Jonathan Edwards’ Religious Affections

Part II

Jonathan Edwards Center Brasil 2014
A TREATISE
Concerning
Religious Affections,
In Three Parts;

PART I. Concerning the Nature of the Affections, and their Importance in Religion.

PART II. Shewing what are no certain Signs that religious Affections are gracious, or that they are not.

PART III. Shewing what are distinguishing Signs of truly gracious and holy Affections.

By Jonathan Edwards, A.M.
And Elder of the first Church in Northampton.

Levit. ix. ult. and x. 1. 2. And there came a Fire out from before the Lord, and it went upon the Altar; which when all the People saw, they feared, and fell on their Faces. And Nathan and Abihu offered strange Fire before the Lord, which he commanded them not: And there went out a Fire from the Lord, and devoured them, and they died before the Lord.

Cant. ii. 12, 13. The Flowers appear on the Earth, the Times of the Singing of Birds is come, and the Voice of the Turtle is heard in our Land; the Fig-tree putteth forth her green Figs, and the Vines with the tender Grapes, give a good Smell. Ver. 17. Take us the Flowers, the little Foxes, which spoil the Vines; for our Vines have tender Grapes.

BOSTON:
Printed for S. Kneeland and T. Green in Queen-street, over against the Prison. 1746.
Religious Affections: Trajectories and Text

• Structure
  • *Part I*: Nature and Importance of the Affections (based on a sermon of I Peter 1:8) [Definition]
  • *Part II*: Showing No certain Signs of Truly Gracious Affections
  • *Part III*: The Distinguishing Signs
Religious Affections: Trajectories and Text

Part II: Showing No certain Signs of Truly Gracious Affections

1. ’Tis no sign one way or the other, that religious affections are very great, or raised very high.

2. ’Tis no sign that affections have the nature of true religion, or that they have not, that they have great effects on the body.

3. ’Tis no sign that affections are truly gracious affections, or that they are not, that they cause those who have them, to be fluent, fervent and abundant, in talking of the things of religion.

4. ’Tis no sign that affections are gracious, or that they are otherwise, that persons did not make ’em themselves, or excite ’em of their own contrivance, and by their own strength.

[Interlude I: Wesley edition]
Religious Affections: Trajectories and Text

• Part II: Showing No certain Signs of Truly Gracious Affections

  • John Wesley (1703-1791) edition 1801 of Religious Affections

  • Sign 4: deletion of “There are some who make this an argument in their own favor, when speaking of what they have experienced...Tis not in men's power to put themselves into such raptures, as the Anabaptists in Germany, and many other raving enthusiasts like them, have been the subjects of.” (141, 142)

  • Sign 8: deletion of “Mr. Shepard speaks of men's "being cast down as low as hell by sorrow, and lying under chains, quaking in apprehension of terror to come, and then raised up to heaven in joy, not able to live; and yet not rent from lust...and such are objects of pity now, and are like to be objects of terror at the great day." Shepard, Parable, Pt. I, p. 125.” (156)

  • Sign 11: deletion of all source references (170, 171, 174, 175, 177) and in text, “These two kinds of hypocrites Mr. Shepard, in his exposition of The Parable of the Ten distinguishes by the names of legal and evangelical hypocrites; and often speaks of the latter as the worst. And 'tis evident that the latter are commonly by far the most confident in their hope, and with the most difficulty brought from it: I have scarcely known the instance of such an one, in my life, that has been undeceived.” (173)
Religious Affections: Trajectories and Text

• Part II: Showing No certain Signs of Truly Gracious Affections

  • 5. ’Tis no sign that religious affections are truly holy and spiritual, or that they are not, that they come with texts of Scripture, remarkably brought to the mind.

  • 6. ’Tis no evidence that religious affections are saving, or that they are otherwise, that there is an appearance of love in them.

  • 7. Persons having religious affections of many kinds, accompanying one another, is not sufficient to determine whether they have any gracious affections or no.

  • 8. Nothing can certainly be determined concerning the nature of the affections by this, that comforts and joys seem to follow awakenings and convictions of conscience, in a certain order.

[Interlude II “source use”]
Part II: Showing No certain Signs of Truly Gracious Affections

- Sources referred to:
  - Scripture (throughout and 133, 135, 139, 140, 185)
  - Ames, *Conscience...Cased Thereof* (175)
  - Flavel, *Touchstone of Sincerity* (138, 170, 182); *Husbandry Spiritualized* (171, 182, 186)
  - Perkins, *A Treatise*... (157)
Religious Affections: Trajectories and Text

Part II: Showing No certain Signs of Truly Gracious Affections

Sources referred to:

- Shepard, The Parable of the Ten Virgins (137, 156, 162, 174, 182); The Sound Believer (163)
- Stoddard, A Treatise Concerning Conversion (150, 177, 181); An Appeal to the Learned (160, 181); The Way to Know Sincerity and Hypocrisy (170), and Guide to Christ (131, 145, 146, 147, 156, 158, 163)...“with the exception of Shepard, Stoddard appears at greater length in Edwards’ notes than any other writer.” (Introduction, 58).
Religious Affections: Trajectories and Text

- Part II: Showing No certain Signs of Truly Gracious Affections
  - Sources referred to:
    - Stoddard, Guide to Christ (131, 145, 146, 147, 156, 158, 163)
    - Review of To the Reader
    - Review of Preface
    - Review of citation RA 131 vs. GtC 4
    - Review RA 151 (sign 8 “..in a certain order”) vs. Preface

• III. Structure
Part II: Showing No certain Signs of Truly Gracious Affection

9. ’Tis no certain sign that the religious affections which persons have are such as have in them the nature of true religion, or that they have not, that they dispose persons to spend much time in religion, and to be zealously engaged in the external duties of worship.

10. Nothing can be certainly known of the nature of religious affections by this, that they much dispose persons with their mouths to praise and glorify God.

11. ’Tis no sign that affections are right, or that they are wrong, that they make persons that have them, exceeding confident that what they experience is divine, and that they are in a good estate.

12. Nothing can be certainly concluded concerning the nature of religious affections, that any are the subjects of, from this, that the outward manifestations of them, and the relation persons give of them, are very affecting and pleasing to the truly godly, and such as greatly gain their charity, and win their hearts.
Edwards last and greatest work on revival, it is a masterpiece of what scholars now call “religious psychology.” The fundamental question of the work is “How can one determine what is a true work of the Spirit of God in one’s own heart?”

II. Inconclusive Signs
Things that do not necessarily demonstrate a work of God. Intensity of outward demonstrations, much vocal praise of God, helpful scriptures popping into the mind, confidence of salvation, conforming to a particular pattern of conversion, etc.
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