

Without the LORD, Frustration! Part 2

1. Text: Psalm 127:1-5
 - a. [1] A Song of Ascents, of Solomon. Unless the LORD builds the house, They labor in vain who build it; Unless the LORD guards the city, The watchman keeps awake in vain. [2] It is vain for you to rise up early, To retire late, To eat the bread of painful labors; For He gives to His beloved *even in his* sleep. [3] Behold, children are a gift of the LORD, The fruit of the womb is a reward. [4] Like arrows in the hand of a warrior, So are the children of one's youth. [5] How blessed is the man whose quiver is full of them; They will not be ashamed When they speak with their enemies in the gate.
2. Intro
 - a. Today, a continuation and conclusion to last week's sermon entitled "Without the LORD, frustration."
 - i. The pithy statement comes from the Latin version of the opening words of Psalm 127,
 1. *Nisi Dominus Frustra,*
 2. "Except the LORD, it is frustration,"
 3. Or more succinctly, "Without the LORD, Frustration!"
 - b. Three times, Solomon repeats the word "vain" to underscore the frustration we face when we labor without the LORD.
 - c. Four areas of life to which Solomon applies this principle:
 - i. House, Security, Sustenance, and Family.
 - d. We covered the first section on house construction last Sunday.
 - e. We delve into the remaining three today.
 - f. One important pre-matter:
 - i. A foundational truth that undergirds Solomon's repeating theme in this psalm: This is God's world.
 - ii. Why the LORD must build a house in order for it to be built and why the LORD must guard the city in order for it to be secure? It is because the world does not belong to the whims and efforts of man.

- iii. The world belongs to the LORD. It is only as the LORD wills and does that anything is accomplished in this world.
- iv. Scripture bears this out:
 - 1. The song of heaven declares that the LORD created all things and because of His will all things existed and were created (Rev. 4:11).
 - 2. Psalm 24:1 says that the earth is the LORD and all it contains; the world and those who dwell in it. This is God's world.
 - 3. The apostle reveals to us: "For from Him and through Him and to Him are all things. To Him *be* the glory forever. Amen" (Rom. 11:36).
- v. In short, this is God's world. He is the great operator behind all that transpires.
- vi. Examples:
 - 1. Not one sparrow (a small bird no larger than a chickadee) falls to the ground apart from your Father (Matt. 10:29).
 - 2. God causes the sun to rise and the rains to fall (Matt. 5:45).
 - 3. The LORD removes kings and establishes kings (Daniel 2:21).
- vii. From the smallest things in the world like the trivial life of a small bird to the greatest things like the reign of monarchs and world leaders, creatures do not determine what happens on earth.
- viii. All things come together according to the will and activity of the divine Sustainer who rules His world with direction and watchful care.
- ix. The world is not a playground for men to frolic in; it is a theater in which God puts on display His magnificent glory.

g. This principle applies to all areas of life.

- i. Solomon, therefore, applies this principle to a wide swath of everyday issues of life. From houses to security, from sustenance to the family.
- ii. These four areas are not meant to exhaust the areas over which the LORD reigns.
- iii. They are examples meant to teach us that the LORD rules over all things, that it is wisdom
 - 1. to entrust and submit all things in life into His hands,

2. to pray and seek His provision and good will in all things,
3. and to learn to say, "If the Lord wills we will live and also do this or that" (James 4:15).

3. #2 Security

- a. The second line of verse 1 is about the security.
 - i. Psalm 127:1 [1] Unless the LORD guards the city, The watchman keeps awake in vain.
- b. Solomon asserts that apart from the LORD's provision, the diligence and alertness of guardsmen and watchmen cannot guarantee the protection of the city.
- c. Relevance
 - i. This has direct relevance to our own lives.
 - ii. No one ever wished to endanger their own lives. No one intentionally chooses to live in a bad neighborhood.
 - iii. But at the same time, it is foolish to think that our efforts and security cameras will protect us from all danger.
 - iv. There is only one source for our security:
 1. It is that the LORD guards the city.
 2. It is to have the confidence that "The Lord stood with me... and I was rescued out of the lion's mouth" (2 Tim. 4:17).
- d. Two examples to underscore our need of the Lord for security: the watchman and the invasion of Jerusalem.
- e. Example #1 the Watchman:
 - i. This is the example that Solomon gives in this line of verse 1. No matter how well the watchman remain alert and does his job, there are intruders he would inevitably miss.
 - ii. Let me play this out. Who can the watchman possibly miss? The threats are legion.
 1. Undercover spy:
 - a. Israel sent into Jericho two such spies and they entered the city unawares.
 - b. This is what spies do. They avoid detection.

