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Jonathan Edwards' Sermons: Search for "Acceptable Words"

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In one of his copious travel volumes Timothy Dwight, president of Yale College from 1795 to 1817, recounts a bristling transatlantic argument. The *Edinburgh Review*, in aiming a calculated sneer at American writers, had claimed that the "loss of a few leaves from an ancient classic" would occasion more regret in the hearts of scholars and bibliophiles than would the loss of all American literature, the works of Benjamin Franklin excepted. Indignant at this insult to American intellectuals, Dwight, a grandson of Jonathan Edwards, responded with pointed piety and ancestral regard that the

loss of his famous grandfather's works alone would cause deeper pain for Christians than would the loss of half the world's accumulated classical volumes.¹

Dwight would rejoice to note that present day readers have access to the fruits of a significant twentieth-century Edwards renaissance. Thanks to the painstaking work of scholars, archivists, librarians, and publishers, there is little danger that Edwards' eighteenth-century writings will be lost to the world. The Editorial Committee of the Yale edition of Edwards' *Works* is laboring meticulously to finish its offering of

"the massive body of Edwards' manuscripts" to the public. In so doing, the committee is promising "a full and complete exposure of his ideas in a manner never before possible,"² an exposure that will provide readers with much of Edwards' writing hitherto unpublished.

Jonathan Edwards' revivalist leadership and "rhetoric of sensation" in New England's Great Awakening have become commonplace parts of our American religious tradition. Less well known, however, is the long and convoluted history of scholarly reaction, both worshipful and vituperative, to Edwards' life and thought. This history has produced a steady stream of panegyric, villification, and hyperbole, as well as extensive theological and philosophical discussions and debates. Already in his own lifetime Edwards had been vigorously upheld by some as a second St. Paul and hotly despised by others as a cantankerous writer and preacher whose iron-clad theology was threatening the progress of the eighteenth-century church.

Edward's earliest biographer, Samuel Hopkins, unequivocally extolled Edward's life and work as that of "the greatest, best, and most useful man."³ In time, other historians would label him for reasons of their own as "the most bitter hater of man the American pulpit ever had,"⁴ a mind tragically warped by "delusional insanity,"⁵ "America's greatest metaphysical genius,"⁶ "the greatest master in false philosophy,"⁷ America's most renowned preacher, and "the hoarsest of the whole flock of New World theological ravens."⁸

This year marks the 250th anniversary of the 1734-35 Northampton, Massachusetts, "awakenings" under Edwards' ministry; this is indeed an appropriate time to note the contours and progress of twentieth-century studies on Edwards, to explore some telling features of the Edwards manuscript sermon collection in Yale's Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, and to provide opportunity for several important unpublished ordination sermons to speak after centuries of

silence.

I

As one of the most articulate and controversial leaders of the spiritual awakenings which swept eighteenth-century New England, Edwards had seen a number of his works to press. But when he died in 1758 shortly after becoming president of the College of New Jersey (today known as Princeton University), he left behind in the hands of relatives and friends an enormous unpublished manuscript collection. It was not until 1806 that a first edition of his selected works was published in England, followed by an American edition two years later and by other editions in 1829-30 and in 1879.⁹ During the eighteenth and nineteenth century, however, Edwards' most popular and frequently reprinted works were not his sinewy theological and philosophical treatises nor his sermons but the narrative and biographical accounts he had produced, namely, the *Life of David Brainerd* and *A Faithful Narrative of Surprising Conversions*.

America's history of religion reveals that the sturdy voices of Calvinism and the colonial Puritan preachers were vigorously challenged in the eighteenth and nineteenth century by the heterodox notions of Arminians, Unitarians, Pantheists, and Transcendentalists. Thus, among many nineteenth-century scholars, Edwards' theological treatises and sermons eventually came to be viewed as derivative, harsh, and revolting at worst and provincial and eccentric at best.

