

The Resolutions of Jonathan Edwards

Resolution #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 eve: and to be especially careful of it, with respect to any of our family.

Anchor Texts: Exodus 20:12 and Ephesians 6:1-4

Today's resolution is another example of a bit of an old English word salad. There is great debate about what Edwards means in utilizing the term "fretting uneasiness". The best way to understand the phrase (in my limited understanding) is a reticence to obey clear instructions from our parents. The goal, in this rendering, is to be obedient with a joyful and willing heart.

1. The command
 - a. The command in Scripture is fairly straightforward
 - b. To "honor" someone is to revere them in such a way that deference is paid
 - c. In this context, the biblical instruction is to heed our parents words and to follow them with very few exceptions
 - d. Furthermore, our goal should be to love and respect our parents such that the world sees an appreciation and respect for those in authority
 - i. The practical implications of this are clear:
 1. We honor someone when we listen to their counsel
 2. We honor someone when we accept their commands and obey
 3. We honor someone when we seek their advice and abide by it
 4. We honor someone when we sacrifice to care for them
2. The promise
 - a. It is fascinating that these commands come with a stated promise
 - b. While it is true that obedience to all of the commandments should yield blessing, it is clear that God desires us to know that blessings are specifically tied to this commandment
 - c. Societies that are full of men and women who honor their parents are going to be blessed
 - d. Families that instill the need to honor those in authority over their children will be blessed
3. The wisdom
 - a. Why is this? The answer is that wisdom flows from experience and fidelity to the Scripture

- b. Those who honor their parents are confessing that they do not know everything quite yet
- c. They are walking in the truth that God is Sovereign over their circumstances and that He is good in giving them older and wiser individuals to learn from
- d. Conversely, societies are cursed when the young take the reigns irrespective of the counsel of those who are older
 - i. Like King Rehoboam (1 Kings 12), our world is full of men and women who forsake the counsel of those who are older and wiser for the brash foolishness of their contemporaries
 - ii. Unfortunately, the story of Rehoboam shows us the fate of those who forsake wisdom and this is what motivates Edwards
- e. Folks, my goal for this church is that we cultivate a group of people who are humble and enlightened enough to know that they need wisdom
- f. Admittedly, the primary impetus of this devotion is the nuclear family
 - i. Nevertheless, we all need spiritual mothers and fathers in the faith
 - ii. It is wise to seek out those who have followed Christ a long time and learn from their wisdom
 - iii. Even those who might struggle to find someone in the congregation that is older can consult the wisdom of those great saints of old who have gone before us
 - iv. In this way, we will seek the blessing that God promises us of a long life in a blessed land!