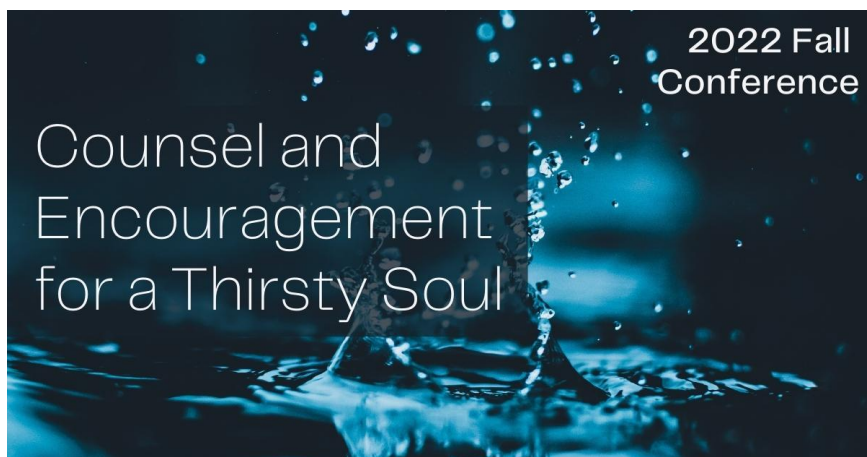


Central Seminary

Fall Conference 2022



CENTRAL SEMINARY

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Dr. Nicolas Ellen



Dr. Ellen is a certified counselor and fellow with the Association of Certified Biblical Counselors (ACBC). He is the founder of the Expository Counseling Center, LLC, and a senior member of the Biblical Counseling Framework.

Dr. Ellen received his bachelor's degree in Business Administration from the University of Houston and his master's degree in Christian Education from Dallas Theological Seminary. He also holds a master's in Biblical Counseling from The Master's University, a doctor of ministry in Biblical Counseling from Southern Baptist Seminary, and a doctor of philosophy in Biblical Counseling from Southwestern Baptist Seminary.

Conference Schedule

October 11, 2022

8:00am –8:30am Registration

8:30am–9:30am Session I – “The Blessing of
Disappointed Expectations”

9:30am–9:45am Break

9:45am–10:45am Session II – “Quieting a Noisy Soul”

10:45am–11:00am Break

11:00am–12:00pm Session III – “Picture and Practice of
Contentment”

12:00pm–1:00pm Catered Lunch

Food will be served in the Fellowship Hall, located in the lower level of Fourth Baptist Church & Christian School. Seminary staff will guide you downstairs. There is an elevator available for any who need it.

Alumni Association Meeting will be held in the Fellowship Hall immediately following lunch.



To maintain the safety of our school children, use only the seminary restrooms located in the seminary wing.

Please silence your electronic devices.



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Recent Episodes:

-  **Church Conflict and Biblical Leadership Part 1** with Dr. Joel Tetreau--*Episode 018*
-  **The Benefit of Church Associations** with Pastor Micah Tanis and Pastor Joe DiVietro--*Episode 017*
-  **The Local Church and Biblical Counseling** with Dr. Josh Stephens--*Episode 016*
-  **Gracious Affections and Jonathan Edwards** with Dr. Ryan Martin--*Episode 015*
-  **Starting the First Counseling Session** with Pastor Jeremy Stephens--*Episode 014*

Upcoming Events at Central Seminary

Fall Modular I Courses – November 7-11, 2022

Fall Modular II Course – November 14-18, 2022

Give to the Max – November 1-17, 2022

MacDonald Lectures – February 14, 2023

Friends & Family Banquet – April 10, 2023

Commencement – May 13, 2023

*Every spring, Central Seminary conducts its annual MacDonald Lectures.
This one-day event is a conference with an academically oriented topic.*



2023 MacDonald Lectures will be delivered by

Dr. Matt Shrader



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SESSION 1

“The Blessing of Disappointed Expectations”

(Proverbs 13:12)

