

D. Nugget #3 – Watson’s “3 Aphorisms” of Contentment

1. “Contentment is a divine thing, it becomes ours not by acquisition, but infusion.”
2. “Contentment is an intrinsical thing; it lies within a man; not in the bark, but in the root.”
3. “Contentment is a habitual thing, it shines with a fixed light in the firmament of the soul. Contentment does not appear only now and then, as some stars which are seen but seldom; it is a settled temper of the heart.”

E. Resource: Thinklings Podcast Episodes

1. Ep. 44 – *Topic*: Defining Contentment
2. Ep. 47 – Title: “Pursing Contentment”
3. Ep. 51 – *Topic*: Boredom and Diversion
4. Ep. 56 – Title: “Discontentment: A Vice and a Virtue?”
5. Ep. 60 – Title: “What does Contentment Look Like?”

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Ministry Contentment

Refresh, 2022

I. Introduction

A. Why this topic at a conference for ministry couples?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

B. Digital content at this link:

<https://andystearnsthoughts.wordpress.com/2022/02/03/christian-contentment-in-ministry/>

II. Defining Contentment

A. Oxford Dictionary

B. New Testament Examples (BDAG)

C. Stoic Connection?

D. Pastors and Puritans

1. Eric Raymond

- “Contentment is the inward, gracious, quiet spirit that joyfully rests in God’s providence.”

2. Jeremiah Burroughs

- “Christian contentment is that sweet, inward, quiet, gracious frame of spirit, which freely submits to and delights in God’s wise and fatherly disposal in every condition.”

3. Thomas Watson

- “It is a sweet temper of spirit, whereby a Christian carries himself in an equal poise in every condition.”

III. **Philippians 4:1-10**

A. Paul’s Rejoicing (10)

B. Paul’s Clarification (11)

C. Paul’s Contentment (12-13)

1. Situations:

- _____: “Brought low and how to abound”
- _____: “Plenty and hunger”
- _____: “Abundance and need”

2. Interpretive question: What is the overall situation of Paul’s life?

3. Source of strength: Christ. (v.13)

4. What about you?

IV. **Notable Takeaways**

A.

B.

C.

V. **Resources and Nuggets**

A. Overview of Resources

1. William Barclay, *The Secret of Contentment*.
2. Eric Raymond, *Chasing Contentment: Trusting God in a Discontented Age*.
3. Thomas Watson, *The Art of Divine Contentment*, (1653).
4. Jeremiah Borroughs, *The Rare Jewel of Christian Contentment*, (1648).

B. Nugget #1 – Barclay’s 7 Reasons to Pursue Godly Contentment

1. God has commanded it.
2. Contentment is a priceless treasure.
3. A murmuring spirit is a great sin.
4. Discontent is at the root of much of our sin.
5. A contented spirit shows our humble submission to God’s will.
6. Without contentment, we cannot experience the peace of God.
7. The contented spirit is the worshipful spirit.

C. Nugget #2 – Raymond’s 5 Characteristics of a Contented Heart

1. A Contented Spirit is a Silent Spirit (163)
2. A Contented Spirit is a Cheerful Spirit (164)
3. A Contented Spirit is a Thankful Spirit (164)
4. A Contented Spirit is Not Bound By Circumstances (165)
5. A Contented Spirit will not Avoid Trouble by Means of Sin (165)