

# Studies in Puritanism and Piety Journal

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## FROM THE EDITORS

In the fifth issue of *Studies in Puritanism and Piety Journal* we have four articles. The subjects of these essays are polemical, doctrinal, devotional, and epistemological and are worthy of our reflection. The first two articles are reproduced from *Colloquia* at Puritan Reformed Theological Seminary from the pens of Chad Van Dixhoorn, professor of Church History and Theology at Reformed Theological Seminary in Charlotte, North Carolina, and by David Kranendonk, professor of Theology at Puritan Reformed Theological Seminary in Grand Rapids, Michigan.

The first is by Dr. Van Dixhoorn writing on John Arrowsmith (1602–1659) with the title, *John Arrowsmith and the Art of Pacific Pugilism*. Van Dixhoorn asks why Arrowsmith resorted to polemic with heresy in his last days. He answers that we must understand that his controversial writing was not in the normal sense of the meaning, but it was a pacific, friendly, or, better yet, “charming polemic.” Van Dixhoorn gives the proper context of Arrowsmith’s *magnum opus*, the *Holy War* or *Tactica Sacra*.

The second article is by David Kranendonk, *Pastoral Silence and Edifying Speech: Paul Baynes’s Teaching on Predestination*. Kranendonk disputes the criticism that the Puritans were overly speculative in their teaching on the doctrine of predestination. Paul Baynes (1573–1617) has been a neglected source of study, and Kranendonk hopes to fill that void. As a convert of William Perkins, Baynes held supralapsarian tendencies much like Perkins. Yet, Baynes didn’t speculate; in fact, he didn’t even mention predestination in much of his literary output but when he did, it almost always involved pastoral issues.

The third article is *A Puritan in the Rising Age of Evangelicals: Theological and Psychological Continuity in the Journal of Israel Loring* by John Ericson, Teacher of English at Trinity-Pawling School, in Pawling, New York. Israel Loring (1682–1772) was a Congregational pastor in the third generation of New England Puritans. When he graduated from Harvard in 1701, Loring began writing a journal that ultimately grew to thirty

volumes, most of which are lost. Nevertheless, in his diaries Ericson compares his theology with that of William Perkins, Thomas Hooker, Thomas Shepard, Increase Mather, Cotton Mather, and Solomon Stoddard in Loring's conversion account, sabbath keeping, self-examination, humility, and confidence in God's grace, and much more.

The fourth essay centers on John Flavel (1627–1691). This article by David Van Brugge is entitled, *Means to Understanding in John Flavel's "Pneumatologia,"* or as the subtitle describes, *A Treatise of the Soul of Man*. Van Brugge surveys the teaching of *Pneumatologia* in this article and what references Flavel gave. He states that first and foremost, this contains the biblical record of the soul. He also refers to ancient philosophers, the early church fathers, medieval exegetes, and Reformers to establish his arguments about the soul. He was well read and informed much like other figures in Reformed orthodoxy (ca. 1560–1725).

In the review section of this journal, we have several scholarly book reviews, including Cameron Schweitzer reviewing Robert L. Boss, *Thunder God, Wonder God: Exploring the Emblematic Vision of Jonathan Edwards*; Simon Hitchings reviewing two volumes: Richard A. Muller's, *Providence, Freedom, and the Will in Early Modern Reformed Theology*, and Andreas J. Beck, *Gisbertus Voetius (1589–1676) on God, Freedom, and Contingency*. Finally, wrapping up the reviews, Allen M. Stanton reviews George M. Marsden's *An Infinite Fountain of Light: Jonathan Edwards for the Twenty-First Century*.

# John Arrowsmith and the Art of Pacific Pugilism

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That John Arrowsmith (1602–1659) was a pleasant person no one seems to have doubted. John Arrowsmith was remembered after his death as a gifted Cambridge theologian but also as a fair man and a kind friend. In the 1640s he was a member of the Westminster Assembly (1643–1653) where he was one of the preachers that assembly members most liked to hear and, perhaps in part because of this, was arguably the most influential theologian involved in the drafting of the assembly's confession of faith. Arrowsmith also served as the master of Cambridge's two most prestigious colleges, enjoyed the post of Regius Professor of divinity, and served a turn as the Vice-Chancellor of the university. In the interregnum England of the 1650s, shorn as it was of all the trappings of cathedral and episcopal privileges, there was no greater height to which a minister or an academic could rise, and everyone seemed happy for him to have risen.

Given this background, this article tries to answer the question, Why did John Arrowsmith, a leading contestant for seventeenth-century England's "Most Pleasant Person Award," wind down his final years by suddenly writing a call for a holy war against heresy? One reason for asking this question is to discover what it may uncover about the priorities of Arrowsmith, an important but under-studied theologian in the early-modern period. The second reason for posing this question is to see what may be learned about mid-century Puritanism in England. But in posing this question it can also be seen that Arrowsmith's book on spiritual warfare is considered in this article not merely as a text but also as an event. This article will proceed by commenting on the conundrum of Arrowsmith and his charming polemics, before reflecting on his possible motivations for writing *Plans for Holy War* and on his polemical style. Before coming to a halt, the article will offer a set of four conclusions.

The centerpiece of this article, an almost 400 page Latin tome, has been translated by Dr. David Noe, and this short article draws on his translation and on my indulgently long introduction which will accompany the publication of Arrowsmith's *magnum opus* in English. This article also utilizes the work of talented research assistants who have helped to identify the people and books discussed by Arrowsmith, chiefly Adrienne Ora, Zachary Herbster, and Paul Woo. I am grateful to them all, and especially to Dr. Noe, for making this article possible.

## 1. The Peacemaker

### 1.1 Life

It seems possible that Arrowsmith's peaceable character was in part a pleasantness inherited from his home. Arrowsmith's father was likely the Thomas Arrowsmith who died and was buried in Gateshead in 1632.<sup>1</sup> If this is correct, it is striking that his father too valued peace, for this is the grace most celebrated on a memorial plaque erected in St. Mary's parish church, where Thomas Arrowsmith was buried. The memorial reads in part,

Reader in that piece of earth in peace rests  
 Thomas ARROWSMITH  
 In peace he livd in peace went hence with  
 God and man and conscience  
 Peace for other men he sought and peace  
 with peeces some time bought  
 Pacific may others bee but *ex pace factus* hee  
 Peace reader then doe not molest he is now possesst  
 The God of peace for him in store hath joy  
 and peace for evermore  
*Pangit plangit et amore dolore*<sup>2</sup>

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1. For the elder Thomas Arrowsmith's Sept. 27, 1632 death date see, National Burial Index for England and Wales, in <https://www.findmypast.com/transcript?id=BMD%2FNBI%2F02732578>; Thomas likely married Mary Place in Cleasby, Yorkshire in 1599: Paver's Marriage Licenses from the Registry of York 1567–1614, p. 72, in [findmypast.com/transcript?id=GBPRS%2FCOA%2FMARRLICENCE%2F00001835%2F1](https://www.findmypast.com/transcript?id=GBPRS%2FCOA%2FMARRLICENCE%2F00001835%2F1) (both accessed June 7, 2021). The current pandemic has not in every case permitted me to view original records.

2. For the memorial inscription at St. Mary's, Gateshead, see Northumberland and Durham Memorial Inscriptions, <https://www.findmypast.com/transcript?id=GBPRS%2FNORTHUMDURHAM%2FMIS%2F012342> (accessed June 7, 2021). "He is planted here and mourned with love and sorrow." All translations courtesy of David Noe.



Perhaps too, as is the case with a remarkable number of Christians who have suffered long with physical disabilities, the graces appreciated by others were worked into John Arrowsmith through his personal trials. His thorn in the flesh was partial blindness. He had a glass eye, for which he was mocked, in the place of an eye that had been struck by an arrow at some point in his life.<sup>3</sup> And he probably seized opportunities to hide that eye from view: there is, I believe, one piece of evidence suggesting that in the assembly Arrowsmith sat on the tiered benches or stands to the left of the prolocutor, along with many of the older and best educated divines; more to the point, the available clues also suggest that he sat at the very top left corner of those stands, hinting that his missing eye was his right eye, for it is natural to assume that Arrowsmith would have presented his only good eye to face the room and his fellow divines.<sup>4</sup>

During his lifetime Arrowsmith enjoyed many marks of esteem, from minor privileges to significant honors. His undergraduate college gifted him with a scholarship,<sup>5</sup> and later the fellows of St. Catherine's college, Cambridge, soon under the command of Richard Sibbes and populated with men who would become members of the Westminster assembly, were eager for him to join their number. After a decade of life as a college fellow, he soon found himself vicar of St. Nicholas's Church, in King's Lynn, at that point England's busiest port. As mentioned above, he was also invited to the Westminster assembly and was a favorite preacher among the many preachers gathered. Holding down two or three jobs at once while raising a second family, everyone forgave him for his obvious pluralism, and the assembly repeatedly appointed him to its most important committees.

His interest in peace-making and fence-mending was obvious for all to see. When no longer a college fellow in the 1630s and early 1640s, he was nonetheless the host for some months of a theologian from Elbing, a city at the heart of Europe's ecumenical movement.<sup>6</sup> When in London, he

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3. Robert Baillie, *The Letters and Journals of Robert Baillie*, D. Laing, ed. (Edinburgh: Robert Ogle, 1841), 2:123–24; for jokes about his eye, see e.g., [John Birkenhead], *The Assembly-man written in the year 1647* (London, 1681), 9.

4. Chad Van Dixhoorn, ed., *The Minutes and Papers of the Westminster Assembly, 1643–1652*, 5 vols (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 1:209.

5. J. A. Venn, ed., *Alumni Cantabrigiensis*, 6 vols. (Cambridge, 1922–54), also venn.lib.cam.ac.uk.

6. John Arrowsmith, *Tactica Sacra, sive de milite spirituali pugnante, vincente & triumphant dissertatio* (Cambridge, 1657), I.iii.6; hereafter the translated text forthcoming from Reformation Heritage Books will be cited as *Plans for Holy War*.

preached sermons that warned of the horrors of war or celebrated small steps towards peace.<sup>7</sup> As a Cambridge Master, he convinced soldiers to leave St John's college, where they had been camping during the war.<sup>8</sup> As University Vice-Chancellor, he dined with the city's mayor to try to lessen tensions between town and gown.<sup>9</sup> And as a theological leader in Cambridge, Parliament heard his complaints about the rise of doctrinal error and empowered him to take action. Everyone seemed to like Arrowsmith.<sup>10</sup>

Historians too have left his memory relatively unscathed. R. W. Ketton-Cremer complained in a history of Norfolk that one of Arrowsmith's civil war sermons contained a "rich storehouse of Puritan invective."<sup>11</sup> And J. B. Mullinger, a historian of the University of Cambridge, has argued that Arrowsmith's St. John years were characterized by "incessant strife."<sup>12</sup> But more recent scholarship has offered kinder assessments, and both John Twigg and Victor Morgan have suggested that his St. John years were not as difficult as alleged and that Arrowsmith's two masterhips were good ones.<sup>13</sup>

During the English civil wars Arrowsmith was, on occasion, mocked for his infirmity,<sup>14</sup> but in his dying months he was more worried about his growing popularity. He cooperated with the University Press in preparing one more book for publication that would only arrive after his death, even though he no doubt suspected that friends would endorse the book with overly kind words. But Arrowsmith's will, written at the end of 1657, deliberately limited the amount of money that could be spent on his funeral and asked that he be buried "in a more private way" in order to avoid the "many notorious disorders" which he had observed at public funerals, presumably for noted Cambridge men such as himself.<sup>15</sup>

7. See, John Arrowsmith, *The Covenant-Avenging Sword Brandished: in a Sermon, Before the House of Commons, at their Late Solemne Fast, Jan. 25* (London, 1642).

8. Mark Nicholls, "The Seventeenth Century," in *St John's College Cambridge: A History*, ed. Peter Linhan (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2011), 137, 139, 141.

9. John Twigg, *The University of Cambridge and the English Revolution, 1625–1688* (Woodbridge: Boydell and the Cambridge University Library, 1990), 147.

10. Twigg, *University of Cambridge*, 122 (n. 114), 123, 125–26.

11. R. W. Ketton-Cremer, *Norfolk in the Civil War: A Portrait of a Society in Conflict* (1969; Norwich: Giddon Books, 1985), 260.

12. J. B. Mullinger, *The University of Cambridge*, vol. 3 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1911), 475.

13. Twigg, *University of Cambridge*, 123–27; and Victor Morgan, *History of the University of Cambridge* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 480.

14. See e.g., [John Birkenhead], *The Assembly-man written in the year 1647* (London, 1681), 9.

15. NA PROB 11/289/161, fol. 179r.

It is hardly unusual for the deceased to be dealt with kindness. But almost no one seemed capable of remembering his faults. The historian Thomas Baker, while no friend of Puritans, reviewed the surviving evidence of Arrowsmith's leadership in Cambridge and concluded that "Allowing for the iniquity of the times and excepting the matter of Korah" (a reference to parliament's war against the King), Arrowsmith "was a good man."<sup>16</sup> John Hackett, later bishop of Lichfield and Coventry, told a correspondent that he was pleased with Arrowsmith's election to the mastership of Trinity College.<sup>17</sup> And even after a falling out over important doctrinal matters, Benjamin Whichcote described Arrowsmith, above all others whom he had met in his course of university life, as "my friend of choice; a companion of my special delight: whom in my former years I have acquainted with all my heart, I have told him all my thoughts; and I have scarcely either spoken or thought better of a man; in respect of the sweetness of his spirit, and amiableness of his conversation."<sup>18</sup>

### 1.2 Death

I have lingered over these details precisely because a review of Arrowsmith's life does not prepare readers for the polemics that emerged near his death. Nor does anything in his first five surviving works (two other books were lost), prepare the reader for Arrowsmith's greatest work. His Latin *magnum opus* was not the last book to appear in his name, but it was in fact the last book he wrote. Parts of these earlier works do prepare readers for themes in his *magnum opus*. They also help to explain why England was at war, why England should find peace, and why parliament needed documents produced by the Westminster assembly. They do not explain why his dying call was for a holy war against heresy.

There can be no doubt that Arrowsmith was dying when he wrote the book he entitled *Tactica Sacra*, or *Sacred Strategies*, or as Dr. Noe and I have decided to translate it, *Plans for Holy War*. The turning point in Arrowsmith's health, and one from which he would never fully recover, seems to have come about in the mid-1650s. In 1655 Arrowsmith was not able to be present for the annual disputation in divinity during the University's commencement exercises. Arrowsmith's friend, John Lightfoot, explains "that

16. T. Baker, *History of the College of St. John the Evangelist, Cambridge*, ed. John E. B. Mayor (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1869), part I, p. 224 ff. (228).

17. BL Sloane MS 1710, fol. 192.

18. Benjamin Whichcote, *Moral and Religious Aphorisms*, ed. Samuel Salter (London: for J. Payne, 1753), 7.

sudden illness overtook...his sick and weakened body” which “turned our prayers to frustration and our hope rang hollow.” In 1656 “sometimes” must have become “most of the time,” for Arrowsmith felt compelled to resign the regius professorship.<sup>19</sup>

It was around this time that he was desperate enough to consult a doctor.<sup>20</sup> His friends later described him as suffering from “a long and tedious sickness,” and it seems that he was increasingly bound to the Master’s lodge.<sup>21</sup> Recovering at home might not have been easy, for the lodge would hardly have been a quiet place to convalesce. His eldest son, Thomas, was likely living in college rooms by this point, but the Master’s lodge housed as many as seven children between the ages of eleven and one.<sup>22</sup> And yet Arrowsmith was not completely incapacitated even then, for in late September or early October 1657 his wife, Mary, conceived again, giving birth to their last child, Rebecca, eight months before her husband’s death.<sup>23</sup>

### 1.3 *The occasion for writing* *Tactica Sacra*

It was his prolonged sickness that gave Arrowsmith occasion to write his greatest work and, as my introduction to Dr. Noe’s translation argues, his last.

The existence, ambitiousness, and subject of *Plans for Holy War* are all in their own way remarkable. Anyone who has suffered from the weariness and pain attending chronic illness or the ongoing effects of serious injury will know how difficult it is to accomplish any kind of work at all, let alone the hard work of creative writing and careful thinking. Arrowsmith acknowledges that his health had recently failed,<sup>24</sup> but his self-effacing words mask the challenge he faced in writing a major work of theology and the extraordinary perseverance required for and evidenced in this work.

19. John Twigg, “John Arrowsmith,” *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, 60 vols. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004). Hereafter ODNB.

20. I was unable to consult London, British Library Add.79 f. 105 (Medical treatment of by Dr. Pratt).

21. Thomas Horton and William Dillingham, “To the Reader,” in John Arrowsmith, *Armilla catechetica* (Cambridge, 1659), sig. \*3v; ODNB.

22. Mary, bap. Feb. 24, 1653: England Births and Christenings, 1538–1975, in <https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:NTG4-PRS> (accessed June 7, 2021); the birth dates of Sarah and Judith, mentioned in Arrowsmith’s will, are unknown; the death date of Mary, who is not mentioned in the 1657 will, is also unknown.

23. Rebecca, bap. July 2, 1658: England Births and Christenings, 1538–1975, in <https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:V5KT-CTQ> (accessed June 7, 2021).

24. Arrowsmith, *Plans for Holy War*, I.i.2.

Nor was he in the final stages of writing a work, stuck with the tiring but predictable work of editing. No, Arrowsmith had managed to initiate a major new project, and of all writing projects the most difficult kind: not a series of texts or topics discussed seriatim, as in his previous expositions of biblical books and doctrinal *loci*, but a major study of a single theme, and a theme that had only recently occurred to him as worthy of an entire book,<sup>25</sup> although its central argument had appeared in his earlier studies.

The very existence and the extreme ambition of the project are unusual for a sick man. But perhaps most surprising is its subject, for it is not directly related to his own ever-present experience of suffering. Such a project a reader could perhaps understand: a book on assurance in the face of hard providence, on perseverance in the presence of adversity, or on the subject of eternal life in the months leading up to his death. Instead, the book's "main purpose is to equip the Christian man for spiritual warfare as a soldier for battle, victory, and triumph."<sup>26</sup> *Plans for Holy War* is a lively study on Christian warfare. And strikingly, given Arrowsmith's circumstances, the Christian's main battle is not with the problem of suffering but with the problems of sin and Satan, particularly as they impact orthodox doctrine. He writes not against any particular error; instead, he writes in favor of all truth in the face of Satan's temptation to mangle and sully what is pure.

## 2. The Polemicist

But what provoked the writing of *Tactica Sacra*? Sickness gave him the time to write, but it does not explain his choice of theme.

### a. Exegesis

One reason why the book was written was that Arrowsmith wanted people to know that the whole of the Bible, as he had come to see it, contains an over-arching theme that is not merely eschatological (as he had explained in earlier works) but militaristic. This can be seen especially in the first of the three books that comprise *Tactica Sacra*.

Book One, in six chapters, argues that spiritual warfare is basic to the Christian religion. In these chapters Arrowsmith walks the reader from the "proto-gospel" of Genesis 3:15, with its promise of Satan's defeat by the Seed of Eve, all the way to the Apostle Paul's discussion of the armor of God in Ephesians 6. Varieties of enmity and enemies are noted along the

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25. Arrowsmith, *Plans for Holy War*, I.i.2.

26. Arrowsmith, *Plans for Holy War*, I.i.1.

way, while Christ is set forth as the coming captain of the Christian soldier. The book is substantially forward-looking.

For Arrowsmith, the “very close connection between Christianity and spiritual military service” is a result of the fall of humanity into sin. This connection is first articulated in the protoevangelium of Genesis 3:15: “I shall place enmity between You and the Woman, between your seed and hers. It shall crush your head, and you shall crush its heel.” This, for Arrowsmith, “is the first statement of the Gospel,”<sup>27</sup> and it is his first order of business in Book One to make sure it is not stolen from God’s people through impoverished and erroneous treatments of the text, notably those propounded by Socinians (a leading concern to the orthodox in the 1650s). Of course, such impoverished interpretations are to be expected; after all, “it is not at all surprising that the ancient Serpent, gripped as he is by the greatest concern for his own head,” has attempted to mislead the world regarding his own destiny and to keep it from seeking rest in Christ.<sup>28</sup>

The connection between the text, Christ, and Christianity is established. But what about Christianity and military metaphors, or rather, military realities? How does Genesis 3:15, properly understood, lead readers to *Plans for Holy War*? The answer is found in the Lord’s own declaration of war: his establishment of the fact that there must be enmity, must be two parties, and that this situation must continue “to the end of the age, between Christ and his own on one side, and the Devil on the other side with his followers.”<sup>29</sup>

Having identified the official opposition in Chapter One, the author engages in reconnaissance and review in Chapter Two: assessing the enemy, learning to identify the serpent, his seven leading vices, his followers; and then surveying loyal forces: Christians, and more importantly, Christ (not the virgin Mary) as our captain and as the Seed of the woman.<sup>30</sup>

Each topic subsequently receives fuller treatment. In Chapter Three, Satan’s “blazing enmity” is seen in the forces loyal to him, including a predictable battery of popes, persecutors, Arminians, demons, practitioners of magical arts, depraved persons of all sorts, and one less predictable group — “men of letters.”<sup>31</sup>

27. Arrowsmith, *Plans for Holy War*, I.i.2.

28. Arrowsmith, *Plans for Holy War*, I.i.3.

29. Arrowsmith, *Plans for Holy War*, I.i.5.

30. Arrowsmith, *Plans for Holy War*, I.ii.

31. Arrowsmith, *Plans for Holy War*, I.iii.

So who is on the Lord's side? *All* Christians, as stated before; but also ministers and even angels make up the forces of our "Gospel Centurion." Arrowsmith explains in Chapter Five the duties owed to the One who says "to this one, 'go,' and he goes." The reader is told that "Alexander's soldiers were marked with distinction, namely 'they focused not only on their general's standard, but even on his nod.' We watch for the standard of Christ in his word, his nod in the inspiration of the Spirit, and we must obey both eagerly."<sup>32</sup> From this point, until the third book, Arrowsmith expounds the armor of God as detailed in Ephesians 6.

