

Unless the LORD Builds the House

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[0:00] All right. Thanks, Ronnie. I don't even know why I'm up here. I could just close in prayer. Amen, brother.! Thanks, Josh W. and Davidson Community Bible Church for having us here. As has been mentioned! My name is Josh and I'm glad to serve you this morning through the word. I'm going to stand here if that's okay. Feels a little far.

We can do that. Do I have permission to do that? Okay. Sounds great. Let's pray before we get in the word. Father in heaven, we just thank you that your mercies are new for us this morning as we're singing about and what we're hearing about from your word here. So, God, help us to listen. Would you give us soft hearts to receive this word from you here and let it take root and bear fruit in our hearts and our lives as we go on? Not just in this week, but our lives in general. And be glorified in this time as we dive in.

In your name. Amen. Yeah, so I usually, I have come here. I've gotten to meet and know some of you.

My wife is in the back there. Emily, you want to just give a wave? There you go. She's walking up, I guess. And we have three kids here. You might have seen them running around. That's our Filipino Mennonite hybrid kids there. And so, if you're wondering what makes them kind of brown, kind of white, that's what it is.

But, yeah, it's great to be here. Serve on staff still at Nippon Bible College, as Brendan mentioned. And I oversee our touring teams here. And so, the last time I was here was with the band about two years ago.

[2:03] And actually, it was Ronnie that was leading the team as well. And I think Lauren was on that team as well. And so, yeah, glad to be back. And at this time, I want to turn your attention to the Word of God in Psalm 127. We just read it.

And so, let me start off with a question for us this morning. And maybe this is something that's been on your mind even this week. But have you ever just woken up and felt like the last day was just nothing?

You worked and finished a job and felt like it was meaningless, useless, right? Maybe it was a job that you were working. Maybe it was house chores.

Maybe you have kids and you don't know what to do with yourself at the end of the day. These are things that we genuinely wrestle with. And this text here brings us to that and wants us to think about the things that we labor in and what the results are.

And so, Psalm 127, right? If you look at the introduction there or, quote, musical direction, so to speak, that's how the Psalms usually start.

[3:21] It says a song or songs of ascent, right? And it's attributed to Solomon. These are songs that Israel, right, as they worked their regular days, as they went up to the temple to sacrifice, right?

That would have been a long pilgrimage. That would have been a long journey for them. These are the songs, specifically Psalm 120, Psalms from Psalm 120 to 134.

These group of Psalms are a collection of psalms and hymns that they would have sung, specifically on the way up to Jerusalem as they ascended the hill, right?

That's why they're called the Ascent Psalms. And these are things that they would have reflected on, the things that they've just labored in. What was it all for? What's the result? What is this going to get us?

And here, a psalm attributed to Solomon addresses this very question. And that's for us this morning. So keep that question in mind as we go through.

[4:23] But the first few points that we see here are illustrations, actually. Likely from the time that Israel would have labored in, right?

So first we see the illustration of building a house. Look at verse 1. Unless the Lord builds the house, those who build it labor in vain.

First points of observation we need to make here are the two characters in action, right? The obvious one, first, is the Lord, right? And the Lord is building. The Lord's a builder here.

And then the second character are those who build. That's not the Lord. Humans, right? So it's the Lord and humans.

But what's the difference? They're both doing the same thing. But what's the difference? Well, if the Lord is not actively building, those humans who build part from the Lord labor in vain, right?

[5:26] The question is, how do you know if your labor is not in vain? If we think of the first time we see this in the scriptures, Genesis 4. Some of you might remember a man named Enoch.

Not the Enoch who walked with God, but Cain's son, right? The bad Enoch. Bad guy Enoch. And that verse, Genesis 4, 16, talks about how this guy, Enoch, went away from the presence of the Lord and settled east of Eden, right?

And this guy built stuff, right? Yet he built stuff away from the presence of the Lord. That's what Genesis 4 is trying to say, right? Enoch, as the first builder, right, in scripture, he built the first building, the first city, right?

