

The Resolutions of Jonathan Edwards

Resolution #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.

Anchor Text: Psalm 139

Today's resolution is both immensely practical and necessary. Theologians have organized the categories of sin into two, broad groups: sins of commission and sins of omission. Sins of commission are sins that are the product of evil deeds, they are not always obvious, but they often are easily spotted by ourselves and others. Sins of omission on the other hand are sins that are the result of our neglect to be obedient. These sins are a bit less overt, in fact they can often escape the notice of both others and our own consciences! Consequently, the resolution before us is both helpful and wise. If we are going to be diligently faithful, we must be discerning and quick to take inventory of our lives.

1. The reality of our great God

- a. One of the great obstacles to our faithfulness to search our own hearts is our propensity to desire to hide our warts from God and others
- b. While it is true that we can often fool our peers, it is a frivolous pursuit to try to hide from God
- c. Psalm 139 reminds us that God knows all things about us
 - i. We are not getting away with anything when we seek to camouflage our true identity and actions from the living God
- d. David reminds us in verse 2 that God is well acquainted with "all" of our ways
- e. Furthermore, we are told that God knows our thoughts and intentions as well!
 - i. These truths should not terrify those who are in Christ as we are forgiven of all of our sins (past, present and future), instead they should embolden us to be forthright with ourselves and the Lord understanding that grace is available and any perceived gain from deceit is a lost cause

2. The responsibility before God

- a. What is the logical result of our understanding of the omniscience of God?
- b. One answer is found in the final verse of this great Psalm as we read David's stated desire that God would see if there was any "grievous" way in Him (meaning any sin) AND that God would lead him in ways "everlasting"
 - i. The point is that David desires for God to search his life so thoroughly that any vestiges of sin be identified and removed

- c. The question before us is what is our role in this endeavor and this is where I believe Edwards' resolution and Psalm 139 meet to form a nice harmony
- d. You see, David is writing this Psalm with a conscious commitment to pray for God's illuminating presence
 - i. The logical implication of this text is that David is writing with an introspective heart, asking for the Lord to empower and teach him as he evaluates his own soul
 - ii. Stated differently, the goal is for the Lord to meet David to show him how to "do better" (Edwards' words) in following the Lord and, therefore, utilizing the days he had been given for God's glory