

FROM REFORMATION TO REVIVAL:
An Overview of Protestant Movements from 1550–1750

- Protestant & Other Christian Groups in 16th Century Europe:



The Lutherans

- Martin Luther died in 1546. Philipp Melanchthon (who succeeded Luther as the leader of the Protestant Movement in Germany) died in 1560.
- Lutheranism was the strongest in Germany and Scandinavia. After Luther's death, the threat of schism among Lutherans was very real. This was resolved with the 1580 Book of Concord—produced on the 50th anniversary of the Diet of Augsburg. The Book of Concord (compiled by Jakob Andreae and Martin Chemnitz) consists of 10 credal documents which are considered the historic authoritative standard of the Lutheran Church.
- The book of Concord includes three ancient church creeds (the Apostles' Creed, the Nicene Creed, and the Athanasian Creed) in order to show that Lutheranism was in line with the history of the orthodox Christian church. It also included the earlier Augsburg Confession and some of the other writings of Martin Luther and Philip Melanchthon.

- From 1580–1689, Lutheranism developed into “Lutheran Orthodoxy”—characterized by theological systematization and an emphasis on logic and reason; it was also characterized by polemical opposition to any other system (whether Roman Catholic or Reformed); defined true Christianity in terms of correct doctrinal formulations
- The result was spiritual and theological lethargy, or “dead orthodoxy”
- The reaction to “dead orthodoxy” was Pietism—a movement which emphasized genuine spiritual experience and inward transformation. From 1689–1750, Pietism had a major influence on German Lutheranism.
- The first major Pietist was Phillip Jakob Spener (1635–1705). He is considered the “Father of Pietism,” and was a prolific writer and professor at the University of Halle. His *Pia Desideria* (published in 1675) was actually a long introduction to the work of Johann Arndt (1555–1621), an earlier Lutheran pastor who had spoken out against the dead orthodoxy of his day.
- Spener’s successor, August Hermann Francke (1663–1727) continued the work of Spener, and together they represent the first wave of Lutheran Pietism. Nicolas Ludwig Zinzendorf (1700–1760)—a leader among the Moravians (a group tracing their spiritual heritage back to John Huss)—represents a second wave of Pietism. Whereas Franke was a more biblical Pietist, Zinzendorf was more mystical.
- Pietism stressed the necessity of good works and a holy life. In contrast to orthodox Lutheranism, Pietism had a number of emphases: 1) lay Bible study, 2) prayer 3) emphasis on holy living, 4) avoidance of controversy, 5) more fervent preaching Zinzendorf
- During this time, two important historical events took place.
 - 1) The Thirty Years War (1618–1648) – The Protestant/Catholic divide in Germany finally lead to armed conflict. Eventually, almost every nation in Europe would be involved in the fighting. It was one of the most violent wars in all of European history. It was also the last major religious conflict to be fought on European soil.
 - 2) The Age of Enlightenment (c. 1650–1800) – When René Descartes published his work, *Discourse on the Method* (1637), a new philosophy began to emerge in Europe. This rationalistic approach to God became a major threat to orthodox Christianity. By the mid-1700s, the Enlightenment infiltrated German Lutheranism, surpassing Pietism as a dominant force in that denomination.

- After 1750, Rationalism began to overtake Pietism. The Rationalism of the Enlightenment essentially taught that human reason is all that is needed to solve mankind's problems and answer mankind's questions.
 - Leading Enlightenment thinkers included Descartes, Locke, Voltaire and even the American founding father, Thomas Jefferson.
 - Key to rationalism is the role of science and also philosophy, which were now distinguished from theology.
 - Two approaches to philosophy that came out of the enlightenment: (1) the European Rationalism of Descartes – attempted to understand reality by starting with human thought (2) the British Empiricism of John Locke – attempted to understand reality by starting with what can be observed in the external world; rather than being a thinker, the empiricist is an investigator
 - In both cases, the growing autonomy of human reason was emerging; there was a new focus in philosophy—human reason (and no longer the Bible) became supreme in determining what people believed.
 - The early scientists, in particular, were not men who lacked faith in God; Isaac Newton, for example, was a devout Christian and even wrote biblical commentaries; but as time went on, science soon became secularized. The Enlightenment is where the battle between science and the Bible began.
 - The rise of science led to a new way of conceiving the Christian faith; book after book attempted to set forth the reasonableness of Christianity, especially focusing on the issue of morality and ethics.
 - This then led to a new form of religion called Deism, which did not deny the existence of God, but painted God as far different than the biblical picture. God still exists as the Creator, but He is like a watchmaker who set the laws of nature in motion and then is no longer intimately involved in Creation.
- In reaction to the pure deduction and scientific rationalization of Enlightenment Rationalism, a new movement arose in the second half of the 18th century known as

Descartes

Romanticism. Unlike Rationalism, Romanticism emphasized emotion, intuition, and feeling.

- Romanticism found its center in human emotion and feeling, rather than in human thinking and reason; it also emphasized the sanctity of nature, rather than a scientific approach that stripped nature of its beauty and mystery.
- But if the Enlightenment led toward deism; Romanticism led toward pantheism. Instead of the scientist or the cerebral philosopher, it is the artist and the musician who is an inspired vehicle of truth.
- In theology, the effects of Romanticism can be seen in Immanuel Kant and Friedrich Schleiermacher.
- In response to rationalism, Friedrich Schleiermacher (1768–1834) emphasized the role of feeling and intuition in religion; He had been highly influenced by both Immanuel Kant and Georg W. F. Hegel. His emphasis on “feeling in religion” had a major influence on later thinkers like Albrecht Ritschl and Walter Rauschenbusch, the “Father of the Social Gospel in America.” Thus, the spirit of liberal theology was born.
- Since the 18th century, Western people have minds that are influenced by the Enlightenment (in which people believe that reason can find the answer to all of our problems) and hearts that are influenced by Romanticism (in which people live life according to personal feelings, wants, and desires)