He labored and built in vain, okay? That's the first example in scripture of building in vain. Another example of vain labor, this one's more popular. Genesis 11, what's that about?

The Tower of Babel, right? When people start to build a city, that's what it is. A tower, a city, to make their name great, right? Think of our cities today and towns and whatever that's named after someone, right?

[6:40] To remember someone. That originates from Babel. Genesis 11 says, the Lord didn't let them finish, right? The Lord dispersed them from over the face of the earth and they left off from building the city, right?

They started building apart from the Lord and the Lord comes and disperses them. They labored and built in vain, okay? Easy examples in Genesis 4 and 11, right? But even a finished building, think of someone who builds a building in a city, right?

Even after that, that can still be built in vain, right? Think about Jesus' teaching regarding the foolish man who built his house on what? Instead of rock? Sand, yeah.

So think about that. The house was finished. It even stood for a while. It doesn't tell us, right? Think of Matthew 7, right? That's when Jesus talked about this. It stood for a while. That could have stood for however many years, right?

Think of the houses here in town and how long ago they've been built and they're still standing. But the illustration Jesus gives in Matthew 7 is that it stood for a while until the rain fell, the floods came, the winds blew and beat against that house and it fell and great was the fall of it, right?

[7:54] So buildings can be built and finished and stand for a really long time and still be done in vain. Ecclesiastes, right?

We hear about the preacher of Ecclesiastes talking about how he toiled and built cities and built homes and built everything, yet it's meaningless, right?

And Solomon here in Psalm 127 says, as a summary, unless the Lord builds, you labor in vain, right? It's kind of getting depressing here.

Hang with me. He's got a point. The point is, unless the Lord builds a house both physically and truly, those who build labor in vain in a sense that unless the builder of a house or a city looks to the heavens and says, this is nothing apart from you, God, it's in vain, right?

Unless you give credit to the Lord who created all of the earth and the fullness thereof because it's his. Unless you do that, you are building in vain, okay? Building shelter not founded on the Lord is meaningless.

[9:02] It's a point. And the second illustration here is applied to security, not just shelter, not just building a city, but also someone who watches over a city, okay?

Look at verse two or at least halfway through verse one. Unless the Lord watches over the city, the watchman stays awake in vain.

Now this, the building a house stuff, that's easier for us to imagine, okay? That still applies to us in our modern day. But none of us really watch over a city, right?

So no one's really, none of us are watching over Saskatoon or Regina or whatever, right? But in the ancient Near East, most if not all cities were walled up, right? You would have seen images of that.

They were walled up to protect against enemy invasion.

We see that throughout the Old Testament, right? And who were standing up high watching over the cities, right? Watchmen, right? And they sound the horn, right? We see examples of that in scripture when they see enemy troops or just anyone coming who doesn't look familiar, whether they're horses or they're chariots or even their robes and their clothing, right?

[10:11] And here Solomon is saying, the watchmen who stand up high and keep watch over the city, right? They stay awake overnight, right?

Those who do that also labor in vain unless the Lord is watching over that city, right? We see this again throughout the Old Testament when kings relied on horses and chariots to protect them.

But Psalm 27 says, No, no. It's the name of the Lord, our God. It's the Lord that protects us, right? The Lord is sovereign over the security of people whether it's during the day or through the night. Unless the watchman looks downward to protect the city, right? Unless that person looks upwards as well, right? As we were doing here, as we were singing, right?

Unless we humbly rely on the Lord, right? Who never sleeps, Psalm 121, right? Who watches over the city 24-7 to protect it, your security is in vain, right?

[11:16] Think of that today in our modern age. What cities are we watching over, right? What do we make efforts and great efforts to stay secure, to keep secure in our lives, whether that's our money, our houses, our families, whatever it is, Solomon says these two types of vain labor, right?

Building a house, watching over city for its security, right? These are nothing. These are meaningless. These are in vain. Unless, unless the Lord is a part of it.