Nonetheless, during the last decade of the nineteenth century and the early years of the twentieth century (including 1903, the bicentennial of Edwards' birth) occurred one of those notable turnabouts in literary history. This turn-of-the-century era produced a great surge of interest in Jonathan Edwards and his place in American history. Stories, publications, and reassessments of the colonial evangelist included misty-eyed

eulogies stressing his gentleness; eugenic studies of the entire Edwards' clan; and news of Edwards' election to the American Hall of Fame. These years also stimulated some wide-ranging and innovative treatments of his theological orthodoxy as well as his rationalism, voluntarism, metaphysical idealism, mysticism, and alleged protoromanticism.¹¹

prompting further studies. By the 1950's, under Miller's leadership as General Editor, a team began work with the large body of Edwards manuscripts at Yale to publish a definitive scholarly edition of *Works*. The first volume, *Freedom of the Will*, edited by Paul Ramsey appeared in 1957, followed by *Religious Affections* in 1959 edited by John Smith. To date five more volumes have been

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By the first decades of the twentieth century, Edwards stood recognized as a major figure in American history. But it was not until the 1930's, with the appearance of scholars such as Joseph Haroutunian, Thomas Johnson, Clarence Faust, Richard Niebuhr, and Perry Miller, and with new interest in the extensive Edwards manuscript collection, that Edwards received the penetrating and systematic, yet sympathetic attention he deserved as a formative intellect in the American theological, philosophical, and cultural landscape.

In the 1940's, two landmark studies on Edwards' life and work appeared, the one a forthright and rigorously researched biography by Ola Winslow (1940) and the other a vivid, persuasively written interpretation by Perry Miller (1949) of Edwards' intellectual contributions to the history of ideas.¹² Miller's work stressing Edwards' modernity became a leading stimulus in

published: *Original Sin, The Great Awakening, Apocalyptic Writings, Philosophical Writings, and The Life of David Brainerd*.¹³ And there is promise of more.

The 1960's, 1970's, and early 1980's have brought forth a lively and steady flow of new Edwards studies and analyses. Alan Heimert's *Religion and the American Mind* (1966) claims that Edwards inspired a radically democratic social and political ideology. Conrad Cherry's *The Theology of Jonathan Edwards* (1966) balances Perry Miller's heavily philosophical approach by examining the place of faith in Edwards' religious vision. Roland Delattre's *Beauty and Sensibility in the Thought of Jonathan Edwards*, (1968) studies Edwards' aesthetics and concept of beauty as the key to his understanding of God and of the nature of reality. Still others have explored Edwards' missiology, his eschatology, covenant theology, his views of heaven and hell, his

place in the tradition of American spiritual autobiography, his artistry and literary techniques, his psycho-history, and his leadership in Northampton, to name a few of the widely-ranging topics probed in recent years.¹⁴

Other indications of continuing interest in Edwards are statistics which reveal that some seventy-two dissertations were written on Edwards in the thirteen years from 1965-78, with a number of these efforts emanating from universities outside the U.S. (Amsterdam, Munich, Gottingen, Leipsig, Toronto, Edinburgh).¹⁵ Perhaps the most telling signs that Edwards will be permanently welcomed in academic halls and libraries are the appearances of several fine critical anthologies of collected commentary on Edwards and two extensive, annotated bibliographic volumes (one by Nancy Manspeaker and one by M. X. Lesser) to ease students through the thickets of 250 years of criticism and reaction to Edwards.¹⁶

In 1985, we may well ask what direction will future Edwards scholarship take. John Smith, the present General Editor of the Yale edition of Edwards' *Works*, has indicated that work is proceeding on volumes representing at least eight more categories in Edwards' writings: miscellaneous observations, ethical writings, *The History of Redemption*, writings on typology, biblical writings, church history, early sermons, and correspondence. Each volume will include a substantial "Editor's Introduction" providing research on the context, influences, and sources of the works.¹⁷ In addition to the contributions we may anticipate from the Yale edition, there remain many areas in need of further exploration: Edwards' influence abroad; nineteenth-century transmissions and permutations of Edwards' thought; additional in-depth studies of Edwards' covenant theology, his views on sanctification, the Trinity, the *imago dei*, principles of exegesis; and interdisciplinary investigations of Edwards' very interdisciplinary approaches to theology, philosophy, history, and science.