- c. How is the watchman ever to spot the undercover spy? He is a master of disguise and an expert deceiver.

2. The Trojan Horse

- a. The ancient tale of the Odyssey tells the story of how the Greeks built a large wooden horse with armed soldiers hidden inside it and left it as a peace offering just outside the city gates, expecting the Trojans to bring the structure into the city, celebrating their victory.
- b. Their watchman could have never known what was in the trojan horse. The armed soldiers were secretly hiding in the wooden horse.

3. Conspirators in the city

- a. How could the watchman ever guard the city against the city's residents who are scheming to revolt and overthrow the city.

4. Non-human threats

- a. He could never spot the plague-infested rat that enters the city and its fleas begin infecting its citizens (think of the 14th century Black Plague).
- b. He could never have detected a pathogen that enters the city and spreads to destroy its population.

5. There are countless other examples of what can bring down a city.

iii. The lesson is simple.

- 1. There is only one protection against all manner of evil against a city: the protection of the LORD.
- 2. Therefore, Solomon declares, "Unless the LORD guards the city, the watchman keeps awake in vain."
- 3. It's no different for our own cities and our own homes.
 - a. There is currently in our nation a security threat arising from our open borders.
 - b. But as important as closing the borders is, by itself, we have not secured our nation.

- c. There are countless other threats against our country.
 - i. If not illegal immigration, then wokism that has infiltrated all our major universities and are poisoning the minds of young people.
 - ii. If not wokism, then economic failure of our nation.
 - iii. If not the economy, then the threat of a nuclear war from Russia.
 - iv. If not Russia, then China.
 - v. If not China, then North Korea.
 - vi. If not North Korea, then Iran.
 - vii. If not wars, then wildfires.
 - viii. If not wildfires, then earthquakes.
- d. National security is a game of Whack-A-Mole.
 - i. Once you squash one threat, another pops up ready to attack elsewhere.
 - ii. What is our true defense against a dangerous world like this?
 - iii. Solomon teaches us: the LORD alone is our defense.

4. The greatest security we can have in life is

- a. What the LORD said to Abram, "Do not be afraid, I am a shield to you" (Gen. 15:1).
- b. Or as David declared, "You, O LORD, are a shield about me, My glory, and the One who lifts my head" (Ps. 3:3).

5. The LORD is our only shield against all manner of evil.

6. This is also true in the spiritual realm.

- a. 1 John 4:4 [4] greater is He who is in you than he who is in the world
- b. 1 John 5:19 [19] We know that we are of God, and that the whole world lies in *the power of* the evil one.
- c. 1 John 5:18 [18] He who was born of God keeps him, and the evil one does not touch him
- d. We therefore we learn to pray, "deliver us from evil."

f. Example #2 The Invasion of Jerusalem

- i. Second example comes from Isaiah 22 where the Assyrian invasion of Jerusalem is prophesied.

1. Isaiah 22:8-13 [8] And He removed the defense of Judah. In that day you depended on the weapons of the house of the forest, [9] And you saw that the breaches In the *wall* of the city of David were many; And you collected the waters of the lower pool. [10] Then you counted the houses of Jerusalem And tore down houses to fortify the wall. [11] And you made a reservoir between the two walls For the waters of the old pool. But you did not depend on Him who made it, Nor did you take into consideration Him who planned it long ago. [12] Therefore in that day the Lord GOD of hosts called *you* to weeping, to wailing, To shaving the head and to wearing sackcloth. [13] Instead, there is gaiety and gladness, Killing of cattle and slaughtering of sheep, Eating of meat and drinking of wine: "Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we may die."

- ii. In this text, the LORD is fighting against Jerusalem.

1. He has removed the defense of Judah.
 2. When the LORD is against the city, no man can resist His will.
 3. What use is it to secure weapons, fortify the city walls, procure the city's water supply, if the LORD fights against you?
 4. All your efforts are in vain.
 5. Far better to expend your efforts to learn to trust in the LORD and listen to Him
 - a. If He has called for repentance and weeping, then you take heed and mourn your sins and get right with Him.
 6. It is vain to fight against the LORD.
 7. It is as Gamaliel said in Acts 5,
 - a. "if it is of God, you will not be able to overthrow them; or else you may even be found fighting against God" (Acts 5:39).
 8. If you are wise, you expend your energy to ensure

- a. That you are on God's side and not on the other side,
- b. That you are a friend of God, not a friend of the world,
- c. That you are advancing the purpose and the will of God on earth, not the godless agenda of the world and the devil.

iii. Be on God's side.