But key for the Professor is that the problem of sin manifests itself in sins of understanding and not merely sins of the heart or sins of action. This emphasis on the importance of theological warfare is one of the points that makes Arrowsmith's treatment of Ephesians 6 and his explanation of the subject of spiritual warfare unique. The schemes of Satan have as much to do with the promotion of heterodoxy as they do with keeping sinners in unholy slavery or in inhibiting their spiritual growth. Arrowsmith's treatment of spiritual warfare does not follow the same path as William Gurnall's *The Christian in Complete Armour*, the first edition of which had been printed only two years previously in 1655. *Plans for Holy War* is a sustained plea for Christian people, Christian ministers, and, as we will see, especially Christian magistrates and academics to take seriously the urgent need to fight for truth.

#### b. Wegelians

Arrowsmith claims that Christian warfare as a unifying theme only "occurred to" him because he was at his "leisure"—by which he really means, he was so sick that he could do almost nothing other than think.<sup>33</sup> Realizing these truths at this point in life, and not having much life left, offers one reason why this peace-making professor would write this book when he did.

But Arrowsmith also says that he was thinking about "Christians' military service" when he came to this discovery—which begs the question why a dying man would have this on his mind and leads us to a second reason why the book needed to be written: because of the Wegelians.

To Arrowsmith's evident sorrow, "England gives birth each year to some new monster,"<sup>34</sup> and Book 2, Chapter Two is entirely dedicated to

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32. Arrowsmith, *Plans for Holy War*, I.v.4.

33. Arrowsmith, *Plans for Holy War*, I.i.2.

34. Arrowsmith, *Plans for Holy War*, II.i.7.

explaining why 1650s England is so convulsed with heterodoxy. Bypassing “the Scholastics who have with great effort brought Greek philosophy into the citadel of the church like a Trojan horse,” Arrowsmith reaches back into antiquity and points the finger at “Plato and the Platonists” and Aristotle and the Aristotelians. These were the philosophers and philosophies to which promoters of Pelagianism were attracted as they boasted of their “secular knowledge.”<sup>35</sup> Similar influences, he believed, along with a “resurgence of skepticism,” were behind the persistence of Remonstrant and Socinian thought.<sup>36</sup> He adds to this a dangerous “presumption to prophesy”<sup>37</sup> on the part of these errorists, but strangely, here he does not mention the recently emerging Quakers as one might expect in a chapter on the errors of England in the 1650s. This is especially surprising since Arrowsmith, generally pacific during his mastership of Trinity, had accused Alexander Ackhurst, the Vice-Master of his own college, of Quaker-like error in 1654, and since Quakers were active in the town by 1655.<sup>38</sup> Instead, Arrowsmith cites as negative examples the Dutch Remonstrants, the Anabaptists, and “From Germany...the Weigelians.”<sup>39</sup>

Valentine Weigel (1533–1588) was a German Lutheran pastor of no real distinction, and during his own lifetime his orthodoxy was not seriously in question. Only after he died were his manuscript works discovered, admired by some, and then two decades later brought into print. It is because of these delays that a sixteenth-century preacher spawned a seventeenth-century sect.

Weigel held views in common with German mystics like Meister Eckhart and Johannes Tauler. He venerated Caspar Schwenkfeld and attracted interest from followers of Paracelsus (d. 1541) who sought an alternative to the “learned” medicine of the time (and who can blame them!). The publisher of his works in England was Giles Calvert, a publisher of both Quaker works and works in the German mystical tradition.<sup>40</sup>

35. Arrowsmith, *Plans for Holy War*, II.ii.2.

36. Arrowsmith, *Plans for Holy War*, II.ii.2, 4, 6.

37. Arrowsmith, *Plans for Holy War*, II.ii.5.

38. Twigg, *University of Cambridge*, 191–92; see 191–95.

39. Arrowsmith, *Plans for Holy War*, II.ii.6.

40. For a modern edition of and introduction to Weigel’s works, see Valentin Weigel, *Von Betrachtung des Lebens Christi. Vom Leben Christi. De vita Christi*, ed. Horst Pfefferl (Stuttgart-Bad Cannstatt: Frommann-Holzboog, 2002).



Twice in *Plans for Holy War*, Arrowsmith had made passing reference to Paracelsus,<sup>41</sup> whom the Weigelians admired. But the Weigelians themselves are a main concern, and it is here that he states his main objection to their teaching. For Arrowsmith, the Weigelians represent “bizarre progressives...who grant the civil magistrate, even though he is Christian and endowed with distinguished piety, no authority even to reform the church, much less to suppress heretics in any way at all.”<sup>42</sup>

The old errors of the Weigelians had much in common with the newly emerging Quakers. They shared the same printer in London. They suffered the same pejorative labeling as varieties of “Enthusiasm.” They also all relied on unmediated communications with God, opposed university education, and criticized established religion.

For Arrowsmith, the Weigelian unwillingness to fight heresy with every weapon available to Christians, including the Christian magistrates’ “sword,” was unconscionable. Such an attitude is “against the plain meaning of sacred Scripture, the mind of Augustine, the practice of the church, and the clear dictates of reason,” and he appeals to “the reform of the churches during the reigns of David, Solomon, Asa, Jehoshaphat, Hezekiah, and the other kings of Judah” to make his point.<sup>43</sup>

But if this was his concern, why point the finger at German “Weigelians” when there were enough problems at home? One answer might be that it seemed more prudent to do so, or at least more politic, than to preach against the toleration of error which characterized Oliver Cromwell’s administration, for it had defaulted to defending high levels of religious liberty and thus, by default, toleration of heterodoxy. Another reason to criticize the Weigelians, in addition to everything said thus far, is that in mid-1650s England it may still have been unclear which movement—Weigelianism or Quakerism—would prove to be most corrosive to orthodoxy or attractive to errorists. But in both of these answers, what should really be seen is that Weigelianism is for Arrowsmith not so much a German movement that needs to be feared in England but a German label for an English problem, perhaps a very specific English problem, and which one or ones he does not say.

In registering complaints about Weigelianism, Arrowsmith further helps us understand how three curious orations that he attached to the book were not merely added padding, an additional feature to increase sales.

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41. Arrowsmith, *Plans for Holy War*, I.iii.2, I.vi.7.

42. Arrowsmith, *Plans for Holy War*, II.ii.11.

43. Arrowsmith, *Plans for Holy War*, II.ii.12.

The three lectures prefacing the main text of *Plans for Holy War*, discussed more fully in the introduction to the new translation, provide essential context for the larger book, and arguably offer a key to its central thesis.

That thesis is that error needs to be resisted by all Christians, including Christian magistrates. To be sure, this thesis is not advanced to the exclusion of other concerns: Arrowsmith ends his three-chapter exposition of the Belt of Truth with an exhortation to all Christians, English Christians generally, and Academics specifically, and thus not to magistrates exclusively. But it is clear that he wants “Christians generally, and ministers in particular” (at a time when almost all academics were ministers) to own the theologian’s task of identifying and refuting error—and then to ask the civil magistrate to back up the word with the “sword,” through means such as state-supported censorship, fines, and perhaps imprisonment or even exile.<sup>44</sup> Arrowsmith makes no specific recommendations, but readers would be well aware of the range of available options.

### c. The Vice-Master

With a consideration of Arrowsmith’s understanding of Scripture and his worries about a Wegelian spirit afflicting 1650s England, this article is drifting toward an answer as to why a figure like Arrowsmith—a figure who cannot shed his pacific tone even while advocating polemics—would focus his remaining energy on writing this as his final book. Both answers thus far might suffice by way of motivation for writing but are perhaps still too general: a conviction about what the whole Bible teaches; and a rising problem in the 1650s.

There seems to be at least one more reason why Arrowsmith might have felt the urgency to write. This third motivation is the sad case of his Vice-Master at Trinity, Alexander Ackhurst, mentioned above in passing.

The Master of Trinity was able to be flexible, at times beyond what others thought proper. Earlier, as Master of St. John’s, he had sometimes advocated the removal of royalists but not always. Even after the regicide, and against vocal opposition, where men of exceptional talent could be found, he occasionally advocated the continuance or promotion of known or suspected royalists in the college if they were well-qualified, godly tutors.<sup>45</sup> This same attitude continued into the 1650s at his new post. But Ackhurst worried Arrowsmith.

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44. Arrowsmith, *Plans for Holy War*, II.ii.12, II.v.6.

45. Twigg, *University of Cambridge*, 152.

Arrowsmith travelled to London to bring testimony in Parliament against Ackhurst for dishonoring both God and Holy Scripture. Imprisoned in London and examined by Parliament, the University, and then the College, Ackhurst was shuttled from one trial to another in 1654 and 1655. Arrowsmith, along with Anthony Tuckney and Lazarus Seaman (two other college masters and former Westminster assembly members), examined Ackhurst. He was later released from prison for the purpose of further examination in Cambridge and remained free, but following an examination of his theological views by senior leaders in the university (including Arrowsmith), Ackhurst was ejected from the college and thus the University. In the case of Ackhurst, the civil magistrate failed to do what Arrowsmith thought it should have done.

Ackhurst was later thought to be a Quaker. But these were early years for Quakerism in the Cambridge area, and in writing about Wegelianism, Arrowsmith may have been seeking a good label for his erring colleague. But the more important point is that as Arrowsmith delivered his three anti-Wegelian lectures in 1655 or 1656 and as he wrote *Tactica Sacra* around the same time, Ackhurst's case was in process or had just wound down. Arguably, the Ackhurst affair is the most immediate of the three plausible catalysts for Arrowsmith's production of *Tactica Sacra*.

Fittingly, the work ends with a "modest sketch of the heavenly triumph." In one deeply moving line after another the writer leaves his readers on the edge of their pews, waiting for Christ's return. He confesses for himself, "I can now see the land, or rather Heaven, where my long argument must come to an end," and adds, "Christians dwell in enemy territory so long as they fulfill their military service in the world... so Christians are led triumphant after they say goodbye to the world through death, are wreathed with their crowns, and decorated with songs of praise. They come to the 'city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, ten thousands of angels.'"<sup>46</sup>

That this heaven contains multitudes heartens Arrowsmith, although it does not lead him down the garden path toward universal redemption.<sup>47</sup> Instead what follows, still maintaining an emphasis on warfare and now victory, is a reflection on the joys of the blessed in seeing God and loving God<sup>48</sup> and the various ways in which the blessed are described in Scripture, reflecting their exalted dignity, purity, and joy, all of which is owed "to

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46. Arrowsmith, *Plans for Holy War*, III.iv.1.

47. Arrowsmith, *Plans for Holy War*, III.iv.2.

48. Arrowsmith, *Plans for Holy War*, III.iv.3.

our most blessed Mediator Jesus Christ.”<sup>49</sup> And here *Tactica Sacra*’s subtitle comes into its own, for this is a book explaining “How the Spiritual Soldier Fights, Conquers, and Triumphs.”

### Conclusions

But what of this article’s title, and its reference to the “art of pacific pugilism”? I set out to demonstrate why peace-making Arrowsmith ended his life with a pugilistic or combative book. But the most striking feature of the book itself, and the first of my four concluding observations, is that Arrowsmith managed to pull off a writing style that was at once pacific and pugilistic. For the fact is, Arrowsmith’s sustained polemic rarely wanders from the winning tone that characterized the rest of his life and writing. His content is warlike, but his tone remains earnestly friendly.

Arrowsmith was conscious of what he was doing in the book and describes his style as scholastic-pastoral.<sup>50</sup> His term is useful. The professor’s book is scholastic in the sense that it addresses and then answers questions that academically trained Christians might ask, and it meets objections that have been and could be raised.

But the book is also pastoral. The whole book is written in the first person, for the book is a conversation between Arrowsmith and his readers, who are frequently and directly addressed in a pastoral tone, “whoever you are—Christian, Englishman, academic.”<sup>51</sup> In turns, his audience is advised to pay attention, excused for their “rising boredom,” encouraged to admire good theologians, or urged to grieve the bad.<sup>52</sup> Throughout the book the professor is a pastor.

The book is also both scholastic and pastoral in the sense that it is both scholarly and accessible. Potential rough edges in the work are softened with both anecdotes and choice citations and quotations. Arrowsmith not only cites around 300 distinct authors; he also tells stories or relates anecdotes mentioning another 350 historical and literary figures, from Protagoras and Pericles to Pope Paul V and the legendary King Pirgandicus.<sup>53</sup> His stories

49. Arrowsmith, *Plans for Holy War*, III.iv.4–5.

50. Arrowsmith, *Plans for Holy War*, I.i.1.

51. Arrowsmith, *Plans for Holy War*, II.iii.6.

52. e.g., Arrowsmith, *Plans for Holy War*, II.ii.5, III.iii.15, II.iii.6, II.ii.11.

53. Of these about seventy were medieval theologians, exegetes, and churchmen. Arrowsmith mentions or cites almost twice as many pagan classical figures (roughly 130), about three dozen pagan literary figures and deities, and perhaps four dozen early Jewish and Christian exegetes, theologians, historians, and heretics, including some prominent

are almost always entertaining, even if not always plausible. His interest in telling stories seems more focused on adding color to his book than light.

This pleasant tone is sometimes on display even in describing particular errorists. While the main point of the work is the need to defend true theology, false theology is discussed right out of the gate. Among the errorists mentioned, papists and Jesuits lead the way, but while many references to Roman Catholics are predictably negative, there are a surprising number of moments where a good point made by an obvious opponent is acknowledged by the author.

This is not an angry man-biting-dog kind of book. Rather, Arrowsmith seems to have operated according to the maxim that one must hate the Catholicism but could love the Catholic. Arminians are the second-most mentioned problem, and they receive less praise for their rare insights. Socinians find themselves in third place, but they are clearly marked out as the most dangerous heretics of Arrowsmith's own day (the Cartesians are on his radar, but not in his sights).

All of this is part of the art of pacific pugilism and is strikingly different—more confident and calmer, than much of the near-hysterical heresiography of the day, not least that which was produced by Thomas Edwards. There appears, then, in Arrowsmith a contrast with other Puritan literature of the day and raises the question, which this article is not able to answer, as to when this tone began to change among the godly. It seems that most works discussing error with a relaxed tone were more closely associated with the cool culture of royalism and not the hot culture of Puritanism. A systematic study of polemical works is needed to see if this impression reflects reality and tells of a trend.

The second conclusion drawn from this brief study is that there is apparent value in tracing the multiple possible motivations involved in the writing of a work, including immediate personal circumstances as well as obvious ministerial motives (such as a faithful exposition of an over-arching biblical theme). There are two worlds that study Puritanism. One seems to look for pure, enduring, pastoral motives behind printed works. The other questions such idealism, sticking to personal and more immediate motives for religious writing. In Arrowsmith's case we see a bit of both, and there is reason to suspect that additional studies of works by other divines would

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Christian churchmen. In distinction from his reformation and post-Reformation citations, most mentions of earlier sources are provided for color or oxygen—devices to ease the reader's way through the book.

often yield complex and compound motivations, including some unimpressive motivations that card-carrying “Calvinists” ought to expect.

Third, the fact that the Ackhurst case was punted between London and Cambridge, and ultimately resulted only in his ejection from a college fellowship, offers one more data point regarding the difficulty in enforcing blasphemy law in Cromwellian England. The weakness of the civil law, and even of a Puritan-controlled trial in a Puritan-dominated university, points to the limits of coercion. Big sticks having proved useless for correcting the increasingly chaotic environment of the 1650s, it may be that Arrowsmith decided to offer a carrot—a book on truth and heresy without (or at least with much less) of the unpleasantness that often accompanied earnest polemic against error.

Finally, it seems inevitable that the sheer volume of the errorists and errors discussed by Arrowsmith will lead historians at some point to compare it to the notorious work of heresiography of the 1640s, Thomas Edwards’s *Gangraena*. Both seek to expose present errors, both call for an urgent response, and both name names, although Arrowsmith focuses on errors on the continent to an extent that Edwards does not. Although it would be unfair to liken Arrowsmith’s largely irenic work to Edwards’s angry diatribe, it is Arrowsmith’s work that will better help historians see why, shortly after Arrowsmith’s death, Presbyterians not sharing Edwards’s judgmental spirit would nonetheless welcome a Restoration of the monarchy even with all the risks that would entail.

It remains to be said—by way of reflection rather than conclusion—that Arrowsmith’s concerns and conduct seem strikingly relevant for today. One does not have to be a credential cultural pundit to notice that we have moved from an anti-judgmental modern culture to a hyper-judgmental cancel culture, and from a culture that paid at least lip-service to human dignity to one that now finds value in a hierarchy of victimhood. Arrowsmith’s interest in addressing sin more than suffering (in spite of his own suffering), and in his own sin and not simply that of others (in spite of his concern about rising doctrinal indifference) might almost make Puritanism seem attractive to modern scholars looking for an antidote to our current malaise.

As well, Arrowsmith’s concern about doctrinal sin, rather than ethical sin, reminds us that many Puritans were convinced that growing in grace entailed growing in a knowledge of God as He has revealed Himself—and that in conscious contrast from how the church or culture might imagine Him to be. Doctrinal controversy was and is in many contexts seen to be a problem, or if not a problem, still something to be subordinated to greater

concerns. How far this timidity or indifferentism is from Arrowsmith's own understanding of the Christian life!

Third, *Plans for Holy War* and the three Orationes that accompany the book describe a problem in the author's day that serves as a reminder that the Weigelian spirit is alive and well in our own day. Arrowsmith's concerns about magistrates who refuse to support ministerial education, church reform, and oppose doctrinal error, will find few sympathizers. But the Weigelian spirit evidences itself in the academy too. There are those who devalue the study of languages and literature for ministers, or who minimize the need for wide reading in theology and philosophy, thus depriving ministers and their congregations from the good that a thorough education can do. Even those who argue for some kind of sustained study for gospel ministry are continually "dumbing down" their programs, requiring fewer and fewer hours of study in residential and hybrid programs and now online programs designed not only to reach those who cannot access in-person ministerial training, but those who find it inconvenient. Arrowsmith understood the value of education for Christians, not least Christian pastors. It will take a backbone like his to stand against these trends and call people to do what is best, even if it is hard.

Finally, Arrowsmith himself is an impressive example of a generous spirit. He extends considerable effort to voice his complaints and concerns in a winsome and attractive way. The hard work of writing well, rather than the easier task of writing much, is something that administrators need to encourage and academics need to pursue. But it is also impressive that Arrowsmith wrote the book not expecting to live to see it published. He was wrong, for it was for sale in the bookstalls before his death. But that Arrowsmith could labor in so much weakness, with so little likelihood that he would personally hear praise from those who would read his book, is a true commendation of a Christian soldier who spent his life in service to his Captain and had the faith to see that he would live another day.

# Pastoral Silence and Edifying Speech: Paul Baynes's Teaching of Predestination

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Many studies assign a large role to predestination in post-Reformation orthodoxy and especially Puritanism.<sup>1</sup> A century ago, William Haller claimed that English Puritanism is “primarily the history of the setting forth of the basic doctrine of predestination, in terms calculated to appeal to the English populace.”<sup>2</sup> A recent Cambridge survey of Puritanism still notes that “Puritanism was linked with the Calvinist stream of the Reformation and thus stressed simplicity in worship and unconditional predestination.”<sup>3</sup>

Important studies on this subject include R. T. Kendall's, *Calvin and the English Calvinists*, which characterizes Puritans as “experimental predestinarians,” whose pastoral theology was dominated by the quest for the assurance of election through the practical syllogism.<sup>4</sup> Kendall fits with the general

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1. Studies concerning the continental post-Reformation era on predestination: Pieter Rouwendal, *Predestination and Preaching in Genevan Theology from John Calvin to Benedict Pictet* (Kampen: Sumnum Academic Publications, 2017); Nam Kyu Lee, *Die Prädestinationslehre der Heidelberger Theologen 1583–1622* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2009); Joel R. Beeke, *Debated Issues in Sovereign Predestination: Early Lutheran Predestination, Calvinian Reprobation, and Variations in Genevan Lapsarianism* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2016).

