

Dependent on the Lord

“Except the LORD build the house, they labour in vain that build it: except the LORD keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain.”

Psalm 127:1

Introduction:

1. We have recently studied Paul’s high motivation created by the love of Christ and coming judgment.
2. We have recently seen some disturbing losses experienced by some other ministers we once esteemed.
3. We have recently studied that nothing is too hard for the Lord, but now we want to learn the opposite; for without Him we can do nothing, therefore it is absolutely imperative we remain dependent on Him.
4. Your efforts, in any field of endeavor, are worthless without the glorious grace and blessing of the Lord.
5. Your efforts, in any field of endeavor, can be blessed and multiplied abundantly by His faithful mercy.
6. The secret to success in the Christian life and anything else is to get down, become a fool, become small, confess your inability, admit your total ignorance, and own your sinfulness. He will lift you up!

I. Our DEPENDENCY

- A. Our text from **Psalm 127:1-2** is glorious wisdom given from David to his son Solomon.
 1. The verse has two clauses – both teaching the same lesson: dependency on God.
 2. Both clauses are *exceptions*, teaching the general rule of human incompetence.
 3. Laborers and watchmen, both very diligent, can do nothing without His blessing.
 4. Solomon said, “In all labour there is profit” (Pr 14:23); but it is only in the Lord.
 5. The “house” and “city” might be anything you wish it to be. These are figures.
 6. Since written for Solomon, there was a very specific house and city considered.
 7. But any goal or endeavor should be viewed equally as dependent on the Lord.
- B. Our text from **Zechariah 4:1-10** is encouragement to Zerubbabel to build the temple.
 1. The obstacles in Jerusalem were great, as you heard recently about Nehemiah.
 2. His problems are described as a great mountain, which he could mock (4:7).
 3. But leveling the mountain would be by Spirit power, not human might (4:6).
 4. And the whole accomplishment must be ascribed to the grace of God (4:7).
 5. The hands of Zerubbabel were definitely involved and would be involved (4:9).
 6. And the completion of the whole project would be by the Lord of hosts (4:9).
 7. So there is no place to despise the day of small things in such a case (4:10).
 8. His building work would be blessed and furthered by God’s spirits (4:10).
 9. The eyes of the Lord run to and fro in the earth for the righteous (II Chron 16:9).
 10. Observe that there is no human intervention from olive tree to burning lamps.
- C. Our text from **John 15:1-5** was a final exhortation from Jesus Christ to His disciples.
 1. We are as dependent on the Lord for vitality and fruit as a branch is on its vine.
 2. A branch severed from its vine dries up quickly into tinder material for a fire.
 3. Grace, wisdom, and strength we need to bear fruit come from Jesus our Vine.
 4. There are many things you can do, but they will not be spiritual fruitbearing.
 - a. You can show moral reform, which Ahab did temporarily (I Kgs 21:29).
 - b. You can show public conformity, which Israel did falsely (Ezek 33:31).
 - c. You can show verbal agreement, which proves nothing (I John 2:4,19).
 - d. You can profess godliness, and still be only a reprobate (Titus 1:16).
 - e. You can have a form of religion, and be without its power (II Tim 3:5).
 - f. You can learn doctrine, but be no better than the devils (James 2:19).

5. Abiding in Jesus Christ is not that difficult, complicated, or mysterious.
 - a. The test is not knowing how to do it, but actually doing it consistently!
 - b. We must retain His words in our hearts by faith and affection (15:7).
 - c. We must keep His commandments, as He obeyed His Father (15:10).
 - d. We must walk in the light of holiness and fellowship with God (I Jn 1:7).
 - e. We must and live walk as Jesus walked, doing the will of God (I Jn 2:6).
 - f. We must put away sin and live free from sin to abide in Him (I Jn 3:6).
 - g. We must live by faith and holiness (Ja 4:6-10; Heb 4:14-16; Ep 3:14-19).
- D. Moses would not go without the Lord: he knew how much he needed Him (Ex 33:15).
- E. Israel tried to fight the Amalekites without the LORD, but lost badly (Num 14:36-45).
- F. How can a couple insignificant enemies chase ten thousand Israelites (Deut 32:28-30)?
- G. The little city of Ai defeated Israel's first attempt for it, without the Lord (Josh 7:12).
- H. Samson looked and felt the same, but didn't know the Lord was gone (Judges 16:20).
- I. Saul is one of the most pitiful stories in all the Bible (I Samuel 16:14; 18:12; 28:15).
- J. When the Lord left David, Hezekiah, and Peter, horrible things happened very quickly.
- K. Unless the Lord had been on our side, we may say, we had been crushed (Ps 124:1-2).
- L. Except the Lord had left us a very small remnant, we had been like Sodom (Isaiah 1:9).
- M. Even the blind man knew that a man can do nothing without God's power (John 9:33).
- N. The apostles' enemies had to admit they could not fight God in a matter (Acts 5:38-39).
- O. Whatever you have, you got it from the Lord as a gift; so stop your glorying (I Cor 4:7).
- P. Without the Lord's Spirit, or candlestick, a church is dead (Revelation 2:5; Prov 21:16).