- 1. Is there a sin you are harboring? Let it go and repent.
- 2. Do not resist Him. If so, you will soon find that He will resist you.
- 3. God is ready to draw near to you, if you would draw near to Him (James 4:8).
- 4. What is there in this world that is worth holding onto? What sin is so enticing that you would forego heaven and the favor of the Lord?

iv. Be not like the unthinking beast that lives by his instincts and lives to satisfy his beastly appetites.

- 1. You are not a beast but a man created in the image of God.
- 2. Your soul is meant to find our satisfaction in the God and Savior Jesus Christ.

v. Do not have God as your enemy.

- 1. Forsake sin and seek Christ and become Jesus' disciple.
- 2. There is hell to lose and heaven to gain.
- 3. There is misery to lose and joy to gain.
- 4. There is bondage to sin to lose and the redemption in Christ to gain.

vi. The LORD alone can grant you security in life. Be on His side and live under His guardianship.

4. #3 Sustenance

- a. Sustenance is Solomon's third example. This is found in verse 2.
 - i. Psalm 127:2 [2] It is vain for you to rise up early, To retire late, To eat the bread of painful labors; For He gives to His beloved *even in his sleep*.
- b. This verse begins with two statements of exertion:
 - i. To rise up early and to retire late.
 - ii. Not talking about someone with a sleep disorder.

- iii. But about someone who is tirelessly laboring at his job.
 - 1. Many of us do this on routinely.
 - 2. The point of this verse is not to discourage hard work.
 - 3. In both testaments, God-honoring form of self-controlled hard work is actually encouraged.
- c. Solomon condemns the sleepless diligence “to eat the bread of painful labors.”
 - i. Believers are to work to honor Christ and then depend on Him for His provision.
 - ii. This means we know when to quit and give attention to the other areas of responsibility the LORD has given us in our homes and in our church.
 - iii. We are to work hard and then pray, “Give us this day our daily bread.” Then we go home to serve the LORD in our home and in our church.
 - iv. Then at the end of our day, put our head on our pillow confident in the LORD in His provision for us.
 - v. Spurgeon: “The sovereignty of God is the pillow upon which the child of God rests his head at night, giving perfect peace.”
- d. To drive home this last point, Solomon writes, “For He gives to His beloved *even in his sleep*.”
 - i. The NASB has the words “even in his” italicized
 - 1. Those words are interpolations of the Bible translators.
 - 2. The NKJV and the ESV omit those extra words.
 - a. Sleep (not provisions) is the object of the LORD’s giving.
 - 3. Now, both interpretations are well-attested in Scripture, showing us that they are both biblical ideas to embrace.
 - 4. This is one of those places in Scripture where both interpretations can work.
 - 5. Besides, both interpretation end up in the same place.
 - a. If the LORD gives sleep, it’s because He gives you the confidence in His provision.
 - b. If the LORD gives you provisions while you sleep, then you can sleep at night.

- c. Either way, both men are confident in the LORD's provision and both men sleep at night.
- 6. In the end, it's a wash.
- e. So, let's consider the two meanings:
- f. **Example #1 Sleep:**
 - i. First, the LORD gives sleep to His own people.
 - ii. In the Psalms, sleep is a theme that shows up very early in the book.
 - 1. Ps. 3:5 *[in this context, David is surrounded by his adversaries; and yet he is able to sleep because the LORD sustains him]* [5] I lay down and slept; I awoke, for the LORD sustains me.
 - 2. Ps. 4:8 [8] In peace I will both lie down and sleep, For You alone, O LORD, make me to dwell in safety.
 - iii. David can sleep at night because the LORD is with Him.
 - 1. Amid all the perils that swirl around him the child of God is able to sleep, because of the LORD.
 - iv. There is one person who masterfully slept amid a storm: the Lord Jesus.
 - 1. Psalm 127 calls the beneficiary of sleep "His beloved," i.e., God's beloved.
 - 2. The word here is *Yadid* (יָדִיד), the shorter form of Solomon's nickname "*Yedidiah* [יְדִידְיָה]" or *Jedidiah* (2 Sam. 12:25).
 - 3. Whether Solomon slept well at night or not only God knows, but one descendant of Solomon whom the Father also called "My Beloved" definitely did sleep.
 - 4. Asleep on the boat amid a storm
 - a. Jesus was on a boat with the disciples sailing across the sea of Galilee.
 - b. A great tempest arose such that the boat was covered with the waves.¹ It was then that our Lord slept.

