

Protecting The Home.

Text: Psalm 121

Suggested Hymns:

344, 270, 176R&S, 588, 512
Protected

1) The Dangers From Which The Home Needs
Protection

2) The Means With Which The Home Must Be

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with you all. Amen.

The text for our sermon today is Psalm 121, ¹ *I will lift up my eyes to the hills — From whence comes my help?* ² *My help comes from the LORD, Who made heaven and earth.* ³ *He will not allow your foot to be moved; He who keeps you will not slumber.* ⁴ *Behold, He who keeps Israel Shall neither slumber nor sleep.* ⁵ *The LORD is your keeper; The LORD is your shade at your right hand.* ⁶ *The sun shall not strike you by day, Nor the moon by night.* ⁷ *The LORD shall preserve you from all evil; He shall preserve your soul.* ⁸ *The LORD shall preserve your going out and your coming in From this time forth, and even forevermore.* (NKJV)

Lord God, heavenly Father, sanctify us through Your truth. Your Word is truth. Amen.

Dear friends in Christ,

We read in Psalm 127:1, ¹ *Unless the LORD builds the house, They labor in vain who build it.* This statement, which has stood unchanged for three thousand years, expresses in the most concrete manner an abiding conviction of all true children of God.

People must build, and labour they must; but what a vast difference there is in the attitude and spirit in which the building and toiling is done! *“Come, let us build ourselves a city, and a tower whose top is in the heavens; let us make a name for ourselves.”*¹ There you hear the opposite attitude asserting itself. While the believing children of God humbly declare, *“Not unto us, O LORD, not unto us, But to Your name give glory”*² the haughty supermen of Shinar ignored God and defiantly determine, *“Let us make a name for ourselves!”*

Now, you know what happened to that city and the tower of Babel. And we all know of many other instances from Biblical history as well as from personal

observation how true it is that, except the Lord build the house, they labour in vain who build it.

But after the house has been built and stands complete and furnished, what then? Does it need no divine protection and safeguarding? Does it need God's sustaining and sheltering protection against dangers from within and from without?

The holy writer is quick to add, "*Unless the LORD guards the city, The watchman stays awake in vain.*"³ Yes, indeed, this also is an impregnable conviction of God's children throughout all generations, that, unless God guards and keeps the house, all our waking and watching is utterly in vain. He, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, defends us and our homes against all danger and guards and protects us from all evil.

This is also most beautifully taught in our text, which invites us to consider the serious and salutary subject of *Protecting the Home*. May the Lord bless our meditation.

1. The Dangers From Which The Home Needs Protection.

Perhaps at no time in the history of the home have there been as many dangerous and hostile influences at work threatening to disintegrate, disorganise, or destroy the most ancient and most fundamental of all social institutions as in our day. Let us consider some of the most important of these dangers.

There is first of all the so-called economic danger. Though the earth is large, so large that it has ample room for all of its inhabitants; yet there is a general complaint that the earth is overpopulated. Well, whatever is wrong with the economic situation, you cannot blame God for it.

He not only has made the earth amply large for each and every one to find comfortable room upon it, but He has also given, and still gives, us richly all things to enjoy.⁴ Yet all too many homes are threatened with shortage and even with poverty and famine because of the present economic situation. To what is this situation due? Certainly not to God's government and lack of providence, but to the elite's greed for gain, which, as all greed, is marked by an inhuman heartlessness.

But as real as these dangers are which threaten many homes, not only in our country, but especially elsewhere, there are other influences and movements at work which are not only more wide-spread, but also far more dangerous and destructive to the home.

That institution of God which is the foundation of the family, marriage, has never been attacked from so many angles as in our day. Divorce is an easy solution of all matrimonial difficulties, and made doubly easy by the law of the land.

The divine ideal of a lifelong union of one man and one woman,⁵ is by many considered not only antiquated, but even unworkable and unbearable.

And this negative attitude is not due to any such consideration as Paul the Apostle refers to in his great chapter on marriage in First Corinthians. No, indeed, the substitutes which the advocates of the new order offer to replace the lifelong union of one man and one wife tell quite a different tale: compassionate marriage, trial marriage, free love, in other words, more or less refined adultery, more or less restrained fornication.

These are to replace the divine institution of marriage as it has been observed by God's people and held in honour by them in all nations of the world. So sacred is the marriage bond between the wedded couple, as St. Paul reminds, that the unbelieving husband is sanctified (consecrated) by the Christian wife and, vice versa, the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the Christian husband, and that the children issuing from such a marriage are not unholy or unclean, but holy and consecrated children because of the one parent's being a Christian.⁶ Such a child, for instance, was Timothy, to whom Paul addressed two of his letters, and are preserved in the New Testament.

³ *"Let us break Their bonds in pieces And cast away Their cords from us,"* these words, spoken against the Lord and His Anointed, express the determination of the enemies of the home as regards its foundational institution of marriage.⁷

Many of our higher schools of education, the theatre, the movies, novels, books, magazine and newspaper articles, are helping to spread the vicious leaven of degenerate views about marriage, actually glorifying those who have put these views into practise.