Much also remains to be discovered in the 1,200 manuscript sermons in the Edwards collection at Beinecke Library. Only 118 of Edwards' sermons have been published over the years; they are not all of his best. Wilson Kimnach, as a member of the Editorial Committee and editor of forthcoming Yale sermon edition, has noted that the published sermons are so uneven in quality that they "might have been selected by [Edwards'] enemies as well as friends." Kimnach also rightly asserts that the manuscript sermons "remain unrivaled as a chronicle of the man and his art in the midst of life."¹⁸

Indeed, these sermons, each a small handmade booklet constructed and labeled by Edwards himself, vividly record the shifts and developments of Edwards' pastoral consciousness during his thirty-six years (1722-1758) of preaching and gospel ministry. The sermons are the most regular, public, and extensive exercise of his pastoral office. Underlying these sermons is his ardent belief that a faithful minister, as a means of grace, can be "the greatest blessing of anything in the world that ever God bestows on a people."¹⁹

In a 1743 ordination sermon, Edwards' vocational intensity and zeal tellingly shape his creation of a short dramatic dialogue. In this sermon he describes a minister standing before the heavenly throne in the day of judgment to answer for his care of the souls placed in his charge. God interrogates. The imagined minister, and by extension Edwards, responds:

Lord,...I have not neglected...[the] souls thou didst commit to me...; I have given myself wholly to this work, labouring therein night and day; I have been ready, Lord, as thou knowest, to sacrifice my own ease and profit, and pleasure, and temporal convenience, and the good will of my neighbors; for the sake of the good of the souls I had the

charge of...I sought out acceptable words, and studied for the most likely means to be used.²⁰

However ironic or prophetic Edwards' sermon scenario may appear to modern readers, it leaves no doubt that Edwards believed the words of faithful gospel ministers are impressive means by which grace is revealed to God's people. And it is in the search for "acceptable words" during thirty-six years of sermons and writings that Edwards' vision of gospel ministry comes to concrete expression.

Not only the content, but also the physical features of the approximately 1,200 sermons tell much of the development, patterns, and shifts in Edwards' search for "acceptable words." In the early, apprenticeship years from 1722 until 1729 when he became principal pastor at Northampton, Edwards wrote *all* his sermons out fully. Most are penned in handmade octavo booklets of four sheets of paper infolded and stitched to make sixteen pages. These sermons fall assiduously within the three-part Puritan sermon framework of Text, Doctrine, and Application with subheadings in each part. The sermons' limited numbers of crossouts, revisions, or corrections suggest that he took great pains in composing. Most likely, he first drafted and developed the sermon on a worksheet before committing it in its final form to the booklet from which he preached.²¹ Many of these youthful sermons are obviously informed by his joyous personal experience of the sweetness, beauty, and majesty of God; often the sermon's "hortatory dimension is overshadowed by the poetically evocative language."²² The booklets' fixed number of pages tend to dictate the sermon length, although occasionally Edwards expanded the space by stitching an additional leaf or two to a booklet's end. Sometimes the difficulty in gauging space resulted in empty pages, no doubt an annoying waste for someone as habitually frugal as Edwards was.

From approximately 1727 (Edwards' of-

ficial association with Northampton church) to 1742 (the decline of the Great Awakening revivals), the sermons reveal notable changes in construction, design, and creation. One obvious difference appears in the sermon booklet size as Edwards shifts from handmade octavo booklets (6¼" × 4") to handmade duodecimo booklets (4" × 3¾") of sheets folded, stacked, collated, and then stitched along the folds. These duodecimo booklets of stacked sheets offered him greater flexibility; he could add pages to fit the sermon length rather than force the sermon length to fit into a prefolded booklet of sixteen pages. The smaller duodecimo booklets were also less conspicuous to palm in the pulpit or to pocket while traveling by horseback to other parishes to preach as Edwards upon invitation often did.

With demands rapidly mounting on his time, counsel, energy, and ecclesiastical leadership, Edwards during the 1730's increasingly bypassed the first draft stage of his earlier sermon-making and created the sermon directly in the preaching booklet. Sometimes he sketched an outline in the booklet before he wrote. Often, the booklets contain concrete evidence of his struggles to express, define, and present ideas clearly or pungently. Sometimes, he scratched through entire paragraphs, deleted sentences and phrases, added extensive interlineations, and in at least one case, discarded a biblical text and opening remarks to begin anew with another text and sermon deemed more suitable for the occasion (Job 11:12—1731).