Unless you attribute these to the Lord. And that's why he says, in these vain labors, think about someone building a house. Carpenters today, right? Rise up early, right?

And watchmen in the ancient Near East would stay awake overnight. And that's why I look at verse 2, in Psalm 127, says, It is in vain that you rise up early, like the builder of the house.

It is in vain that you stay awake, and go late to rest, like the watchmen. It is in vain that you do all that, as you eat the bread of anxious toil.

[12:26] So, here's his next point, after his two illustrations. Now, when we think about rising up early, right, that's actually encouraged throughout scripture, right?

If you want to get important work done, think of Exodus 8.20 or Job 1.5, if you're curious about those references, right? Rising up early is encouraged. Nor is going late to rest from a day's work necessarily wrong, or explicitly condemned in scripture.

Although, resting too much is, if you read the Proverbs. But going late to rest from a day's work, that's not wrong. It's not condemned in scripture. So, the natural implication of the progression here is that rising up early, or going late to rest, due to hard work, whether it's building a city, or watching over a city, right?

That leads to the reward of eating bread. Okay? Think of a modern day today. We go to work, right? At the end of the month, or two weeks, however the frequency of your pay, right?

You get income to put bread on the table, so to speak. So, that's what the progression is here. Work equals money, equals food on the table. That's how they were thinking in the ancient Near East here.

[13:45] And that's how Solomon here is thinking, right? And think about 2 Thessalonians 3, when Paul, the Apostle Paul later says, if anyone's not willing to work, don't let him what?

Eat. Yeah? So, they know that. That was assumed here. So, Solomon is not condemning any of these things, individually, that he's talking about here. Right? But rather, he is warning against the habitual pattern of rising up early, and going late to rest, in order to reap the reward, and eat the bread of it.

Whatever that labor was. And Solomon describes that kind of labor, not only as vain, apart from the Lord, but anxious toil. Okay? This phrase, anxious toil, is, if anyone has a New American Standard translation, it's quoted, translated as painful labors.

Right? Painful labors. Anxious toil. And that language, I love that translation, because it roots it back to the first painful labor. The first anxious toil.

Where is that found? Genesis 3. Right? When God says to Adam, curse is the ground because of you, because you've rebelled against me, because you've sinned. In pain, there it is, in pain, you shall eat of it all the days of your life.

[15 : 07] By the sweat of your face, you shall eat bread. Right? So, Solomon here understands that anxious toil, right, or vain labor, painful labor, that's results of the fall, when man fell into sin and in death.

And hard work and diligence is the means by which fallen man is to put bread on the table. It's not easy anymore. It's not just, hey, in Genesis 1 and 2, you could eat of the fruit of the tree.

Any tree. Except for the one in the middle, don't eat of that because you'll die. But, it's easy. It's good. Now, on this side, right, of sin, it's sweat and toil and labor.

Right? Think of even our hot day today, right? You looking forward to getting back to work tomorrow? Right? In this weather? This is, this is what Solomon is getting at as he writes to ancient Israel.

But, the anxious toil that Solomon is warning against here is man's self-reliant labor that produces self-gratifying reward.

[16 : 15] Right? That's what he's getting at with eating the bread of anxious toil. Your anxious toil and trying to make ends meet on your own. Your anxious toil and trying to make your bank account explode on your own.

Or your savings account as fat as it can be for your own good, for your own enjoyment. I mean, think about it. Have you met anyone like this? Maybe this sounds like someone you know.

Maybe it sounds like something you can relate with yourself. I mean, I have family and friends, unbelievers. Sometimes, actually, unfortunately, they are believers. But, mainly unbelievers who do exactly this.

Restlessly and anxiously working, toiling, day and night, working 12 to 16 hour days on regular, missing family time, missing sleep, and worst of all, time with the Lord on their own, and time with the Lord's people, right, when we're commanded to gather regularly, as we're doing here.

Just, for what purpose? Just to bear the fruit and reap the reward of their own labors, right? We're such a work-minded, work-focused culture, especially here, in our culture here, in the north, right, in the west.

