, worrying about bread to eat, because God grants sleep to the one he loves. There are few things more fundamental than the Lord’s Prayer. **Our Father in Heaven.** That’s who we are talking to – Luther said, “**with these words God tenderly invites us to believe that he is our true Father and that we are his true children, so that we may pray to him as boldly and confidently as dear children ask their dear father.** Luther’s Catechism 2017. Remember the 4th petition – the 4th request? **Give us today our daily bread. What does this mean? God surely gives daily bread without our asking, even to all the wicked, but we pray in this petition that he would lead us to realize this and to receive our daily bread with thanksgiving. What, then is meant by daily bread? Daily bread includes everything that we need for our bodily welfare, such as food and drink, clothing and**

shoes, house and home, land and cattle, money and goods, a godly spouse, godly children, godly workers, godly and faithful leaders, good government, good weather, peace and order, health, a good name, good friends, faithful neighbors, and the like! That's from our new catechism—written by Mrs. Schumacher's husband—Pastor Schumacher—my friend and President John Braun from Trinity—also my friend! Daily bread is all kinds of blessings from Jesus so we don't need to worry about them!

It is useless for you to get up early and to work late, worrying about bread to eat, because God grants sleep to the one he loves. Sleep— a good night's sleep—a power nap—the ability to sleep on an airplane—or a train—or in the back seat of the family SUV are all gifts from Jesus. How old are you—when you learn how to fold your pudgy little fingers and pray: *“Now I lay me down to sleep—I pray the Lord my soul to keep. Old school—if I should die before I wake I pray the Lord my soul to take. And this I ask for Jesus' sake.* I have literally knelt beside a sick bed/death bed and prayed that prayer. And only when the time is perfect—does Jesus send his holy angels to open their arms—to take us safely home to Heaven! It is a sweet blessing from Jesus when you can go to sleep unafraid—even far from home—because Jesus is watching over you. We used to have a sign in Melissa's room that said, **“Before you go to sleep tonight—give all your troubles and concerns to Jesus. He's going to be up all night anyway!”** And it's true! It's very *very* true!

Indeed, children are a heritage from the LORD. The fruit of the womb is a reward from him. Sons born during one's youth are like arrows in the hand of a warrior. How blessed is the man whose quiver is full of them. They will not be put to shame when they dispute with enemies at the city gate. Children— a priceless gift from your Heavenly Father. To have a Grandfather Edward Schultz—I will meet for the first time in Heaven. I have literally seen about 3 photographs of my Grandfather Edward Schultz who went to Heaven when he was only 42 years old. You can have children and grandchildren and great-grandchildren to carry on his name! You can have twins—even after all kinds of sophisticated tests show only one. You can have babies--such good news you can tell complete strangers at the fast food counter—the workers—fellow customers and people in the parking lot! Twins—what could be more wonderful than that! A grand daughter who told her mom

the other day she would like to marry someone just like Grandpa! What could be more wonderful than that? Sometimes Jesus gives us children – and suddenly and unexpectedly Jesus brings them home to Heaven! Only Jesus can decide that! Love your children. Do not neglect them – which is perhaps the most painful abuse of all – neglect! Love them! That means bringing them to Church – while they are still in your tummy. Bring them to be baptized. Bring them to Church to receive the blessing – the benediction – the powerful Gospel promise of Jesus’ forgiving love. Bring them to Church – then Sunday School – then Trinity St. Luke’s Lutheran Grade School – Lakeside or Luther Prep – and then Martin Luther College or Wisconsin Lutheran College – and then – maybe – even the Seminary? Show them by your most powerful example – to love Jesus who always loves us first and loves us best! Teach your children to say, “Thank you, Jesus!” – now and in Heaven. Amen!

To God alone all glory!

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Rev. Anthony E. Schmitt", is centered within a light blue rectangular box.