¹ The Sea of Galilee is known for its violent storms, which can come up suddenly and be life-threatening for any on its waters. These tempests are caused by the situation of the lake in the Jordan Rift with steep hills on all sides. The cooler air masses from the surrounding mountains collide with the warm air in the lake's basin. Winds sometimes funnel through the east-west-oriented valleys in the Galilean hill country and rush down the western hillsides of the lake. The most violent storms, however, are

- c. One preacher said, "He was so quiet in spirit that the billows rocked him to sleep."²
- d. Our Lord, the beloved of the Father, laid aside every care, became completely oblivious of the perils around Him. He left all matters with His Father and slept while the fishermen who navigated that very sea all their lives were panicked by this storm.
- v. Our heart can be at ease and we can sleep at night because of the Father's care for us.
 - 1. Apart from Him there is no security or peace.
 - 2. There is no other way to rest your head at night.
 - 3. The LORD grants sleep to His adopted children even as He gave sleep to His only begotten Son in the stern of the boat.

g. **Example #2 Provisions:**

- i. The NASB's interpretation is that the LORD gives provisions while His beloved sleeps.
- ii. We also know this principle of Scripture that the LORD takes care of His own.
 - 1. Matt. 6:25-26 [25] do not be worried about your life, *as to* what you will eat or what you will drink; nor for your body, *as to* what you will put on. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing? [26] "Look at the birds of the air, that they do not sow, nor reap nor gather into barns, and *yet* your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not worth much more than they?
 - 2. Matt. 6:31-32 [31] "Do not worry then, saying, 'What will we eat?' or 'What will we drink?' or 'What will we wear for clothing?' [32]

caused by the fierce winds which blow off the Golan Heights from the east. One such storm in March 1992 sent waves 3 m (10 ft) high crashing into downtown Tiberias and caused significant damage to the city.

(<https://biblearchaeology.org/research/chronological-categories/new-testament-era/3802-jesus-and-the-sea-of-galilee>)

² Spurgeon, *The Treasury of David* 3:85.

"For the Gentiles eagerly seek all these things; for your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things.

3. Matt. 6:8 [8] "So do not be like them; for your Father knows what you need before you ask Him.

iii. Jesus' point isn't that Christian not work.

1. 2 Thess. 3 teaches the exact opposite of that (v.10: "If anyone is not willing to work, then he is not to eat, either").
2. But He teaches us is that we are not to worry and work like the pagans do, i.e., eagerly seek to secure provisions for ourselves.
3. We are to do our part and then trust in the Lord for the rest.
4. And in terms of our eager preoccupation, Jesus calls us to turn our attention away from seeking provisions for ourselves to seeking our heavenly Father's kingdom and His righteousness first (Matt. 6:33), trusting in Him to meet all our needs.

iv. The picture of Ps. 127 is a lot like a lesson Jesus taught about the kingdom of God.

1. Mark 4:26-29 [26] And He was saying, "The kingdom of God is like a man who casts seed upon the soil; [27] and he goes to bed at night and gets up by day, and the seed sprouts and grows—how, he himself does not know. [28] "The soil produces crops by itself; first the blade, then the head, then the mature grain in the head. [29] "But when the crop permits, he immediately puts in the sickle, because the harvest has come."

v. Even as one seed sprouts while another doesn't by the will of God, so it is with the spiritual seed of the word.

1. While one hears the word and is born again and led to repentance and faith, another hears the word and it is snatched away and he remains unchanged.
2. As the saying goes, the same sun that melts wax hardens clay.
3. What makes the difference is the LORD. It is as He wills that one is converted and made into a saint and another remains reprobate.

- h. Whether in the spiritual realm or in the physical realm, the truth remains the same.
 - i. Unless the LORD grants the increase, we labor in vain.
 - ii. We rise up early and we retire late in vain. "It is vain for you to rise up early, To retire late" (Ps. 127:2), because without the LORD, all our work ends in frustration.
 - iii. *Nisi Dominus Frustra!* Without the LORD, frustration.