2. William Haller, *The Rise of Puritanism* (N.Y.: Columbia University Press, 1938), 85.

3. John Coffey and Paul C. H. Lim, “Introduction,” in *The Cambridge Companion to Puritanism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 2–6; cf. Patrick Collinson, *Richard Bancroft and Elizabethan Anti-Puritanism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 221.

4. Robert T. Kendall, *Calvin and English Calvinism to 1649* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1979), 8, 80. His perspective is assumed by Philip Benedict, *Christ's Churches Purely Reformed: A Social History of Calvinism* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2002), 321–22; John Morgan, *Godly Learning: Puritan Attitudes towards Reason, Learning, and Education, 1560–1640* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 23–24; Diarmaid MacCulloch, *The Later Reformation in England, 1547–1603*, 2nd ed. (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2001), 73–77; Peter White, *Predestination, Policy and Polemic: Conflict and consensus in the English*



Calvin versus the Calvinist argument that Theodore Beza and William Perkins made Reformed theology a rigid system dominated by predestination.<sup>5</sup> This system continues to be seen as creating a host of pastoral ills, including excessive introspection, subjectivism, uncertainty, despair, and even terror, all of which it had difficulty addressing.<sup>6</sup> Kendall's thesis has been challenged by a growing body of scholarship. Richard Muller has argued that English Calvinism did not have predestination as a central, non-Christological dogma,<sup>7</sup> yet variations of Kendall's argument persist.

Puritan studies have also demonstrated various pastoral purposes related to the Puritan treatments of predestination.<sup>8</sup> Dewey Wallace provides a synthesis of many Puritans to argue that "more and more the doctrine of predestination came to the fore as the touchstone of how grace was regarded, and thus special attention is given to it."<sup>9</sup> From a narrow selection of evidence, Arnold Hunt also concludes "there was widespread popular

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*Church from the Reformation to the Civil War* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 95, 293; Sophie Oxenham, "A Touchstone the Written Word: Experimental Calvinist Life-Writing and the Anxiety of Reading Salvation, 1650–1689" (PhD diss., King's College, University of London, 2000), 10, 28.

5. Beza: Basil Hall, "Calvin against the Calvinists," in *John Calvin*, ed. G. E. Duffield (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1966), 25–28; Brian G. Armstrong, *Calvinism and the Amyraut Heresy: Protestant Scholasticism and Humanism in Seventeenth-Century France* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1969), 38–42, 128–33, 158–60; John Stanley Bray, "Theodore Beza's Doctrine of Predestination" (PhD diss., Stanford University, 1971), 5–6; Alister E. McGrath, *Reformation Thought: An Introduction* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 1999), 141. Perkins: Kendall, *Calvin and English Calvinism*; White, *Predestination, Policy and Polemic*; Ian Breward, "The Life and Theology of William Perkins, 1558–1602" (PhD diss., University of Manchester, 1963), 196–201.

6. John Stachniewski, *The Persecutory Imagination: English Puritanism and the Literature of Religious Despair* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), 57, 86; Christopher Marsh, *Popular Religion in Sixteenth Century England* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 1998), 121; David E. Stannard, *The Puritan Way of Death: A Study in Religion, Culture, and Social Change* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1979), 41, 74; Oxenham, "A Touchstone the Written Word," 28, 41–42.

7. Richard A. Muller, *Christ and the Decree: Christology and Predestination in Reformed Theology from Calvin to Perkins* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1986).

8. Mark Dever, *Richard Sibbes: Puritanism and Calvinism in Late Elizabethan and Early Stuart England* (Macon: Mercer University Press, 2000), 106–109; Anthony R. Moore, "Assurance according to Richard Sibbes" (PhD diss., Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2014), 111–15; Lesley A. Rowe, *The Life and Times of Arthur Hildersham, Prince among Puritans* (Grand Rapids: Reformation Heritage Books, 2013), 54–57. See also Randall Pederson, "Unity in Diversity: English Puritans and the Puritan Reformation, 1603–1689" (PhD diss., Leiden University, 2013), 108–109.

9. Wallace, *Puritans and Predestination*, viii–ix.

acceptance of predestination” and teaching of it.<sup>10</sup> More recently, Leif Dixon’s study argues “ministers sought to create a generation of self-confident and assertive everyday saints who would be able to engage constructively with others because they were not constantly fretting about themselves.”<sup>11</sup> Especially Dixon’s study shifts the focus from assurance to the Christian life.

The scholarly variances at the intersection of predestination and pastoral ministry is easily fostered by selectivity in the use of primary sources. A path toward a clearer understanding of predestination’s pastoral function is through a study of its teaching within the entire corpus of one pastor. This approach will show this doctrine’s placement, treatment, use, and weight within one ministry. That ministry can then challenge or confirm perceptions of the broader dynamics in early seventeenth-century Puritanism.

A good candidate for study is an important figure with clear Puritan credentials, firm convictions on predestination, a burden for pastoral ministry, and one overlooked by scholars. These elements describe Paul Baynes (c. 1573–1617). To begin with the last point, Baynes is a mentioned but neglected theologian worthy of study. One of the most in-depth studies of Baynes in relation to predestination is Kendall’s chapter on him and his spiritual son, Richard Sibbes. He casts Baynes as more pastorally sensitive to strugglers who were affected by Perkins’s system, yet as furthering this system which made people focus more on themselves than on Christ.<sup>12</sup> Paul Schaefer’s study entitled *The Spiritual Brotherhood* counters Kendall’s arguments. His chapter title, “Paul Baynes: Ministering to the Heart Set Free,” captures his focus on Baynes’s teaching on godliness being rooted in sovereign grace.<sup>13</sup> Apart from these chapters, Baynes has received little attention. In 2019, Tom Schwanda still observed that “Surprisingly... Baynes has attracted little scholarly interest.”<sup>14</sup> This article is a further step toward filling that void.

10. Arnold Hunt, *The Art of Hearing: English Preachers and Their Audiences, 1590–1640* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 386, 346 (chapter entitled “Reading sermons theologically: Predestination and the pulpit”).

11. Leif Dixon, *Practical Predestinarians in England, c. 1590–1640* (Burlington, Vt.: Ashgate Publishing, 2014), 7 (cf. p. 15).

12. Kendall, *Calvin and English Calvinism*, 94, 102.

13. Schaefer, *Spiritual Brotherhood*, 226–27, 326; cf. Haller, *Rise of Puritanism*, 92; Busfield, “Protestant Epistolary Counselling in Early Modern England,” 60, 64.

14. Tom Schwanda, “Paul Baynes and Richard Sibbes,” in Ronald K. Rittgers and Vincent Evener, eds., *Protestants and Mysticism in Reformation Europe* (Leiden: Brill, 2019), 371, 370. Schaefer, *Spiritual Brotherhood*, 108, 64; Kendall, *Calvin and English Calvinism*, 94.

This article will seek to answer the question: How does Paul Baynes's manner of combining Reformed scholastic precision and pastoral edification in his treatment of predestination contribute to the understanding of early Stuart Puritan ministry?

### Puritan Stance

Defining Puritanism continues to be debated.<sup>15</sup> Rather than define Puritanism and press the object of this study into that definition's mold, the thought and practice of Paul Baynes will be examined to shed further light on the nature of Puritanism, since there has been no debate about whether he stood within the Puritan family of convictions and practices.

Biographical information on Baynes comes from several early biographies as well as official ecclesiastical records, his own correspondence, and scattered references.<sup>16</sup> He was born in London, likely in 1573. As a boy, he was sent by his father over fifty miles away to a school in a tiny village

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15. On defining Puritanism, see Basil Hall, "Puritanism: The Problem of Definition," in G. J. Cuming ed., *Studies in Church History*, vol. 2 (London: Thomas Nelson, 1965), 283–96; Patrick Collinson, "A Comment: Concerning the Name Puritan," *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 31, no. 4 (Oct. 1980): 483–88; Peter Lake, "The Historiography of Puritanism" in *The Cambridge Companion to Puritanism*, 346–72; Brian H. Cosby, "Toward a Definition of 'Puritan' and 'Puritanism': A Study in Puritan Historiography," *Churchman* 122, no. 4 (2008): 297–314; Ian Clary, "Hot Protestants: A Taxonomy of English Puritanism," *Puritan Reformed Journal* 2, no. 1 (2010): 41–66; Pederson, "Unity in Diversity"; Peter White, "The *Via Media* in the Early Stuart Church," in *The Early Stuart Church, 1603–1642*, ed. Kenneth Fincham (Stanford University Press, 1993), 211–30; idem, *Predestination, Policy and Polemic*, xiii, 140.

16. Manuscripts and letters: Paul Baynes, *Christian letters of Mr. Paul Bayne. Replenished with divers Consolations, Exhortations, and Directions, tending to promote the Honour of Godliness* (London: by E. G. for I. N., 1637); idem, *Paul Bayn to the Earl of Salisbury*, Cecil Papers, vol. 111 (June 30 [1605]), accessed June 20, 2019, *Proquest—The Cecil Papers*; idem, *Paul Bayn to Viscount Cranborne*, Cecil Papers Petitions, 28 ([After April 10, 1605]), accessed June 20, 2019, *Proquest—The Cecil Papers*. Early biographies: William Ames, "Preface," in Paul Baynes, *The Diocesans Tryall. Wherein all the sinnewes of Doctor Downhams Defence Are brought into three heads, and orderly dissolved* (n.p., 1621), sigs. A2<sup>r</sup>-B1<sup>v</sup>; Samuel Clarke, *The lives of two and twenty English divines eminent in their generations for learning, piety, and painfulnesse in the work of the ministry, and for their sufferings in the cause of Christ* (London: for Thomas Vnderhill and John Rothwell, 1660), 27–31; Benjamin Brook, *The lives of the Puritans*, vol. 2 (London: J. Black, 1813), 261–64; Thomas Alexander, "Paul Bayne," in Paul Baynes, *An entire commentary upon the whole Epistle of St. Paul to the Ephesians* (London: James Nichol, 1866), v-xi; C. S. Knighton, "Baynes, Paul (c. 1573–1617)," in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford University Press, 2004), online edn, Jan 2008, [www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/1780](http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/1780).

pastored by the famous puritan, Richard Rogers.<sup>17</sup> Several scholars observe similarities between Rogers and Baynes in their emphasis on practical guidance for piety.<sup>18</sup> From there, Baynes headed to the Puritan-influenced Christ's College, Cambridge, in 1590/91, while Perkins was its "chief attraction."<sup>19</sup> According to Samuel Clarke, Baynes was converted under Perkins's ministry, as indicated in the fact he began to receive his father's £40 annuity, which was to be given only on evidence of conversion.<sup>20</sup>

Baynes's writings show affinity with Perkins and his Cambridge milieu not only in his piety but also his view of predestination. Like Perkins, Baynes had strong supralapsarian convictions concerning predestination. He is often viewed as a defender of the Reformed orthodox teaching of predestination against the rising threat of Arminianism.<sup>21</sup> The title of his Ephesians commentary published in 1618 was: *A commentarie vpon the first chapter of*

17. Clarke, *Lives of two and twenty English divines*, 27.

18. Willem J. op 't Hof, *Engelse piëtistische geschriften in het Nederlands, 1598–1622* (Rotterdam: Lindenberg, 1987), 393–94; Theodore Dwight Bozeman, *The Precisianist Strain: Disciplinary Religion & Antinomian Backlash in Puritanism to 1638* (Williamsburg, Va.: Omohundro Institute of Early American History and Culture, 2004), 97–98.

19. Mark R. Shaw, "William Perkins and the New Pelagians: Another Look at the Cambridge Predestination Controversy of the 1590s," *Westminster Theological Journal* 58, no. 2 (1996): 284. On William Perkins, see Mark R. Shaw, "The Marrow of Practical Divinity: A Study in the Theology of William Perkins" (PhD diss., Westminster Theological Seminary, 1981); Joel Beeke and Stephen Yuille, "Biographical Preface: William Perkins, the 'Father of Puritanism,'" in *The Works of William Perkins*, vol. 1, ed. Joel Beeke and Stephen Yuille (Grand Rapids: Reformation Heritage Books, 2014), ix–xxxviii; W. B. Patterson, *William Perkins and the Making of a Protestant England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014). On Christ's College, Anthony Tuckney (1599–1670) noted "in former times, when the question was, why Cambridge men were accounted more profitable preachers than Oxford men; Mr. Baynes said, the reason was, that God had, from the first reformation blessed Cambridge with exemplary plaine and spirituall preachers; and so goodlie pictures hung before the women conceiving, helpt to make the birth more beautifull." Anthony Tuckney, "Dr. Tuckney's 2nd letter," in *Moral and religious aphorisms: collected from the Manuscript Papers of The Reverend and Learned Doctor Whichcote...to which are added, Eight Letters* (London: J. Payne, 1753), 37.

20. Clarke, *Lives of two and twenty English divines*, 27.

21. Wallace, *Puritans and Predestination*, 82; Nicholas Tyacke, *Aspects of English Protestantism c. 1530–1700* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2001), 119; David D. Hall, *The faithful shepherd: a history of the New England ministry in the seventeenth century* (University of North Carolina Press, 1972), 56; Eric W. Platt, "The Course and Consequences of British Involvement in the Dutch Political and Religious Disputes of the Early Seventeenth Century" (PhD diss., University of Wisconsin-Madison, 2010), 334; Joel R. Beeke and Randall J. Pederson, *Meet the Puritans: With a Guide to Modern Reprints* (Grand Rapids: Reformation Heritage Books, 2006), 75–77.

the epistle of Saint Paul, written to the Ephesians Wherein, besides the text fruitfully explained: some principall controuersies about predestination are handled, and diuers arguments of Arminius are examined. These strong predestinarian convictions make him an ideal object of study.

After graduating with a BA in 1594 and an MA in 1597, Baynes served as a fellow in his alma mater from 1600 until 1604 and succeeded Perkins as lecturer of St. Andrew's Cambridge from 1602 until his suspension in 1608. William Ames thought this lectureship did more good than "all the doctors of Cambridge"<sup>22</sup> because "Puritanes were made by that lecture."<sup>23</sup> Baynes's early, hagiographic biographer, Samuel Clarke, states that as a fellow Baynes "became inferiour to none for sharpnesse of wit, variety of Reading, depth of judgment, aptnesse to teach, holy, and pleasant language, wise carriage, heavenly conversation, and all other fulnesse of grace."<sup>24</sup>

Baynes's own evaluation was different: "We are but petty ushers; it is Christ that is the chief Schoolmaster in this school, he is the Doctor of the chair."<sup>25</sup> In a letter, he lamented: "I feele such ignorance of God and all his waies... such folly, which keepeth me from taking any thing to heart, which respecteth God, or concerneth my selfe."<sup>26</sup> He then continued: "But I flie to God who hath promised [grace]... I looke to Christ, and pray him to strengthen me, that I may follow... him whithersoer hee leadeth."<sup>27</sup> His letters give glimpses of his piety.

The evaluation of Baynes by important ecclesiastical authorities was even less positive. Already in 1605 he was temporarily suspended from preaching, possibly due to non-conformist sentiments, but was restored through the involvement of Chancellor Robert Cecil.<sup>28</sup> Baynes was able to resume lecturing until his final suspension in 1608.<sup>29</sup>

22. Ames, "Preface," in *Diocesans Tryall*, A3<sup>v</sup>.

23. Ames, "Preface," in *Diocesans Tryall*, sig. A3<sup>v</sup>.

24. Clarke, *Lives of two and twenty English divines*, 27–28.

25. Paul Baynes, *A commentary upon The whole Epistle of the Apostle Paul to the Ephesians* (London: S. Muller, 1658), 419.

26. Baynes, *Letters*, 150–52.

27. Baynes, *Letters*, 153.

28. Andrew Atherstone, "The Silencing of Paul Baynes and Thomas Taylor, Puritan Lecturers at Cambridge," *Notes and Queries* 54, no. 4 (2007): 388; *Cambridge University Library, Ely Diocesan Records*, D2/24, fos 55–6; "Cecil Papers: April 1605," in *Calendar of the Cecil Papers in Hatfield House, Volume 23, Addenda, 1562–1605*, ed. G. Dyfnallt Owen (London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1973), 205–207, *British History Online*, <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/cal-cecil-papers/vol23/pp205-207>.

29. Ames, "Preface," in *Diocesans Tryall*, sigs. A2<sup>r</sup>-B1<sup>r</sup>; see also Atherstone, "The Silencing of Paul Baynes and Thomas Taylor," 386–90.

Without an academic or ecclesiastical position in Cambridge, Baynes spent the last decade of his life often enduring physical suffering and yet seeking the spiritual welfare of others until his death in 1617. As a wanderer, he confessed, "When I am weake, I looke to my God; Lord, say I, thou must carry me as the Eagle her young ones, setting me on the wing of thy Spirit; as... the shepheard his weake sheepe which can goe no further... Thou art my God, thou must lead me till death."<sup>30</sup> His death in 1617 manifested the fruits of his Puritan piety, according to some. Clarke reports: "In his last sicknesse he had many doubts and feares, and God letting Satan loose upon him, he went out of this world, with farre lesse comfort then many weaker Christians enjoy." Was this stalwart teacher of predestination a victim of the ills it bred, as some suggest?<sup>31</sup> Baynes's earlier observation is helpful: "The truth and certainty of this priviledge [of having a good end] is not to be doubted of, though wee see good men at their death to shew small tokens of grace and of a happy departure" because "this is certaine, of a good life commeth a good death."<sup>32</sup> In speaking of a "good death" his focus is not simply a "comfortable" death but the death of a saint in Christ.

The life of Baynes shows he grew up and studied within a context of godliness as evidenced in his father's spiritual concern, his schooling in Wethersfield where Richard Rogers ministered, and his university years with William Perkins. At the same time, his religion was deeply personal, with his life evidencing a humble piety. Rather than a mere academic polemicist theologizing about predestination, he appears a man with quiet conviction and strength of character, who ministered to others out of the mercy he had received from God.

### Pastoral Convictions

Baynes had a burden for pastoral ministry. In his service as fellow and lecturer in Cambridge, he exercised, modeled, and mentored pastoral ministry.

30. Paul Baynes, "Spiritual Aphorismes: or Divine Meditations suteable to the pious and honest life and conversation of the Author, P. Bayne," in *Lectures preached upon these texts of Scripture* [bound with *A commentarie vpon the first and second chapters of Saint Paul to the Colossians*] (London, Nicholas Bourne, 1635), 301; cf. Baynes, *Letters*, 297.

31. Kendall, *Calvin and English Calvinism*, 75, 95; see also Richard F. Lovelace, *The American Pietism of Cotton Mather: Origins of American Evangelicalism* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1979), 87; H. C. Porter, *Reformation and Reaction in Tudor Cambridge* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1958), 218, 227.

32. Paul Baynes, *Briefe directions vnto a godly life* (London: Nathanael Newbery, 1618), 233. He adds that to correct sin or be an example to others, God "may send such a death as is lesse comfortable."

His voluminous output reflects the basic pastoral tasks of preaching, catechizing, counseling, and prayer.

Ironically, his very suspension as lecturer after a metropolitan visitation in 1608 arose from his pastoral concern. Clues to what offended the authorities are provided by William Sancroft the elder's extensive notes of Baynes's visitation sermon. Baynes's text was 1 Peter 5:2: "Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind."<sup>33</sup> This sermon pleads for a robust ministry of shepherding through preaching, visiting, and discipline. While void of references to nonconformity and predestination, it contains warnings against pastors having multiple benefices, reading rather than preaching, not engaging in discipline, and other grievances concerning current conditions in the established Church. A comparison of this sermon to the official records concerning the suspension of others indicates these later warnings were objectionable to the authorities.<sup>34</sup>

Ames reports after Baynes's suspension, he continued to pastor in various ways including "instruct[ing] or comfort[ing] those which came to him in private, wherin he had a heavenly gift."<sup>35</sup> His family connections through his wife made him visit Cranbrook where he even preached.<sup>36</sup> He also spent some winters as a "privat Seer" in the home of gentry friends.<sup>37</sup> His published letters attest to his spiritual counsel to a wide range of family, friends, and acquaintances. The available evidence indicates he remained devoted to the established church and to the care of souls after his suspension.

Baynes not only engaged in the practice of ministry, but also in reflecting on ministry. He saw two main purposes for ministry. Drawing from Paul's resolve to "present every man perfect in Christ Jesus" (Col. 1:28), he concludes: "This then ought to be the scope of every mans ministry, to

33. Paul Baynes, "Sermon on 1 Peter 5:2" (Sept. 20, 1608), in William Sancroft the Elder, *Theological Common-place book* (University of Oxford, Bodlian Library, MS. Rawl. D. 1332), fos. 17<sup>r</sup>–19<sup>r</sup>.

