

## Let the Lord Build it in 2026 – Psalm 127

I do love the fresh start of a new year even though there's nothing necessarily special about the calendar turning over. Here at WBC, I try to spend 1 Sunday a year just thinking about the New Year. Typically, I'll look forward and try to encourage you and motivate you as you approach the next 365 days.

This year I'm more looking back on something that God pressed into my life in a very real way in 2025 that I hope will carry into the next year and further. If you were at the Christmas Eve service, I talked for a few minutes that night about the experience of waiting and how waiting challenges our desire to be in control and helps us learn to trust the God who is in control. I talked about that because it's a real struggle in my life.

I've always recognized that I have a deep desire for comfort in my life and that desire often turns into an idol. Well, connected to the desire for comfort is the desire for control and the Lord has graciously forced me to deal with it this past year. The desire for control kept coming up through a struggle with anxiety and some OCD tendencies in my life. The Psalm I want to study this morning has been very meaningful for me in battling the idol of control.

This Psalm helped direct me to some truths about God that I desperately needed to hear and it did it in a way that emotionally connected to me and altered my perspective and desires. It helped me to genuinely rest in God's care and trust His character. I've read this Psalm many times before, but something unique happened this time. And here's what I think happened and this may be helpful for you in your own growth and battle against sin.

For me there was a very real struggle going on regarding control. I recognized the struggle and was actively trying to fight it with truth, but in a particular moment another believer turned my attention to this text and applied God's Word to my real-life struggle and God used it to shape and form me.

So, the elements involved were four; I had a struggle; by God's grace I admitted the struggle; another believer spoke into my life; and used a specific truth from Scripture to address my struggle. This is ministry and this is the process of

sanctification! Because of the impact of this passage on my life I wanted to share it with you this morning. In Psalm 127 we will see **2 Actions to Let God Build in Your Life in 2026.**

### **1. Surrender My Plans to God (vv. 1-2a)**

Let's read this first section again. The basic idea of this is straight forward, but it may not be something we often think about. There are two general categories of human activity mentioned here, building and maintaining or protecting what you already have. One author said these two are creating and conserving.

Humans are always participating in these two activities, and yet, the Psalmist says that unless the Lord is doing the work, our creating and conserving are in vain.

But what is the typical human response when our activities are threatened or could possibly be all for nothing? What do you do when you think you may end up failing to build a house or failing to properly guard a city? Look at verse 2.

You double down. You work even harder. You get up early. You go to bed late. Maybe you do both, but you put the work in. You can't count on anybody but yourself. But the Psalmist says that you ultimately don't have the power and control to determine the outcome you want. Instead, you end up eating the bread of anxious toil.

Now, I told you the general logic of this makes sense and it's probably already started to pry into your life and the way you think a bit. But there's a very important layer to this that we have missed if we only read this like we have so far.

If you go back to the very beginning of the Psalm, you have what's called a superscription that is actually a part of the Hebrew text. This one tells us who wrote the Psalm and it was Solomon. Who was Solomon? Of course, Solomon was David's Son, and I think he had bigger things in mind than simply building a house to dwell in. What did God promise to David in the Davidic Covenant? Listen to 2 Samuel 7:11-12.

God promises to build David a house, which means a dynasty and a kingdom and Solomon was the first son in that line. This Psalm is Solomon's meditation on

God's plan of redemption and His kingdom purposes. God made this promise to David and God Himself would ensure its fulfillment and Solomon's role was to trust the Lord to do His work. But also notice the second part of verse 1.

It's hard to see this in English, but the word translated "watches" and "watchman" is the same word used in Genesis 2:15 that is translated "keep." God put Adam in the garden and told him to guard, watch, or keep the garden. This was Adam's responsibility, but of course, he failed. This is what happens when we take matters into our own hands as human beings. Rather than living by God's Word and promises, Adam became his own authority and the results were tragic.

You can see the results in verse 2. A life spent pursuing my own plans and working myself to death without resting and relying on God means I will eat the bread of anxious toil. There will be bread to eat, but it will come with anxiety and toil. This word "toil" again takes us back to the early chapters of Genesis and to verses 16-19.

The tragic results of sin in Genesis mean that humans will strive to fulfill their own plans and the results will be anxious toil for one, and notice the other result mentioned multiple times in these verses. What word is used repeatedly? It's the word "vain". Again, keep in mind who wrote this Psalm? Solomon and what other book did he write in the OT? Ecclesiastes.

Listen to Solomon's words in Ecclesiastes 2:18-25.

