



THOUGHTS ON CONTENTMENT

A conversation with Arwen Elliott

Arwen sits across from me, smiling, but deep in thought. We're talking about contentment, something that in the past couple of months has become a regular topic in the Elliott family. They are in the middle of a big transition: preparing to move out of state, leaving the familiar, while what is ahead is still unknown.

She says she just had a long conversation the night before with her daughter about contentment. "It was a great opportunity to remind her that contentment is having faith in the midst of our circumstances. God gives us a choice in how we respond to what is happening around us. We can choose to feel pity or we can choose to be content. Why? Because He promised to do immeasurably more than all we can ask or imagine (Ephesians 3:20). I don't have to like it and I still feel sad or overwhelmed, but my heart has peace. That peace is definitely not from me, but a true gift."

"See," she tells me, "what makes contentment so hard is that our flesh takes over. I've just had to get to the point where I open my hands and make the choice to find joy in the little details, to thank Him, and to not question. It's so easy to look past the little things, to wonder and to question. All that does is just steal our joy. Sometimes I'm too overwhelmed to make a choice but I'm confident that He knows me well enough to make the best choice for me."

How do you keep your vision up? How do you keep from becoming overwhelmed or missing the joy in the little things?

"God has carried us through many rough situations. It has been awe-inspiring to see His hand, though. We have a list that we look back on regularly. It documents disappointments and how God used them for good." This intrigued me; a list of the not-so-good things. Not your typical list for sure, but how great to have this redemption list. She went on to say that "there are things in my testimony that I don't want there, but I wouldn't be where I am, helping who I am able to, if those weren't there."

"It comes down to being grounded in contentment, in finding a balance, taking a harsh look at our own life while also keeping an eternal perspective. Everything we go through has already gone through Christ. That's where I draw my contentment."

Virtue of the Month

Join us this month as we pray **CONTENTMENT** for our children.

Prayer:

Lord, you alone are our true contentment. Help <child> to understand that gaining genuine contentment comes as he learns to delight himself in knowing you. Help <child> see that as he commits himself to you in the quiet trust, he will experience real contentment.

Scripture:

Lamentations 3:25-26, Psalm 27:13-14, 2 Corinthians 9:8, Psalm 73:25

What's Happening?

NOVEMBER & DECEMBER:

**Camp Oida
High School Retreat**
November 21-22
Mt. Sequoyah

**Deadline: Spring Break
Mission Trip Sign-ups**
November 30
Register: [myFellowship](#)

Advent Daily Devotionals Start
November 29
[Subscribe](#) to receive daily email

Parent/Child Dedication
December 12
Contact [Susan Thomas](#)

Family Service
December 26 | 5:00pm
One service only
No children's classes

How do you pass that down to your kids; how do you help them live a life marked by contentment?

Explain the difference between flesh and truth and pray discernment over them. Give them truth they can memorize and draw back on.

Validate their feelings. Listen to them. Help them understand that what they're feeling is not a bad thing. God gives us emotions, we just have to choose wisely what we do with them.

Kids feed off of us and our emotions, just as we do from our Father. Kids who can't quite cognitively grasp this concept will watch us to see how to cope and to act. Remain connected to Christ and be open with your child, but share on an appropriate level.

Voice your thankfulness, even in the smallest moments. Model gratitude; speak it.

Be mindful of any seeds of discontent you are planting. Remind them that God loves them and they are enough.

Arwen's life phrase is: "God will take us where we have not intended to go, in order to produce in us what we could not achieve on our own." The Elliott family definitely have so much they could be frustrated, scared, and disappointed about. What you'll hear over and over from them, though, is how thankful they are, how excited they are to see where God is taking them, even when it means giving up what they thought they wanted or needed. And that is having faith in the midst of their circumstances.

RESOURCES

BOOKS

[Freedom of Simplicity](#)
[Simply Tuesday](#)
[Enough: Discovering Joy through simplicity and Generosity](#)

ARTICLES

[Why Am I Not Happy?](#)
[5 Principles for Living With Less ... and Liking It - Learning to be content with enough](#)

MEDIA

[Veggie Tales: It's a Meaningful Life](#)

Connecting Church and Family

**FAMILY
MINISTRY**