34. Thomas Taylor (*Cambridge University Archives*, VCCt.I 6 [Act Book], fol. 181<sup>v</sup>) John Cotton (Hunt, *Art of Hearing*, 37), and John Rudd (Keith Sprunger, *The learned doctor William Ames: Dutch backgrounds of English and American Puritanism* [Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1972], 15) were suspended after expressing similar concerns.

35. Ames, "Preface," in *Diocesans Tryall*, sig. A3.

36. Paul Baynes, *A counterbane against earthly carefulness In a sermon preached at Cranebrooke in Kent. 1617* (London: Nathanaell Newbery, 1618).

37. Baynes, *Letters*, 77–79, 184; cf. Clarke, *Lives of two and twenty English divines*, 29.

beget men to CHRIST by the immortall seed of the Word; and to nourish and feed them more and more, till they come to a perfect growth.”<sup>38</sup>

Concerning the tasks of ministry, Baynes gave most attention to that of preaching.<sup>39</sup> In his visitation sermon, he stressed its content must be the Word: “y<sup>e</sup> word of god in generall is y<sup>e</sup> only food of soules.”<sup>40</sup> Yet, “there are some things in y<sup>e</sup> word w<sup>ch</sup> are most to be insisted upon.” Rather than mentioning predestination, he highlights the fundamental truths of repentance from sin, faith in Christ, and a life of new obedience, akin to the tripartite structure of the Heidelberg Catechism.<sup>41</sup> Concerning application, he encourages ministers to address, first, the uncalled, second, the “newly called and in infancy,” and third, the “more spiritual and perfect” believers.<sup>42</sup> The minister must teach “with respect of due circumstances; considering what is fit for weak, what for strong, for young, for old,” so that each person receives their right portion.<sup>43</sup> To fail to practice this is to divide the Word “like him in the Emblem, who gave to the Asse a bone, to the dogge straw.”<sup>44</sup> Preaching is to proclaim the Word to various types of hearers with various types of exhortation.

Like Perkins, Baynes only has scattered hints related to teaching predestination. One principle is humility. He warns that pride makes one think “hee hath skill enough to judge” of “Gods secret and high Counsels.”<sup>45</sup> He says to preach “curious points” is to feed sheep with chaff.<sup>46</sup> He exhorts ministers to “condescend to their capacities whom yee teach” and “Think it not

38. Paul Baynes, *A commentarie vpon the first and second chapters of Saint Paul to the Colossians* (London: Nicholas Bourne, 1635), 167.

39. Baynes, *Briefe Directions*, 116 (“the ordinary preaching of the Word, is a singular meanes provided for the perfecting of Gods Elect, and for their growing in a Christian life”).

40. Baynes, “Sermon on 1 Peter 5:2,” fol. 16; see also Baynes, *Colossians*, 163.

41. Baynes, “Sermon on 1 Peter 5:2,” fol. 17. For the influence of the Heidelberg Catechism in England, see Anthony Milton, “A Missing Dimension of European Influence on English Protestantism: The Heidelberg Catechism and the Church of England, 1563–1663,” *Reformation & Renaissance Review* 20, no. 3 (2018): 235–48.

42. Baynes, *Lectures*, 45.

43. Baynes, *Ephesians*, 387.

44. Baynes, *The trial of a Christians estate: or a discoverie of the causes, degrees, signes and differences of the apostasie both of the true Christians and false* (London: Felix Kyngston, 1618), 2–3.

45. Baynes, *Ephesians*, 349.

46. Baynes, “Sermon on 1 Peter 5:2,” fol. 17. He then cites Basil who when he came to “curous points w<sup>ch</sup> some would be disireous to heare, he passed y<sup>m</sup> all ov[er] w<sup>th</sup> silence bec[ause], saith he, . . . y<sup>e</sup> people come not to heare p[ro]blesmes, but to have y<sup>e</sup> soules fed.”



your credit to walk in the clouds.”<sup>47</sup> His concern was for edifying preaching, which raises the question whether he would even preach on predestination.

At the same time, Baynes exhorts hearers to grow in knowledge. He stresses that “those that are under a Ministry, must not always bee children for knowledge.” Evidence of being babes is that “when wee are taught the doctrine of predestination...then wee think men walk in the clouds, and love to soare above our capacities; whereas it is an argument, not of the Teachers fault, but of our own weakness.”<sup>48</sup> Preachers are to come down to where the people are in order to elevate them.

To lead the church further, Baynes counsels to use a wise order of teaching. As builders, ministers need “wisdome which may make them deliver the counsel of God, every parcel of it, in his season, not bringing forth the roof and tyle when the grounds of Religion are not favourably digested.”<sup>49</sup> While this suggests he would reserve learning about predestination to the spiritually advanced, elsewhere he cautions all hearers: “we must not when we hear of predestination and such like...open our mouthes against these, like the dogge barking at the Moone, but lay our hands on our mouthes, knowing that all are full of wisdome, though we cannot behold the reason of them.”<sup>50</sup> Wisdom is needed to teach predestination within a broader framework.

Baynes’s instruction about ministry demonstrates his caution about unedifying speculation concerning and the proud or lazy rejection of predestination. Pastoral concern and reverence for Scripture is to guide the manner, order, depth, and use of teaching it. His pastoral bent generally and specific desire to treat predestination as an expounder of Scripture to the profit of his hearers makes him counter the caricature of strong predestinarians being obsessed with teaching predestination.<sup>51</sup> The question that remains is whether his practice cohered with his theory.

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47. Baynes, *Ephesians*, 388; cf. Baynes, “Sermon on 1 Peter 5:2,” fol. 17.

48. Baynes, *Ephesians*, 396.

49. Baynes, *Ephesians*, 260. For Luther’s similar use of this analogy see Susan Snyder, “The Left hand of God: Despair in Medieval and Renaissance Tradition,” *Studies in the Renaissance* 12 (1965): 41.

50. Baynes, *Ephesians*, 300.

51. Baynes confirms Peter Lake’s point that both Calvinists and anti-Calvinists cautioned about speculation (Peter Lake, *Anglicans and Puritans? Presbyterianism and English Conformist thought from Whitgift to Hooker* [London: Unwin Hyman, 1988], 189).

### Presence of Predestination

Paul Baynes's broad range of publications did not appear until after his death in 1617, due to his "indisposition and antipathy to the Presse," according to his friend.<sup>52</sup> The first four years after his death saw a spate of publications, and then some larger new publications rolled off the presses between 1635 and 1642. His writings cover the range of genres: commentaries, sermons, treatises, popular devotional guides, catechisms, letters, a polemical work, and academic discussions embedded in his commentary on Ephesians 1. Together they total around 3600 pages. This variety of genres provides an ideal opportunity to explore how predestination functioned within various means of ministry.

The most basic genre is his catechetical works. His catechism's title captures this genre's thrust: *A helpe to happinesse, or, A briefe and learned exposition of the maine and fundamentall points of Christian religion*.<sup>53</sup> This work expounds Stephen Egerton's mid-level catechism.<sup>54</sup> This catechism does not mention predestination and Baynes's exposition only uses predestinarian terms a few times, but does not define them.<sup>55</sup> Baynes's *Treatise upon the Sixe Principles* expounds a catechetical work of William Perkins. Neither Perkins nor Baynes treat predestination. Even Baynes's paraphrase of Romans 8:33 replaces the term "God's elect" with "us."<sup>56</sup> The closest he comes to predestination is God giving an "inheritance, which out of his fatherly love he before worlds prepared for them."<sup>57</sup> Overall, his most basic teaching aids hardly mention predestination and neither one defines it.

Such absences have been considered evidence of moderate theology, fear of the doctrine's dangerousness, or teaching an "implicitly universalist

52. E. C., "To the Right Worshipfull Sir Henry Yelverton," in Paul Baynes, *A commentarie vpon the first chapter of the epistle of Saint Paul, written to the Ephesians Wherein, besides the text fruitfully explained: some principall controuersies about predestination are handled, and diuers arguments of Arminius are examined* (London: Robert Milbourne, 1618).

53. Ian M. Green, *The Christian's ABC: Catechisms and Catechizing in England, c. 1530–1740* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996), 592–93. He lists three editions published 1618–1635.

54. See Stephen Egerton, "The Fovre Principal points contracted, and diuided into euen parts: euery part containing ten questions," in *A Briefe Methode of Catechizing. Wherein are handled these foure points* (London: Henrie Fetherstone, 1610), 20–26.

55. Paul Baynes, *A helpe to happinesse, or, A briefe and learned exposition of the maine and fundamentall points of Christian religion*, 2nd edition (London: W. Bladen, 1622), 39, 307, 205, 215, 344.

56. Paul Baynes, "A Treatise upon the Sixe Principles," in *Two godly and fruitfull treatises* (London: Robert Mylbourne, 1619), 213–14.

57. Baynes, "Sixe principles," 272.

message.”<sup>58</sup> More likely, it fits his conviction that catechizing is to “teach the grounds of Faith in right and good order” and coheres with him expounding a more basic catechism rather than a more advanced one which might define predestination.<sup>59</sup> His practice clarifies that he did not consider predestination to be one of those doctrines basic for faith and obedience.

The second group of genres are devotional and practical works, designed for those more grounded in the faith. These guides also have few references to predestination. His *Spirituall armour* and his practical guide to godliness, *Briefe directions vnto a godly life*, have a mere sprinkling of mentions of predestination without exposition. This paucity is not unique. Baynes’s work is based on Richard Rogers’ *Seuen Treatises*, which is ten times longer and yet has no exposition of predestination.<sup>60</sup> Baynes’s treatise on the *Lord’s Prayer* has a few more references. He distinguishes between how petitions apply to the elect called or “yet uncalled” or elect and “all others.”<sup>61</sup> Yet, his scant mention of predestination in works of spiritual guidance raises the question whether election had a function in daily spiritual life.

A third genre, his pastoral letters, gives personalized spiritual guidance. One letter gives counsel to an afflicted person who appears near despair of

58. White, *Predestination, Policy and Polemic*, 91; Ian Green, “‘Reformed Pastors’ and ‘Bons Curés’: The Changing Role of the Parish Clergy in Early Modern Europe,” in *The Ministry: Clerical and Lay*, ed. W. J. Sheils and Diana Wood (Oxford: Blackwell, 1989), 284; Green, *Christian’s ABC*, 386; Derek Hirst, *England in Conflict, 1603–1660: Kingdom, Community* (London: Arnold, 1999), 39. In contrast, even the “moderate” Joseph Hall’s extremely brief two page catechism defines God’s decree (Joseph Hall, “A briefe Summe of the Principles of Religion,” in *The vvorks of Joseph Hall B. of Norwich* [London: Miles Fleisher, 1647], 763–64). On the other hand, the supralapsarian William Twisse did not include predestination (William Twisse, *A Briefe Catecheticall Exposition of Christian Doctrine* [London: Robert Bird, 1632]).

59. Baynes, *Briefe Directions*, 9. For the need for catechizing, see Baynes, *Lectures*, 275–276. Egerton’s larger catechisms did briefly expound predestination (Egerton, *Briefe Methode of Catechizing*, 3, 6, 10).

60. See Dixon, *Practical Predestinarians*, 151. Use of predestinarian terms are found in Richard Rogers, *Seuen treatises containing such direction as is gathered out of the Holie Scriptures, leading and guiding to true happines, both in this life, and in the life to come: and may be called the practise of Christianitie* (London: Felix Kyngston, 1603), 33, 36, 49, 50, 52, 55, 76, 81, 89, 205 (Assurance); 116, 134, 225, 267, 434 (favour).

61. Paul Baynes, “A Treatise upon the Lords Prayer,” in *Two godly and fruitfull treatises* (London: Robert Mylbourne, 1619), 27, 32–33, 75–76, 121. Cf. William Perkins, *A godly and learned exposition of Christs Sermon in the Mount: preached in Cambridge* [Cambridge: Thomas Brooke and Cantrell Legge, 1608], 275, 267–69, 306).

being elect.<sup>62</sup> Two others mention election or reprobation in the context of encouragement.<sup>63</sup> This lack of references to predestination is reflected in the letters of Richard Greenham and Edward Dering as well.<sup>64</sup> Lucy Busfield sees Baynes's letters as an example of how "the need to display pastoral sensitivity frequently appears to have won out over strict predestinarian logic" in counselling.<sup>65</sup> A better conclusion may be that predestination was not uppermost in the minds of counselees and counsellor.

A fourth genre is comprised of sermons and lectures. Overall, Baynes gives minimal attention to predestination. Some of his sermons do not mention a single predestinarian term.<sup>66</sup> Some only hint at predestination in the citation of Scripture texts, which are not necessarily cited for their predestinarian content. Others mention election only within pastoral "uses" under the descriptors of true or false marks of election, without saying anything more about election.<sup>67</sup>

Other times Baynes uses predestination to clarify the meaning of the text. His sermon dealing with apostacy clarifies that apostates have never had "the true grace of the elect" because "the Lords chosen" cannot utterly fall away.<sup>68</sup> His sermon on John 3:16 gives more attention to election in his interaction with the Arminian interpretation of God's love.<sup>69</sup> His lecture on 1 Peter 1:17 explains how the statement that God "without respect of

62. Baynes, *Letters*, 18–33 (see especially pp. 23, 25, 33). See also Baynes, *Letters*, 14, 114, 310, 403.

63. Baynes, *Letters*, 182, 210.

64. Edward Dering, *Certaine godly and comfortable Letters, full of Christian consolation* ([S.l.: E. Griffin for E. Blount, 1614]), sig. A7<sup>r</sup>, B5<sup>r</sup>, B6<sup>r</sup>, C1<sup>r</sup>, C3<sup>r</sup>; Richard Greenham, *The workes of the reverend and faithfull seruant of Iesus Christ M. Richard Greenham* (London: VVilliam VVelby, 1612), 876, 878, 880; cf. Nehemiah Wallington, "Coppies of Profitable and Comfortable Letters" (British Library, Sloane MS. 922).

65. Busfield, "Protestant Epistolary Counselling in Early Modern England," 125–26.

66. Paul Baynes, *A Caueat for cold Christians in A Sermon Preached by Mr. Paul Bayne* (London: Nathanael Newbery, 1618); idem, *The Christians garment A sermon preached in London* (London: Ralph Rounthwaite, 1618); idem, *Lectures*, 1–14 ("A Pourtraiture or Description of a Sensuall and carnall heart"), 145–56 ("The Difficulty of Attaining Salvation"), 223–36 ("Mutuall Exhortation with the time and end of it"), 237–52 ("Kings to be prayed for, to what end").

67. Baynes, *Lectures*, 164 ("The Practical Life of a Christian"—2 Cor. 7:1); cf. ibid., 258 ("A Commentary upon divers verses of the first Chapter of the second Epistle of Saint Paul to Timothy"); idem, *Lectures*, 27 ("The Terrour of God displayed against carnall securitie").

68. Baynes, *Christians Estate*, 3, 8, 9.

69. Paul Baynes, *The mirrour or miracle of Gods loue vnto the world of his elect Preached on the third of Iohn, verse the sixteenth* (London: Nathanael Newbery, 1619), 1, 2, 3, 6, 8, 14–15, 64.

persons judgeth" fits with God choosing some and refusing others for no reason in them.<sup>70</sup> In these uncommon instances predestination surfaces to clarify the meaning of a text.

In other sermons, he deals with predestination because his scripture text does so.<sup>71</sup> His exposition of 2 Timothy 1:9 contains his most extensive sermonic treatment of election, since the text states God "hath saved us... according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." He provides a one-page exposition and application of predestination.<sup>72</sup> Unless it is explicit in the text, his sermons do not expound the doctrine of predestination and rarely reference it. Thus, he fits with the observation that godly preachers did not often preach on predestination, in contrast to Hunt's claim.<sup>73</sup>

A fifth genre is Baynes's commentaries. These likely arose from sermon series, yet their massive size gives them opportunity to be more technical and doctrinal. However, large sections of his commentaries on Ephesians and Colossians still do not use any predestinarian terms.<sup>74</sup> His commentary on Ephesians 2 through 6 contains no exposition of predestination. He does little more than mention its terms, such as "elect" or "chosen" ones, on less than 10% of the 453 quarto pages covering these chapters.

The conspicuous absence of predestination in the survey thus far raises the question whether the subject of predestination played any role in his pastoral teaching; however, he also expounded Ephesians 1, which is one of most extensive treatments of predestination in Scripture. Here, as an expositor of Scripture, Baynes expounds predestination in detail. He deals with the relationship between election, foreknowledge, and predestination, as well as their relationship to the attributes of God. He even gives a logical ordering of God's intentions in predestination relating to the

70. Baynes, *Lectures*, 72 ("The Motive of Holy Walking before God in filiall feare and obedience").

71. He does not always take occasions afforded in a text to speak of election, for example on Luke 2:14 (Baynes, *Lectures*, 193–95).

72. Baynes, *Lectures*, 268–69.

73. Hunt, *Art of Hearing*, 386, 346. Those recognizing scarcity: Morgan, *Godly Learning*, 25; Susan Doran and Christopher Durston, *Princes, Pastors, and People: the Church and religion in England, 1529–1689* (New York: Routledge, 1991), 195; Robert T. Kendall, "Preaching in Early Puritanism with special reference to William Perkins's *The Arte of Prophecy*," in *Preaching and Revival* (London: Westminster Conference, 1984), 30.

74. No predestinarian terms are mentioned in Baynes, *Ephesians*, s.v. 3:1–9, 3:16–24, 4:23–31, 5:9–24, 5:27–6:8; *Colossians*, s.v. 1:3–9, 2:5–12, 2:14–22.

infra-supralapsarian debate.<sup>75</sup> He emphasizes both the role of Christ and the sovereignty of God in election to the glory especially of His grace. He mentions little about reprobation because Ephesians 1 is focused on election. His method of expounding Scripture keeps him close enough to the text to be generally silent when the text is silent about predestination and to speak at length when the text does.

A final genre is the polemic scholastic disputation, involving the systematic presentation of arguments and counterarguments to establish a point of doctrine. Three of his four polemic excurses, which are embedded within his commentary on Ephesians 1, employ this form.<sup>76</sup> These detailed excurses cover: the supra-infralapsarian debate, the Arminian question of election based on foresight, Arminius's interpretation of Romans 9, and the fall.<sup>77</sup> He introduces one excursus by stating: "Having thus admonished what I deeme fit to be spoken more generally, as fitting to popular instruction, before I pass this place, I thinke it good to deliver my judgement touching that question."<sup>78</sup> He recognized this instruction was for the more theologically advanced.

Baynes's treatment of the Supra-infralapsarian debate here rather than elsewhere shows he did not consider this point necessary for everyone to know and calls into question whether lapsarian convictions should be identity markers of theologians. It fits with what other scholars have observed about the scarcity of popular teaching of lapsarian formulations and calls into question the idea that supralapsarians were strident teachers of predestination.<sup>79</sup> While his exegesis of Ephesians 1:4 occasioned this discussion, his treatment of it contains little exegesis of Scripture, thereby confirming the scholastic refinement inherent in this discussion.

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75. Baynes, *A commentarie vpon [Eph. 1]*, 163. Citing 1 Corinthians 3:13: "all are yours, you Christs, Christ Gods; that is, for God and his glory."

76. Baynes, *A commentarie vpon [Eph. 1]*, 81–93, 99–110, 134–61, 257–76, 353–71.

77. Baynes, *A commentarie vpon [Eph. 1]*, 81–93, 99–110, 134–61, 257–76.

78. Baynes, *A commentarie vpon [Eph. 1]*, 256–57. Elsewhere he states: "But having thus dispatched the point for common edification, I will for the benefit of such who are more ripe in understanding set downe my iudgement in these three points following" (*Ibid.*, 353).

79. Green, *Print and Protestantism*, 266; Dixon, *Practical Predestinarians*, 275. Some scholars are too quick to identify men as teaching supralapsarianism because they assume double predestination is necessarily supralapsarian. See: Hunt, *Art of Hearing*, 374; Cunningham, *James Ussher And John Bramhall*, 53; Jerome Friedman, *The Battle of the Frogs and Fairford's Flies: Miracles and the Pulp Press During the English* (Palgrave: Macmillan, 1993), 277; Oxenham, "A Touchstone the Written Word," 37. For a corrective, see Muller, *After Calvin*, 11–12; Pederson, "Unity in diversity," 106.

His disputation on foreseen faith and his engagement with Arminius's interpretation of Romans 9 are more forceful, indicating he saw these as more serious dangers. These debates were present in Cambridge through the influence of Peter Baro and later of James Arminius.<sup>80</sup> Baynes continued the debate between Perkins and Arminius<sup>81</sup> by engaging with specific texts. Thereby he shows that both he and Arminius were willing to analyze this passage using various academic tools to present doctrine with sophistication.

