Not Yet Preached by Me Dr. Rick Griffith

2013 Single Message

NLT 30 Minutes

**Family Investments**

***Psalm 127***

**Topic:** Family

**Subject:**

**Complement:**

**Purpose:** The listeners will

**Meditation:**

**Reading:**

**Song:**

# Introduction

**Psalm 127 Sermon Outline**

Preaching Relevantly on a Foundation of Solid Exegesis

**Challenges of the Psalm**

Psalm 127 presents several challenges for the preacher:

A. Structure: How are verses 1-2 related to verses 3-5? At first they seem to be two separate psalms (some scholars consider them so). The first section shows the folly of strenuous efforts without resting in God’s care, but then the subject shifts to the value of children. How can both points fit under a central idea? Getting both of these in a M.I. is a challenge.

B. Imperatives: The psalm has no commands and only speaks of warnings (1-2) and blessings (3-5). Is the implied response supposed to be: *invest yourself* in God’s projects (Litfin), *involve/fear God* in raising your family, *trust in /seek* God for success/blessing, or *respond* to the providence of God?

C. Exegetical Options: Key exegetical decisions will affect the main idea and the development:

1. Does the “house” of verse 1 mean Solomon’s temple, David’s dynasty, no particular dwelling (any house), or is it a figure for the family? The last two seem to have the most merit in my eyes.

2. Should verse 2b read “he grants sleep to those he loves” (NIV) or “He gives to His beloved even in his sleep” (NASB)? In other words, is the idea that one who trusts self can’t sleep or is it that God blesses those who trust Him even while they sleep?

3. Who is the “beloved” (v. 2b)? Is this anyone God loves or specifically Solomon?

4. What is the significance of sons being like arrows (v. 4)? Does this connote defending parents (my view), serving God where parents have never been (Litfin), or being special and unique since arrowheads were engraved with the archer’s name (Swindoll)?

5. Does the contending with enemies (v. 5b) refer to battle or a legal dispute? Is the idea confidence when opposed (Swindoll) or the defense and security for parents that children provide them in their old age (my view)? And what is the significance of the gate?

**Options in Outlining**

How the outline will turn out depends largely on what one determines as the subject.

If the subject is “how we spend our lives,” the outline could look like this

(Duane Litfin, “Riding the Winds of God,” in *Biblical Sermons,* ed. Haddon Robinson, 92-94, 106):

Subject: How are you are spending your life? (Have you evaluated this?)

I. The value of our life’s work is only as good as the cause for which it is expended (1-2).

II. We can invest our lives for eternity by spending them on God’s projects (M.I.)

Please read Litfin’s whole sermon above to see a masterful job of inductive, interesting preaching. Unfortunately, Litfin doesn’t include “sons/children” in his MP or MI and his statements can be shortened for clarity. I prefer to simplify Litfin’s main points in the following way:

Subject: How can you make your life count?

I. Invest your life in the right causes (1-2).

II. Children are one of the best investments in life (3-4).

If the subject relates to both security and the family, an outline might look like this:

Subject: How should you balance career and family?

I. Realize that pursuits without God’s blessing can’t provide security for your family (1-2).

II. God gives us security through our children (3-5).

Some may see a contrast in the psalm at the end of verse 2 as the major break:

Subject: Where ultimately is your security?

I. Don’t try to find security in a house, guard system, or a workaholic lifestyle (1-2a).

II. Trusting God for security leads to genuine rest and the blessing of a family (2b-5).

Substituting “security” with “trust” yields a simpler outline:

Subject: In whom or in what do you place your trust?

I. Only God can guarantee success (1-2).

II. Only God can bless you with children (3-5).

Main Idea: Look to God alone for success, children, or any other blessing.

This next outline shifts the focus from man to God (but it misses the vanity aspect of verses 1-2):

Subject: How does God bless us? (in contrast to how people think He does)

I. God blesses us with security (1-2)—in shelter, protection from enemies and provision of food.

II. God blesses us with children (3-5).

Another problem with the above is that it doesn’t tell us what we should do. Try this:

Subject: How should we respond to God’s blessings?

I. God blesses us with security, so don’t be a workaholic (1-2).

II. God blesses us with children, so give them priority (3-5).

Continuing with a subject of “blessing” note this outline:

Subject: How can you experience God’s richest blessings?

I. Seek God to experience His blessing in what you do (1-2).

II. Recognize God’s blessing in giving you children (3-5).

The possibilities are endless. One student says Psalm 127 shows we need God in our working (1-2) and our family life (3-5). Swindoll claims it depicts stages of family development from inception (1-2) to expansion (3-5). So the question is, “Which of these outlines is the best—or are they all legitimate?” The answer: “I don’t know.” Seriously. No doubt, one of them is the closest to authorial intent, but I need to study more to determine this. Perhaps we can ask Solomon himself when we meet him in heaven, but until then, let’s seek to genuinely preach the text, always looking to the Lord for exegetical and homiletical insight.

# Preliminary Questions

**Verses Questions**

# Context: What did the author record just prior to this passage?

# Purpose: Why is this passage in the Bible?

# Background: What historical context helps us understand this passage?

# Questions

# Tentative Subject/Complement Statements

Text

# Possible Illustrations

### Text

# Possible Applications

### Text

**Title**

***Passage***

**Exegetical Outline (Steps 2-3)**

# *Exegetical Idea*:

# I.

# II.

# III.

**Purpose or Desired Listener Response (Step 4)**

The listeners will

**Homiletical Outline** (Cyclical inductive form)

# Introduction

### Interest:

### Need:

### Subject:

### Background:

### Preview:

### Text:

(Transition into MPI here.)

# I.

[Restate MP here.]

(Transition into MPII here.)

# II.

[Restate MP here.]

(Transition into MPIII here.)

# III.

[Restate MP here.]

(Transition into the MI here.)

# Conclusion

### (MI/CPS).

### Main Points

### Exhortation/Application



**Rick Griffith**

18 August 2013

*Message 6 of 15*

**Title**

***Passage***

# Introduction

Subject with a blank for the key word \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ blank answer in hidden text

# I. MP has a blank for the key word \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ answer (verses).

## SP has a blank for the key word \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ answer (verses).

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# II. MP has a blank for the key word \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ answer (verses).

## SP has a blank for the key word \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ answer (verses).

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# Conclusion

### Main Idea has a blank for the key word \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ answer (verses).

### Application question

**Home Group Questions:**

1. Read the passage aloud. Contrast:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Issue** | **Contrast** |
| Text | Text |
| Text | Text |
| Text | Text |
| Text | Text |
| Text | Text |
| Text | Text |
| Text | Text |
| Text | Text |
| Text | Text |

1. Text-based question

Text

Text

Text

Text

1. Application to your own Christian experience

Text

Text