*Hope deferred makes the heart sick,
but desire fulfilled is a tree of life.¹*

It is good for a person to have **hope**, but if it is not fulfilled for a long time (**deferred** means “put off or long drawn out”) then he experiences disappointment (his **heart** becomes **sick**). But when a hope is **fulfilled** a person is refreshed. The gratification of hope gives encouragement like a tree that gives life.²

Hope deferred makes the heart sick and languishing, fretful and peevish; but hope quite dashed kills the heart, and the more high the expectation was raised the more cutting is the frustration of it. It is therefore our wisdom not to promise ourselves any great matters from the creature, not to feed ourselves with any vain hopes from this world, lest we lay up matter for our own vexation.³

I. Hope deferred can be expectations that are delayed or denied.

- A. There are things we are hoping for that will not be realized resulting in deep disappointments in our lives.

¹ *New American Standard Bible: 1995 Update*. LaHabra, CA: The Lockman Foundation, 1995, S. Pr 13:12

² Walvoord, John F.; Zuck, Roy B.; Dallas Theological Seminary: *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures*. Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1983-c1985, S. 1:933

³ *Matthew Henry's Commentary on the Whole Bible: Complete and Unabridged in One Volume* (Peabody: Hendrickson, 1994), 983.

- B. There are things we are hoping for that will be realized but are on delay according to the providential plans and wisdom of God.
- C. The things that God has promised to us in His Word will be realized in our lives.
- D. The things God has not promised to us in His Word may or may not be realized in our lives.

II. Where our expectations are denied, our hearts will be sick, i.e. disappointed. God not granting those expectations reveals that they were not promised by God nor did those expectations fit in God's providential plan for us. Therefore, it is to our advantage to learn what God has not promised.

- A. God never promised freedom from trials and problems.
- B. God never promised that everything we do would work out as we planned and practiced.
- C. God never promised that everyone would treat us well even as we treat them well.
- D. In essence, God never promised that our faithful input into matters and our God-honoring pursuit of particular desires would produce our expected success, and the realization of all we faithfully pursue.

III. Disappointed expectations can lead us to the end of false hope and into building genuine faith in what God has promised as we wait on the fulfillment of those promises that are delayed in realization.

- A. Disappointed expectations can lead us to focusing on the reformation of our existence in totality to reflect the character of Jesus Christ which God promised would happen. (Philippians 3:20-21, Psalm 138:8)
- B. Disappointed expectations can lead us to focusing on the responsibility of God to provide, protect, and prepare us for the next life which God promised would happen. (Philippians 4:19, Hebrews 13:5-6, Philippians 1:6)
- C. Disappointed expectations can lead us to focus on the rewards of God in this life and the life to come which God promised would happen. (Hebrews 11:6, Galatians 6:9, 1 Corinthians 3:7-15)
- D. Disappointed expectations can lead us to focus on the return of Christ and His glory along with the residence created by our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ when He returns for us which God promised would happen. (1 John 3:1-3, John 14:3)

IV. We need to ask ourselves questions about the things in which we have put our hope.

- A. In what are we hoping?
- B. In whom or what are we depending on to bring this hope to realization?

- C. Is this hope promised to be fulfilled by God?
- D. What Bible verses can we use to affirm the realization of our hope and are the verses properly understood in their context?

NOTES

SESSION 2

“Quieting a Noisy Soul”

(Matthew 11:28-30)

I. The Premise of a Noisy Soul

- A. A noisy soul is a mind that is bombarded with thoughts of:
1. **guilt** – the awareness in your soul that you have done something wrong, being down-casted in mind
 2. **fear of judgment** – an impending sense of doom, anticipating something bad is going to happen, a sense of anxiety as a result of the loud noise of guilt in your soul
 3. **running away** – thinking about ways to escape the pain you are feeling in your heart as a result of the loud noise of the fear of judgment in your soul
- B. A noisy soul is caused by trying to **control** the good and bad that God controls in your life, instead of enjoying and enduring what God ordains in your life.
- C. A noisy soul is caused by **reducing** life to what you want, what you think you need, and living by what you think is right and wrong, resulting in living a life of self-indulgence and self-righteousness which is all self-centeredness.
- D. In essence, a noisy soul is caused by trying to live a life without **God**, resulting in preoccupation with your own cares, riches, worries, and standards leading to being weary (tired from hard toil) and heavy laden (loaded down), thus a noisy soul.