[17 : 29] And so, these people, right, if you're thinking about them, they are like the builders that Solomon speaks of, right? They rise up early to get to work, and they're like the watchmen that stay up all night, right, who in their sleepless and restless, toiling, with their own two hands alone, fail to recognize that their shelter and their security and their sustenance from eating bread are all in vain without the Lord.

That's what Solomon's getting at. But what does eating the bread of anxious toil actually mean for us today? Well, a pastor, I heard, explained this really well, said, eating the bread of anxious toil means to place the fruit or reward of your own labors into your own hands and carry the weight of either its success or its failure instead of placing them into God's hands, right?

Or as this pastor words it, letting God take the burden of final responsibility. So, if you work your job and you do a really good job at the end of the day, it's in your own hands, right?

Unless you attribute it to the Lord. Or, if you do a terrible job and feel terrible about how bad of a job you did, the pressure is still on you, right? And so, unless you attribute this to the Lord, in my weakness, Lord, make something out of nothing.

And, in my success, it's all because of you. What do I have that I didn't receive? Right? That's what Solomon is trying to distinguish here. Eating the bread of anxious toil is any labor, right, or enjoying any reward from your labor that you have done with your own two hands without the Lord.

[19 : 23] Right? And so, Solomon here says, look, don't anxiously toil like that. Don't eat the bread of your anxious toil.

And how do you do that? Right? We're going to look at that as we end this morning with some ways we can apply this. But, Solomon gives two reasons.

Two reasons why we shouldn't eat the bread of our anxious toil. The first reason is, look at end of chapter, end of verse two.

Right? Eating the bread of anxious toil. Why? For, because he gives to his beloved sleep. Okay?

Again, Solomon's already just been saying, look, you rise up early and you go late to rest.

What are they eliminating from their pattern? Sleep, likely. Right? I can relate to that. Anyone else?

Right? But, think about this. Why does God choose to give his beloved sleep?

[20 : 24] God graciously gives to his children sleep in light of verses one and two. Right? So that their labors would not be in vain. That's what Solomon's connection is.

Right? God loves his people so much that he wants their labors to be truly fruitful and truly rewarding, which means that they need his gift of sleep to avoid eating the bread of anxious toil. There's some major implications for us here. But Solomon is getting at the main point of to reap the fruit and reward of your own labors.

Right? By eating the bread of your anxious toil. From early mornings to late nights. To do that, verses one and two, is to refuse this gift of sleep that God is giving you.

That's what he's saying. Right? In other words, it's like saying, God, I'm more powerful than you've designed me to be. I don't need your gift of sleep. I think I've had that belief when I was in high school and college years.

[21 : 29] That's what I believe. Sleep is for the weak is what I thought. But to be clear, the context of this passage speaks against those who refuse God's gift of sleep due to human arrogance.

Right? Because I can work. I don't need to sleep. I'm going to work long days and long nights. I don't need sleep. Right? That's rebuking those people rather than those who struggle to receive God's good gift of sleep due to human limitations or diagnoses.

Right? Think of those who have sleep apnea or other conditions. Okay? I don't think this passage is rebuking those people. But those who work in light of human arrogance refusing God's good gift of sleep.

The builders who rise up early. The watchmen who stay awake through the night. Anxious toilers enjoying the fruit of their own labors. And don't be so quick to think, Josh, I think you're talking about unbelievers.

I think Solomon's talking about my unbelieving friends. Let's be careful. Let's be slow to not just exclude us Christians from this conversation.

[22 : 33] Now at the same time in understanding this that we should not refuse this gift of sleep we also need to understand that we should not overuse this gift.

Right? Solomon warns against sleeping too much through the whole book of Proverbs. Proverbs 20 verse 13 you can look that up. That's one reference to the sluggard sin in sleeping.

And I'm not suggesting a limit or number of hours to sleep here. Please don't hear that. That varies depending on each person. But all I'll say is this. Only babies and little kids sleep for long and extended hours through the night.

