Jonathan Edwards and The Enlightenment

Summer Course 2017
"What has been said may be sufficient to show what is meant by liberty, according to the common notions of mankind, and in the usual and primary acceptation of the word: but the word, as used by Arminians, Pelagians and others, who oppose the Calvinists, has an entirely different signification. These several things belong to their notion of liberty..."

*WJE 1:164*

- Arminians
- Pelagians
- Others...
- vs.
- Calvinist
Transitional Moments: The Will 101

- Augustine - Pelagius (c. 410-416)
- Medieval era (c. 11-13th century)
- Erasmus - Luther (c. 1524-1527)
- Pighius - Calvin (c. 1542-1543)
- Catholic - Protestant Reformation (c. 1560s)
- Post-reformation era (c. 1600-168/19)
Transitional Moments I: Augustine - Pelagius (c. 410-416)

- Pelagius’ commentary on St. Paul’s’s Epistle to the Romans
- Fall (Gen. 3) caused no internal change to, or no fundamentally corruption of humanity.
  - *Peccato originale* (original sin): no original sin or inherited sin from Adam (*De natura*, 414)
  - *Libertas arbitrii* (freedom of decision or choice): human beings are capable of not sinning in the sense of doing good independent of divine grace (*De libero arbitrio*, 416)
**Transitional Moments I: Augustine - Pelagius (c. 410-416)**

- Augustine: *De natura et gratia, De gratia et libero arbitrio* (On Grace and free choice of the will) & *Confessions* (*Confessiones*)
  - *Original sin*: a consequence of this first sin, the hereditary stain with which we are born on account of our origin or descent from Adam - “the deliberate sin of the first man is the cause of original sin” (*On marriage and concupiscence* *De nuptiis et concupiscentia*): first & corporate
  - Humanity after the fall is a *massa damnata* (mass of perdition, condemned crowd)
  - Note: Augustine’s Will discussion in context - Manichaeans nut in his refutations of Pelagius the limitations of a concept of unlimited free will as denial of grace is discussed.
Transitional Moments I: Augustine - Pelagius (c. 410–416)

• Augustine: four states of humanity in relation to sin:
  (a) able to sin, able not to sin (posse peccare, posse non peccare) (ante lapsum)
  (b) not able not to sin (non posse non peccare) (post lapsum) (sinful humanity)
  (c) able not to sin (posse non peccare) (regenerated humanity)
  (d) unable to sin (non posse peccare) (glorified humanity)

• The state of original sin leaves humanity in the wretched condition of being unable to refrain from sinning, “In Adam’s fall...”
Transitional Moments: The Will

In Adam’s Fall
We Sinned all.

Thy Life to Mend
This Book Attend.

The Cat doth play
And after play.

A Dog will bite
A Thief at night,

An Eagles flight
Is out of sight.

The Idle Fool
Is whipt at School.
Transitional Moments II: Medieval era (c. 11-13th century)

- Rise of Semi-Pelagianism
  - In distinguishing between the beginning of faith (*initium fidei*) and the increase of faith (*augmentum fidei*), one may refer the former to the power of the free will, while the faith itself and its increase is absolutely dependent upon God;
  - The gratuity of grace is to be maintained against Pelagius in so far as every strictly natural merit is excluded; this, however, does not prevent nature and its works from having a certain claim to grace;
  - As regards final perseverance in particular, it must not be regarded as a special gift of grace, since the justified humanity may of one's own strength persever to the end.
- Handout
Transitional Moments II: Medieval era (c. 11-13th century)

- On the matter of primacy of the will or intellect:
  - Thomas advocates what is generally characterized as the ”Dominican” or ”intellectualist” position, puts the intellect ahead of the will.
  - Scotus represents what may be called the ”voluntarist,” ”Augustinian” or ”Franciscan” position, teaches the primacy of the will.
Transitional Moments III:

Desiderus Erasmus (1466-1536) - Martin Luther (1483-1546)

- Erasmus, *De libero arbitrio diatribe sive collatio* (1524)
  - All of humanity have free will
  - Doctrine of predestination not Scriptural
  - Divine foreknowledge depended on free will
  - Divine grace assists us in coming to the knowledge of God
- Luther, *De Servo Arbitrio* (1525)
Transitional Moments III:

Desiderus Erasmus (1466-1536) - Martin Luther (1483-1546)

- Luther, *De Servo Arbitrio* (1525): sin incapacitates human beings from working out their own salvation, and that they are completely incapable of bringing themselves to God. As such, there is no free will for humanity because any will they might have is overwhelmed by the influence of sin.
- “what is sought by means of free choice is to make room for merits.”
Transitional Moments IV: Albertus Pighius (1490-1542)–Jean Calvin (1509-1664)

- Pighius, *De libero hominis arbitrio et divina gratia libri decime* (1542)
- Calvin *Defensio sanae et orthodoxae doctrinae de servitute et liberatione humani arbitrii adversus calumnias Alberti Pighii Campensis*
  - Debate 1539-1543 the nature of free will.
  - After Calvin’s *Institutes of the Christian Religion* (1539), Pighius responded with *Human Free Choice and Divine Grace* (1542, 10 books). In response to Pighius’ Calvin wrote *The Bondage and Liberation of the Will* (1543).
Transitional Moments IV: Albertus Pighius (1490-1542)- Jean Calvin (1509-1664)

- Pighius accuses Calvin’s doctrine of total depravity as being Manichaeism.
  - Calvin responds that he distinguishes between human nature as created and human nature as fallen. Adam indeed had the power of contrary choice, but through his sin he forfeited it for himself and all his descendants. Pighius’ refusal to admit this joins him with the Pelagians.
- Pighius defines free will as the power of contrary choice, that is, the power of the individual to choose rightly or wrongly in any given moral crisis.
  - Calvin denies this power, yet insists that the will is free in the sense that the will’s acts derive from its own soul; its actions are internally bound but not externally coerced.
- Noteworthy: (1) Neither Pighius nor Calvin drew their debate points from the Luther-Erasmus debate; (2) Calvin quotes from some twenty-five of Augustine’s works in the book, as well as having frequent references to Pelagius.
Transitional Moments V:

Catholic - Protestant Reformation (c. 1545-1560s)

- The issue between Roman Catholic and the Protestants was never, whether grace and faith, but what sort of grace and what sort of faith?

- Council of Trent
  - Human Free Will/Choice discussed in the context of the doctrine of Justification - session 6 (January, 1547)
    - ch. I “free will [is] weakened”
    - ch. V “[God’s] quickening and helping grace to convert themselves to their own justification by freely assenting to and cooperating with that grace...he able by his own free will
Transitional Moments VI:

Post-reformation era (c. 1600-168/19)

- Jacobus Arminius (1560-1609) – Franciscus Gomarus (1563-1641)
- Remonstrants - Contra-Remonstrants
- Synod of Dort (Canones)
  - Predestination, Divine Sovereignty, Christ’s redemptive work
  - Free choice / will?
  - See further discussion Wednesday “Arminian view of liberty”
Transitional Moments: Summary

The discussion freedom of will / choice relates to:

- original sin
- intellect and will
- divine grace, and human responsibility
- divine foreknowledge, and predestination

N.B Epistle to the Romans (Pelagius & Arminius)