Summary: *A noisy soul is a soul that is down-casted, doubtful, devastated, divided, and devoid of peace as a result of seeking to live life without depending on and submitting to **God**.*

II. The Prescription for a Noisy Soul (v28-v29)

- A. God's calls us to **come to Him** – establish a relationship with Jesus Christ all who are *weary* (tired from the hard toil) *and heavy laden* (loaded down from the noise of our soul, the sin that so easily entangles us). *This is a call to **salvation**.*
- B. God calls us to **take His yoke** – submit to Jesus Christ in discipleship. *This is a call to **sanctification**.*
- C. God calls us to learn **gentleness** from Him – a willing submission from the heart to the rule of God over your life without grumbling or resisting; a willing submission to the agenda of God.
- D. God calls us to learn **humility** from Him – a willing disposition from the heart and willing practice to esteem others above yourself; a willingness to proclaim the name of Jesus Christ above making a name for yourself.

Summary: *We must come to Jesus Christ to receive **salvation**. We must walk with Jesus Christ in **sanctification**. “We must learn the Lord’s Nature and out of love seek to relate to Him accordingly; Letting the Mind of the Master be the Master of our Minds”* (Quote from Jim Berg)

III. The Promise for the Noisy Soul (v29-v30)

- A. We will be **given rest** for our souls if we come to Him – to be refreshed; to be revived in soul from spiritual death to spiritual life through salvation in Jesus Christ. This rest can be defined as **Peace with God** – legally declared right with God. ***This rest is given through salvation (Romans 5:1).***
- B. We will **find rest** for our souls if we follow Him – relief from anxiety and trouble, relief from the pain of guilt as we walk in progressive sanctification in Jesus Christ. This rest can be defined as the **Peace of God** – tranquility of soul as a result of following Jesus Christ. ***This rest is gained through sanctification (Philippians 4:6-9).***
- C. His yoke will be **easy** – His agenda of discipleship is well fitted and suited for you, adapted to fit you. As you submit to His agenda, God's purpose is fulfilled in you and through you resulting in pleasantness for you and glory to Him.
- D. His burden will be **light** – the load God has for you to carry in terms of the demands of discipleship will not be more than what you can handle. It will be bearable and not burdensome. You will be able to carry the load without it weighing you down.

Summary: *Through salvation you will be given rest – **peace with God.** Through sanctification you will find rest – **the peace of God.** The lifestyle and responsibility God gives, teaches, and commands you to walk in will not be burdensome or more than what you can handle. It has been tailor-made to fit you. It is well-fitted for you.*

NOTES

SESSION 3

“Picture and Practice of Contentment”

(Philippians 4:10-14)

Definition of Contentment: Sufficient satisfaction within the heart through the fellowship with and power of Jesus Christ apart from external circumstances and people

I. The Picture of Contentment Painted by the Apostle Paul (v10-v14)

- A. Paul rejoiced in the Lord when others came through for him, yet his state of mind was not conditioned upon their gift (v10-v11).
- B. Paul learned to live with what he had and let it be enough for him (v12).
- C. Paul learned to live without anticipating the provision of God (v12).
- D. Paul adjusted his desires to match his condition and circumstances (v12).
- E. Paul depended on God’s power from within to cultivate contentment in his condition and circumstances (v13).
- F. Paul had fellowship with God in his condition and circumstances (v13).
- G. Paul showed appreciation when others came through for him, yet he did not live for or by what others may or may not do for him (v14).

