

2017: Week 27

Sunday, July 2nd 2017

"Origins of Success– The Blessing of God"

Psalm 127:1

"Unless the LORD builds the house, they labor in vain who build it; Unless the LORD guards the city, the watchmen keeps awake in vain." (NASB)¹

This past Sunday John walked us through **Psalm 127**, reminding us that the true origin of success rests in the blessing of the Lord. As we recently celebrated the 4th of July, it is an appropriate time to reflect upon the Lord's blessings over our nation and thank Him for the various freedoms we possess. It is also an appropriate opportunity to observe the various successes of our nation throughout the years. Many have tried to pinpoint why the United States of America has become such a wealthy and powerful nation. Is its success due to the rich natural resources within the land? Or maybe the geographical isolation of North America providing opportunities for unhindered growth? Or perhaps the societal ideals of liberty and a government rooted in democracy? All of these factors have undoubtedly contributed towards the success and prosperity of America. However, John directed our attention towards **Psalm 127** as a reminder of the true origins of American exceptionalism: the **blessing of God**. Our nation was founded by numerous individuals who acknowledged a dependency upon the Lord. Seeking to build a nation upon several Biblical principles these early colonists publicly declared their need for the Lord to bless their efforts. Although God is a debtor to no man, He often chooses to honor those who honor Him. In the case of why God chooses to bless an individual, the focus should not be upon the worthiness of the one being blessed but rather upon the gracious God who chooses to bless. Praise the Lord for His unmerited favor upon our nation, and may He continue to bless America.

1. "THE TEXT"

READ Psalm 127

- The Psalmist (Solomon) states that it is "vain to rise up early" and "to retire late" (i.e. spending quite a bit of time working). Is Solomon saying that hard work and diligence is pointless?
- Why might Solomon be contrasting the hard work of man with the gracious giving demonstrated by God ("For He gives to His beloved even in his sleep" **v.2**)?
- In **v.3** Solomon states that "children are a gift from the LORD." In what ways can children be a blessing to their parents?

2. "YOU"

- When Solomon stated that the Lord "gives to His beloved even in his sleep" he is reinforcing the idea that God can bless us independent of our own efforts. God can and often blesses us regardless of our efforts. Can you think of a time when the Lord blessed you with something that had absolutely nothing to do with your "worthiness" of being rewarded?
- What goals are you pursuing on your own that you should be presenting before the Lord and upon which you should be seeking His blessing?
- Does our current society reflect agreement with the Psalmist's idea that children are a "gift" from the Lord. Why or why not?
- As a child to your parents, how have you been a blessing to them and to your family?

3. "REMEMBER"

- **James 1:17** ¹⁷ Every good thing given and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shifting shadow."

FAMILY PRAYER: Dear Lord, thank You for the grace You have shown upon me, and thank You for the grace You have shown upon our nation. May You show mercy and grace upon America, and may we honor You with our choices. Amen

¹ All Scripture notations taken from the **New American Standard Bible (NASB)** unless otherwise noted.