

The Resolutions of Jonathan Edwards

Resolution #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.

Anchor Text: 1 Corinthians 6:19-20

Today's resolution is fairly straightforward. As I understand Edwards' thoughts here, the basic point is to be vigilant in monitoring and stewarding the gift of a body for God's glory.

1. The biblical basis

- a. We must understand that eating and drinking are critical to our everyday health
- b. What we put into our body has an impact on:
 - i. Our long-term health
 - ii. Our current functional capabilities
- c. Furthermore, and more to the biblical point, our bodies are not separated from our regenerated state as Christians, instead our bodies constitute the very locale in which the Spirit of God dwells within us and the center of operations by which we serve the Lord
 - i. Stated differently, while Christianity is more than a physical religion, the physical body is necessary for the carrying out of the Lord's commands which means that we must be cognizant of how we treat our bodies
- d. This being the case, there are two aspects of our journey that are directly affected by our eating/drinking habits

2. Our physical health

- a. God has designed our bodies to operate on the fuel of nutrition
- b. When we pack our bodies full of things that are either:
 - i. Overtly unhealthy or gluttonous, we can rest assured that God's good design will lead to our physical harm
 - ii. We must be faithful to care for the tent that God gives and to do all we can to ensure that we enjoy the best health possible
- c. Remember, health is not solely a personal reality
 - i. While it is my body that is in question, my life has direct ramifications on the lives and wellbeing of others
 - ii. When I neglect my own body, I am:
 1. Less likely to be able to use my gifts for the glory of God and good of others

2. I am more likely to be in need of assistance that would have been avoidable if I were faithful to care for myself
3. Our spiritual impact
 - a. I do believe that there is some connection to resolution 39 in these words as well
 - b. The idea, in a nutshell, is that we must monitor our eating and drinking not just for physical purposes but also for the ways in which our consumption might influence others
 - c. I do believe this is one reason why Edwards includes “drinking” on the list!
 - i. When we consume things that might be permissible but are not always helpful, we are leveraging our liberty for the harm of others
 - ii. This means that I must be cognizant of what I eat and drink not only for my own health but for the good of others
 - d. If I am hanging out with someone who struggles with gluttony or alcoholism or has a condition that would not allow them to partake in something that I am enjoying, I should be concerned with the impact of my actions on others and this might preclude me from partaking, not because it is sinful but out of love and concern for my brother!