Since Romans 9 also deals with reprobation, this excursus is the main place in which Baynes deals with reprobation. That he does not treat reprobation in his exposition of Ephesians 1 and does in his exposition of Romans 9 fits with his view of his calling to expound the Word of God.<sup>82</sup> This approach does not fit Sophie Oxenham's opinion that Ramism forced theologians to bring reprobation to the same level as election in teaching.<sup>83</sup> To suggest that his teaching was a significant instigator of spiritual distress would also be a caricature of Baynes, as would White's implication that those who speak more of election than reprobation are on the *via media* between Geneva and Rome.<sup>84</sup> Baynes sought to draw out the meaning of passages rather than impose a predestination-controlled system on these passages.

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80. Tyacke cites a letter of John Overall of Cambridge dated 1605 which remarks that "our teachers enquire earnestly concerning Arminius, whenever any [Leiden] students arrive here," making it understandable that Baynes would address an Arminian error. John Overall to Dominicus Baudius (1605); cited in Nicholas Tyacke, *Anti-Calvinists: The Rise of English Arminianism c. 1590–1640* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1987), 36; see also Porter, *Reformation and Reaction*, 410. Wallace, *Puritans and Predestination*, 82–83. For Baro as an Arminian *avant la lettre*, see Keith D. Stanglin, "Arminius *Avant la Lettre*: Peter Baro, Jacob Arminius, and the Bond of Predestinarian Polemic," *Westminster Theological Journal* 67 (2005): 51–74; Porter, *Reformation and Reaction*, 344–90.

81. On Arminius's interpretation of Romans 9, see William den Boer, *God's Twofold Love: The Theology of Jacob Arminius (1559–1609)*, trans. Albert Gootjes (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2010), 15; Arminius, *Examen Modestum libelli quem D. Gvilielmvs Perkinsivs*, 261–301; idem, *An Analysis of the Ninth Chapter of the Epistle to the Romans*, in *The Works of James Arminius*, vol. 3, trans. W. R. Bagnall (Buffalo: Derby, Orton, and Muligan, 1853), 527–65.

82. On sermons on Romans 9 treating reprobation, see also Hunt, *Art of Hearing*, 354–55.

83. Contra Oxenham, "A Touchstone the Written Word," 50. Kendall also recognizes "he treats the doctrine of reprobation marginally" (Kendall, *Calvin and English Calvinism*, 96).

84. White, *Predestination, Policy and Polemic*, xiii, 140; idem, "The *Via Media* in the Early Stuart Church," 211–30; Porter, *Reformation and Reaction*, 310, 340–41; Stachniewski, *Persecutory Imagination*, 85, 90. See also Wallace, *Puritans and Predestination*, 47, 60; Karen Bruhn,

In summary, Baynes engages in precise and detailed theological discussion on predestination within the polemical academic genre, expounds and preaches predestination where the text speaks of it, does not import it where the text does not mention it, and does not expound it within his practical guides and catechisms. Overall, predestination was a minor theme. This general scarcity and occasional intensity can be accounted for by his attention to the genre and audience and more importantly his principle that ministers are to teach the Word with a view to edification using a right order of teaching. This counters the idea of post-Reformation scholastic theologians imposing a predestinarian grid on Scripture and indicates that at least Baynes desired to expound the meaning of the specific text before him.<sup>85</sup> At the same time, not only Baynes's detailed treatment of predestination in Ephesians 1, but also the inclusion of polemical excurses in his commentary suggests he saw value in leading more learned readers further into these mysteries. Thus, the general scarcity of predestination does not reflect an indifference toward the doctrine.

### Pastoral Uses

The combination of a pastoral heart and minimal teaching of predestination raises the question: Were Baynes's treatments of predestination merely to maintain orthodox credentials and his silence to shield people from its pastoral dangers? If so, he would still not fit within the argument that pastoral pressures moved pastors to modify and soften their Reformed understanding of predestination, because he remained committed to what is perceived as the least pastoral view of predestination: the supralapsarian view.<sup>86</sup> However, he would be a star witness in Kendall's suggestion that "pastoral concern" led some to react to Perkins and "almost prefer that men forget about the decrees of predestination."<sup>87</sup> He could even support those

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"Sinne Unfolded': Time, Election, and Disbelief among the Godly in Late Sixteenth- and Early Seventeenth-Century England," *Church History* 77, no. 3 (2008): 575.

85. He fits better with Dixon's observations (Dixon, *Practical Predestinarians*, 261, 263); cf. Oxenham, "A Touchstone the Written Word," 75.

86. Regarding softening, see Christopher Haigh, "The Taming of the Reformation: Preachers, Pastors and Parishioners in Elizabethan and Early Stuart England," *History* 85 (Oct. 2000): 577–81; Hunt, *Art of Hearing*, 372; Peter Iver Kaufman, *Prayer, Despair, and Drama: Elizabethan Introspection* (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois, 1996), 60. Regarding supralapsarianism, see Marsh, *Popular Religion in Sixteenth Century England*, 121; Stachniewski, *Persecutory Imagination*, 20–21, 240; Morgan, *Godly Learning*, 25–26; Hirst, *England in Conflict, 1603–1660*, 38–39.

87. Kendall, *Calvin and English Calvinism*, 103; Charles H. George, "A Social



who say doctrinal predestinarians had to set this doctrine aside and adopt Arminian tones in pastoring to benefit the people.<sup>88</sup> Such views fit the idea that the Puritan teaching of predestination has been labeled spiritually and psychologically damaging by breeding despair, desperation, distress, depression, and anxiety. In contrast, Dixon, Lake, and Hunt argue that messages aimed at moving the hearer's will were consistent with Calvinism and that distinctively Calvinistic truths were used for evangelistic purposes.<sup>89</sup>

A helpful method of countering selective use of examples and quotations which easily give rise to distorted caricatures or beautified paintings is to study one pastor's way of applying predestination in the whole of his written corpus. This study focuses on Baynes's preaching and lecturing because that is where predestination surfaces within his pastoral writings. The categories of Baynes's uses or applications in his sermons generally can be broken down as follows: corrective uses (37%), with a fraction being polemical; exhortations concerning sanctification (30%); comfort (around 10%); calls to salvation (9%); exhortations concerning assurance (7%); and doxological uses (under 5%). Baynes's general uses are focused on exhortations and rebukes relating to the Christian life, with the weight of Baynes's application in an individual sermon being dependent on the text he expounds.

Baynes's uses of predestinarian doctrines are a significant deviation from his standard pattern: uses of comfort (29%), doxology (20%), correction (20%), most of which are polemical, and exhortation to sanctification (18%), to salvation (6%), and to assurance (6%). In other places where predestination surfaces in the exposition or uses of a doctrine, but not in the

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Interpretation of English Puritanism," *The Journal of Modern History* 25, no. 4 (1953): 330. For a response, see Dever, *Richard Sibbes*, 108–109.

88. M. M. Knappen, *Tudor Puritanism: A Chapter in the History of Idealism* (Chicago: Columbia University Press, 1939), 392; cited in Dixon, *Practical Predestinarians*, 258. Porter, *Reformation and Reaction*, 310; Irvonwy Morgan, *The Godly Preachers of the Elizabethan Church* (London: Epworth Press, 1965), 106; Spurr, *English Puritanism, 1603–1689* (Hampshire: MacMillan Press, 1998), 169–70; Hirst, *England in Conflict, 1603–1660*, 39.

89. Dixon, *Practical Predestinarians*, 23, 119, 258; Peter Lake, *The Boxmaker's Revenge: 'Orthodoxy,' 'Heterodoxy' and the Politics of the Parish in Early Stuart England* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2001), 28, 31, 35; Jonathan D. Moore, "Predestination and Evangelism in the Life and Thought of William Perkins" (The Evangelical Library Annual Lecture 2008, [http://www.evangelical-library.org.uk/articles/EL\\_Annual\\_Lecture\\_2008.pdf](http://www.evangelical-library.org.uk/articles/EL_Annual_Lecture_2008.pdf)); Joel Beeke, "William Perkins on predestination, preaching, and conversion," in Peter Lillback, ed., *The practical Calvinist: an introduction to the Presbyterian & Reformed heritage: in honor of Dr. D. Clair Davis* (Ross-shire: Christian Focus Publications, 2002), 183–214.

stated doctrine itself, the breakdown is as follows: exhortations to salvation, assurance, and sanctification (41%), rebuke (26%), comfort (24%), and praise (9%). Here the proportions are closer to those in his sermons generally, with comfort and praise still considerably higher. This overview of his uses already calls into question the unpastoral character of predestination. Each category of use will now be reviewed.

### Corrective Use

The corrective use involves rebukes and warnings concerning doctrine and life. Baynes's general preaching gave considerable weight to rebukes and warnings about sin in heart and life, which fit within Baynes's pastoral framework of aiming at repentance and faith. Baynes's rebukes play a lesser role concerning predestination, while polemics play a greater role than in his sermons generally.<sup>90</sup>

As scholars have observed about other Puritans, Baynes's rebukes do address the misuse of predestination as an excuse for carelessness.<sup>91</sup> In a lecture, he counters the excuse "Every thing dependeth on the first Mover" by showing that spiritual inability exposes human sinfulness to drive to God for mercy.<sup>92</sup> Elsewhere, after expounding predestination, he cautions: "Yet this must not make us carelesse through despaire, nor quench our dutifull respect to GOD, but rather encrease it, that we may more and more evidence this purpose of GOD to our selves by a sanctified conversation."<sup>93</sup> Carelessness can also be rooted in presumption of salvation "though no change is in them." He then corrects both forms of carelessness by directing them to the golden chain and practical syllogism.<sup>94</sup> He also blows away "all such vayne thoughts" of carelessness flowing from believers' carnal resting

90. Together they account for almost a fifth of all his uses of doctrines expounding predestination. Another handful of uses contain a rebuke or warning in relation to predestinarian themes that surface in a doctrine's exposition or use. See Baynes, *Lectures*, 72, 73, 261, 273; *Mirroure*, 6; *Ephesians*, 300, 517; *Helpe to happinesse*, 38; *Colossians*, 377.

91. Hunt, *Art of Hearing*, 354; Alec Ryrie, *Being Protestant in Reformation Britain* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 38; Lake, *Boxmaker's Revenge*, 77; Horton Davies, *Worship and Theology in England: From Cranmer to Hooker, 1534–1603* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1970), 323–24; Eric Rivera, "From Blackfriars to Heaven: The Puritan Practical Divinity of William Gouge" (PhD diss., Trinity International University, 2016), 141; Dixon, *Practical Predestinarians*, 138.

92. Baynes, *Lectures*, 217–18.

93. Baynes, *Lectures*, 268.

94. Baynes, *Lectures*, 261–62.

on election's immutability.<sup>95</sup> These rebukes use a right understanding of predestination in connection with other doctrines to deliver from the carelessness of despair or presumption.

These ills flow from misunderstanding of the relationship between the decree and its execution through means. From Ephesians 1:5, he draws the doctrine that "God hath not onely chosen some, but ordained effectually means, which shall most infallibly bring them to the end, to which they are chosen."<sup>96</sup> In response to fatalistic responses, he states: "God had given *Paul* the life of all in the ship, yet when the ship-men would have left them, *Paul* telleth them; *If these men bide not in the ship, ye cannot be saved*; Gods decree doth stablish the meanes, not remove them."<sup>97</sup> Predestination binds people to the means which are rendered effectual according to God's decree.

Other rebukes use different approaches. In applying the doctrine that "The Lord regardeth his with an especiall favour," he argues God's love for His people shows the "folly of the world" in hating most what God loves most.<sup>98</sup> Another rebuke is the closest to a warning about not being elect. His use of his doctrine that "Hee doth generally intend the praise of his grace in all such who are predestinated by him" states: "They are not the children of grace, in whom God obtaineth not this end."<sup>99</sup> This warning aspect of the practical syllogism is minimal as an application to predestination and stronger in non-predestinarian contexts.<sup>100</sup>

Baynes also rebukes those who resist the teaching of predestination itself, without identifying whether they are common people or learned theologians.<sup>101</sup> He warns those acting "like the dogge barking at the Moone"

95. Baynes, *Lectures*, 72.

96. Baynes, *A commentarie vpon [Eph. 1]*, 120.

97. Baynes, *A commentarie vpon [Eph. 1]*, 123–24 (... Thus we might refuse meat in health, medicine in sicknesse, and say, *so long as God hath appointed us to live, we shall live*: The divell teacheth men in outward things wholly to distrust God, and relye altogether on means; in these spiritual things, he maketh them lay all on Gods mercy and purpose, never taking heede to meanes"). As he says a little later, "God out of his meere good will doth determine both the end, and all the meanes by which hee will bring us to the end." (Baynes, *A commentarie vpon [Eph. 1]*, 132).

98. *Mirroure*, 6.

99. Baynes, *A commentarie vpon [Eph. 1]*, 165, 167.

100. Baynes, *Lectures*, 261–62; *Colossians*, 14; *A commentarie vpon [Eph. 1]*, 55–56 (also noted in Hall, *Faithful Shepherd*, 69).

101. Common people: Christopher Haigh, *The Plain Man's Pathways to Heaven: Kinds of Christianity in Post-Reformation England, 1570–1640* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 127; Dewey D. Wallace, "George Gifford, Puritan Propaganda and Popular Religion in Elizabethan England," *Sixteenth Century Journal* 9, no. 1 (April 1978): 38. Theologians:

in their “licentious censuring” of God,<sup>102</sup> as well as those who reject the doctrine because they “thinke it maketh men licentious.”<sup>103</sup> Because God included it in His word, we are to receive its teaching. Other polemical confutations focus on the specific aspects of the teaching of predestination, resisting especially those who attribute salvation to anything man does. For example, if grace is what God “before all time did purpose,” then “Wee see them confuted, who will not yeelde that God loveth any Sinner unto life, till hee doth see his faith and repentance.”<sup>104</sup> If God effectually works what He wills, “see them confuted that make Gods will tend mans, and worke accordingly as that inclineth; which is to set the Cart before the Horse.”<sup>105</sup> These rebukes counter resistance to an orthodox teaching of predestination.

In applying predestination, Baynes’s rebukes and warnings are not given to instill fear of being reprobate, but to address misuses, resistance, and misunderstandings of predestination. As such he differs from those like Stachniewski who claim “godly ministers” issued warnings which tended to “confirm self-accusations of reprobation,” as well as from Jiannikkou’s observation that polemics brought predestination into sermons.<sup>106</sup> Baynes warned against paralyzing despair as well as careless presumption in a way that directed them to God and His means of grace.

### Exhortative use concerning Salvation

Historians have noted Baynes’s strong exhortatory thrust, especially

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Samuel Hoard, *Gods Love to mankind. Manifested, Dis-prooving his Absolute Decree for their Damnation* ([London], 1633), 14, 38–44, 91–110; Edmund Reeve, *The communion booke catechisme expounded* (London: Miles Flesher, 1635), 47. See also Tyacke, *Anti-Calvinists*, 182; Brian Cummings, *Grammar and Grace: The Literary Culture of the Reformation* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 295; Shaw, “Perkins and the New Pelagians,” 292).

102. Baynes, *Ephesians*, 300.

103. Baynes, *A commentarie vpon [Eph. 1]*, 98.

104. Baynes, *A commentarie vpon [Eph. 1]*, 155.

105. Baynes, *A commentarie vpon [Eph. 1]*, 254, 256; cf. *ibid.*, 130.

106. Stachniewski, *Persecutory Imagination*, 86; Nathan Johnstone, *The Devil and Demonism in Early Modern England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 135; Oxenham, “A Touchstone the Written Word,” 28, 50–53; Gail C. R. Henson, “A Holy Desperation: The Literary Quest for Grace in the Reformed English Tradition from John Bale to John Bunyan” (PhD diss., University of Louisville, 1981), 7; Michael MacDonald, *Mystical Bedlam: Madness, Anxiety, and Healing in Seventeenth-Century England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981), 224. Jason Jiannikkou, “Protestantism, Puritanism and Practical Divinity in England, c. 1570–1620” (PhD diss., University of Cambridge, 1999), 146; cf. Dixon, *Practical Predestinarians*, 260; George W. Bernard, “The Church of England c. 1529–c. 1642,” *History* 75 (1990): 196.

concerning sanctification.<sup>107</sup> Yet, his supralapsarian view has been considered detrimental to human responsibility.<sup>108</sup> Many see teaching predestination and issuing exhortations as being an unstable combination and even mutually inconsistent, resulting in some doctrinal Calvinists being homiletical Arminians.<sup>109</sup> The specific question here is not whether a minister could at one point teach predestination and at another point exhort, but whether exhortations could be grounded in the teaching of predestination.

Exhortations concerning salvation and sanctification comprise almost half of Baynes's uses in his sermons generally but less than a third of his uses of predestination. This difference might suggest he found drawing exhortations from predestination more difficult. Baynes rarely uses predestination as a basis for exhorting sinners to faith and repentance. After extolling the blessings flowing from predestination (Eph. 1:3), his first use is "to stirre us up to seeke to be partaker of this our Fathers blessing," and his third use is a warning not to seek salvation anywhere "out of Christ."<sup>110</sup> After tracing both the proclamation of the gospel and its success to "his meere gracious pleasure within himself," he exhorts: "let us labor to walke worthy these ordinances, to be fruitfull in them," lest we undergo Capernaum's judgment.<sup>111</sup> Such exhortations apply to both salvation and sanctification.

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107. Micah S. Meek, "The Ideal of Moral Formation in Anglican Puritanism from 1559–1662" (PhD diss., Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2012), 53; op 't Hof, *Engelse piëtistische geschriften*, 180–81; Schaefer, *Spiritual Brotherhood*, 143–45.

108. San-Deog Kim, "Time and Eternity: A Study in Samuel Rutherford's theology, with Reference to His Use of Scholastic Method" (PhD diss., University of Aberdeen, 2002), 329; Chad Van Dixhoorn, "The Strange Silence of Proculator Twisse: Predestination and Politics in the Westminster Assembly's Debate over Justification," *The Sixteenth Century Journal* 40, no. 2 (Summer 2009): 416. The infralapsarian system has been seen as emphasizing man's responsibility more (Kendall, *Calvin and English Calvinism*, 105), though Dever states supralapsarians also emphasized exhortation as a means of grace (Dever, *Richard Sibbes*, 154).

109. Kaufman, *Prayer, Despair, and Drama*, 60; Bruhn, "Sinne Unfolded: Time, Election, and Disbelief," 574–95; Oxenham, "A Touchstone the Written Word," 42. Morgan, *Godly Preachers of the Elizabethan Church*, 106; Porter, *Reformation and Reaction*, 310; Spurr, *English Puritanism*, 169–70; John Coffey, *John Goodwin and the Puritan Revolution: Religion and Intellectual Change in 17th-Century England* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2006), 54; Alexandra Walsham, "The parochial roots of Laudianism revisited: Catholics, anti-Calvinists and 'parish Anglicans' in early Stuart England," *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 49, no. 4 (Oct 1998): 629.

110. Baynes, *A commentarie vpon [Eph. 1]*, 63–64.

111. Baynes, *A commentarie vpon [Eph. 1]*, 221.

Elsewhere Baynes does use the freeness of grace rooted in election to exhort all to faith in Christ.<sup>112</sup> When expounding 2 Timothy 1:9, he exhorts, “if it depended on our worthinesse, on our endeavours, on our holinesse, now we could doe nothing but despaire; but seeing it is not in him that willeth, nor in him that runneth, but in God that hath mercy,... let none of us put away or judge our selves unworthy this grace reveiled.”<sup>113</sup> By proceeding from the sovereignty of election to the freeness of grace, he comes to an offer of free grace and exhortation to receive it.

Baynes explains the relationship between the call to faith and predestination in his polemical excursus on predestination based on foreseen faith. In response to the objection that his view calls some to believe a lie “that God will save them,”<sup>114</sup> he first stresses that “the truth of my faith dependeth not on a conformity with Gods secret will within himselfe, but with that which he hath revealed unto me,” citing Deuteronomy 29:29. He then stresses that God “doth not binde any directly and immediately to beleieve salvation, but in a certaine order, in which they cannot but beleieve them truly: for hee bindeth men first to beleieve on Christ unto salvation; and then being now in Christ, to beleieve that he loved them, gave himselfe for them, did elect them, will save them.”<sup>115</sup> Since faith is trust in Christ rather than belief that one is elect, his call to faith does not conflict with God’s decrees. In his exposition of the gospel being “the word of truth” (Eph. 1:13), he uses the same arguments to counter the objection that “to bid a reprobate beleieve his sins are forgiven, is to bid him beleieve a lie.”<sup>116</sup> His general writings more often ground the gospel call in Christ’s redemption rather than predestination, but Baynes does see a connection between predestination and the gospel call.<sup>117</sup>

112. Baynes, *Epitomie*, 26, 29.

113. Baynes, *Lectures*, 267. See identical wording in idem, *Ephesians*, 195–96.

114. Baynes, *A commentarie vpon [Eph. 1]*, 99.

115. Baynes, *A commentarie vpon [Eph. 1]*, 107. When he comes to the description of the gospel as “the word of truth” in Ephesians 1:13, he again counters the objection that “to bid a reprobate beleieve his sins are forgiven, is to bid him beleieve a lie,” with the same arguments (Baynes, *A commentarie vpon [Eph. 1]*, 285); see also Baynes, *Colossians*, 21–22 about the truth of God’s promises. He then adds several applications including a warning about treating God as a liar by “not heeding all the grace he offereth us in Christ” (Baynes, *A commentarie vpon [Eph. 1]*, 285–86).