Right? So adults should not be sleeping like babies outside of a sleepless work week or sleepless nights due to early parenthood. Yeah. You can connect the dots here. Right? So just needed to address the other side really quickly.

But the emphasis of Psalm 127 is receiving the gift of sleep. You know what the application from this sermon is? Sleep. I'm not kidding.

[23 : 34] Solomon's not kidding. Right? Sleep but not too much. Don't refuse it but don't overuse it either in a skillful balance. But receiving it so we can restfully labor in dependence on God to avoid laboring in vain.

And when we do that with a good balance this becomes not the sluggard's sin but the believer's blessing. Right? As a young father I wish I could go back and preach this to my unmarried self and childless self years ago.

Right? And now I think as I've as I've understood more of how to labor in the Lord I've had to prioritize sleep patterns healthy sleep patterns and I find that when I sleep better I actually can fight sin better the next day.

There's a tight connection. The spiritual life is not so far from the physical. We need to we need to recognize the tight connection between those two things. Right? We can't do everything as human beings because we're weak beings.

Right? Look at what Paul says in 2 Corinthians 12 My grace is sufficient for you. Why? For my power is made perfect in God's power rather is made perfect in our weakness.

[24 : 46] Right? And so Paul boasts of his weaknesses that the power of Christ rests upon him. So when we sleep it's as if we say God I'm finite and you're not. Right?

I am weak but you are strong. So as I helplessly sleep in my weakness would you powerfully work as you watch over me? Keep me safe until tomorrow comes.

Right? God never sleeps so he's always working. Right? And so this is what Solomon is trying to encourage his readers. Don't work so much that you actually forget who you are and who God is.

Right? Don't labor in vain. Why? Because God gives his beloved sleep. Second reason after sleep not only does God the Lord give his beloved sleep right?

But he also gives them sons. Right? If you're wondering what's the connection between 1 and 2 verses 1 and 2 and verses 3 to 5 look at verse 3 and onwards.

[25 : 48] Behold children are a heritage from the Lord a gift from the Lord. He gives them to you. The fruit of the womb a reward from the Lord. Right? This is the second reason.

The Lord gives to his beloved sleep and literally the translation in the NASB is sons children. Right? The first observation we need to make in this section is one that would be less obvious for us.

Right? That sons language because contextually this is a war passage. This is warfare imagery we're getting. So the sons of the fathers who are reading this.

Right? The sons in ancient Israel they would grow up and speak with their enemies at the gate.

Right? They would negotiate at the gate. That's where deals would have been made in the ancient Near East at the city gate.

But not only that not only are they growing up for war purposes. Right? For warfare reasonings. But sons also received the primary inheritance.

[26 : 53] Right? In the ancient Near East. Right? So the fact that the Lord gives children rewards children to people here is because the sons would have received the greatest inheritance.

Right? And now we know in the New Covenant that's applied to all of us who are children of God through Abraham. But what he's saying is much like sleep sons children are a good gift that our good God graciously gives to his beloved.

Right? This is why we cheer and rejoice when there's a pregnancy announcement. It is good and fitting to do that. Right? As we should because they all come from the Lord. And so we want to celebrate that.

But there's an important implication here. Right? Is that when we celebrate that we don't celebrate the labors of those who just made that announcement.

No. It's God who gives them. God gives sleep and God gives children. Right? Think of the times when in Scripture when the Lord withheld children.

[28 : 01] from his people. Right? Think of Jacob and was it Rachel? Yeah. It was Rachel that bore Jacob no children. And Jacob says to Rachel right?

When Rachel says give me children or else I die. Right? Kind of wife you don't want to be. Right? Jacob's anger burned and he said am I in the place of God who has withheld from you the fruit of the womb?

Right? God is sovereign over this. Right? And so whether he gives or takes away we want to recognize God is good regardless in this. But when God does give children we need to make that connection that it is from him.