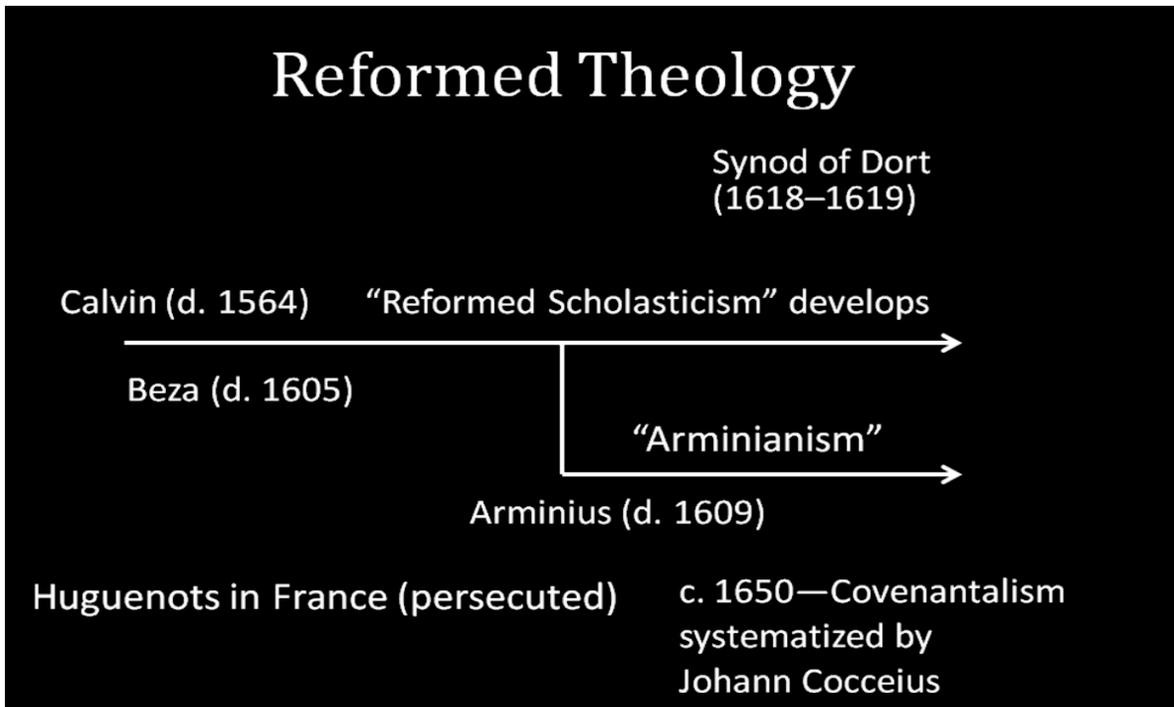
Reformed Theology

- John Calvin gave the Reformed movement the doctrinal character it needed after Zwingli died in 1531. With the term “Reformed,” Calvin meant “the Catholic Church reformed of abuses.”
- Theodore Beza succeeded John Calvin in Geneva; he is generally credited with establishing “Reformed Scholasticism.” Others also followed in the Reformed tradition, such as Martin Bucer, Heinrich Bullinger, and Johann Oecolampadius.
- Like Thomas Aquinas, the Reformed Scholastics emphasized Scripture, Tradition, and Reason in order to work out their specific theological formulations; though not Lutheran (and in fact opposed to Lutheranism), they were similar to the “Lutheran Orthodox” in their approach to theology

- Doctrinal stability came through the Heidelberg Catechism (1563) and the Synod of Dort (1618–19)
- In France, the followers of John Calvin were known as the “Huguenots” – they were greatly persecuted and did not really gain their full freedom until the French Revolution (though they did receive some freedom of religion under the Edict of Nantes in 1589)
- In the Netherlands, the Reformed movement really took hold; the Dutch Reformed church resulted
- It was in the Netherlands that Covenantalism was systematized. Covenantalism arose, as a system, in the mid-1600s under the development of two men, Johannes Cocceius (1603-1669) and Hermann Witsius (1636-1708).
- Also during this time the Five Points of Calvinism were developed: Total Depravity; Unconditional Election; Limited Atonement; Irresistible Grace; and Perseverance of the Saints. (These points were solidified at the Synod of Dort in response to Arminianism.)
- In opposition to the supralapsarianism of the Dutch Reformed, one Dutch theologian (Jacob Arminius) emphasized man’s free will.
 - Arminius (whose non-Latinized name was Jakob Hermanszoon [“Herman’s son”]) eventually became a professor at the University of Leiden.
 - Though at one point he had studied under Theodore Beza, he came to oppose certain aspects of Calvinistic teaching.
 - He died in 1609. The next year, his followers presented the five articles of Remonstrance, which noted their disagreements with Calvinism. These articles argued:
 - Against total depravity, that man is able of himself to exercise saving faith
 - Against irresistible grace, that God’s grace can be rejected by man
 - Against limited atonement, that the atonement was unlimited in its intention
 - Against unconditional election, that divine predestination is conditional (based on God’s foreknowledge of man’s response), not absolute



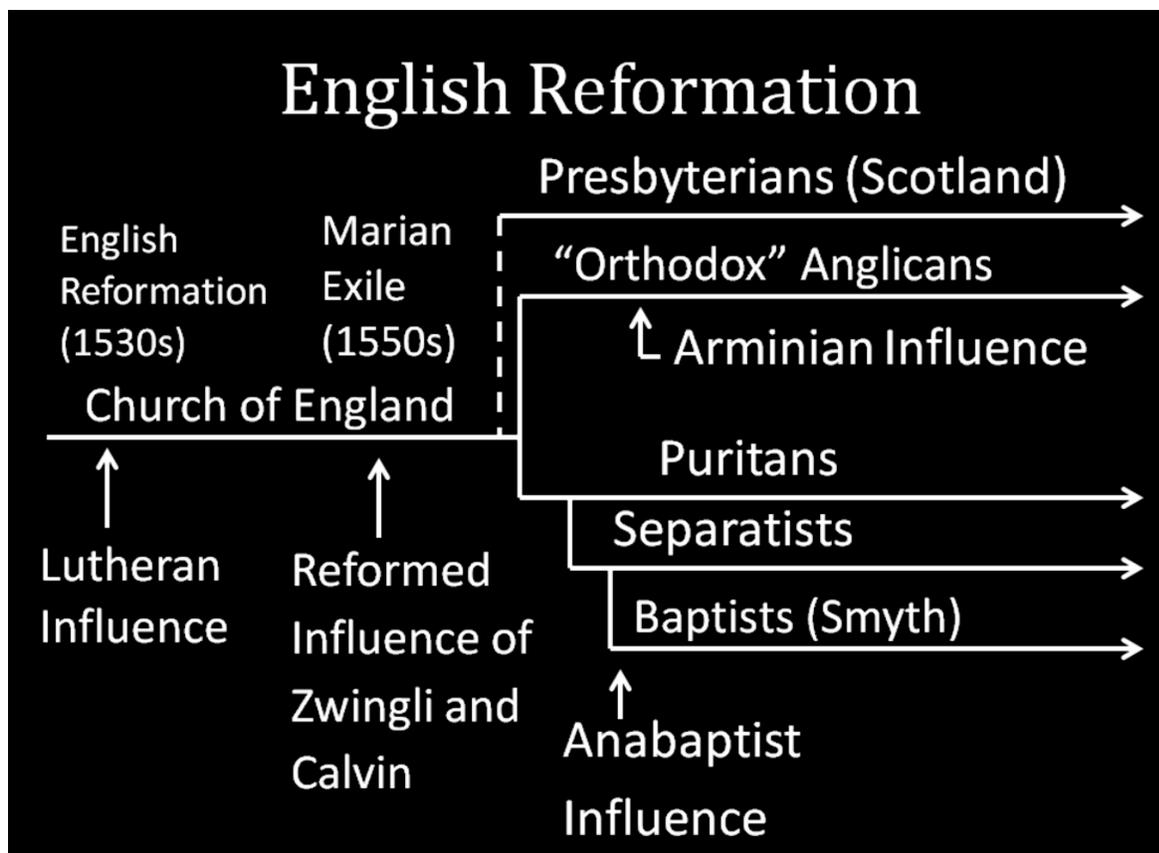
- Against the perseverance of the saints, that it is possible for believers to fall from grace and lose their salvation
- Arminius taught that there was a “preventing grace” (also called “prevenient grace”) that the Holy Spirit had given to all sinful men; such that men, even in their sin, were enabled by this grace to choose whether or not they would believe, and whether or not they would receive the gift of salvation.
- The Reformed position had been adopted by the state; thus, Arminius’s followers (the Arminians) were exiled from the Netherlands as a result
- Arminianism was condemned and Calvinism firmly espoused at the Synod of Dort (in 1618-1619); nonetheless, Arminianism began to have a major influence, even in the Anglican Church around this time.