It is also during the 1730's that the sermons gradually grow longer, frequently too long to fit into one preaching unit or length of time. The sermon manuscript collection contains numerous instances of two-unit and three-unit sermons from this period. Edwards also published a lengthy serial sermon on justification by faith in 1738 and a sixteen-part sermon called *Charity and its Fruits* in 1739. A thirty-part "sermon" which Edwards preached in 1739 was published posthumously as *History of the Work of Redemption* in 1774. Edwards had used the

traditional sermon form comfortably in his early sermons and still could use it for the powerfully focused revival sermons and other occasional or special sermons. But in the 1730's and early 1740's, the sermons seemed at times to be in danger of buckling under the weight of his complex insights, to verge on becoming treatises, and to be in peril of "dissolving under the pressure of long, long thoughts."²³

After 1742 and the decline of the Great Awakening, Edwards more and more resorted to preaching from sermon *outlines*. The sermon booklets of the 1740's and 1750's reveal roughly sketched-out sermon

(discarded tissue-like paper from his wife's fan-making cottage industry) in the sermon booklets does certainly suggest that Edwards was reserving his *best* paper for the lengthy theological works he was writing and preparing for the printer and a growing international readership.

In 1750, following several years of disagreements and controversy between Edwards and his congregation, he was dismissed from his position as pastor of the Northampton church. Edwards had adamantly insisted that persons who wished to become communicant members of the church must make a personal and public

With demands rapidly mounting on his time, counsel, energy, and ecclesiastical leadership, Edwards during the 1730's increasingly bypassed the first draft stage of his earlier sermon-making and created the sermon directly in the preaching booklet.

headings, subpoints, reasons, and propositions. These were then fleshed out in varying degrees of completeness with lists of phrases, texts, and words. Perhaps with these "outlinish" sermons Edwards was attempting to preach more extemporaneously after the manner of George Whitefield. Perhaps with the growing disappointments and tensions between the Northampton congregation and its pastor, Edwards' homiletic creativity was stifled. Perhaps his sermon-making energy was redirected into the production and publication of large theological works such as *Religious Affections* (1746) or *A Humble Inquiry* (1746). At any rate, the frequent appearance of recycled correspondence, envelopes, bills, and even "fan paper"

profession of their faith. The majority of church members, increasingly wary and resentful of his autocratic leadership, voted for his removal as their pastor.

In 1751, Edwards accepted a charge in Stockbridge, Massachusetts, a remote frontier outpost of a few white families and several hundred Indians. The search for "acceptable words" continued here, but once again it shifted and adjusted with the exigencies of his life. To the Mohawk Indians, Edwards preached very simple, brief sermons sketched out in a booklet of several pages. He accommodated the sermon's language, images, and illustrations to the Indians' experience. To the small white congregation, he preached with minor changes

his best sermons from earlier years. And he continued to write extensively, with an eye to publication, in defense of the orthodox foundations of the Christian church—the right understanding of freedom of the will, the nature of true virtue, the end for which God created the world, and the doctrine of original sin. These treatises became his apostolic message, his sermon and his errand to the world and future generations.

III

In conclusion, I would introduce excerpts from two specific unpublished sermons on ministry preserved in Yale's Beinecke Library. During his many years of ministry, Edwards prepared and preached numerous sermons for ministerial ordinations and installations. Most of these are unpublished but all are written out in full, including the last one he preached in 1754 and again in 1756. As Edwards writes and preaches on preaching and ministry, these sermons become lively and noteworthy vehicles communicating his conception of the faithful minister appointed by Christ and solemnly set apart to a "sacred office" as a kind of subordinate savior.

In 1736, when the extraordinary awakenings in Northampton were reverberating through the colonies, Edwards delivered his first sermon for the ordination of a fellow minister. This November 6, 1736, unpublished sermon preached at Lambston, Massachusetts, is a joyous celebration of the minister as God's trusted, faithful servant. Its doctrine based on Luke 10:17-18 asserts, "When those ministers of the gospel that have been faithful and successful come to give an account of their success to their Lord that hath sent them, Christ and they will rejoice together." The sermon's key words—"joy," "rejoice," "joyful," "rejoicing," "successful ministers," "faithful minister"—mark its optimism and exuberance: the labor is awesomely "great," the Master is infinitely "great," the minister's success is gloriously "great," and the

minister's vocation greatly surpasses all other earthly vocations:

There is no employment that the children of men are employed in wherein they have such opportunity [as in gospel ministry] to lay a foundation for their own blessedness. Faithfulness in serving God in any calling will be crowned with glorious rewards, but there seems to be promises of distinguished and peculiar honor and joy in a faithfulness in this work [of gospel ministry]. This employment may well be looked on as a yet more excellent and honorable employment on the account of the joy that the success of it occasions to Christ. The very business of those that are called to this employment is to do that in which Christ exceedingly rejoices. Surely that must be great and excellent indeed that the Lord of angels and men takes such notice of and so rejoices in.

This first ordination sermon does not detail the rigors and complexities of gospel ministry. Rather it presents a richly impressive, eschatological view of rejoicing and rewards awaiting faithful ministers:

Let us who are employed in or about to be employed in this work [of gospel ministry] consider how blessed a day that day will [be] to us when we return to our Lord to give an account, if we have been faithful and successful.... And when we shall be admitted unto fellowship and intimate conversation with our Lord and relate to him our labours and self-denial through his grace and the blessed success we had...we have reason to conclude from the word of God that they (ministers) shall be admitted as friends to converse freely with him, no less freely than the disciples on earth did.

At one point the sermon resonates with spousal, parental, and natal imagery, reflecting, of course, Edwards' great interest in typology and correspondences:

[Ministers are] employed in setting the crown of joy upon Christ's head in that they are the instruments of bringing to pass the work of conversion which is the marriage between Christ and his spouse. The day of [a soul's] conversion is the day of Christ's espousal and the day of his exceeding gladness of his heart.

It is thought to have been a custom among the Israelites that in the wedding day the mother of the bridegroom put a crown upon his head to be a crown and joy and rejoicing which is mystically applied to Christ in Cant. 3:11. By King Solomon is probably meant Christ. And by his mother and his bride, by both is meant the church, but by his mother seems especially to be meant the church as holding forth the word of Christ and administering his ordinances whereby souls are converted and as it were, brought forth and brought to a spiritual marriage with Christ and therefore the ministers of the gospel seem especially to be intended by his mother for the travail [sic] with souls 'till Christ be formed in them (Gal.4:19). Christ said of his disciples, they are my brethren and sister and mother. These therefore when they are the instruments of converting souls and their espousal to Christ, they do as it were put a crown of gladness on Christ's head.

And what an honor is that upon...faithful ministers as the instruments of the conversion of...persons, that brings a soul to espousal with Christ and occasions

gladness in his heart and adds a jewel to his crown of rejoicing.

And hereafter when they (ministers) come to give their [account] of their success, they shall then behold the crown of joy which they have set on Christ's head, and Christ will at the same time give the same souls to them to be their own crown of rejoicing and thus they shall have communion in the same crown of joy which shows the exceeding blessedness of that work.

Apart from brief words warning of the judgment awaiting the ministers who neglect the souls in their charge, this sermon delivered in 1736 stands as a vigorous, joyful celebration of ministry delivered by the man whom the world was fast coming to recognize as the leader of a wide-spread American revival.

In 1754, nearly twenty years after being invited to deliver his first ordination sermon, Edwards wrote the homily that would be his last ordination sermon. A personal note on the top left-hand side of the first page indicates that the message was "prepared for the [May 28, 1754] installment of Mr. Billing" and "preached also at No. 3 July, 1756 at Mr. Jones' Ordination." The sermon is grave, pensive, and heavily theological. It is shaped clearly and profoundly by Edwards' personal experience of rejection, pain, and defamation as a gospel minister deposed from his Northampton parish, his spiritual leadership repudiated and his pastoral theology scorned. Based on Acts 20:28, this unpublished sermon looks directly at the ineffably perfect example of Christ's suffering, selflessness, humility, and obedience as a pattern especially for gospel ministers. Edwards' sermon doctrine and intent are explicit: "My design...is to consider Christ's expending his own blood for the salvation and happiness of the souls of men, in the view both of an inducement and a

direction to ministers to exert themselves for the same end."