It is a reward from him as verse 3 says his heritage. Right? So here we can connect the dots with what Solomon is saying. Like even when verse 1 there's no coincidence when he says unless the Lord builds the house.

Okay? Is he talking about the city there? Is he talking about the temple there? Well it's no coincidence if he was also talking about the house as in the offspring. Right? Where the promised seed would come from as well in Genesis 3.

[29 : 10] Right? So it wouldn't be a surprise if Solomon was referring to a physical offspring here. Unless the Lord gives you that offspring, builds the house, you labor in vain.

Right? And so here eating the bread of anxious toil as parents. This is one meaningful implication for us. Eating the bread of anxious toil as those who have children.

If you have children here maybe you aspire to have children. This means is that when you feel the sense of identity or security or maybe superiority complex after you have built the house, i.e. after you have had children, simply because you have a baby, simply because you gave a pregnancy announcement or have children or grandchildren.

Right? I point to myself here the most. I felt this when our firstborn, Luca, came to this world. There was a sneaky temptation in our mind to think, oh, now we've achieved it.

[30 : 10] Right? Now we've stepped up in the game of life because we have kids now. Veteran parents in the room, you know what this temptation is like, right? This applies to grandparents as well.

And we need to beware. This is what Solomon is guarding against. Unless the Lord builds a house, unless the Lord gets credit for the children whom he has blessed you with, you are laboring in vain. It's a caution for us parents in the room and aspiring parents in the room. Right? We can't treat children like, and grandchildren like they're the greatest accomplishment in our lives.

And you know what? Usually when children are there, right, we kind of think like mother hens and like to flock our families in a little circle. Right? That's what Solomon is guarding against.

Right? Of course we can rejoice that our children have our names, our last names rather, and that sometimes they might look like us.

[31:08] Right? Emily and I are still thinking about that. Do they look more Filipino or Mennonite? We don't know. But our job is to make them look less like us and more like Jesus.

that's our job as parents or anyone who works with children. Right? So God not only gives sleep to his children but he gives children to his children so to speak.

Right? And this is verse 4. What is the purpose of that? Like arrows in the hand of a warrior are the children of one's youth. Blessed is the man who fills his quiver with them. He shall not be put to shame when he speaks with enemies in the gate.

Again, warfare imagery here. But think of arrows and what they're used for. They're used to send out. Right? They're used to shoot at their enemies. Right? And so Solomon is guarding from people building their own cities.

Think of Babel. They were called to fill the earth but they stayed vertical. That's what Solomon is guarding against. Don't labor in this way. Right? Don't labor trying to make your own kingdom, make your own city.

[32:16] Don't build your own kingdom. Build God's kingdom with him because he's given you that opportunity already. Right? In a full quiver, right, means that you unnumber your enemies.

Right? I know some Christians and maybe some of our Mennonite friends. I gotta stop making Mennonite jokes. My wife's Mennonite, that's why. So, but, you know, this doesn't mean we need to have kids in abundance and, you know, cheaper by the dozen stuff.

Under the old covenant, obedience was tied to blessings which included children. That is very true and yet in the new covenant in Christ, being fruitful and multiplying has a much bigger scope than just physical children because the blessing is Christ and in Christ there are spiritual children.

That's a much bigger quiver than just physical children. Right? Charles Spurgeon once said, a quiver could be small yet full. Right? So, this isn't talking about having lots and lots and lots and lots of children.

It's talking about filling the earth with God's blessing and glory and we have much more than a physical scope to that today. Right? Think of the Apostle Paul when he talks to his Christian churches that he's planted.

[33:31] Right? Like a nursing mother, I take care of you. Like a father who becomes a father to his child, Onesimus. Right? So, this is much like sleep.

This is not giving us an advocacy for a number. Right? Number of hours of sleep or number of children. No. He's just saying, look, do not labor in vain and do not take the gifts of the Lord and forget about the giver.

That's what he's saying. Right? Make sure that the Lord is a part of this because he was the one who gave it to you in the first place and use it for him and pressures off you.