Closely connected with this danger is another, which also threatens the very foundation of the home. It is the present-day attitude toward children. “*They had no child,*”⁸ was formerly considered a tragedy. Today it often is a crime to have children. How often we hear the large family ridiculed in our day! How often have we heard contempt, yes, cold-hearted contempt, poured upon the mother of many children!

And often, the self-imposed condition of childlessness is due to nothing else than a purely selfish desire for free and unhampered enjoyment of life, the “thrill” of a good time without intermission.

But to every husband, to every wife, to every doctor, the commandment “*Thou shalt not kill*” applies also in this matter. Abortion is rampant in supposedly cultured and educated nations! If everyone did this, what would be the result?

And now a glimpse of the home where there are children’s voices to proclaim that God is life, and not death. There are two dangers here, so often met that we need to call attention to them.

The first is a lack of discipline in the home. Children are left to grow up without any restraints and training. Father and mother are the God-appointed teachers and trainers of a child’s character. The sad neglect of this duty is all too apparent today. All the sadder because the enemies of the home use these instances quite effectively to attack the home as an institution.

Another danger is closely akin to the foregoing: that of relegating religion to the church exclusively. This is perhaps the greatest of all dangers. Just what do such parents understand religion to mean? What kind of religion is that which a person can take for one hour on Sunday and then for the remaining 167 hours of the week carefully avoid as something dangerous to home happiness and harmony?

Do not be deceived; that is not religion, not the living religion of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. But think of the results of such “religion” for the next generation. As we look at many homes today we sadly observe that conscience has fled, piety has been exiled, and godliness has been banned. How empty and void such homes are!

They harbour human beings who never lift up their eyes to God, who have forfeited God's promises of "help" and "preservation" and "protection," as portrayed in our text. They have not listened to God, as we read in Psalm 128:1, ***Blessed is every one who fears the LORD, Who walks in His ways?*** How is it with your home ?

2. The Means With Which The Home Must Be Protected.

Having reviewed the dangers which threaten the home of today, let us now turn our attention to the means of protecting our home against them.

Do we have the means of protection against the dangerous influences and movements which threaten the most important of all social institutions? As in all other conditions and emergencies, we have at our disposal the Word of God, the Bible, which gives us all the weapons of defence and offence needed for a successful protection of our home.

That Word, with its directions and promises, must above all dwell in our hearts, as it did in the heart of the psalmist who speaks in our text.⁹ If the Word of Christ dwells in our hearts and minds, it will exert its influence for good and for peace in our homes.

Now, when the days are evil, when financial and other troubles threaten our home, what are we to do? Do we look up or down? Ah, we are only too prone to look down. But the sacred singer says: ***I will lift up my eyes to the hills.*** God is our only Refuge in times of trouble. If we need help and assistance, it will surely come from the Lord, ***who made heaven and earth.***

The same God who created the universe also preserves and protects it,¹⁰ and He is also the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all. How shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?¹¹

If economic or financial troubles vex you, look to the promises of God, who is faithful: ***Cast your burden on the LORD, And He shall sustain you; He shall never permit the righteous to be moved.***¹² Our text says, ***He will not allow your foot to be moved; He who keeps you will not slumber.*** ***Behold, He who keeps Israel Shall neither slumber nor sleep.***

⁵ *The LORD is your keeper*, Protector, and Guardian. These promises were not intended only for the believer of Old Testament Israel, but also for the believer of the New Testament, for St. Peter is but repeating the Old Testament promise when he bids us to cast *all your care upon Him, for He cares for you*.¹³

Do you thus trust in the Lord and in His protection and help? Food and clothing and protection from dangers, ⁵ *The LORD is your keeper*, ⁶ *The sun shall not strike you by day, Nor the moon by night*. We read in 1 Timothy 6:8, ⁸ *And having food and clothing, with these we shall be content*.

When Ruth and Naomi left the land of Moab, the outlook for both of them was not very bright, and yet Ruth, the Moabitess, spoke her immortal words of loyalty to Naomi, *For wherever you go, I will go; And wherever you lodge, I will lodge; Your people shall be my people, And your God, my God*.¹⁴

Ruth, the Moabitess was content to glean on the fields of Boaz at Bethlehem. She had faith, and Naomi, the Jewess, had faith. And we today must have faith if we and our homes are to be protected from anxious care.¹⁵

As to the rich the open Bible tells us what he ought to be doing as written in 1 Timothy 6:17–19, ¹⁷ *Command those who are rich in this present age not to be haughty, nor to trust in uncertain riches but in the living God, who gives us richly all things to enjoy*. ¹⁸ *Let them do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to give, willing to share*, ¹⁹ *storing up for themselves a good foundation for the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life*.