116. Baynes, *A commentarie vpon [Eph. 1]*, 285; see also Baynes, *Colossians*, 21–22 about the truth of God’s promises.

117. Baynes, *Helpe to happinesse*, 198–99; *Mirroure*, 35, 48, 51.

### Exhortative use concerning Assurance

The “problem of assurance” has dominated much of the discussion on the pastoral implications of predestination, giving the impression that assurance was the main pastoral issue of teaching predestination.<sup>118</sup> Some see this problem as the cause of many pastoral ills.<sup>119</sup> Baynes’s exhortations concerning assurance are more prominent than his gospel call in his treatment of predestination in Ephesians 1.<sup>120</sup>

In the context of predestination, Baynes recognizes it is “a point controversall...whether wee may in ordinary course be infallibly perswaded touching our salvation.” He establishes that “Christians may come to it,”<sup>121</sup> especially contra the Catholic denial of it, observing elsewhere that “many amongst us have a smach of this [papist] leaven.”<sup>122</sup> For Baynes, predestination is the basis for the possibility of assurance. If salvation depended on anything of man, all confidence would be presumption.<sup>123</sup>

118. Joel Beeke, *The Quest for Full Assurance: The Legacy of Calvin and his Successors* (Edinburgh: Banner of Truth, 1999); idem, “William Perkins and His Greatest Case of Conscience: How a man may know whether he be the child of God, or no,” *Calvin Theological Journal* 41 (2006): 255–78; Jonathan Master, “Anthony Burgess and the Westminster Doctrine of Assurance” (PhD diss., University of Aberdeen, 2012); Mark Dever, “Calvin, Westminster, and Assurance,” in *The Westminster Confession into the 21st Century*, vol 1, ed. Ligon Duncan (Ross-Shire, Scotland: Mentor, 2003), 303–41; R. M. Hawkes, “The Logic of Assurance in English Puritan Theology,” *Westminster Theological Journal* 52 (1990): 247–61; Rivera, “From Blackfriars to Heaven,” 23; Moore, “Assurance according to Richard Sibbes,” 168.

119. MacCulloch, *Later Reformation in England*, 77; Haigh, “Taming of the Reformation,” 581; Marsh, *Popular Religion in Sixteenth Century England*, 121; Michael P. Winship, “Weak Christians, Backsliders, and Carnal Gospellers: Assurance of Salvation and the Pastoral Origins of Puritan Practical Divinity in the 1580s,” *Church History* 70 (2001): 477–78; Jeremy Schmidt, *Melancholy and the Care of the Soul: Religion, Moral Philosophy and Madness in Early Modern England* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2007), 53. To a lesser extent: Paul Seaver, *Wallington’s World: A Puritan Artisan in Seventeenth-Century London* (Stanford: Stanford University Press: 1985), 19–20; Stannard, *Puritan Way of Death*, 41, 74; Doran and Durston, *Princes, Pastors, and People*, 23, 85; Robert Letham, “Saving Faith and Assurance in Reformed Theology: Zwingli to the Synod of Dort,” vol. 1 (PhD diss., University of Aberdeen, 1979); Michael S. Horton, “Thomas Goodwin and the Puritan Doctrine of Assurance: Continuity and Discontinuity in the Reformed Tradition, 1600–1680” (PhD diss., Oxford and the University of Coventry, 1998).

120. Even while seeking to broaden the focus of the pastoral use of predestination to piety, Dixon notes that evidence of “an assurance-obsessive strand within the sermon literature is overwhelming” (Dixon, *Practical Predestinarians*, 293).

121. Baynes, *A commentarie vpon [Eph. 1]*, 296.

122. *Lectures*, 70–71; *Ephesians*, 206.

123. Baynes, *Colossians*, 233.

Assurance is not only possible but normative. The first privilege of the godly life is that “all true Christians may know themselves to bee beloved of God, and that they shall be saved.”<sup>124</sup> This normativity is evident in his applicatory framework which uses assurance as a basic motivation to godliness.<sup>125</sup> Contrary to Bozeman’s claim, assurance is more of a motivating presupposition than a future reward of godliness in Baynes’s guide for godliness.<sup>126</sup>

Baynes’s most systematic treatment of how assurance is attained in relation to predestination is under his doctrine from Ephesians 1:14 concerning the assuring work of the Holy Spirit.<sup>127</sup> Spirit-worked assurance comes both by faith and by discerning faith, love, and obedience. This second means is the practical syllogism which concerns “the works or fruits of the Holy-Ghost by the Gospell, which may more clearly bee perceived and discerned than faith.”<sup>128</sup> The Holy Spirit assures of election in both ways.

Within this framework, his pastoral exhortations vary. At times his exhortations to labor for assurance have ambiguity whether he is calling to conversion or assurance, as Dever notes concerning Sibbes.<sup>129</sup> For example, after showing that the elect are “such as have beleaved, and are sanctified” his only use is “onely let us endeavour to know our selves predestinated by him,” through faith and sanctification.<sup>130</sup> Other uses include guidance on how to attain assurance.<sup>131</sup> Especially to those with weak faith, he directs to faith, since the “chief” way to get “our title and possession [of God’s kingdom] made sure to our consciences” is “faithfully lay[ing] hold on Gods promises.”<sup>132</sup> He writes, “faith may receive what the Word doth testifie... [namely] that my particular person beholding the Sonne, and believing on him, shall have eternall life.”<sup>133</sup> The scholarly focus on the introspection induced by the practical syllogism overlooks this emphasis on faith in Christ

124. Baynes, *Briefe Directions*, 214 (citing 1 John 3; 1 John 5:13).

125. For example, his *Briefe directions* for the Christian life assume a measure of assurance as a motivation to such a walk. Its exhortations include: “Every day wee ought to be raised up in assured hope of forgiveness of them by the promises of God in Christ.” (Baynes, *Briefe Directions*, 172, 173).

126. Bozeman, *Precisianist Strain*, 141–42; citing Baynes, *Briefe Directions*.

127. Baynes, *A commentarie vpon [Eph. 1]*, 295.

128. Baynes, *Briefe Directions*, 19; cf. Kendall, *Calvin and English Calvinism*, 99–100.

129. Dever, *Richard Sibbes*, 34.

130. Baynes, *A commentarie vpon [Eph. 1]*, 123–25.

131. Baynes, *A commentarie vpon [Eph. 1]*, 74–75, 216, 268, 295.

132. Baynes, *Counterbane*, 8.

133. Baynes, *A commentarie vpon [Eph. 1]*, 298.



as the first means of assurance.<sup>134</sup> Baynes fits with Peter Lake's observation concerning some of Baynes's contemporaries, that they directed people to Christ, not election, as the object of faith and ground of salvation.<sup>135</sup> Baynes did the same for assurance.

The practical syllogism also plays a considerable role as a means of assurance. Often the evidence of true faith is that it purifies the heart and life. He counsels: "let us see, that wee may come to know our Election. If we finde that our hearts have that faith on Christ, by which they are purified, he who may know he hath that faith, which is the faith of the elect, he may know he is elected also."<sup>136</sup> The reason for proceeding to the practical syllogism is that the love of God applied by the Spirit and apprehended by faith is not "easily felt of us," which difficulty calls for clearer evidences, namely, "the works or fruits of the Holy-Ghost by the Gospell, which may more clearly bee perceived and discerned than faith."<sup>137</sup> Baynes saw the practical syllogism as a pastoral means to stoop to address doubts of believers. The foundation for the practical syllogism is that union with Christ by faith makes a person a new creature.

A pastoral sensitivity for various spiritual conditions is reflected in the variety of his assurance-related exhortations in the context of predestination. The prominence of exhortations concerning assurance indicates, first, that the "problem of assurance" existed in his pastoral context. Second, this syllogism was not simply meant as an aid to assure believers but also to uncover the reality of presumption.<sup>138</sup> Third, his instruction counters the picture of the typical Puritan being driven to godliness by a tormenting doubt of his election in that he presents assurance as a prime motivation to godliness.<sup>139</sup>

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134. Kendall, *Calvin and English Calvinism*, 8, 54, 68, 80; see also Doran and Durston, *Princes, Pastors, and People*, 23, 84; Morgan, *Godly Learning*, 21, 24, 122; Green, *Print and Protestantism*, 319; Stachniewski, *Persecutory Imagination*, 11.

135. Lake, *Moderate Puritans*, 167. Rivera is less precise in stating Gouge makes "election and the finished work of Christ as the...primary ground of assurance" (Rivera, "From Blackfriars to Heaven," 140–41). Moore goes so far as to say for Sibbes the only means of assurance is union with Christ (Moore, "Assurance according to Richard Sibbes," 166).

136. Baynes, *A commentarie vpon [Eph. 1]*, 74.

137. Baynes, *Briefe Directions*, 19; cf. Kendall, *Calvin and English Calvinism*, 99–100.

138. Contra Ryrie, *Being Protestant in Reformation Britain*, 38; Winship, "Weak Christians, Backsliders, and Carnal Gospellers," 479–81.

139. Contra Bozeman, *Precisianist Strain*, 127; Stachniewski, *Persecutory Imagination*, 57, 86, 2, 61; Coffey, *John Goodwin and the Puritan Revolution*, 54.

### Exhortative use concerning Sanctification

Most of Baynes's exhortations flowing from predestination use it to motivate to sanctification in a way that presupposes a measure of assurance. In expounding the call of Colossians 1:10 to "walk worthy of the Lord," he exhorts to "live and behave our selves as becommeth those to whom God hath vouchsafed so great mercy, that passing by thousands and ten thousands, for deserts all as good, and in outward respects many of them better than they, Hee hath of His meere grace and free love in CHRIST, chosen and called them out of the world, to be partakers of Eternall life & glory with Him."<sup>140</sup> Believers are to live up to their privileges as the elect.

The goal of predestination also motivates to sanctification. Baynes concludes "there is no more effectual argument perswading Christians to sanctification, than this of our election; Now as the Elect of God put on meeknesse, Colos. 3. If wee hear that we are chosen to any place or condition on earth, which is beneficiall, this, that wee are chosen to it, maketh us ready and stirreth us up to get possessed of it."<sup>141</sup> God's predetermination to sanctify is the energizing motivation to pursue that goal with expectation in the Holy Spirit's grace.

Baynes especially emphasizes God's electing love motivating to love. After expounding "What ancient love the Lord hath born us in Christ... before all worlds, that his love rested on us, electing us to salvation," his first use is that this ancientness is to "indeare this love of God to us" and make us value it highly. To be "indeared" by his love is not only to prize it but to love him in return.<sup>142</sup> Having spoken of God's electing love revealed in Christ, he adds: "If this be so, that God's love is so great to us, Brethren what will ye doe now for God?... Hath CHRIST done thus for me? Then I will labour to walke answerably to his love."<sup>143</sup> Baynes traced salvation to God's decree to reveal sovereign love which motivates to love and desire to please Him.

At times he gives specific exhortations from specific aspects of God's execution of His decree. For example, God's patience with the reprobate serves "for a patterne of imitation, to teach us patience towards all."<sup>144</sup> Since

140. Baynes, *Colossians*, 39–40; cf. idem, *Ephesians*, 194; idem, *A commentarie vpon [Eph. 1]*, 395.

141. Baynes, *A commentarie vpon [Eph. 1]*, 98; cf. idem, *Ephesians*, 215; idem, *Briefe Directions*, 212.

142. Baynes, *A commentarie vpon [Eph. 1]*, 80, 92; see also idem, *Mirroure*, 13–14; idem, *Letters*, 258 ("Gods love constraineth us to love").

143. Baynes, *Colossians*, 130; see also idem, *Ephesians*, 179.

144. Baynes, *Lectures*, 27.

electing love moved God to send his Son to reconcile enemies to himself, His people should “imitate him” and love their enemies.<sup>145</sup> Elsewhere he notes, “all Gods actions to us imprint their stamp in us: his election maketh us chuse him, and chuse the household of faith before all others.”<sup>146</sup> While God’s decree cannot be imitated by man, certain aspects of it provide a basis for exhorting to specific graces.

In summary, Baynes uses three main methods to move from predestination to exhortation. First, he used the force of God predestinating to bless gracious means as a basis to exhort pursuing these graces through these means. Second, he uses what God does in election as an example for His children in their relationship to others. Third, his main method uses the knowledge of God’s electing love as a motivation to love. In these ways, predestination is a powerful means to exhort and motivate sanctification. This dynamic makes predestination more of a loving pull than a fearful push factor in sanctification, as Cohen notes about the Puritans.<sup>147</sup> Baynes does not appear perplexed by the much-discussed tension between predestination and exhortation, but rather uses predestination to motivate believers.

### Comforting Use

As already indicated, some scholars consider the Puritan teaching of predestination to have been despair-inducing and comfort-robbing through obsession with reprobation, fatalism, gospel-muting, and introspection. However, Baynes’s comforting uses are more frequent in the context of predestination than in other contexts. The question concerning his comforting uses is two-fold: for whom and how did Baynes use predestination as a comfort?

Baynes does recognize that “many of the faithfull” are driven to desperation by fear of reprobation, however, he traces this desperation to Satan who stirs to sin and unbelief which hinder gospel comfort, rather than let the blame rest on the teaching of predestination.<sup>148</sup> Overall, comforting the despairing remains a minor note for Baynes.

Baynes spends more time comforting those sensing their unworthiness with God’s free election as the foundation for a gracious salvation. In expounding the “free favour of God” as the “ground of all our salvation,”

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145. Baynes, *Colossians*, 127, 132.

146. Baynes, *Lords Prayer*, 112; see also idem, *Mirroure*, 8–9.

147. Cohen, *God’s Caress*, 125.

148. Baynes, *Briefe directions*, 14–16; idem, *Lectures*, 268.

he indicates this decree has “much comfort in it for us.” He asks, “if our salvation bee of meer grace, and depend not on our own worth, endeavour, and holinesse, why should wee fear?”<sup>149</sup> In his *Epitomie*, he clarifies grace as “God himself, of himself, in great favour and riches of mercy, bowing downe to succor his miserable creature altogether undeserving,” with reference to Romans 9:16.<sup>150</sup> Then in a surprising turn, he offers this comfort to all:

we may boldly accept, and confidently trust in this free grace of God, although wee be unworthie of it. For why should we put away this great grace offered and revealed to us: why should we not cheerfully embrace it, and reioyce in it, specially since it hath appeared unto all, and God (without respect of persons) hath set it out to be enjoyed of the poore, base, low, and unlearned, as well as of the rich, high, noble, and learned: and it is not true humility, but a sottish pride, to put away, and iudge our selves unworthy of this salvation.<sup>151</sup>

In a letter, he leads one focusing on reprobation (“those whom he hateth”) through God’s election (“when we were hateful”) to the freeness of grace in Christ to enemies. Election secures the comfort of a gracious salvation for the unworthy.<sup>152</sup>

Firm comfort for those who do not always sense God’s favor is rooted in the immutability of God’s electing love. Baynes exhorts: “whom he once loveth unto life, he doth love him ever.... We do feel changes, but look as the Skie is variable, the Sunne in itself being no whit changed; thus the effects of God in us varie, though himselfe in his affection (if I may so speake) is immutable towards us.”<sup>153</sup> The basis of comfort is not our feeling of comfort but God’s firm decree. The firmness is accentuated the more by the elect being “chosen *in him* [Christ] before the foundation of the world” (Eph. 1:4).<sup>154</sup> There is no tension between a predestinarian and Christological comfort since God’s election is “in Christ.”

God’s election also comforts the spiritually embattled with the certainty of salvation. This is “for our comfort”: God will work all the graces he has determined to work. “Did our good depend upon our owne wills...

149. Baynes, *Ephesians*, 194–95. See also idem, *Lectures*, 267; idem, *Epitomie*, 29–30.

150. Baynes, *Epitomie*, 26.

151. Baynes, *Epitomie*, 29.

152. Baynes, *Letters*, 23–24; see also idem, *Ephesian*, 178–79.

153. Baynes, *A commentarie vpon [Eph. 1]*, 93.

154. Baynes, *A commentarie vpon [Eph. 1]*, 79–80, 75.

all our comfort were at an end.”<sup>155</sup> If predestination depended on man, “wee might utterly despair”;<sup>156</sup> however, predestination guarantees God will continue to give grace until its ordained goal is reached. Satan may attack believers, but “if God say, this man I appont to be an heire of Heaven, all the power and policie of hell and darknesse, shall never be able to disapoint Him of His purpose.”<sup>157</sup> In the spiritual battle, predestination gives hope-giving comfort.

This comfort also functions amid the afflictions of life. Citing Christ’s words, “Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father’s good pleasure to give you the kingdom” (Luke 12:32), he asks: “Hath God prepared an eternall life for us, and will he not maintaine this temporall? Hath he purchased heaven...for us, and will hee see us perish for want of earthly things?” If God predestinates to the greater, he will provide the lesser on the way to the greater. Thus, in the knowledge of our election “standeth our sweete peace and comfort, when all our world besides can shew us no comfort.”<sup>158</sup>

In these ways, Baynes uses predestination to show both the gracious freeness and immutable certainty of God’s grace to provide comfort amid a sense of unworthiness, weakness, spiritual assaults, and general afflictions. His ministry confirms that there were distressed hearers needing comfort. However, his comforts address a much broader range of distresses than despair. Furthermore, the comfort of predestination did not make believers introspective but theocentric.

## Doxological Use

While more attention has been given to issues of assurance and exhortation, some do mention the presence of the doxological use of predestination.<sup>159</sup> The lack of attention for this use is rendered surprising by the fact that predestination was defined in terms of God’s glory, especially by Supralapsarians.<sup>160</sup> Preaching was also aimed at divine glory. Perkins’s “Summe

155. Baynes, *A commentarie vpon [Eph. 1]*, 255–56. He makes an identical application from Ephesians 3:11 (idem, *Ephesians*, 301).

156. Baynes, *Ephesians*, 195; idem, *Lectures*, 267–68.

157. Baynes, *Lectures*, 269; cf. idem, *Lords Prayer*, 136; idem, *Letters*, 306.

158. Baynes, *Letters*, 403–404.

159. Dixon, *Practical Predestinarians*, 101, 181, 267; Hunt, *Art of Hearing*, 348; Wallace, *Puritans and Predestination*, 22, 46; Kranendonk, *Teaching Predestination*, 140–41; Pederson, “Unity in diversity,” 107–108; San-Deog, “Time and eternity: a study in Samuel Rutherford’s theology,” 162–63, 255. Peter White only notes this in the Lutheran Hemmingsen (White, *Predestination, Policy and Polemic*, 90).

160. J. V. Fesko, *Diversity Within the Reformed Tradition: Supra- and Infralapsarianism*

of the Summe” of preaching captures the doxological climax of preaching: “Preach one Christ, by Christ, to the praise of Christ.”<sup>161</sup> Baynes also saw the goal of ministry being the glory of God in his saving grace. Such definitions give reason to expect doxology to be an important theme in its pastoral teaching.

Though not a major theme, the theme of thankful praise does run through Baynes’s general writings. Based on Psalm 50:21–23, he asks, “What is Praise, but the approving and publishing of His praise-worthinesse?” He clarifies that “glorifying of God is nothing but shewing forth that glory which he hath as all-sufficient in Himself” and exhorts: “let us stirre up our dull hearts to praise Him, for herein is He glorified.”<sup>162</sup> Doxological uses are five times more frequent in the context of predestination than of his sermons generally. This theme is prominent especially in his expositions of Ephesians 1:3–14, which itself is one lengthy sentence with “blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ” (v.3) as its main clause. The scope of Paul’s treatment of predestination in Ephesians 1 raises doxology to a greater prominence than it has in his writings generally.

Baynes observes that Ephesians 1:3 already expresses “a fundamentall favour, whence all other doe spring, and it containeth the eternall love of God, loving us, and predestinating us to supernaturall happiness, as likewise every subordinate grace.” Thus Christians are to be “stirred up to magnifie God.”<sup>163</sup> Baynes draws those who receive of Christ’s fulness back to election as the source of that grace.<sup>164</sup> In his words, “that gratifying, mother, child-bearing grace, from all eternity in God himself” deserves thanks from its beneficiaries.<sup>165</sup>

Baynes also uses various specific aspects of predestination as motivations to praise God. Election as God’s choice of some of the many is a reason

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in *Calvin, Dort, and Westminster* (Jackson: Reformed Academic Press, 2001), 195; Sarah Hutton, “Thomas Jackson, Oxford Platonist, and William Twisse, Aristotelian,” *Journal of the History of Ideas* 39, no. 4 (1978): 651.