English Reformation

- The English Reformation was initially influenced by Luther; though Martin Bucer brought a Reformed emphasis when he visited Thomas Cranmer in 1546; nonetheless, the result was an Anglican model in which vestiges of Roman Catholic liturgy were retained

- During the Marian exile (in the 1550s), many English Protestants were highly influenced by the Reformed movement in Europe; when these Protestants returned, they wanted to purify the Anglican church (“Puritans”)
- The monarchs of England (Elizabeth I, James I, Charles I) generally opposed the Puritan reforms, finally leading to the English Civil War
- In the early 1600s, the Anglican church was influenced by Arminian theology; though such teaching was opposed by the Puritans
- Many Puritans fled from England in the 1630s, establishing new colonies in New England, where they could practice church life according to their Puritan convictions



- Platonic philosophy and deism both threatened the Church of England, from about 1650 to 1800. Philosophers like John Locke (1632–1704) and David Hume (1711–1776) attacked the heart of the gospel.
- After the Glorious Revolution of William and Mary (1688), England quickly entered a period of deep spiritual decline.

- This spiritual decline set the stage for a revival in England, which took place (beginning in the 1720s and 1730s) alongside of the First Great Awakening in New England.
- The three key individuals in the revival were George Whitefield (1714–1770), John Wesley (1703–1791), and Charles Wesley (1707–1788).
- The revival that had begun to take place in Germany (through the Pietists and Moravians) had an influence on the evangelical revival in England.
- Some historians, such as D. W. Bebbington, trace the history of modern Evangelicalism to the evangelical revival of the 1730s in Great Britain. The key characteristics of the evangelical movement at that time were: 1) an emphasis on personal conversion and being born again; 2) an emphasis on personal evangelism; 3) an emphasis on biblical inerrancy and authority; and 4) an emphasis on the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.
- These themes will continue to characterize evangelicals in both Britain and America in the centuries to follow. (Of course, these themes were very much present in church history before the 18th century.)

American Puritanism

- The Plymouth Colony was established in 1620; Massachusetts Bay Colony in the 1630s. These two colonies were united in 1648 by the Cambridge Platform
- In 1636, Harvard University was established; also Roger Williams left Mass. Bay to found Rhode Island, and the first Baptist Church in America (in 1639)
- The initial generation of Puritans in New England were very devout and fervent
- But subsequent generations lacked the conviction of that initial generation; soon spiritual indifference began to set in
- In 1643, Solomon Stoddard was born; in 1670, he became pastor of the church in Northampton, a post he held for 55 years
- Stoddard noted the growing spiritual decline of the Puritans in New England, noting a general lack of interest in the church and in spiritual things
- Stoddard is generally credited with the Halfway Covenant, which was an attempt to incorporate nominal Christians into the life of the church

- The Halfway Covenant provided partial church membership for people who followed the rules and creeds of the church (provided they had been baptized as babies), even if they did not profess to be converted
- It also allowed them to join in Communion
- By the time we come to Jonathan Edwards (Solomon Stoddard's grandson), the church in New England is largely nominal, lethargic, and spiritually dead

Joseph Tracey, *The Great Awakening*, 7–8: It is easy to see, that this system [of the Halfway Covenant] favored the entrance of unconverted men into the ministry. If one was fit to be a member of the church; if he was actually a member in good standing; if he was living as God requires such men to live, and pressing forward, in the use of the appointed means, after whatever spiritual good he had not yet attained; if conversion is such a still and unobservable matter, that neither the candidate nor any one else can judge whether he has yet passed that point or not; and if his mental qualifications are found sufficient; why should he be excluded from the ministry? It could not be. The form of examining candidates as to their piety was still retained, but the spirit of it was dying away; and though it was esteemed improper to fasten the charge upon individuals by name, nobody doubted that there were many unconverted ministers. . . .

[Thus, there] had been the downward progress [of genuine spirituality] in New England. Revivals had become less frequent and powerful. There were many in the churches, and some even in the ministry, who were yet lingering among the supposed preliminaries to conversion. The difference between the church and the world was vanishing away. Church discipline was neglected, and the growing laxness of morals was invading the churches. And yet never, perhaps, had the expectation of reaching heaven at last been more general, or more confident. Occasional revivals had interrupted this downward progress, and the preaching of sound doctrine had retarded it, in many places, especially at Northampton; but even there it had gone on, and the hold of truth on the consciences of men was sadly diminished. The young were abandoning themselves to frivolity, and to amusements of dangerous tendency, and party spirit was producing its natural fruit of evil among the old.

- There was a great need for revival; such paved the way for the ministries and impact of men like Jonathan Edwards and George Whitefield.

AN EDWARDS, TWO WESLEYS, AND A WHITEFIELD: The Unexpected Revivals in England and America¹

¹ Parts of these notes, spec. with regard to Wesley and Whitefield, are adapted from *Christian History Magazine*.

Due to spiritual decline in both England and the American colonies, the stage was set for a Great Awakening and Evangelical Revival. It is during these years in the first half of the 18th century that God used four men in particular: Jonathan Edwards (1703–1758), John Wesley (1703–1791), Charles Wesley (1707–1788), and George Whitefield (1714–1770).

The following notes are set up in chronological fashion, tracing the history of these men and the impact of their ministries on both sides of the Atlantic.

1703 June 28 – John Wesley born

- Fifteenth of nineteen children
- His father (Samuel Wesley) was an Anglican minister

October 5 – Jonathan Edwards born

- He was the fifth of eleven children (1 boy, 10 girls)
- His father was a Congregationalist minister (Timothy Edwards)
- His mother was the daughter of Solomon Stoddard
- His family was tall, especially for that time period; Jonathan reached over 6 feet tall, and most of his sisters were around 6 feet tall. Timothy Edwards referred to his ten daughters as “sixty feet of daughters”

1706 Benjamin Franklin born

1707 Charles Wesley born (the eighteenth of nineteen children)

1709 John Wesley rescued from a fire at Epworth rectory

- John saw this as a key moment in his life where God “plucked him from the fire” and set him apart for special service

1711 Timothy Edwards (Jonathan’s father) served as a chaplain in the colonial military during an expedition into Canada. In a letter written around that time, Timothy (writing to his wife) says this about his 8-year-old son:

“I hope you will take special care of Jonathan, that he doesn’t learn to be rude and naught[y] etc. of which you and I have lately discoursed. I wouldn’t have you venture him to ride out into the woods.”