Don't eat the bread of anxious toil. That's what Solomon's been saying here. And we know, and Ronnie already took us to this, we know where Psalm 27 ends is not the end. Right?

Because throughout the scriptures we know where God's work, specifically in his son. Right? Jesus Christ. Right? The son of God who came down, lived a perfect and sinless life.

[34:36] Right? And died in the place of sinners and rose from the dead, ascended, and won't be one day will return. This was not in vain. Think of 1 Corinthians 15.

Right? If Christ has not been raised, then your faith is in vain. But he was raised from the dead.

Right? And so that's why at the end of that chapter he says, be steadfast, immovable.

Right? Abounding in the work of the Lord. Right? Knowing that your labor is not in what? Vain.

Right? When we do the work of the Lord in Christ, and the work of the Lord includes, Psalm 127, would include receiving the gift of sleep and receiving the gift of children, should the Lord bless you with that.

And working in such a way that credits the Lord for those very gifts. These works of the Lord will not be in vain. Right?

We think of the work of the Lord as stuff we do on Sunday mornings or stuff we do with believers and church and all that. But no, this is any work that we do that is not in vain because God's work in Christ was not in vain.

[35 : 50] He was raised from the dead. So now, we can live and labor freely. Right? And this is important for us Christians. But maybe you haven't received Christ this morning.

I'm not going to assume everyone's a believer here. So, unbeliever, this passage calls you to stop living and laboring in vain apart from Christ. Right? And believe on Him who labored.

Believe on Christ who labored on the cross for you so that you might be raised up to life with Him. Right? But maybe you have believed. Maybe you're straying like sheep.

Remember what the passage calls you to do. Stop eating the bread of your anxious toil. Right? Return to the Father wants to bring you back to Himself. Right? And protect you.

And watch over you. As Psalm 127. Jesus fulfills Psalm 127. This is where this is going. You can't just preach an Old Testament passage and stop there. This is preaching Christ.

[36 : 49] This is looking to Christ. So this is what it means for us today. Wherever you are, whoever you are, whether believer or unbeliever, we need to stop eating the bread of anxious toil.

Whether it's our physical work, maybe you're working on education. Right? Whatever it is, I could give many more examples. Stop eating the bread of your anxious toil and instead depend on Christ for the success or the failure of your labor.

The pressure is not on us anymore. Right? I tell the band this actually. Part of my journey with the band members here is there's so much pressure with doing music and to do it well. And even this can be an avenue of not eating the bread of our anxious toil is that when I make mistakes, I'm free because I'm human.

Right? And when I do really well, you know what? I can't do this apart from the Lord. That's the best spot to be. That's the spot where we want to be. We cannot carry the weight of our labor, success, or failure.

Stop eating the bread of your anxious toil. Instead, restfully labor in the Lord. As you sleep here, even maybe this afternoon, if you take Sunday afternoon naps, maybe tonight as you sleep, remember that your labor in the Lord this day and the day forward will not be in vain in Jesus Christ.

[38 : 13] Let's pray. Dan, you can come on up. Father in heaven, help us to rest in your labor. that is your work on the cross in Jesus, our Savior, who not only gives us everything we need, but who is everything we deeply desire as well.

And so, Lord, help us to apply this well. Even this summer, some of us continually work, some of our schedules dramatically increase from a work perspective. Help us not to work like unbelievers do who labor apart from you.

Help us not to work in that way, but help us not to work on our own, even when we as professing Christians tend to do and are tempted to do. Lord, help us to acknowledge you that unless you are there, unless you are the one we are working for and working to, it's in vain.

And yet we know it's not if it's the work of the Lord in Christ. So help us to do our jobs well, whatever that may be, in the home, in the church, in our workplaces, and help us to not eat the bread of anxious toil.

Help us to receive your gift of sleep and your gift of sons, especially to receive the gift of your son, Jesus, and help us to turn from our sins and turn to him every single day.

[39 : 44] In Jesus' name, Amen. This last song we're going to sing celebrates this reality. So let's stand together and sing.