This final ordination sermon plays upon extremities—the infinite lowliness and utter vileness of men and women as enemies of Christ in dramatic contrast to Christ's infinite dignity, benevolence, perfection, and sacrificial love. Edwards' rhetorical method is to push the listener step by step to an

claims repeatedly, that ministers must not only represent but also resemble:

The work of the ministry is in many respects as Christ's own work, the work of being savior.... 'Tis undoubtedly the duty of ministers to...be willing to bring themselves even to the utmost as to all temporal

To view Edwards' long career as gospel minister particularly through the medium of his sermons is to observe him as he articulated that ministry and tried rigorously to embody it as Christ's messenger laboring to edify, build, and protect the church.

awareness that the magnitude of Christ's redemptive gift is beyond human comprehension. At times the language becomes incantatory:

It was the blood of one of infinite dignity and glory, and it was blood that was infinitely precious, and what was done in shedding of it for sinners was a thing infinitely great, infinitely greater than if the greatest earthly potentate had shed his blood or that of all the princes of earth, yea, an infinitely greater [than] the highest created angel, yea, and not only so but an infinitely greater thing than if the whole glorious host of those pure and glorious spirits [had given up their lives].

And so Edwards' sermon continues to repeat "infinite" upon "infinite" to magnify and intensify Christ's exaltation as well as his humility. And it is *this* Christ, Edwards

things and even of their own death, if they should be called to it in divine providence, yea, to undergo the most tormenting and ignominious death as many of Christ's ministers have been called to it and have actually done it.

Pointing to the martyrdom of the apostles and citing Colossians 1:24, II Corinthians 4:10, and I John 3:16, Edwards, no doubt remembering his own ministerial anguish, claims that it is especially the duty of ministers "to submit willingly and cheerfully to self-denial and suffering." Alluding to II Corinthians 12:15, he urges that "ministers should be ready to give what they have and give themselves to spend and be spent." Christ's charity and benevolence, says Edwards in the sermon's application, are "an example for all the followers of Christ, but more especially an example for ministers to teach them in what manner they ought to behave themselves in their work."

Once again Edwards' language is heavy

with superlatives as he attempts to excite his listeners to a consideration of the exemplary Christ in "the greatest test" of his love, "the highest manifestation" of his obedience, his "exercise of the fullest humility," his "most admirable kindness toward his most injurious, spiteful, and contemptuous enemies when they were in the highest exercise of their cruelty," and his suffering "the most terrible effects of [his enemies'] vile malignancy [when] they showed the most ingratitude."

Having initially presented a superlative view of Christ, Edwards' sermon subsequently moves to collapse the great gap between Christ and ministers by underscoring the ways in which self-sacrificing, faithful ministers not only represent but also resemble Christ: "The relation of ministers to the church of God is in many respects an image of that which Christ stands in." Edwards has thus masterfully managed his sermon at first to magnify the great abyss separating perfect Savior and sinful creature. But toward the sermon's conclusion, the emphasis on the infinite span between God and fallen sinners paradoxically gives way to an emphasis on the benevolent union between Christ and the redeemed. Most particularly in the gospel minister is Christ's love, compassion, and concern for souls concretely embodied: "The work of the ministry is the same in many respects as Christ's own work, the work of being savior." Through the instrumental words, lives, and persons of his ministers, says Edwards, Christ performs his great work of redemption.

It is little wonder that Edwards' last official ordination sermon, in striking contrast to the jubilation of his first ordination sermon, is touched by a somber consciousness that the minister's task contains much in it that brings great stress, pain, and disappointment in this life. Christ's ministers are to believe that through grace their faithful preaching demonstrates God's counsels, reveals God's mind, and shows forth God's glory. Yet, exactly when Edwards had believed himself faithful and diligent in pro-

tecting the sanctity of the Lord's Supper and in defending the great doctrines of the orthodox church, his leadership and preaching had been rejected by his parishoners, and he had been forced to leave the church he had served for 23 years.

In this last ordination sermon, we find once again a central paradox in Edwards' view of ministry. The minister's pressing desire is that the souls under his care be touched, awakened, nourished, and saved by the gospel he preaches. To this end, the minister strives continually to find acceptable words and to resemble and exemplify Christ his Lord. But this Christ is infinitely perfect, infinitely beautiful, infinitely meek, patient, and majestic, wholly beyond the capability of even the most righteous, longsuffering minister to imitate and exemplify.