5. #4 Family

- a. The final example from the last three verses has to do with family.
 - i. Psalm 127:3 [3] Behold, children are a gift of the LORD, The fruit of the womb is a reward. [4] Like arrows in the hand of a warrior, So are the children of one's youth. [5] How blessed is the man whose quiver is full of them; They will not be ashamed When they speak with their enemies in the gate.
 - ii. Often verse 3 is quoted in vacuum and so is misunderstood.
 - i. Sometimes struggling new parents have a hard time seeing the meaning of this passage.
 - ii. But if they just consider the entire text, the meaning isn't so elusive.
 - iii. Children are a blessing
 - 1. Not because they give you fulfillment in their youth, though that certainly can happen,
 - 2. But because in the future when they have grown up, they defend you against your enemies.
 - 3. This is the blessing of family.
 - iv. Family is indeed a blessing.
 - 1. The family is one of the greatest blessings in life God has given universally to all mankind.
 - 2. Whether believer or not, whether theist or atheist, whether criminal or a law-abiding citizen, every person belongs to this wonderful blessing called family.
 - 3. It is what theologians call common grace.

4. Family is where you can be yourself and know for sure that you belong.
5. You need not do a thing to belong, because that security is found in your blood.
6. There is an analogy to this in the church of God.
 - a. Your security comes not from your physical blood but from your spiritual birth and conversion to Christ.
 - b. That spiritual reality is the unchanging guarantor of your part in the Lord's spiritual family.
7. In this sense, you are secure the same both in your earthly family as well as your heavenly family.

v. When it comes to the security of your earthly family, it is most often experienced by children who depend on their parents.

1. But these verses focus on the other side of that relationship, how parents sense that security in their children later in life when they become your defense.
2. For this reason, this psalm portrays children are portrayed as valuable ammunition, as arrows in the quiver, against the enemies of the parents.
3. Children are in this sense an asset, a gift from the LORD.

c. When you are struggling new parents, your children sure don't feel like an asset.

- i. They require so much of your time, energy, and resources, and if you are not careful, you can even become resentful toward the little ones who desperately need your care, whom the Lord has placed under your care.
- ii. Even though you may not feel or see it now, trust in the LORD that your children will one day become a great asset to your life.
- iii. They will become an immense resource for your blessing in the future.
- iv. How so?
 1. At a national level
 - a. If the population of a country stops having children (that's the crisis seen in Japan, Korea, China, and Europe), that country will eventually run out of military aged men and

they won't have the man power to defend itself against enemy state, not to mention the economic burden of a reduced work force to support the aging population of the previous generation.

- b. This is not an obscure and irrelevant issue; it is a real and relevant at a national level.

2. In a spiritual sense

- a. Some have suggested that the children here are portrayed as spiritual arsenal against the world.
- b. Augustine has said something to this effect: "spiritual children *are* shot forth like arrows into all the world."³
- c. Children, when properly trained for Christ and the Lord has graciously converted them, will be shot from your bow as gospel impact for Christ in the world.
- d. Even though it's unlikely Solomon thought of this, common sense tells you that is indeed what happens with children who have been discipled by their parents.
- e. One day your children will become your partners in ministry. Instead of a crying baby, getting in the way of you trying to minister to people, they will one day minister alongside you and add energy and strength to your labors for the Lord.
- f. You will one day shoot them into the world as life-giving arrows against the schemes of the devil who is trying to drown the world to death under his deception.
- g. That is worth raising children for.

3. But you may say I don't know whether my children become saved. But that is precisely the point of this psalm, that you need the LORD in all of these matters of life, including parenting.

³ Alfred Edersheim, in "The Golden Diary of Heart Converse with Jesus in the Book of Psalms," 1877.