1712–13 – Shortly after Timothy returned home from his time as a military chaplain, Jonathan Edwards became very religious (as a young boy of 9 or 10). He would frequently pray and discuss religious topics with his friends. However, this intensity would pass. Later he would write that he “entirely lost all those affections and delights” and “returned like a dog to his vomit, and went on in ways of sin.”

1714 George Whitefield born in Gloucester, England, December 16.

- His father died when he was two years old.
- His mother remarried when he was seven, but his step-father was not a good choice. His mother left her second husband in 1728.
- George delayed his education to help at the inn
- His family was very poor

1716 Jonathan Edwards describes the fruit of his father’s ministry in a letter to his sister:

“DEAR SISTER: Through the wonderful goodness and mercy of God, there has been in this place a wonderful outpouring of the Spirit of god. It sill continues, but I have reason to think it is in some measure diminished; yet I hope not much. Three have joined the church since you last heard, five now stand propounded for admission, and I think about twenty persons come commonly on Mondays to converse with father about the condition of their souls. It is a time of general health here. Abigail, Hannah, and Lucy have had the chickenpox and are recovered. Jerusha is most well. Except her, the whole family is well. Sister, I am glad to hear of your welfare as often as I do. I should be glad to hear from you by letter, and therein how it is with you in your crookedness. Your loving brother, Jonathan E.” (cited from *Homiletic Review*, p. 442)

1716–22 – Edwards pursues his education at Yale College

- He was 13 years old when he started college; the normal age would have been around 16, but Edwards had already learned the languages need to be admitted
- At this point, Jonathan was still not converted. At age 16, he became very ill and thought he was going to die. As a result, he became very concerned about the condition of his soul, stating that he felt like God “shook me over the pit of hell”
- But it was not until he started his Master’s degree program that his heart was finally regenerated; in 1721, Edwards himself noted the evidence of his spiritual transformation
- During this time, Edwards still struggled with the doctrine of Divine sovereignty. He recounted his “full of objections against the doctrine of God’s sovereignty, in choosing whom he would to eternal life, and rejecting whom he please; leaving

them eternally to perish, and be everlastingly tormented in hell. It used to appear like a horrible doctrine to me.”

1720–26 – Jonathan Edwards writes his Seventy Resolutions (see appendix for full list)

- He was 17 years old when he started and 23 when he completed his resolutions
- They are the result of his conversion and give full evidence of his regeneration
- Here is Edwards’ own expression of his heart’s commitment:

“On January 12, 1723, I made a solemn dedication of myself to God and wrote it down; giving up myself and all that I had to God, to be for the future in no respect my own; to act as one that had no right to myself in any respect; and solemnly vowed to take God for my whole portion and felicity, looking on nothing else as any part of my happiness, nor acting as if it were; and his law for the constant rule of my obedience, engaging to fight with all my might against the world, the flesh, and the devil, to the end of my life.”

- In the midst of writing his resolutions, Edwards ministered briefly in New York (in 1722) and Connecticut (1723–1724) and then served as a tutor at Yale College (1724–1726)
- Also during this time (in 1723), he met Sarah Pierpont (his future wife), who although she was only 13 years old at the time caught the young man’s attention.

Writing about her, Edwards said this: “They say there is a young lady in [New-Haven] who is loved of that Great Being, who made and rules the world, and that there are certain seasons in which this Great Being, in some way or other invisible, comes to her and fills her mind with exceeding sweet delight; and that she hardly cares for anything, except to meditate on him—that she expects after a while to be received up where he is, to be raised up out of the world and caught up into heaven; being assured that he loves her too well to let her remain at a distance from him always. There she is to dwell with him, and to be ravished with his love and delight forever. Therefore, if you present all the world before her, with the richest of its treasures, she disregards it and cares not for it, and is unmindful of any pain or affliction. She has a strange sweetness in her mind, and singular purity in her affections; is most just and conscientious in all her conduct; and you could not persuade her to do anything wrong or sinful, if you would give her all the world, lest she should offend this Great Being. She is of a wonderful sweetness, calmness, and universal benevolence of mind; especially after this Great God has manifested himself to her mind. She will sometimes go about from place to place, singing sweetly; and seems to be always full of joy and pleasure; and no one knows for what. She loves to be alone, walking in the fields and

groves, and seems to have someone invisible always conversing with her.”
(*Settlement in the Ministry at Northampton*, chapter 7)

1726 Jonathan Edwards goes to Northampton, Massachusetts to assist his grandfather, Solomon Stoddard

- The church in Northampton was large (as many as 1,000 members); and Northampton itself was the most important city in Massachusetts outside of Boston
- Solomon Stoddard had been influential in orchestrating the Half-Way Covenant (an issue which would later prove controversial in Edwards’s own ministry)

1727 Jonathan Edwards marries Sarah Pierpont. She is 17 years old; he is 24. They would have eleven children.

1729 Charles Wesley founds the Holy Club at Oxford; both John Wesley and George Whitefield also eventually take part in the Holy Club (though later). All three men later admit that they were not converted at this time; yet they were seeking to live holy lives in spite of their lack of personal conversion.

Also in 1729, Solomon Stoddard dies and Jonathan becomes the full pastor of the congregation in Northampton

1732 George Whitefield enrolls at Pembroke College, Oxford University. He pays expenses by working as a “servitor” (an errand boy for other students). He begins praying three times a day and fasting weekly.

1732 George Washington born

1733 George Whitefield invited to breakfast by Charles Wesley and introduced to the Holy Club’s 10 or 11 earnest members. He borrows from Wesley *The Life of God in the Soul of Man* by Henry Scougal, which “showed me that I must be born again, or be damned!”

1734 Like his Holy Club friends, George Whitefield seeks salvation through severe discipline and good works, which causes a breakdown of his health from which he never fully recovers.

- Participants in the Holy Club are mockingly called “Methodists” by other students ... the name also comes to speak of a “methodical approach to the Scriptures and Christian living”

1734–35 – Revival begins to break forth in Northampton and Connecticut Valley

- Though evangelistic efforts had been made by others (like Solomon Stoddard), Jonathan Edwards was surprised to note that there was something different about this revival (or awakening)
- It was the most powerful and widespread that Edwards had ever witnessed; within three months nearly half of the adult population had been converted
- Edwards recorded these events in his 1737 work *A Faithful Narrative* which brought international attention to the New England revival

1735 Following five years of penitence and self-righteousness, George Whitefield becomes first of the Oxford “Methodists” to experience “a full assurance of faith [which] broke in upon my disconsolate soul!” As a result, he begins evangelizing and organizing the converts into a society of believers.