To view Edwards' long career as gospel minister particularly through the medium of his sermons is to observe him as he articulated that ministry and tried rigorously to embody it as Christ's messenger laboring to edify, build, and protect the church. Further studies of Edwards' vast sermon canon and Yale's forthcoming volumes of his sermons will certainly enlighten our understanding of his ministerial vision, the motives that informed his preaching, and the metaphors of ministry which shaped his sermons and his life. It has been observed correctly that many of the best and most cogent expressions of Edwards' theological thought and pastoral concerns are yet to be uncovered in his unpublished sermon manuscripts.²⁴ But to be true to Edwards in any assessment of his words or preaching, we must remember that he would be quick to reiterate the words of apostle Paul in I Cor. 4:3-4: "With me it is a very small thing that I should be judged of you, or of man's judgment.... He that judges me is the Lord." Edwards' ultimate ambition, indeed his preoccupation throughout his ministry, was that his preaching and writing prove to be "acceptable words" before his Divine Master.

Endnotes

¹Timothy Dwight, *Travels in New-England and New-York* (New Haven: T. Dwight, 1822), 4, 323-28.

²Stephen Stein, *The Works of Jonathan Edwards* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1977), V, x.

³Samuel Hopkins, *The Life and Character of the Late Reverend Mr. Jonathan Edwards* (Boston: S. Kneeland, 1765).

⁴Charles Angoff, *A Literary History of the American People* (New York: Tudor, 1935), 299.

⁵Joseph H. Crooker, "Jonathan Edwards: A Psychological Study," *New England Magazine*, 2 (1890), 167.

⁶Perry Miller, "Jonathan Edwards on the Sense of the Heart," *Harvard Theological Review*, 41 (1943), 123.

⁷George Santayana, *Character and Opinion in the United States* (New York: C. Scribner's Sons, 1920), 9.

⁸James Lane Allen, *The Mettle of the Pasture* (New York: Macmillan Company, 1903), 128.

⁹*Works of President Edwards*, eds. E. Williams and E. Parsons, 8 volumes (Leeds: Edward Baines, 1806); *Works of President Edwards*, ed. Samuel Austin, 4 volumes (Worcester, Mass.: Isaiah Thomas, Jr., 1808); *The Works of President Edwards*, ed. Sereno E. Dwight, 10 volumes (New York: S. Converse, 1829-30); *The Works of Jonathan Edwards, A.M.*, ed. Edward Hickman, 2 volumes (London: William Tegg & Co., 1879).

¹⁰*An Account of the Life of the Late Reverend Mr. David Brainerd* (Boston: D. Henschman, 1749); *A Faithful Narrative of the Surprising Work of God in the Conversion of Many Hundred Souls in Northampton and the Neighboring Town and Villages* (Boston: S. Kneeland, 1738).

¹¹Alexander V. G. Allen's *Jonathan Edwards* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin & Company, 1890, reprinted frequently thereafter), has remained to this day an important work of interpretative biography and critical analysis of Edwards' writings and philosophy. An early twentieth century example of serious analyses of elements in Edwards' thought appears in *The Edwardean, A Quarterly Devoted to the History of Thought in America*. It was written, edited, and published by William Harder Squires during 1903-04, and anticipates many of the themes related to Edwards that would appear in scholarly journals later in the twentieth century.

¹²Winslow, *Jonathan Edwards, 1703-1758: A Biography*, (New York: Macmillan, 1940); Miller, *Jonathan Edwards*, (New York: Dell Publishing Company, 1949).

¹³*Original Sin*, ed. Clyde Holbrook (1970); *The Great Awakening*, ed. C. C. Goen (1972); *Apocalyptic Writings*, ed. Stephen Stein (1977); and *Philosophical Writings*, ed. Wallace Anderson (1980); *The Life of David Brainerd*, ed. Norman Pettit (1985).

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²⁰The Watchman's Duty and Account, *Works* (Dwight), VII, 190.

²¹Wilson Kimnach in a chapter entitled "The Sermon Canon" in "Literary Techniques of Jonathan Edwards" (Dissertation, University of Pennsylvania, 1971) provides the most extensive analysis available on Edwards' sermon manuscript form, materials, drafts, revisions, and developments.

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