II. The Perspective of Contentment Promoted in the Scriptures

- A. A content person is able to accept their condition (Philippians 4:11-13)
- B. A content person is able to accept their contents (Hebrews 13:5)
- C. A content person is able to endure their circumstances (2 Corinthians 12:10)
- D. A content person is depending on Christ (Hebrews 13:5)
- E. A content person is pursuing Christ-likeness (1 Timothy 6:6-8)
- F. A content person is not a complainer (Philippians 4:11-13)
- G. A content person has an attitude of consideration (Philippians 4:11-13)

III. The Process to Contentment Presented in Eight Key Steps

- A. Enjoy the good and perfect gifts that God provides in your life through the means of people, circumstances, and tangible things of this creation.
- B. Grieve the disappointments in your life that come through the means of sin, suffering, and unrealized expectations in relation to people, circumstances, and tangible things of this creation.

- C. Give thanks for your condition and circumstances knowing God will use it to bring about His glory and your good through your condition and circumstances.
- D. Accept and endure what God has allowed in your life through the means of sin, suffering, unrealized expectations, people, circumstances, and tangible things of this creation through seeking and making the most of it without complaining about it.
- E. Adjust your desires to fit your situation in relation to people, circumstances, and tangible things of this creation.
- F. No longer demand that people satisfy you but seek to help people glorify God.
- G. Function according to your roles and responsibilities in relation to people and circumstances as assigned and commanded by God out of your covenant with God and not your mood of the moment.
- H. Embrace the character of God that is befitting for the moment, leading to worship and enjoyment of God according to that character.

Overall, we must enjoy every pleasure that God allows, endure every pain that God allows, while living from Him, through Him, and to Him in our condition and circumstances focusing on His Covenant to us (Ecclesiastes 5:18-20, 12:13-14, 1Corinthians 13:7, Hebrews 13:5-6).

Summary: Jesus is the doorway into the life that is truly life. Confidence in Him leads to become His apprentice in eternal living. Those who connect with Jesus Christ will find all they need to have life and life to no limit. We must increasingly integrate our lives into the spiritual world of God at every point of our lives. We must live our lives in interactive dependence upon God and interactive

submission to His kingdom rule. The condition of life sought by human beings through ages is attained in quietly transforming friendship of Jesus. We must learn what is real, discover how well off we are in Jesus, and begin to live according to this reality.

We are supposed to groan because there are things that we have been promised but do not yet have. We are supposed to groan because the full expression of God's kingdom has not yet come. We are supposed to groan because we are not yet all that God shed the blood of His Son for us to become. We are supposed to groan because the temporary pleasures of this physical world do not satisfy us; they always leave a void in our hearts. We are supposed to groan because in every situation and circumstance we see the damage that sin has done and is doing. We are supposed to groan because we recognize how we each give in to the temptation to seek in the physical world what we can only find in the Lord and what will only be fulfilled in eternity. This side of eternity, groaning is meant to be the default language of the big kingdom.

When we groan for these reasons, we get it right. This kind of groaning is only present in people who are submitting little kingdom desires to big kingdom interests. Where does one find ultimate fulfillment, satisfaction, and contentment? In God and God alone. Living for God is indeed fulfilling, but we don't find Him fulfilling because we are too busy being satisfied with the temporary pleasures of the physical world. Before we ever come to God we have already decided the things that we want in order to be fulfilled. We tend to seek God so that He will deliver some kind of physical, relational, or circumstantial fulfillment. Rather than working to satisfy us with these, God wants us to experience hunger so deep that it drives us to forsake these things and finally find our satisfaction in Him.

Adapted from The Divine Conspiracy pp.94, 103-104, The Divine Conspiracy Participant Guide pp. 26,29, 37, 94, and A Quest for More: Living for Something Bigger than You Kindle Locations 1492- 11547.

NOTES

Questions to Consider this Week

1. What do I want that I cannot control getting?

2. What am I getting that I don't want and I can't control it?

3. How am I responding in attitude to this?

4. How am I responding in conversation to this?

5. How am I responding in actions to this?

6. How am I treating others as a result of this?

7. According to Scripture how would God view my attitude, conversation, actions, and relational patterns in relation to this?

8. What do I need to accept that God has allowed?

9. How do I need to obey God in this situation?

10. What has God promised in His Word that I can rest on in accordance to this situation?

11. How can I adjust my desires to match my situation?

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THE CALL TO
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THE CALL TO
PREPARE.

-Dr. Richard V. Clearwaters

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