Connect—Empower, Equip, Extend, Enlarge

Ps 127: 1 “Unless the Lord builds a house, the work of the builders is wasted. Unless the Lord protects a city, guarding it with sentries will do no good”.

The function of a builder is to do with what is not there yet and the function of a guard is to do with what is already there. In this verse there’s are two possibilities—building with the Lord and without the Lord. To build without the Lord leads to effort expended but in vain. There are four keys for us to build our lives according to God’s plan.

**Empower**

2 Tim 1:7 For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind.(NKJV) Thus the first key to be empowered by the Holy Spirit—the dunamis, the power of God.

The impact of power is most felt when there is focus. For example, light is most powerful when it is concentrated to a single point – it has laser focus.

Even as God wants us to focus and be purposeful, the devil tries to distract us. One of the ways he does that is to keep us focused on the rear view mirror—the chains of guilt and shame. Ps 107:14 He brought them out of darkness, the utter darkness, and broke away their chains.

**Equip**

Eph 4:11-12 So Christ himself gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers,to equip his people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up

“God will give us the key to the gym, but he will not lift the weights for you”. Equipping is a partnership between God and us. God is the personal trainer, but we have to lift the weights. It’s through the discipline of preparation and practice. Often we are the answer to our own prayer. For example, God will not help us love a particular person more, he will give us opportunities to practice love for that person.

**Extend**

Lk 5: 4 When he had finished speaking, he said to Simon, “Now go out where it is deeper, and let down your nets to catch some fish.”

God wants to extend us but we need to discern the season that we are in and not run ahead of God.

**Enlarge**

Is 54: 2 Enlarge the place of your tent, stretch your tent curtains wide, do not hold back; lengthen your cords, strengthen your stakes.”

Also Num 33:55 “But if you do not drive out the inhabitants of the land from before you, then those of them whom you let remain shall be as barbs in your eyes and thorns in your sides, and they shall trouble you in the land where you dwell. (ESV) The point is God will give us opportunities to extend and enlarge but those doors may not be open forever. If we fail to obey the first time, those territories will become harder to conquer the second time round.

Discussion questions:

1. How do we develop the power of purpose in our lives so that we will not aim at everything and strike at nothing?
2. Give some examples of the prayers that God would not answer without our partnership. What are the opportunities that God is giving you to practice those characteristics you pray for?
3. What season do you think you are in at the moment—empower, equip, extend or enlarge? Explain your answers
4. How do we discern the timing of God to extend? (*Optional*—how do we differentiate between presumptuousness and faith?)
5. When was the last time God challenged you to step out and to enlarge your territories? What was your response and what were the results?