Also, in 1735, Samuel Wesley dies. John and Charles decide to leave for Georgia, in order to minister in the colonies. George Whitefield leads the Holy Club in their absence, but soon determines that he also wants to be a missionary to the American colonies.

The Wesley’s time in Georgia proves to be a disaster. Again, by their own admission, neither one is a genuine believer at this time. Charles returns in 1736. John returns in 1737 after a failed relationship with a Miss Sophy Hopkey.

- She wanted to get married, but he was afraid doing so would hurt his ministry. He was especially interested in evangelizing the native American Indians in Georgia.
- She grew impatient and, in March 1737, informed John that she would marry someone else unless he objected.
- In response, he decided to draw lots in order to make his decision. He wrote down three different options on three slips of paper: 1) Get married; 2) Think it over for a year; or 3) Don’t think about it anymore. He drew the third slip of paper, and decided not to marry Sophy.
- Later, in August 1737, he refused to permit Sophy to take communion, resulting in controversy. Though John claimed he had valid reasons to refuse her communion, her new husband threatened to take him to court for defaming her reputation.
- In light of these and other charges levied against him, Wesley fled from Georgia and returned, discouraged, to England.

1737 George Whitefield begins preaching in Bristol and London. The response is overwhelming as thousands come to hear him.

1738 Jonathan Edwards preaches a series of sermons on “Charity and Its Fruits,” showing what true revival should look like in the loving fruit of the Christian life.

Also, George Whitefield makes his first of seven trips to the American colonies. He spends three months ministering in Georgia.

Also in 1738, both of the Wesley brothers are truly converted.

May 21: Charles finds himself "at peace with God"

May 24: John feels his heart "strangely warmed" (after hearing the Moravians reading from Luther's introduction to his commentary on Romans)

1739 George Whitefield returns to England and is ordained as an Anglican priest. But he finds that many of the pulpits in England are closed to him, so he starts preaching outdoors. Thousands flock to hear him preach.

Also, Jonathan Edwards continues to encourage the believers in Northampton to stay the course in their Christian walk. Some of them, he fears, are beginning to slip back into their pre-revival habits. In response, he preaches a series called the “History of Redemption,” emphasizing the hostility between God and Satan.

Whitefield returns to America, and preaches to throngs in New York and Philadelphia. He also meets and befriends Benjamin Franklin.

1740 When Edwards heard of the widespread impact of Whitefield's preaching, he wrote to George Whitefield and invited him to come to Northampton. Whitefield agreed and as a result of Whitefield's New England tour, the Great Awakening was officially sparked.

Roger Olson, regarding Edwards: He was a revivalist who stood at the center of the Great Awakening that swept through the colonies in the 1740s, and he helped found the science of psychology of religion through his careful and critical examinations of religious experiences... through his writings Edwards created a distinctively American form of Reformed theology that has stood as a landmark for intellectual Protestant Christians of evangelical faith for over two centuries. (*The Story of Christian Theology*, 504–505)

Not all New England pastors responded positively to Whitefield's impact. Among Congregationalists, two opposing camps developed. The “Old Light” clergy opposed the Great Awakening. The “New Light” ministers supported the Awakening.

1741 When he returned to England in March, George Whitefield meets with hostility, largely stemming from John Wesley who had attacked Whitefield's Calvinism. In response, Whitefield publishes a counterattack against Wesley. In November, he marries widow Elizabeth James.

Iain Murray on Whitefield and Wesley:

When Whitefield returned to England at the end of 1738, after his first visit to America, he found that the awakening in London had been furthered by the conversion and subsequent ministry of the Wesleys. Immediately they began to work together. Under Whitefield's preaching the revival spread to Bristol and the West country in February and March 1739, and when he left that area at the beginning of April 1739, John Wesley was given the oversight of the work. But before three months had elapsed it began to be evident that there had not been the same doctrinal development in the Wesleys on all points mentioned above. The fact is that while John Wesley had at his conversion in May 1738 accepted evangelical views on sin, faith, and the re-birth, he had at the same time retained his pre-conversion opinions on the doctrines of predestination and the extent of the atonement. As the religious influences which had moulded Wesley prior to his conversion were High Anglican, it is not surprising that these opinions were Arminian and not orthodox. His views on these points were not part of his new evangelical experience but arose, as Howell Harris declared to him, "from the prejudices of your education, your books, your companions, and the remains of your carnal reason."

The first hint that this doctrinal difference might lead to serious results occurs in a letter of Whitefield's to Wesley on June 25, 1739: "I hear, honoured sir, you are about to print a sermon on predestination. It shocks me to think of it; what will be the consequences but controversy? If people ask me my opinion, what shall I do? I have a critical part to act, God enable me to behave aright! Silence on both sides will be best. It is noised abroad already, that there is a division between you and me. Oh, my heart within me is grieved. "

On July 2, 1739, Whitefield wrote further to Wesley on this subject, terminating his letter with another appeal:

"Dear, honoured sir, if you have any regard for the peace of the church, keep in your sermon on predestination. But you have cast a lot. Oh! my heart, in the midst of my body, is like melted wax. The Lord direct us all! . . . "

On Whitefield's departure from England in August 1739, Wesley immediately published this sermon. Entitled "Free Grace," it professed to be founded upon Romans 8:32, and was printed as a 12 mo. pamphlet in 24 pages. Annexed to it was a hymn by Charles Wesley on *Universal Redemption*.

On September 25, 1740, he wrote to Wesley: "What a fond conceit is it to cry up *perfection*, and yet cry down the doctrine of *final perseverance*. But this, and many other absurdities, you will run into, because you will not own *election*. . . . O that you would study the covenant of grace! . . . O that you would not be too rash and precipitant! If you go on thus, honoured sir, how can I concur with you? It is impossible. I must speak what I know. . . ." On February 1, 1741, he says;

further: "I must preach the gospel of Christ, and that I cannot now do, without speaking of election. . . ."

[His published reply in 1741 includes statements like this:

Dear Sir, for Jesus Christ's sake, consider how you dishonour God by denying election. You plainly make salvation depend not on *God's free grace*, but on *man's free-will*. And if thus, it is more than probable, Jesus Christ would not have had the satisfaction of seeing the fruit of his death in the eternal salvation of one soul. Our preaching would then be vain, and all invitations for people to believe in him would also be in vain.]

The outcome of Whitefield's return to England in March 1741 and the publication of his reply to Wesley (also published in 1741), was an inevitable separation. Henceforth the evangelical forces engaged in the revival movement were divided, and a new party of Arminian evangelicals emerged for the first time in British church history. Due to the eminence of the Wesleys, this new form of evangelical faith has exerted a widespread influence even down to the present day. The contemporary strength of this influence can be judged from the manner in which George Whitefield, with his great predecessors the Reformers and Puritans, have been forgotten; indeed, it would not be too much to say that Whitefield's views, as expressed in [his letter to Wesley], would appear to many to be quite alien to the evangelicalism that is commonly believed in today.

