

Thinking about Contentment, Companions, and Popular Opinion

Ecclesiastes 4:4-16

1. The value of contentment (4:4-5)

- a. The problem – two extremes: “workaholism” and laziness

- b. The prescription – contentment

2. The value of friends (4:7-12)

- a. Recognize the misery of isolation (4:7-8)

- b. The benefits of companionship
 - *Productivity increases* – v. 9
 - *Mutual encouragement when weak* –v.10
 - *Mutual support when vulnerable* – v. 11
 - *Mutual protection when attacked* –v. 12

- c. Some practical benefits of companionship
 - *Accountability*
 - *Objectivity – able to ask penetrating questions*
 - *Advocate in recovery and restoration*

3. Realize popular opinion is fickle (4:13-16)