II. Our SUFFICIENCY

- A. We can do all things through Him strengthening us, but we must be in Him (Phil 4:13).
- B. It didn't matter to Paul who the laborers might be, God gave the increase (I Cor 3:5-7).
- C. Paul knew exactly where his sufficiency was – not in himself – but in God (II Cor 13:5).
- D. The Lord looks to show Himself strong for those with pure hearts (II Chron 16:9; 15:2).
- E. When Jesus prays for us, we shall be delivered, no matter the enemy (Luke 22:31-32).
- F. His grace is sufficient, more than sufficient; so that we should glory in our weakness, infirmity, and difficulties; for only then can He reveal His power on us (II Cor 12:7-10).
- G. Are you a poor talker? Consider Moses (Ex 4:12-16) and Jeremiah (Jer 1:6-10).

III. Our RESPONSE

- A. We must always admit and confess anything we do is by His great grace (I Cor 15:10).
- B. For Paul's sufficiency, and our sufficiency, is by God's power (II Cor 13:5 cp Gal 2:8).
- C. David's thankfulness at Solomon's coronation is glorious and helpful (I Chr 29:10-22).

IV. Our DUTY

- A. In building the house and keeping the city, we have standards we must keep (Ps 127:1).
 1. We must be building the right house – it must be an object approved by God.
 2. We must build with the right methods – it must be pursued according to God.
 3. We must build with the right spirit, which is not our own lusts (James 4:3).
 4. We must build with the right goal, which is the glory of God (I Cor 10:31).
 5. We must build with the right effort, which is only reasonable (Psalm 127:2).
 6. We must build with the right perspective, which is no glory for us (Luke 17:10).
 7. We must build with the right priorities, which is with a whole heart (Jer 29:13).
 8. We must build with the right response, which is thanksgiving (I Chr 29:10-22).

- B. Our confidence must in God Himself, as the ark and temple did not help Israel (I Sam 4:1-11; Jer 7:8-10); so we cannot put our trust in the Bible, the doctrine, or the church.
- C. Self-examination is essential for us to be constantly abiding in Him with His blessing.
- D. We must “run scared” in order to fully please the Lord (Phil 3:8-14; Hebrews 12:1-4).
- E. We must confess our sins (Pro 28:13; Psalm 66:18); sins shorten His arm (Is 59:21-22).
- F. We cannot be confident ourselves (I Cor 10:12), or we face an imminent and great fall
- G. We cannot be self-righteousness, or the witnessing Spirit will desert us (Luke 18:9-14).
- H. Prayer is more important than production, no matter what your flesh, the world, or Satan tells you (prayer exceeds production as creation exceeds your resume). Believe it!
- I. Prayer is more important than planning, tools, materials, cost, labor, or anything else.
- J. At His throne there is grace to help in time of need, but we must go there (Heb 4:14-16).
- K. He will be with us, as long as we are with Him; so we must go (II Chr 15:2; Jas 4:6-10).
- L. There may be dependent situations where only prayer and fasting work (Matt 17:21).

Conclusion:

1. Whatever your house – marriage, family, church, job, or soul – you can do nothing without Him.
2. Don’t despise the day of small things – your small and insignificant abilities – but instead trust Him.
3. Without Him you can do nothing! So turn and run to the Lord Jesus Christ today in every way possible!