161. William Perkins, *The arte of prophesying, or, A treatise concerning the sacred and onely true manner and methode of preaching*, trans. Thomas Tuke (London: Felix Kyngston, 1607), 148; cf. idem, *Of the calling of the ministerie two treatises, describing the duties and dignities of that calling* (London: William Welby, 1605), 39. See Chad VanDixhoorn, “Anglicans, Anarchists and The Westminster Assembly: The Making of A Pulpit Theology” (ThM thesis, Westminster Seminary, 2000), 146.

162. Baynes, *Lectures*, 57, 293.

163. Baynes, *A commentarie vpon [Eph. 1]*, 46–48.

164. Baynes, *A commentarie vpon [Eph. 1]*, 65.

165. Baynes, *A commentarie vpon [Eph. 1]*, 173.

to esteem this favour the more, since the rarer something beneficial is, the more valuable it is.<sup>166</sup> The freedom of God's love before creation means:

this francke love of his can never be enough extolled. If a man of emi-  
nencie choose to him for wife, some woman, who hath neither dowrie  
nor friends, nor yet hath beauty or breeding extraordinary, the part is  
marvailous in our eyes: But well may we wonder at this fact of God,  
who when we were not, nor yet had any thing which might commend  
us, did freely set his liking on us and love us to life.<sup>167</sup>

These aspects of predestination give reason to praise Him.

Election also has as its very goal "the praise of the glory of his grace," according to Ephesians 1:6. Baynes paraphrases this verse as: "All this spiritual blessing... is to this end, that he might manifest his most glorious essence, which is grace it selfe, and that to the intent we might admire it, esteeme it highly, honor it, set it forth in words, yield thanks to it."<sup>168</sup> This goal is "to stirre us up to glorifie him in regard of his grace to us... so should we never cease to have this grace in our hearts and mouthes, to his glory who hath shewed it."<sup>169</sup> The goal of predestination being God's glory leads Baynes to call saints to glorify God not only in lip-praise but whole-life praise. This goal is the power behind his call "let us in all things labour to yeelde him glory; whatsoever we are, let us be it in him, & through him, and for him."<sup>170</sup> The doxological use serves as a motivation to sanctification generally, which was the main theme of Baynes's uses.

These doxological uses presuppose assurance. Baynes opposes the papists as "cut-throats of thankfulnessse, while they will not let us know the graces given us."<sup>171</sup> He recognizes the pastoral problem of and gives guidance to the one who asks: "how can I be thankful for what I am not sure I have?"<sup>172</sup> Yet, the Holy Spirit reveals the light of electing grace in Christ, which "serveth to excite in us godly joy, in us I say, who see... this love shining upon us in Christ."<sup>173</sup> The prominence of the doxological use conveyed often in the first person plural confirms the normativity of assurance.<sup>174</sup>

166. Baynes, *A commentarie vpon [Eph. 1]*, 71; see also idem, *Ephesians*, 390.

167. Baynes, *A commentarie vpon [Eph. 1]*, 94.

168. Baynes, *A commentarie vpon [Eph. 1]*, 163.

169. Baynes, *A commentarie vpon [Eph. 1]*, 167.

170. Baynes, *A commentarie vpon [Eph. 1]*, 163.

171. Baynes, *A commentarie vpon [Eph. 1]*, 51, 75.

172. Baynes, *A commentarie vpon [Eph. 1]*, 296.

173. Baynes, *A commentarie vpon [Eph. 1]*, 172.

174. Baynes, *A commentarie vpon [Eph. 1]*, 172.

Baynes's doxological thrust provides a corrective to the perception of Puritan theology as inducing spiritual fear, distress, and even depression. For Baynes, predestination was bright with God's glory and therefore a reason to love, admire, praise, and thank God. Baynes's doxological thrust in his treatment of predestination cohered with his pastoral theory which saw pastoral ministry as aimed at God's glory through the salvation of sinners and the edification of believers.

A survey of Baynes's uses of predestination thus demonstrates his pastoral desire to edify his hearers in the variety of uses, thereby confirming that the infrequency of his treatments of predestination was not due to a fear of its pastoral consequences. He does warn about misuses of predestination involving fatalism or laxity but also warns against resisting the teaching of predestination itself. Not the doctrine but its misuse is dangerous. Overall, his uses of predestination are much more weighted toward comfort and praise than his uses of other doctrines, indicating he saw this doctrine as especially suited to fill believers with comfort and praise to God.

### **Conclusions**

The study of Paul Baynes's pastoral teaching of predestination demonstrates he taught the doctrine of predestination when it was present in a text in order to convey its pastoral benefit especially to believers. The weight of this doctrine within his whole corpus shows he did not let it dominate his teaching and the pastoral uses of this doctrine demonstrate he was not afraid of this doctrine. Thus, this doctrine did not have a unique place within his preaching. In his systematic works it was present in polemical, academic works and virtually absent from his basic works which coheres with his view of the right order of teaching. Overall, it functioned, as did other doctrines, in accordance with his view of pastoral ministry as teaching and applying God's Word for the church's benefit and God's glory.

His uses of predestination are more heavily weighted toward comfort and praise than his uses of other doctrines, indicating he saw this doctrine as especially suited to fill believers with comfort and praise to God. Even his exhortations use the knowledge of personal election most often as a motivation to grateful godliness and trust in a God who has provided and works a salvation of pure grace. Most of his uses presuppose a measure of assurance, which coheres with his theory concerning the normativity of assurance in believers. While he does give significant attention to assurance within his treatment of predestination, it does not dominate his uses. The



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problems he addresses are more often sin and affliction than a struggle concerning the assurance of election.

In these ways, Baynes's uses of predestination challenge the stereotypes of Puritans as morbid, introspective, and tortured with doubt, and furthers the growing awareness that predestination had broader application than the problem of assurance. His uses also challenge the perception that those with supralapsarian convictions were less pastoral than infralapsarians. Instead, they provide further evidence that even a pastor with strong supralapsarian convictions could use predestination as primarily a graciously motivating and comforting doctrine to God's praise.

# A Puritan in the Rising Age of Evangelicals: Theological and Psychological Continuity in the Journal of Israel Loring

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A veritable “dark age” in New England studies, the years between the Salem witchcraft trials and the Great Awakening remain a fecund source for novel interpretation and new understandings. As such, this study is situated within the current historiographical debate over the era, especially as it relates to Thomas Kidd’s conception of “the protestant interest” and Mark Peterson’s notion of “spiritual economy.” Bearing these and other recent theories in mind, this project contributes a different style of small-scale investigation that asks what, if any, transformation occurred in the daily religious practice, intellectual life, and everyday thinking of a forgotten cleric and his parish. An intellectual microhistory focusing on the Rev. Israel Loring of Sudbury, Massachusetts (1682–1772), it considers historians’ claims regarding a socio-religious transition from Puritan piety to evangelical revivalism. Accordingly, it seeks to contest long-standing assumptions about historical constructs, complicating general narratives concerning early eighteenth-century colonial New England.

The central questions arising from this approach to considering Loring and his era remain definitional and categorical. They focus on the psychological, relational, and ministerial concerns that followed Loring throughout his ninety-year lifetime and seventy-year vocation in Sudbury. Evaluating these localized aspects of his existence in the larger context of colonial civilization, the work aims to understand a leader who was at once thoroughly puritanical, but also avowedly evangelical in his outlook. In balancing these two impulses endemic to eighteenth-century New England, Loring appears as a figure of moderate temperament whose beliefs and value system depended simultaneously on cultural adaptation to changing circumstances, as well as conservation of enduring traditions.<sup>1</sup>

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1. Philip Greven, *The Protestant Temperament: Patterns of Child-Rearing, Religious Experience, and the Self in Early America* (New York: Meridian, 1977).

However, classifying Loring as a modest clergyman in an apparent age of upheaval fails to fit him adequately into a narrative structure suitable for proper scholarly engagement. For historians of early Colonial British North America and New England studies, labeling religious individuals and groups poses a significant, intractable problem. Terminological ambiguity over the precise meaning of words and definitions becomes muddled in regards to the heady era between 1690 and 1740. As a discipline, history traces change over time, but imposing categories on peoples and events in rapid flux is a tiresome, difficult process.<sup>2</sup> The “middle period” of colonial North America is no different, particularly as it relates to the nebulous historical constructs of “Puritanism” and “Evangelicalism.”

Religious historians have long disputed the limitations and applicability of these terms to various contexts.<sup>3</sup> But, in the case of Loring an appreciation for both is necessary in order to formulate coherent thoughts

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2. For excellent studies in the philosophy of history and historiographical works which elaborate on this point of history as the study of “change over time” see, Sam Wineburg, *Historical Thinking and Other Unnatural Acts: Charting the Future of Teaching the Past* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2001); John Fea, *Why Study History: Reflecting on the Importance of the Past* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2013), 1–22. This study is deeply inspired by and faithfully adheres to a theoretical framework based on the philosopher of history R. G. Collingwood’s “three propositions of the field.” These are that: “All history is the history of thought”; “historical knowledge is the re-enactment in the historian’s mind of the thought whose history he is studying;” and “historical knowledge is the re-enactment of a past thought encapsulated in a context of present thoughts which, by contradicting it, confine it to a plane different from theirs.” See, R. G. Collingwood, *My Autobiography* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1939), 111–15.

3. On “Puritanism” see for example, Peter Lewis, *The Genius of Puritanism* (Morgan, Pa.: Soli Deo Gloria Publications, 1996), 11; Christopher Durston and Jacqueline Eales, eds., “Introduction: The Puritan Ethos, 1650–1700,” in *The Culture of English Puritanism, 1560–1700* (N.Y.: Palgrave Macmillan, 1996), 1; Glenn Miller, “Puritanism: A Survey,” in *Union Seminary Quarterly Review* 27 (Spring, 1972), 169–75; Kelly M. Kapic and Randall C. Gleason, eds., *The Devoted Life: An Invitation to the Puritan Classics* (Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press, 2004); D. M. Lloyd-Jones, *The Puritans: Their Origins and Successors* (Edinburgh: Banner of Truth, 1987), 239–40. On “Evangelicalism” see, George Marsden, *The Evangelical Mind and the New School Presbyterian Experience* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1970); D.W. Bebbington, *Evangelicalism in Modern Britain: A History from the 1730s to the 1980s* (London: Unwin Hyman, 1989), 43–45; Mark A. Noll, D. W. Bebbington, and George Rawlyk, eds., *Evangelicalism: Comparative Studies of Popular Protestantism in North America, the British Isles, and Beyond, 1700–1990* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994); Mark A. Noll, *The Rise of Evangelicalism: The Age of Edwards, Whitefield, and the Wesleys* (Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity, 2003); Douglas A. Sweeney, *The American Evangelical Story: A History of the Movement* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2005); Darren Dochuk, Thomas S. Kidd, and Kurt W. Peterson, eds., *American*

on him, as well as on his social setting. The early 1700s mark a time of religious transition in the American Colonies, yet the nature of this shift is indistinct, subtle, and, in certain cases, imperceptible. Virtually no scholar argues that by the 1750s Puritanism, by any useful meaning of the word, persisted as a viable intellectual or social movement.<sup>4</sup> However, when and in what manner it declined continues to be sharply contested. Accordingly, an overarching theme of this project is to provide insight into when and why Puritanism faded and the means by which Evangelicalism came to supplant it. To achieve this, one must first flesh out what these terms signify within a given framework.

### **Antecedents and Formulations**

Throughout the seventeenth century, New England ministers, laboring in a vocation predicated on the conversion of the unregenerate and the edification of saints, confronted the existential crises inherent in a society dedicated to Calvinistic cosmology.<sup>5</sup> Their congregants longed to experience the “New Birth”: a liberating transformation produced through divine grace that freed them from the shackles of spiritual worthlessness. Yet questions regarding how one could be assured that such grace truly infused their soul remained a rankling problem. In response to these apprehensions, some Puritan ministers and theologians established a complex formula comprised of stages of “preparation” on the road to genuine conversion. Employing this rather nebulous explanation as a type of moral calculus, they claimed that certain “doings” offered a glimpse into the process of regeneration and afforded the opportunity for a soul’s opening up to God’s spiritual refinement.

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*Evangelicalism: George Marsden and the State of American Religious History* (Notre Dame, Ind.: Notre Dame University Press, 2014).

4. One notable exception to this trend is George McKenna, who claims that a strain of American Puritanism persisted well into the twentieth-century. Despite the intriguing nature of this argument, it tends to rely on far too loose a definition of “Puritan,” vitiating the overarching assertions and subverting the general thesis. McKenna’s analysis begins to collapse by the mid-nineteenth century, when his comparisons between early New England settlers and Romantic intellectuals becomes overreaching and facile. While vestiges of Puritan theology and ideology undoubtedly remained present in some vein of American life into this and subsequent eras, it is fatuous to equate residual effects with intellectual continuity. See, *The Puritan Origins of American Patriotism* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 2007).

5. Robert Middlekauff, *The Mathers: Three Generations of Puritan Intellectuals, 1596–1728* (Berkeley, Calif.: University of California Press, 1999), 231–32.

Articulating this point in the early 1640s, “the Father of Connecticut,” Thomas Hooker (1586–1647), usefully described the various phases of salvation by drawing a distinction between what he termed “legal” and “evangelical” preparation.<sup>6</sup> The former of these constructs imported “not so much any gracious habit or spiritual quality which is put into the soul, as a principle by which it is enabled to act that which concerns its everlasting welfare.”<sup>7</sup> It denoted and established a right method of conduct, which formed the foundation of a social morality that when violated might elicit the compunction of any right-minded, ethical person. Legal restraints, at least in a spiritual context, were a “plashing of the soul not a total cutting off the soul from sin, which makes corruption couch more close, but will never kill it, nor is appointed by God for this end.”<sup>8</sup> In contrast, evangelical preparation was derived from something far more spiritually substantial, “to fit the soul fully for faith...implanting by faith into Christ.” Operating outside the sphere of human influence, evangelical preparation resembled legal preparation in its inchoate stages. But, as it developed, sinners gained greater spiritual sentience. What began as a powerful sense of contrition over deviation from codified moral conduct grew into profound aversion, as the Holy Spirit progressed from merely acting upon one’s soul to joining in union with it. Predetermined by God’s grace, this marriage of the Spirit with the soul was contingent on divine imputation. Only God maintained power, authority, and knowledge over one’s salvation.

While not all Puritan leaders stood in complete agreement on every aspect of Hooker’s explanation for these distinctions, most espoused the same general tenets.<sup>9</sup> At root, these precepts stretched back further than Hooker. As early as 1606, William Perkins appears wedded to an understanding of grace barely distinguishable from later thinkers, claiming: “God gives man the outward meanes of saluation, specially the Ministerie of the

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6. Thomas Hooker, *The Application of Redemption* (London, 1656), Book III, 152. The exact date of the *Application* is uncertain, though most sources cite its original composition to have been sometime between 1639 and 1641. For example see Alan Heimert and Andrew Delbanco, eds., *The Puritans in America: A Narrative Anthology* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1985).

7. *Ibid.*, 151.

8. *Ibid.*, 152.

9. One of the best sources for an overview of these theological differences and disputes remains Edward S. Morgan’s, *Visible Saints: The History of a Puritan Idea* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1965). For more recent commentaries on these arguments see Baird Tipson’s, *Hartford Puritanism: Thomas Hooker, Samuel Stone, and Their Terrifying God* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015).

word: and with it, he sends some outward or inward crosse, to breake and sub due the stubbornnesse of our nature, that it may be made plyable to the will of God.... This done, God brings the minde of man to a consideration of the Law."<sup>10</sup> Thus, for him, regeneration begins with a movement of gratuitous grace from God toward an absolutely depraved man, subduing his stubborn, inherently sinful nature and revealing his dissolution and wretchedness. In this phase of transformation, the sinner gains a righteous fear of God, becomes pliable to His will, and repents. Though Perkins sedulously crafted these features of initial grace, eschewing any whiff of "meritorious action" or proto-Arminianism, his framework tacks closely to that of contemporaneous thinkers, such as François Turretini's conceptions of *institutio*, *destitutio*, and *restitutio*. And, in the same form, Turretini followed even earlier paradigms of Reformed distinctions in Christian anthropology and provided grounds for further development of preparation theology in the 1640s and 1650s.<sup>11</sup>

All those who promulgated the doctrine of preparation emphasized the necessity of seeking salvation, despite their equal conviction that no individual possessed the faculties to save oneself. God's grace demanded human exertions, but human efforts in no way guaranteed salvation.<sup>12</sup> In the seventeenth century Puritan mind, to exercise the art of living out one's faith began with the humility of accepting that the inner man's motivations reflected in the outer man's behavior. At its core, colonial New England theology relied on praxis. As the historian T. H. Breen rightly noted, for the Puritans "theory seemed to joggle along behind practice."<sup>13</sup> Their ideas concerning preparation encapsulated this sentiment and turned some of them inward toward excessive introspection.

Yet this belief in preparation, self-examination, and conversion extends far in both historical directions, and a shared terminology among trans-Atlantic Puritans from roughly the mid 16th through the mid 18th centuries often obscures significant religious and social developments. While most

10. William Perkins, *The Whole Treatise of the Cases of Conscience*, Book I, Chapter V, pp. 50–51.

11. Francis Turretin, *Institutes of Elenctic Theology*, ed. J. T. Dennison and trans. G. M. Giger, vol. 3 (Phillipsburg, N. J.: Presbyterian Reformed, 1992), VIII. qu.1.

12. For a fairly thorough, if theologically tendentious, overview see, Martyn McGeown, "The Notion of Preparatory Grace in the Puritans," *Protestant Reformed Theological Journal* 41 (Fall, 2007).

13. T. H. Breen, *The Character of a Good Ruler: Puritan Political Ideas in New England 1630–1730* (N. Y.: W. W. Norton and Company, 1970), xvii.

Puritan and Reformed leaders in the early modern period found the lineaments of Hooker's or Perkins's theology on the subject agreeable, the specifics mattered and, when left unchecked, expansions or mischaracterizations led to dangerous heterodoxy or outright heresy.

### **An Analysis of Crisis and Conflict**

In the history of New England Puritanism the "Free Grace" or "Antinomian" controversy serves as the paradigmatic example of such heretical trespasses. Typically conceived in the minds of most historians as revolving around a thorny, convoluted theological dispute with political and gendered underpinnings, scholars tend to center on three key figures: Henry Vane, John Wheelwright, and Anne Hutchinson. Yet though such an analysis is warranted it frequently devolves into ahistorical travesty, missing the larger religious and cultural context within which the controversy transpired. The roots of Hutchinson's, Wheelwright's, and Vane's educated viewpoints stretch back to England, where much earlier, if less noticeable, disputes over the issues of preparation, grace, and freedom rankled elite Puritan clergy.<sup>14</sup>

In some ways, concerns over potential heterodoxy were present within the Puritan mind from the start. William Perkins's fears in 1580 that early Anglican luminaries preached about assurance and salvation in a manner which left "weak" Christians susceptible to heretical ideas share a genetic relationship with subsequent anxiety over antinomian partialities among the faithful some fifty years later.<sup>15</sup>

A tension between some assurance of salvation and constant introspective preparation and examination exerted itself among the faithful throughout social strata and across the Atlantic. By the time of Hutchinson, Wheelwright, and Vane, "free grace" as an alternative to rigidity, scrupulosity, and spiritual decorum echoed long-held and sonorous complaints within Puritan culture.<sup>16</sup> Likewise, critics of "free grace" responded with a ferocity not unknown to related incidents in England. At stake in the debate was an interpretation of life, an entire anthropological and soteriological conception of God, humanity, and law.

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14. Michael P. Winship, *Making Heretics: Militant Protestantism and Free Grace in Massachusetts* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2001), 52–53.

15. *Ibid.*, 14–15.

16. Thomas Dwight Bozeman, *The Precisianist Strain: Disciplinary Religion and Antinomian Backlash in Puritanism to 1638* (Chapel Hill, N.C.: University of North Carolina Press, 2012), 185.

Free grace advocates initially struck a chord with Puritan ministerial elites by reconfiguring a central plank of covenantal theology and Calvinist predestination. Most 17th century preachers, theologians, and well-educated laity espoused a dual covenant view of salvation history. Upon this view, God made two covenants of salvation, one of works and one of grace, the first impossible and the second inscrutable. God decreed the covenant of works, according to traditional Reformed ideas at the time, after His declaring the damnation of reprobates. Under such a system God's justice required perfect adherence and obedience to the law, an impossible task in a postlapsarian world. Conversely, God offered a covenant of grace predicated on salvation through faith, though only God imbued those predetermined for righteousness with said faith.<sup>17</sup>

Discontentment with the mechanics and ordering of this view congealed in early New England theology with the work of John Cotton. In an attempt to emphasize reprobates' quasi-volitional role in their deeds, he reorganized the decrees, averring that God's imperatives surrounding a covenant of works preceded any assignation of reprobates. In this fashion, he attempted to reassert the primacy of Calvinism, while also navigating the treacherous waters of potential Arminianism. Although understandably useful in repelling outright Arminianism (or, worse, a Catholic understanding of predestination), Cotton's view failed to garner full acceptance. Rather, his perspective gained only a begrudging appreciation as merely straddling the borders of orthodoxy among many of his clerical contemporaries.<sup>18</sup>

But the attractiveness of Cotton's theologizing to those who already found the punctilious nature of precisionist preparationism daunting, opened the door to a kind of heresy redolent of older trespasses. In the hands of figures like Hutchinson and Wheelwright, Cotton's ideas weren't contained to soteriology. Rather quickly, questions revolving around the nature and forms of revelation itself arose.<sup>19</sup> To confront these challenges to New England orthodoxy the language reached for by ministers like John Winthrop (or even Cotton in distinguishing his view from the unorthodox) borrowed from older controversies. Linguistic atavisms, including "familists" and "antinomian," quickly regained currency against ostensible heretics. Thus, while incontrovertibly new and different, enough similarities existed between 16th century English heterodoxy and 17th century

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17. Winship, *Making Heretics*, 31.