- 4. So, cling onto the LORD all the more and honor Him in your parenting.
- v. Whether taken physically or spiritually, children are indeed a gift of the LORD.
 - 1. When you're in the thick of training up children in the discipline and instruction of the Lord (Eph. 6:4), you may find it difficult to see that truth
 - 2. But believe the word of God.
 - a. You believe in heaven even though you have never seen it.
 - b. You believe in Christ, though you have never seen Him.
 - c. Believe in this promise of Scripture that with the favor of the LORD, your children will pour a benediction upon your head.
- vi. No one has ever said, "I wish we had fewer children." The opposite is what they say: "if we could do it all over again, we would have more children."
 - 1. Don't go the way of the world deceived by the Devil that children are a burden and a nuisance.
 - 2. Don't believe that lie.
 - 3. The word of God teaches us to think long term and see the payoff that comes later.
 - a. Children are an investment toward the future.
 - b. And if you invest in them well, instill in them the fear of the LORD and the life-giving gospel of Jesus Christ, and you prayerfully wait upon the LORD to convert their hearts, they will one day bestow upon you by God's grace a crown of exultation (1 Thess. 2:19).
- vii. One mother was told by divine revelation that her child would cause her immense pain, that her son would be a sword to pierce her own soul (Luke 2:35).
 - 1. Simeon the prophet spoke those words to Mary.

2. That day came when she witnessed her son be pierced through with a spear and she felt the piercing pain in her own heart. She watched her own son die like a criminal on the cross.
3. But even that pain was to be for her soul's eternal blessing.
4. Through His death on the cross, she was saved from her sins and became one of the 120 who gathered to pray in the upper room, awaiting the coming of the Holy Spirit (Acts 1:14).
5. Mary had become a disciple of Jesus Christ who trusted in Him as Savior and Lord.
6. The son of her young age, who caused her immense pain, would one day become her Savior, Jesus who saves His people from their sins (Matt. 1:21). He would become the God for whom she had waited that He might save her, the LORD in whom she rejoiced and were glad in His salvation (Isaiah 25:9).

viii. Mary tasted of that reward of her womb uniquely as the mother of her Savior.

1. In a small measure that joy will be yours also, if you wait patiently on the LORD and raise up your children for the glory of God. One day when your child becomes one with Christ by faith and manifests Christ to you and to others around you, you too will taste of the gift of God and the reward of the womb.

6. Conclusion

- a. The lesson for us in this psalm is simple and straightforward.
- b. This is God's world and all our labors are vain except that the LORD be in them.
- c. Hard work and intelligence will never achieve the blessings you seek from the LORD.
- d. Look to Him and depend on Him for His provision. Trust in Him and be on His side.
- e. Let me underscore that last part: be on His side.
- f. The point of this psalm is not that God will help you achieve whatever you want in life. It is teaching us that the LORD alone determines the outcome of your

labors. If you wish not to waste your life, then bring your life under the waterfall of His blessing and provision.

- g. How does one do that? There is only one way to stand in the grace of God, place your faith in Christ and become His follower this day. Jesus died for sinners to make a way for them to be reconciled to God. Repent this day and surrender your life to Christ and stop resisting His word and come under His shepherding care. Begin this day to walk with the Lord and be discipled by Him.
- h. All those who thus hear and follow Christ, come under the care and provision of the triune God. There is real security in the LORD.
 - i. You will be assured in your heart that He loves His children and He loves to do them good, maximum good.
 - 1. Matt. 7:9-11 [9] "Or what man is there among you who, when his son asks for a loaf, will give him a stone? [10] "Or if he asks for a fish, he will not give him a snake, will he? [11] "If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give what is good to those who ask Him!
 - ii. In fact, Scripture assures us that He is causing all things to work together for good to those who love Him who have been called according to His purpose, and that good, my friends, is our eternal good in Christ (Rom. 8:28-30).
 - i. All the provisions for life and ministry come to us from our great heavenly provider in heaven.
 - i. Friends, live as children of your heavenly Father. You live under His care. Never for a moment think or behave as an orphan child without a heavenly Father who cares for him. No. You have a heavenly Father and He is the provider for all your needs. He carries you on eagle's wings (Ex. 19:4). Live dependent on Him.
 - ii. Work and do you part, then seek the LORD and pray, asking for His provision for all your needs and live daily expecting His watchful care to provide for your eternal good and for His everlasting glory.
- j. The LORD is the crucial Provider for our every need.

- i. May the Lord this year teach us to trust in Him and to pray.
- ii. May we learn to depend on Him knowing that this is His world.
- iii. And where we have failed to trust in the Lord and lived independent of Him, my friends, repent today. Seek the blood of Christ to cover your sinful skepticism toward the righteous God.
- iv. Find in Christ renewal and healing to still every murmur in your heart and instead to trust in our heavenly Father like Him and learn to sleep in the stern of the boat amid the storms of life with peace that transcends understanding guarding your heart and mind (Phil. 4:7).
- v. Remember, without the LORD, it is all frustration. Be on His side and live under His favor.