So, with all of these OT connections in these first two verses of Psalm 127, what is Solomon's point? God has made promises to build and keep and redeem. And yet, as humans we ignore God's promises and Word and seek to do our own thing, just as Adam did in the garden. This results in anxious striving and toil. We keep doing what we've always done.

And this is what I discovered this year in my battle with control. When I lose control and things get hard, I grasp for further control. I stay up late. I get up early. I take matters into my own hands, and I turn to my own wisdom. And my guess is that you do the same thing, just like nearly every human being as done for centuries. So, what is the answer to this vain striving and pursuit of control?

## **2. Stop My Striving because of Grace (vv. 2b – 5)**

Look at the end of verse 2. This is the part that brought tears to my eyes when I first read it after considering my own pursuit of control. “For He gives”.

Solomon knows where all the goodness comes from. God gives by grace to His beloved. Notice that in this particular instance God grants sleep. He gives rest.

Some of you have never struggled to fall asleep at night but think about the dynamics here. If there’s one thing you can’t force by taking control yourself, it’s sleep. If you’ve ever sat up awake and anxious trying to think through the tasks of the day and the different options in front of you and then tried to shut your brain off and fall asleep, it’s a real challenge. And sleep isn’t one of those things you can force or control. Sleep is a gift of God each and every night of your life.

One commentator put it this way: *“This suggests that the Lord gives to his people by his grace what they never could grasp by their labor.”* – Daniel Estes

Not only does God graciously give us what we can never grasp, but He Himself works while we sleep. He never slumbers as Psalm 121 puts it. Listen to the whole Psalm. Sleep is one of those things that you have to let go of your desire for control and just allow it to happen. Solomon’s meditation in this Psalm helps us to develop this perspective in all of life.

Now, it’s very tempting to stop there after verse 2 in this Psalm and if we are honest, verses 3-5 almost seem like a separate Psalm. Let me read them. How in the world does this fit with what we’ve just seen in verses 1-2? Well, if we keep in mind the author, Solomon, and the bigger purposes of God on His mind, verses 3-5 actually make a ton of sense. Solomon is pondering God’s work in building the Davidic house by His grace and bringing redemption to his people. If you are Solomon and you are looking for God to continue the Davidic line, what is the primary means by which God will do that? Through children, specifically sons.

Verse 3 is translated “children” in English but it’s a masculine word and indicates sons. This doesn’t mean daughters aren’t a gift from God, but it does point to the Davidic line of sons coming by God’s promise.

And as God graciously gave these sons to Solomon, what was His purpose? Look at verses 4-5. Notice the language of arrows and a warrior and enemies. I think this takes us back to Genesis 3:15 and the promise that through Eve's line God would crush the head of the serpent. In other words, God's gracious promises to His people would result in the defeat of God's enemies through the Davidic Line.

I think that's the ultimate intention of verses 3-5, but I want you to notice an important word in verse 3. The word "heritage". This word means "lot" or property or land. It's used 50 times in the book of Joshua. Why is that significant? Because Joshua is when God is portioning out the Promised Land to the Israelites. Each tribe and family receives an allotment. Each allotment was different. None were the same. Some were in the hills, some on plains, some by streams, and some near the ocean. But each received a "lot" from the Lord and was given the gift and chance to cultivate that "lot".

I think this is the driving force behind this passage in a lot of ways. If God gives to his people then all that he gives is a "heritage" or "lot" given by His gracious hand. Each "lot" is different and this applies to everything and not just children.

Solomon presents two ways to live to us in this Psalm. We can build and watch and labor with anxious toil and seek control and power and security in our own wisdom. Or, we can relax, and receive our "lot" from God's hand in 2026 as a gift and cultivate that lot, whatever it is, by God's grace. So, what does that mean for you?

*"If human life is indeed a gift, it would be difficult to imagine a more important fact about it. If life is a gift, its gift-ness should shape how you view all of it. Every gift both invites and demands a fitting response. If life is a gift, how should you live it? Not striving, but receiving. If life is a gift, it's already been given. You don't need to take the world by force; someone has already given you your share in it. Not only that, but if life is a gift, then the countless inflows of energy and support and nurture you receive from the world and the people around you are so many streams of gifts. Beneath anything you want and don't have and might strive for lies life itself, given before you could ask for it or strive for it or deserve it or achieve it or do anything else for it...If life is a gift, then life is a grace and a*

*miracle. Grace because you didn't deserve it; miracle because you can't explain it.  
What you can and must do is receive it."* – Bobby Jamieson