Some evangelical writers have sought to minimize the division between Whitefield and Wesley by referring to their "minor differences." An impression is given that Whitefield abandoned the strong conviction he had about Arminianism in 1741; in proof of this we are referred to the fact that in 1742 their personal friendship was in measure resumed and that ultimately Wesley even preached Whitefield's funeral sermon. But all this is misleading. The truth is that Whitefield rightly made a distinction between a difference in judgement and a difference in affection; it was in the *former* sense that he differed from the Wesleys, and that difference was such that, as Tyerman writes, it "led them to build separate chapels, form separate societies, and pursue, to the end of life, separate lines of action . . . the gulf between Wesley and Whitefield was immense." But while their public cooperation was thus seriously disturbed, his personal affection for the Wesleys as Christians was preserved to the last. In this respect Whitefield teaches us a needful lesson. Doctrinal differences between believers should never lead to personal antagonism. Error must be opposed even when held by fellow members of Christ, but if that opposition cannot co-exist with a true love for all saints and a longing for their spiritual prosperity then it does not glorify God nor promote the edification of the Church.

Also in 1741 Jonathan Edwards preaches his famous sermon, *Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God*; preached at Enfield, Connecticut on July 8

“Before the sermon was done, there was a great moaning and crying out throughout the whole house. ‘What shall I do to be saved? Oh, I am going to Hell! Oh, what shall I do for Christ?’ Edwards asked for silence, but the tumult increased until Edwards had to stop preaching. A monument to the sermon stood until twentieth century on the site of the Enfield meeting house” (“The Diary of Stephen Williams” in Oliver Means, *A Sketch of the Strict Congregation Church of Enfield, Connecticut* [Hartford, 1899])

1742 First performance of G. F. Handel's *Messiah*

1743 John Wesley issues a defense of Methodism entitled, *An Earnest Appeal to Men of Reason and Religion*. The same year, George Whitefield helps to found the Welsh Calvinistic Methodist Association.

1746 Jonathan Edwards publishes his *Religious Affections*.

Excerpt: “The first objective ground of gracious affections, is the transcendently excellent and amiable nature of divine things as they are themselves; and not any conceived relation they bear to self, or self-interest. I say, that the supremely excellent nature of divine things, is the first, or primary and original objective foundation of the spiritual affections of true saints; for I do not suppose that all relation which divine things bear to themselves, and their own particular interest, is wholly excluded from all influence in their gracious affections. For this may have, and indeed has, a secondary and consequential influence in those affections that are truly holy and spiritual, as I shall show how by and by.”

1747 David Brainerd dies in the Edwards’s home. Two years later, in 1749, Jonathan Edwards publishes his biography on the life of David Brainerd.

1749 Charles Wesley breaks up John's romantic relationship with Grace Murray; John officiates at Charles's wedding.

J.B. Wakely: None will venerate the memory of John Wesley less if we say he loved Grace Murray, and had a desire she should become his wife. They were engaged to be married; but his brother Charles and Whitefield were opposed to his marrying at all, and took steps which were but too successful to induce her to marry another. John Bennet was one of Mr. Wesley's early preachers and was very successful. He afterward separated from Mr. Wesley's societies, became a Calvinist, and the pastor of an independent Church in Cheshire. He had once been sick of a fever and Grace Murray nursed him, and from that period he desired she should become his wife. Favored with the influence of Charles Wesley and of Whitefield, he succeeded in winning Grace; she having been persuaded by these influential friends that her marrying John Wesley would in all probability lessen his usefulness in the itinerancy.

John Wesley felt the disappointment most keenly. He poured out the sorrows of his heart not only in prose but in verse. In one of his letters he says, “The sons of Zeruiah were too

strong for me. The whole world fought against me, but above all my own familiar friend. Then was fulfilled, ‘Son of man, behold I take from thee the desire of thine eyes at a stroke, yet shall not thou lament, neither shall thy tears run down.’ The fatal, irrecoverable stroke was struck on Thursday last. Yesterday I saw my friend that was, and him to whom she is sacrificed.”

Also in 1749, John Wesley publishes *A Plain Account of the People Called Methodists*

1750 Jonathan Edwards preaches his *Farewell Sermon* after being voted out of his church. The primary conflict regarded his view that only true believers could participate in the Lord’s Table.

1751 John Wesley marries Mary Vazeille

- **She was 7 years younger than he was**
- **She was a widow with four children from her previous marriage**
- **Their marriage was not a happy one and ended in her leaving him**
- **She was apparently short-tempered and jealous of Wesley’s interaction with other women (especially female housekeepers)**

Also in 1751, Edwards moves to Stockbridge, Massachusetts in order to serve as both a pastor and a missionary to the American Indians there.

1754 Jonathan Edwards publishes his *Freedom of the Will*.

1755 John Wesley and his wife Mary separate due to marital problems

1756 Amadeus Mozart born

1758 Back in 1757, Jonathan Edwards was nominated to be the president of Princeton College (then called, the College of New Jersey). But shortly after his arrival in 1758, he was inoculated for smallpox. As a result, he contracted the disease and died on March 22.

Speaking of her husband’s death, Sarah Edwards said: “O My Very Dear Child, What shall I say? A holy and good God has covered us with a dark cloud. Oh that we may kiss the rod [of reproof], and lay our hands on our mouths! The Lord has done it. He has made me adore his goodness, that we had him so long. But my God lives; and he has my heart. Oh what a legacy my husband, and your father, has left us! We are all given to God: and there I am, and love to be.” (cited from George Marsden, *Jonathan Edwards*, 495)

Regarding his legacy, John Piper notes: “My own judgment is that, from generation to generation, giants like Edwards are needed to inspire us to think

about our faith, and to guard us from settling superficially on small ideas about a small God. We need Edwards to waken us from our pragmatic stupor of indifference to doctrine in worship and prayer and evangelism and missions and church planting and social action. We need Edwards to show us again the beauty and the power of truth. Edwards does this so well because he is relentlessly God-besotted and God-exalting. He helps us recover truth because he never loses sight of the unspeakable reality of God, where truth originates, and whom it exists to serve.” (*God’s Passion for His Glory*, 97)

1769–1770 – George Whitefield makes his seventh and final trip to the American colonies. It is his 13th trans-Atlantic trip. He arrives in Charleston and preaches for 10 days to large congregations. In September, 1770, he preaches his final sermon in New Hampshire and dies the following day. Some 6,000 people attend the memorial service in England, at which John Wesley preaches.