Do not be like the Rich man, lifting up his eyes in hell.¹⁶ Yes, the masters, the globalist and capitalists, ought to lift up their eyes to the Lord, while here in this life, knowing that their Master also is in heaven, and that there is no respect of persons with Him,¹⁷ giving to their servants that which is just and equal.¹⁸ *“God resists the proud, But gives grace to the humble.”* ⁶ *Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time*.¹⁹

But the other dangers threatening the home are still more pernicious and require vigilant watching. Sound and godly views on marriage must be taught the young by their parents, both by precept and by example.

The parents must above all prepare their sons and daughters to become husbands and wives of the type commended in the Word of God, so that, when

the son leaves his father and mother, he will cling to his wife, nourishing and cherishing her, even as Christ does the Church, and that the daughter, when she becomes a wife, will be a helpmeet, suited, fit for her husband, who is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the Church.

Did it never strike you that these relations between husband and wife stand at the very opening of your Bible, in the very second chapter, where the union of our first parents is described? And note well that St. Paul, who was not married, affirms the position of Gen. 2 in that loftiest conception of the marriage relation found in all literature and the highest imaginable,²⁰ where he tells Christian men to love their wives as they love themselves.

Do not fail to understand correctly Paul's great parallel: the husband is to love his wife as Christ loved the Church with a sacrificial love, and the wife is to regard her husband as her head as the Church regards Christ as her Head.

If you are married or if you are going to marry, be sure to know what the Word of God tells you about marriage. And if you are a doer of that Word and not a hearer only, you will have the best protection in the world to your home.

Furthermore, the proper view of marriage will necessarily include the proper views on children. All that is written in the Sacred Record about sexual matters is written for our learning,²¹ and warning, such as the heinous sins of Sodom and Gomorrah,²² the sin of Onan;²³ the terrible sin of the men of Gibeah,²⁴ the abominable sins of the inhabitants of Canaan before Israel took possession, men and women lying with beasts;²⁵ and David's sin with Bathsheba.²⁶

These sins and others are written that we might be warned not to sully the purity of family life, but to guard and protect the fountain springs of human life by keeping our bodies and minds pure, and fleeing youthful lusts.²⁷

Parents must teach and train their children, warning them again and again. *⁴And you, fathers, ... bring them up in the training and admonition of the Lord.*²⁸ And watch carefully with whom your children associate, for no sin is so alluring to most young people as the sin of sexual uncleanness. We read in 1 Corinthians 15:33-34, *³³Do not be deceived: "Evil company corrupts good habits."* *³⁴Awake to righteousness, and do not sin; for some do not have the knowledge of God.*

Of Eli's sons it is written that they *were corrupt; they did not know the LORD.*²⁹ Having the germ of sin in them, your children need discipline and training in righteousness. As we hear before, *¹ Blessed is every one who fears the LORD, Who walks in His ways.* Do not neglect this duty in your home, the best place on earth for a schooling in righteousness.

All that we have already said will exhibit the folly, the criminal folly, of avoiding religion in the home.³⁰ Is there any one present here who would refuse, or even hesitate, to confess that the greatest heritage he has received from father or mother or both is the blessing of a Christian training in the home? Are you handing this blessing on to your children? Do you say grace at the table and have family devotions?³¹

Truly, "*Blessed is every one who fears the LORD, Who walks in His ways.*" His is the precious promise in our text: "*⁷ The LORD shall preserve you from all evil; He shall preserve your soul. ⁸ The LORD shall preserve your going out and your coming in From this time forth, and even forevermore.*

May the Holy Spirit create in us the holy determination always to say with the hymnist, "*Though all the world forsake Thy Word, I and my house will serve the Lord!*"³² Amen.

The peace of God, which passes all understanding, will keep our hearts and minds, in Christ Jesus. Amen.

¹ Genesis 11:4

² Psalm 115:1

³ Psalm 127:1b

⁴ 1 Tim. 6:17

⁵ Matt. 19:4-6

⁶ 1 Cor. 7:14

⁷ Psalm 2:3

⁸ Luke 1:7

⁹ See also Eph. 5:19, 20; Col. 3:16

¹⁰ Nehemiah 9:6

¹¹ Rom. 8:32

¹² Psalm 55:22

¹³ 1 Pet. 5:7

¹⁴ Ruth 1:16

¹⁵ Psa. 37:5; Psa. 55:22; Psa 121:5-7; Matt. 6:25; Luke 12:22; Heb. 13:5-6.

¹⁶ Luke 16:23

¹⁷ Eph. 6:9

¹⁸ Col. 4:1

¹⁹ 1 Peter 5:5-6

²⁰ Eph. 5:22-33

²¹ Rom. 15:4

²² Gen. 19

²³ Gen. 38:9-10

²⁴ Judg. 19:20-22

²⁵ Lev. 18:22-25

²⁶ 2 Sam. 11

²⁷ 1 Tim. 5:22; 2 Tim. 2:22

²⁸ Ephesians 6:4, Col. 3:21

²⁹ 1 Samuel 2:12,

³⁰ Deuteronomy 6:6-7

³¹ See Gen. 8:20; 13:4; 22:13-14; Job 1:5.

³² See Joshua 24:15, Hymn 588 v 5