- Over his life, he preached some 18,000 sermons of which less than 80 have been published
- He had extensive ministries in both England and America; he also made 15 trips to Scotland, 2 to Ireland, and one to the Netherlands, one to Bermuda, and one to Gibraltar.
- He was the most well-known preacher in both America and New England of the 18th century; and one of the most recognizable figures of his day

Arnold A. Dallimore: “We must also inquire, What were Whitefield’s accomplishments? Throughout his lifetime and for several years after his death he was known as ‘the leader and founder of Methodism.’ Yet, as we have seen, he willingly relinquished his position as the head of the Calvinistic branch of the movement and served thereafter as ‘simply the servant of all.’

Whitefield also taught the evangelical world a new manner of preaching. In a day when ministers in general were lacking in zeal and were apologetic in preaching, he preached the gospel with aggressive zeal and undaunted courage. He set mankind on fire wherever he went, and numerous men, learning from his example, began to preach after the same manner. For a hundred years his style of direct application was practiced in the overwhelming majority of Protestant pulpits.

He likewise held to the fundamentals of the faith. He believed in the inerrancy of the Bible, the Deity, virgin birth, atoning death, and literal resurrection of Jesus Christ, and that salvation is not by works but by grace. These truths he declared so consistently that they gradually filtered into a vast multitude of consciences, and for at least a century after his death they were preached in the greater number of churches in both Britain and America.

. . . He initiated almost all of [the 18th-century revival’s] enterprises—the open-air preaching, the use of lay preachers, the publishing of a magazine, the

organizing of an association, and the holding of a conference. And by his thirteen crossings of the ocean, he provided the international scope of the movement. Among his accomplishments there must be recognized the host of men and women he led to Jesus Christ and the large part he played in this great work of revival on both sides of the Atlantic” (*George Whitefield*, 200 – 201).

1770 Ludwig von Beethoven born

1775 American Revolution begins

1771 Francis Asbury sails to America

1776 Methodists in America number 4,921

1788 Charles Wesley dies (after composing some 5,000 hymns)

1791 John Wesley dies

- Today there are approximately 70 million Methodist adherents worldwide. The vast majority of them follow in the Arminian tradition of John Wesley.

APPENDIX: The Seventy Resolutions of Jonathan Edwards

Being sensible that I am unable to do anything without God's help, I do humbly entreat him by his grace to enable me to keep these Resolutions, so far as they are agreeable to his will, for Christ's sake.

Remember to read over these Resolutions once a week.

1. Resolved, that I will do whatsoever I think to be most to God's glory, and my own good, profit and pleasure, in the whole of my duration, without any consideration of the time, whether now, or never so many myriad's of ages hence. Resolved to do whatever I think to be my duty and most for the good and advantage of mankind in general. Resolved to do this, whatever difficulties I meet with, how many and how great soever.

2. Resolved, to be continually endeavoring to find out some new invention and contrivance to promote the aforementioned things.

3. Resolved, if ever I shall fall and grow dull, so as to neglect to keep any part of these Resolutions, to repent of all I can remember, when I come to myself again.

4. Resolved, never to do any manner of thing, whether in soul or body, less or more, but what tends to the glory of God; nor be, nor suffer it, if I can avoid it.

5. Resolved, never to lose one moment of time; but improve it the most profitable way I possibly can.
6. Resolved, to live with all my might, while I do live.
7. Resolved, never to do anything, which I should be afraid to do, if it were the last hour of my life.
8. Resolved, to act, in all respects, both speaking and doing, as if nobody had been so vile as I, and as if I had committed the same sins, or had the same infirmities or failings as others; and that I will let the knowledge of their failings promote nothing but shame in myself, and prove only an occasion of my confessing my own sins and misery to God.
9. Resolved, to think much on all occasions of my own dying, and of the common circumstances which attend death.
10. Resolved, when I feel pain, to think of the pains of martyrdom, and of hell.
11. Resolved, when I think of any theorem in divinity to be solved, immediately to do what I can towards solving it, if circumstances don't hinder.
12. Resolved, if I take delight in it as a gratification of pride, or vanity, or on any such account, immediately to throw it by.
13. Resolved, to be endeavoring to find out fit objects of charity and liberality.
14. Resolved, never to do anything out of revenge.
15. Resolved, never to suffer the least motions of anger to irrational beings.
16. Resolved, never to speak evil of anyone, so that it shall tend to his dishonor, more or less, upon no account except for some real good.
17. Resolved, that I will live so as I shall wish I had done when I come to die.
18. Resolved, to live so at all times, as I think is best in my devout frames, and when I have clearest notions of things of the gospel, and another world.
19. Resolved, never to do anything, which I should be afraid to do, if I expected it would not be above an hour, before I should hear the last trump.
20. Resolved, to maintain the strictest temperance in eating and drinking.
21. Resolved, never to do anything, which if I should see in another, I should count a just occasion to despise him for, or to think any way the more meanly of him.
22. Resolved, to endeavor to obtain for myself as much happiness, in the other world, as I possibly can, with all the power; might, vigor, and vehemence, yea violence, I am capable of, or can bring myself to exert, in any way that can be thought of.

23. Resolved, frequently to take some deliberate action, which seems most unlikely to be done, for the glory of God, and trace it back to the original intention, designs and ends of it; and if I find it not to be for God's glory, to repute it as a breach of the 4th Resolution.
24. Resolved, whenever I do any conspicuously evil action, to trace it back, till I come to the original cause; and then both carefully endeavor to do so no more, and to fight and pray with all my might against the original of it.
25. Resolved, to examine carefully, and constantly, what that one thing in me is, which causes me in the least to doubt of the love of God; and to direct all my forces against it.
26. Resolved, to cast away such things, as I find do abate my assurance.
27. Resolved, never willfully to omit anything, except the omission be for the glory of God; and frequently to examine my omissions.
28. Resolved, to study the Scriptures so steadily, constantly and frequently, as that I may find, and plainly perceive myself to grow in the knowledge of the same.
29. Resolved, never to count that a prayer, nor to let that pass as a prayer, nor that as a petition of a prayer, which is so made, that I cannot hope that God will answer it; nor that as a confession, which I cannot hope God will accept.
30. Resolved, to strive to my utmost every week to be brought higher in religion, and to a higher exercise of grace, than I was the week before.
31. Resolved, never to say anything at all against anybody, but when it is perfectly agreeable to the highest degree of Christian honor, and of love to mankind, agreeable to the lowest humility, and sense of my own faults and failings, and agreeable to the golden rule; often, when I have said anything against anyone, to bring it to, and try it strictly by the test of this Resolution.
32. Resolved, to be strictly and firmly faithful to my trust, that that in Prov. 20:6, "A faithful man who can find?" may not be partly fulfilled in me.
33. Resolved, always to do what I can towards making, maintaining, establishing and preserving peace, when it can be without over-balancing detriment in other respects. *Dec. 26, 1722.*
34. Resolved, in narration's never to speak anything but the pure and simple verity.
35. Resolved, whenever I so much question whether I have done my duty, as that my quiet and calm is thereby disturbed, to set it down, and also how the question was resolved. *Dec. 18, 1722.*
36. Resolved, never to speak evil of any, except I have some particular good call for it. *Dec. 19, 1722.*

37. Resolved, to inquire every night, as I am going to bed, wherein I have been negligent, what sin I have committed, and wherein I have denied myself: also at the end of every week, month and year. *Dec. 22 and 26, 1722.*
38. Resolved, never to speak anything that is ridiculous, sportive, or matter of laughter on the Lord's day. *Sabbath evening, Dec. 23, 1722.*
39. Resolved, never to do anything that I so much question the lawfulness of, as that I intend, at the same time, to consider and examine afterwards, whether it be lawful or no; except I as much question the lawfulness of the omission.
40. Resolved, to inquire every night, before I go to bed, whether I have acted in the best way I possibly could, with respect to eating and drinking. *Jan. 7, 1723.*
41. Resolved, to ask myself at the end of every day, week, month and year, wherein I could possibly in any respect have done better. *Jan. 11, 1723.*
42. Resolved, frequently to renew the dedication of myself to God, which was made at my baptism; which I solemnly renewed, when I was received into the communion of the church; and which I have solemnly re-made this twelfth day of January, 1722-23.
43. Resolved, never henceforward, till I die, to act as if I were any way my own, but entirely and altogether God's, agreeable to what is to be found in *Saturday, January 12. Jan. 12, 1723.*
- 44- Resolved, that no other end but religion, shall have any influence at all on any of my actions; and that no action shall be, in the least circumstance, any otherwise than the religious end will carry it. *Jan. 12, 1723.*
45. Resolved, never to allow any pleasure or grief, joy or sorrow, nor any affection at all, nor any degree of affection, nor any circumstance relating to it, but what helps religion. *Jan. 12 and 13. 1723.*
46. Resolved, never to allow the least measure of any fretting uneasiness at my father or mother. Resolved to suffer no effects of it, so much as in the least alteration of speech, or motion of my eye: and to be especially careful of it, with respect to any of our family.
47. Resolved, to endeavor to my utmost to deny whatever is not most agreeable to a good, and universally sweet and benevolent, quiet, peaceable, contented, easy, compassionate, generous, humble, meek, modest, submissive, obliging, diligent and industrious, charitable, even, patient, moderate, forgiving, sincere temper; and to do at all times what such a temper would lead me to. Examine strictly every week, whether I have done so. *Sabbath morning. May 5, 1723.*
48. Resolved, constantly, with the utmost niceness and diligence, and the strictest scrutiny, to be looking into the state of my soul, that I may know whether I have truly an interest in Christ or no; that when I come to die, I may not have any negligence respecting this to repent of. *May 26, 1723.*
49. Resolved, that this never shall be, if I can help it.

50. Resolved, I will act so as I think I shall judge would have been best, and most prudent, when I come into the future world. *July 5, 1723.*

51. Resolved, that I will act so, in every respect, as I think I shall wish I had done, if I should at last be damned. *July 8, 1723.*

52. I frequently hear persons in old age say how they would live, if they were to live their lives over again: Resolved, that I will live just so as I can think I shall wish I had done, supposing I live to old age. *July 8, 1723.*

53. Resolved, to improve every opportunity, when I am in the best and happiest frame of mind, to cast and venture my soul on the Lord Jesus Christ, to trust and confide in him, and consecrate myself wholly to him; that from this I may have assurance of my safety, knowing that I confide in my Redeemer. *July 8, 1723.*

54. Whenever I hear anything spoken in conversation of any person, if I think it would be praiseworthy in me, Resolved to endeavor to imitate it. *July 8, 1723.*

55. Resolved, to endeavor to my utmost to act as I can think I should do, if I had already seen the happiness of heaven, and hell torments. *July 8, 1723.*

56. Resolved, never to give over, nor in the least to slacken my fight with my corruptions, however unsuccessful I may be.

57. Resolved, when I fear misfortunes and adversities, to examine whether ~ have done my duty, and resolve to do it; and let it be just as providence orders it, I will as far as I can, be concerned about nothing but my duty and my sin. *June 9, and July 13 1723.*

58. Resolved, not only to refrain from an air of dislike, fretfulness, and anger in conversation, but to exhibit an air of love, cheerfulness and benignity. *May 27, and July 13, 1723.*

59. Resolved, when I am most conscious of provocations to ill nature and anger, that I will strive most to feel and act good-naturedly; yea, at such times, to manifest good nature, though I think that in other respects it would be disadvantageous, and so as would be imprudent at other times. *May 12, July ii, and July 13.*

60. Resolved, whenever my feelings begin to appear in the least out of order, when I am conscious of the least uneasiness within, or the least irregularity without, I will then subject myself to the strictest examination. *July 4, and 13, 1723.*

61. Resolved, that I will not give way to that listlessness which I find unbends and relaxes my mind from being fully and fixedly set on religion, whatever excuse I may have for it-that what my listlessness inclines me to do, is best to be done, etc. *May 21, and July 13, 1723.*

62. Resolved, never to do anything but duty; and then according to Eph. 6:6-8, do it willingly and cheerfully as unto the Lord, and not to man; "knowing that whatever good thing any man doth, the same shall he receive of the Lord." *June 25 and July 13, 1723.*

63. On the supposition, that there never was to be but one individual in the world, at any one time, who was properly a complete Christian, in all respects of a right stamp, having Christianity always shining in its true luster, and appearing excellent and lovely, from whatever part and under whatever character viewed: Resolved, to act just as I would do, if I strove with all my might to be that one, who should live in my time. *Jan. 14' and July '3' 1723.*

64. Resolved, when I find those "groanings which cannot be uttered" (Rom. 8:26), of which the Apostle speaks, and those "breakings of soul for the longing it hath," of which the Psalmist speaks, Psalm 119:20, that I will promote them to the utmost of my power, and that I will not be wearied, of earnestly endeavoring to vent my desires, nor of the repetitions of such earnestness. *July 23, and August 10, 1723.*

65. Resolved, very much to exercise myself in this all my life long, viz. with the greatest openness I am capable of, to declare my ways to God, and lay open my soul to him: all my sins, temptations, difficulties, sorrows, fears, hopes, desires, and every thing, and every circumstance; according to Dr. Manton's 27th Sermon on Psalm 119. *July 26, and Aug. 10 1723.*

66. Resolved, that I will endeavor always to keep a benign aspect, and air of acting and speaking in all places, and in all companies, except it should so happen that duty requires otherwise.

67. Resolved, after afflictions, to inquire, what I am the better for them, what good I have got by them, and what I might have got by them.

68. Resolved, to confess frankly to myself all that which I find in myself, either infirmity or sin; and, if it be what concerns religion, also to confess the whole case to God, and implore needed help. *July 23, and August 10, 1723.*

69. Resolved, always to do that, which I shall wish I had done when I see others do it. *Aug. 11, 1723.*

70. Let there be something of benevolence, in all that I speak.

Aug. 17, 1723