18. *Ibid.*, 31–35.

19. Bozeman, *The Precisianist Strain*, 6–7.



New England heresy to warrant a sense of communal continuity. Together these forces helped shape a continuing sense of self from the first generation Massachusetts Bay Puritans to their English forebears.<sup>20</sup> Within such a traditionalist milieu, recognizing the present in light of the past holds as normative. To understand a current crisis, then, leaders in the 1630s drew from the 1540s and, as Loring's work partially conveys, to understand the 1740s, ministers drew from earlier generations' conflicts as well.<sup>21</sup>

### Language, Transitions, and Dispositions

Still, traditionalism rarely equates with stagnation, except in minds prone to vicious mischaracterization. As such, Puritan New England's continuity and familiarity with its past generations does not imply sterility or inertia. Intellectual and spiritual fecundity during the period from 1700 to 1740 conveys larger, if subtler, cultural changes permeating various segments of society. The conflicts and turmoil roiling this period seems far less "antinomian" than contemporaries lamented. They require an understanding of analogical thinking, contrasting the similarities which highlight real continuity with equal recognition of genuine dissimilitude. Undoubtedly, concerns during the 1740s over "New Lights" (a term borrowed from the Free Grace Controversy) bears some semblance to the core issues over "legalism" and "antinomianism" that embroiled the 1630s, as leaders such as Charles Chauncey realized. But greater differences make univocal, one-to-one comparisons jejune and shallow. Here a sense of continuity pairs reasonably with an understanding of change.<sup>22</sup>

Paying close attention to shifting tendencies on vocabularies, grammars, and religious tropes highlight concomitant, underlying changes in early 18th century "lived religion."<sup>23</sup> And though, as Loring's life indicates,

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20. Winship, *Making Heretics*, 35–40. Winship offers an excellent interrogation of Cotton's theology in contradistinction to those who elaborated similar veins of thought well beyond their intended, heavily idiosyncratic purposes.

21. Jonathan Beecher Field, "The Antinomian Crisis Did Not Take Place," *Early American Studies: An Interdisciplinary Journal* 6 (Fall, 2008). Fields argues along similar lines regarding the shaping of narratives through linguistic atavisms and ideological filters. However, his claims of deliberate collusion in the 1640s and 50s between Independents and Presbyterians probably lacks the force necessary to make his overall assertion that the crisis was entirely manufactured compelling to most early Americanists.

22. Douglas L. Winarski, *Darkness Falls on the Land of Light: Experiencing Religious Awakenings in Eighteenth Century New England* (Chapel Hill, N.C.: University of North Carolina Press, 2017), 14–15.

23. For pieces discussing these historical frameworks see Robert Orsi, "Everyday

the dominant jargon in colonial New England unabashedly remained Reformed and Calvinist, its hue continued to brighten into ever lighter shades of individualism and emotionalism in succeeding centuries. For the Puritans and their posterity, all events in this life—mundane, superlative, or eldritch—were couched in the language and metaphors of cyclical depravity, unmerited grace, and sainthood; an idiom of constant conversion or movement toward God.<sup>24</sup>

But the general acceptance and use of shared narrative language passed from generation to generation fails to adequately encapsulate wider conflicts. From the start, the Puritan “experiment” in Europe, and especially within the wilderness of New England, possessed various sometimes incompatible religious methods or, in more extreme cases, disparate theologies.<sup>25</sup> Topics of soteriology and conversion often took center stage in these disputes, in which combatants deployed similar terms to opposite effect. As a 16th century movement rooted in spiritual revival and renewal, Puritanism never shed its original skin. Instead each generation fought anew what it perceived as threats to the established understanding of grace, preparation, and salvation.<sup>26</sup>

### Loring and the Puritan Strain

In this vein of spiritual self-analysis and idioms of preparation and conversion, Israel Loring weighed the state of his soul against the content of his character. To him, fear was the heart of love and confession the earnest measure of piety. Preoccupied with the depths of depravity and the ceaseless humiliation borne out by a conception of humanity’s condition as immanently hopeless, his only escape from psychologically induced debility stemmed from God’s regenerative mercy. In light of this acknowledgement, he led a life of constant self-examination, in which protracted experiences of desperation and abasement functioned as cathartic expressions of faith. Maintaining a journal detailing the tumultuous nature of these struggles,

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Miracles: the study of Lived Religion” in David D. Hall, ed., *Lived Religion in America: Toward a History of Practice* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1997); Meredith B. McGuire, *Lived Religion: Faith and Practice in Everyday Life* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008); Kim Knibbe and Helena Kupari: “Theorizing Lived Religion” *Journal of Contemporary Religion* 35 (Issue 2, 2020), 157–76.

24. Winarski, *Darkness Falls on the Land of Light*, 13.

25. Michael P. Winship, *Making Heretics*, 12–27.

26. Hendra Thamrindinata, “Preparation for Grace in Puritanism: An Evaluation from the Perspective of Reformed Anthropology,” *Diligentia* 1 (Issue 1, 2019), 59–60.

Loring wrestled with his understanding of grace and justice in a predestined world. Never fully enjoying a secure sense of certainty regarding salvation, his writings convey the thoughts and emotions of a man tortured by niggling fears of inadequate devotion.<sup>27</sup> Imbued with an elegiac rhetoric of societal declension and marked by an urge for self-deprecation, Loring's texts reveal deep-seated anxieties rooted in potent convictions of personal iniquity. This impulse for near performative admission of sin in private writings appears to gesture toward a puritanical outlook of predestination and preparationist theology.

But, unlike Hooker, his predecessors, or his immediate descendants, Loring did not reach a state of intellectual maturation in the sixteenth or seventeenth century. Born in 1682 at Hull, Massachusetts and graduating from Harvard in 1701, he belonged to the third generation of New England ministry.<sup>28</sup> He earned a Master of Arts degree in 1704, spending the succeeding two years tutoring at the college and preaching to various churches across the colony, particularly at Barnstable and Hull. Accepting a call to the parish of Sudbury, Massachusetts in 1706, he received formal ordination in November of that same year.<sup>29</sup> Retaining this post until his death sixty-six years later, Loring's ministerial career displayed surprising continuity in a period of rapid social and cultural change. By the end of his life in 1772, the political and religious landscapes stood in stark contrast to the milieu in which he grew into adulthood. In an odd comparison to these revolutions, Loring's most visceral convictions were redolent of those held by Thomas Hooker, Increase Mather (1639–1723), and their clerical contemporaries more than the value systems of mid-to-late eighteenth century elites.

Although these similarities with older luminaries appear understandable given Loring's uncommonly long lifespan of ninety years, his lived experiences placed him in an entirely separate era. With the death of Increase Mather in 1723, his son Cotton (1663–1728) in 1728, and

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27. Israel Loring, *Journal of the Rev. Israel Loring of Sudbury, Massachusetts, 1682–1772*, ed. Louise Parkman Thomas (Nevada City, Calif.: self-published by Eleanor L. Rue, 1987), 10. Loring's first entry, dated April 1, 1705, remarks despairing upon spending the Sabbath "very Unprofitably" by allowing his thoughts to be "taken Up about things of Worldly concern." Continuing in this fashion, he implores the Lord to "Humble me deeply and for it and punish my Sin, thro' the blood of Christ."

28. Emerson Davis, *Biographical Sketches of the Congregational Pastors of New England*, 5:140 (Five-Volume typescript of pre-1869 manuscript, Congregational Library, Boston, 1930). I use the guidelines laid-out in Harry S. Stout, *The New England Soul: Preaching and Religious Culture in Colonial New England* (N.Y.: Oxford University Press, 2012), 5.

29. Loring, *Journal*, 8–9, 29.

Solomon Stoddard (1643–1729) a mere year later, few prominent second and early third generation Puritans remained to hold significant sway over the course of New England’s religious and political existence. Profoundly affected by these three deaths, Loring rightly perceived them as the end of an era in Puritan thought. Describing these three men as the “chariots and horsemen of these people, their glory and defence,” he viewed their deaths through an eschatological lens, determining that their ends were inextricable from the demise of New England’s religious purity. This concern weighed heavily upon him, prompting the question: “when God sendeth his angels to pluck out his righteous Lots, what may Sodom Expect, but fire and BrimStone to be rained down upon them?”<sup>30</sup> However, in all its apocalyptic imagery and hyperbolic excesses, the central point of Loring’s query rang true: what kind of men would take charge of maintaining an evermore threatened “Citty vpon a hill.”<sup>31</sup>

Perhaps not surprising, many of Loring’s contemporaries found an answer to this question in new language. By the early 1740s references to “awakened” youths became so prevalent within various modes of literature—personal correspondence, diaries, sermons—that revivalists coined a pair of neologisms describing the phenomenon. Soon “New Converts” or “Young Converts” littered various texts throughout the period, implying an acceptance of sincerity and truth to these events belied by the raucous debates among ministerial elites surrounding these new instances of supposed transformation.<sup>32</sup> Yet, also unsurprising was the ministerial elite’s responses rooted in older language and a feeling of having been here before; in essence in their traditional outlook. For Loring and others thrust into the crisis of this Great Awakening, as the middle path between the extremes eroded, a language of and connectedness to traditional ideas, however varied, of preparation and conversion drew them back toward the “old lights.”

### Conversion Psychology and Puritan Culture

The anxiety that permeated Puritan society in both New and Old England during the seventeenth century persisted in the American colonies well into the eighteenth. Peel away the inevitable, yet often superficial and material changes that transpired between centuries and the lines dividing how

30. *Ibid.*, 131.

31. *A Modell of Christian Charity*, Reprinted in *Winthrop Papers*, 4 vols. (Boston, 1931), 2:282–95.

32. Winarski, *Darkness Falls on the Land of Light*, 178–79.

Thomas Hooker and Israel Loring conceived of heaven and earth, of God and man, and of good and evil become virtually indistinct. Both men suffered from an ever-present feeling of anxiety. But this anxiety was neither morbid nor neurotic in the modern sense. It did not flow from a crisis of identity—the Puritans confidently knew their place in the cosmos—rather it arose from a reasoned set of objective truths based in constant inquiry. The doctrines of predestination and preparation, which both men used to measure every alteration in society against, guided their sentiments and behaviors.<sup>33</sup> Ironically, by the simple act of asking what the ministers that replaced Stoddard and the Mathers would be like, morally and spiritually, Loring provided insight into answering his own inquiry. The clergy who assumed control over New England's religious duties—including Loring himself—would retain an equal commitment to the Congregational Way, though within a context of greater toleration, and stress the power and importance of conversion as an individual and communal experience necessary to salvation.<sup>34</sup>

As an eighteenth-century figure, Loring epitomized this enduring legacy of spiritual psychology and conversion theology. Though effaced with time and overlooked by historians who, understandably, favor focusing on more prominent minds—namely Jonathan Edwards (1703–1758), George Whitefield (1714–1770), or even Charles Chauncy (1705–1787)—Loring's intellectual existence offers an interesting looking-glass with which to survey putatively moribund Puritanism for two reasons. First, despite his historical obscurity, Loring was an articulate and respected minister in his youth and a venerated pillar of congregationalism in old age. He produced

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33. Owen C. Watkins, *The Puritan Experience: Studies in Spiritual Autobiography* (N.Y.: Schocken Books, 1972), 3–5; Middlekauff, *The Mathers*, 7; John Owen King, III, *The Iron Melancholy: Structures of Spiritual Conversion in America from the Puritan Conscience to Victorian Neurosis* (Middletown, Conn.: Wesleyan University Press, 1983), 58–59, 354.

34. Stout, *New England Soul*, 132–33, 191. The overlap between clergy of the late third generation (such as Loring, Benjamin Colman, and Timothy Edwards) and early fourth (such as Jonathan Edwards, Charles Chauncy, and Ebenezer Parkman) makes it difficult to distinguish any independent sense of spiritual, cultural, and ethical inheritance each might have had. Because of this fact, it is best to assume that both comported themselves as leaders poised to meet the demands of an increasingly fractured society. As Stout notes, the fourth generation was, even in the most generous scholars' interpretations, incontrovertibly the last maintaining any formal continuity with "Puritanism." The Great Awakening ensured a bizarre democratization that shifted significant power from clergy to laity. By the 1750s, vestiges of Puritanism could only be located in various strains of early "Evangelicalism," a testament to social splintering and religious upheaval left in the wake of mid eighteenth century style revivalism.

ten published sermons and a theological tract, received an invitation to deliver Massachusetts's 1737 election sermon, and maintained intimate friendships with other esteemed religious leaders throughout his life, from Increase Mather to Benjamin Colman (1673–1747). These achievements and recommendations defy the depictions of Loring offered by the few historians that have dealt with him as a subject. He was not merely a clergyman struggling in a small parish far out of reach from Boston's religious and political environs; rather, by most contemporary accounts he wielded considerable influence given the size of his rural outpost in Sudbury.<sup>35</sup> More important than this reason, however, was Loring's promotion and practice of self-examination.

For Loring, knowing thyself was a critical imperative, which demanded both public theological defense and private practice. Working within the Puritan disposition, in a 1731 series of three interrelated discourses he urged New Englanders to recognize and earnestly pursue the "great duty of self-examination."<sup>36</sup> Deploying a skillful exegesis of 2 Corinthians 13:5, he laid bare the underpinning tenets of conversion and introspection, writing that "the reflection of our consciences on the course of our lives" and "more especially the inward Acts of our soul" was a central "Christian Duty."<sup>37</sup> Adumbrating a specific method for assessing one's "spiritual estate," Loring proffered a theory of three stages for the process of genuine self-examination before God. Self-examination was a "work," beginning with the "looking inward" and a "looking backward upon the motion of our inward and outward Man." According to Loring, it attended to the "Sense of our Minds, the choice of our Wills, the bent of our affections, and the Tenor

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35. For the election sermon see, Israel Loring, *The Duty of an Apostatizing People to Remember from Whence They are Fallen, and Repent, and do Their First Works* (Boston, 1737), Beinecke Rare Book & Manuscript Library, Yale University (hereafter BRBM). In November of 1737, Loring received a letter in high praise of his election sermon from Joseph Nash of South Hadley. Slightly over a month after getting this missive, a piece of post arrived from Dr. Benjamin Colman containing a copy of "Mr. Edwards's Narrative," as well as a note offering both personal commendations and relayed compliments from "Dr. Watts and Dr. Guise," *Journal*, 206–208. Thomas Kidd is the most recent example of this potential misrepresentation. See, Kidd, *Protestant Interest*, 26. However, he does find Loring a useful fixture for later parts of his argument and mentions his election sermon on page 72.

36. Israel Loring, *Three Discourses on Several Subjects* (Boston, 1731), 119.

37. *Ibid.*, 122–23; The verse reads: "Examine yourselves to see whether you are living in the faith. Test Yourselves. Do you not realize Jesus Christ is in you?—Unless, indeed, you fail to meet the test!", NRSV.

of our whole Walk.”<sup>38</sup> From these initial phases, one moved toward deeper introspection, trying the sincerity of his acts against the will of God and, eventually, concluding with qualifying the impetuses behind those acts by judging their moral worth. In this branch of Calvinist theology, all humankind was “naturally full of self-flattery and Hypocrisy,” and it was through serious self-examination that one identified the extent of his or her spiritual failings.<sup>39</sup>

In this way, Loring attempted to standardize how one might consider their own regeneration in the presence of God and one’s own true self. So visceral was this conviction that more than merely making it the subject of a significant body of his theological thought, he also sedulously recorded examples of his personal religious experiences. Loring’s entire journal, which he started keeping shortly after his graduation from Harvard, is best understood as a spiritual autobiography in the Puritan mold. His recordings and recollections of both the mundane and sublime follow a narrative style that highlights divine providence as reality’s central driving force. Analyzing the minutia of day-to-day life in order to evaluate his spiritual condition, Loring attached himself to an intellectual tradition and psychological habit that connected him with his Puritan ancestors while transcending the socio-cultural disparities between historical eras. Even the scriptural basis and language he employed bound him to this heritage and helped him define self-examination as an action upon which Christians’ salvation depends. Drawing from a full well of examples extending back to early seventeenth century England, Loring’s public admonitions echo those of Thomas Shepard (1605–1649), Thomas Goodwin (1600–1680), and Thomas Watson (1620–1686).<sup>40</sup> Likewise, his private writings resemble the works of earlier Puritans in both England and the colonies.

The reasons Loring kept a journal recording his experiences were manifold, but each one was related to the others and all were rooted in a genre of writing and a mode of communication essential to Puritan religious culture.

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38. *Ibid.*, 123

39. *Ibid.*, 124.

40. For excellent examples of these similarities and comparative passages see, Thomas Shepard, *The Parable of the Ten Virgins* (London: Aberdeen and London, 1855) 271–72; Thomas Watson, *Heaven Taken by Storm* (London: 1669), 60, accessed through BRMB online archives; Thomas Goodwin, *Works*, vol. 6 (London: 1863), 27. Thomas Watson’s writings on self-examination are perhaps the closest of the three to Loring’s discourse on the matter. Like Loring, Watson desired to “prevail with Christians to take pains with themselves in this great work of examination. Their salvation depends on it.”

Puritans who prepared for meeting God through the sacraments, sabbath, and self-examination were acutely aware of ultimate realities linked with the human soul and divine grace.<sup>41</sup> Puritan conversion was a self-interpretation rather than a form of actualization or rationalization. The meaning imputed to it arose from a conscious effort to interpret particular events in light of the actions and motivations that led to them.<sup>42</sup> As such, the positive and negative valences of spiritual introspection created a strain between self-abasement and self-confidence in God's graciousness. This pressure comprised the paradoxical pairing of self-examination's crucial elements: conviction of sin, followed by experience of forgiveness.<sup>43</sup>

Loring's diary adopts this approach, tracing his torturous recordings of moral success and failures in an endless cycle of reveling in God's enabling of his exceptional achievements before engaging in flagellation over his own mean condition of innate sinfulness. From its opening, his journal conveys this tendency.<sup>44</sup> In typical Puritan fashion he appeals to the greatest human authority of his early life, Cotton Mather, copying the sentiment that "when God has done Excellent things, we are not only to speak of them, but (if we can) to write of them too. Every good man should leave to his Children, a Diary for a Legacy."<sup>45</sup> Here is an acknowledgement that the Lord has worked for good through his life as, in the Puritan vernacular, a saint. But, Loring's acceptance that he is regenerate in Christ and elect by God's mercy is ephemeral, as his thoughts transported in the text turn almost immediately toward guilt and anxiety. As he confesses it: "I came into the World guilty of Adam's first transgression... A most heinous Sin this; A Complicated iniquity."<sup>46</sup> Launching into a general narrative of his childhood,

41. Charles E. Hambrick-Stowe, *The Practice of Piety: Puritan Devotional Disciplines in Seventeenth Century New England* (Chapel Hill, N.C.: University of North Carolina Press, 1982), 287–88.

42. Charles Lloyd Cohen brilliantly describes Puritan conversion and examination by noting, "faith changed how they regarded their behavior rather than the behavior itself," in *God's Caress: The Psychology of Puritan Religious Experience* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986), 17, also see pages 108–10.

43. Watkins, *Puritan Experience*, 9.

44. For an interesting modern sociological take on the relationship between language and the nature of conversion with some, albeit limited, applicability to Puritanism see, Andrew M. McKinnon, "The Sociology of Conversion Narratives: A Conundrum, a Theory, and an Opportunity," *Journal of Contemporary Religion* 37 (issue 1, 2022), 89–105.

45. Cotton Mather, "The Wonderful Works of God Commemorated" (Boston: 1689), 119.

46. Loring, *Journal*, 2.



Loring continues to oscillate between these two poles of ecstatic faithfulness and lowly degeneracy. This section of his writing serves as a template for the journal's religious explorations and transmits to the reader through prosaic dexterity a tale of tension between providence and perdition.

### **The Incident in the Orchard**

Israel Loring fell into his ministerial vocation, quite literally. In 1694, at around the age of twelve, an energetic and curious Loring set out to explore his uncle's orchard. As expected of a vigorous youth, the temptation to climb trees and pick apples overpowered him, and he proceeded to attempt both. However, while reaching out upon a limb to retrieve the fruit, the branch broke and he crashed into the ground, leaving his wrists "hurt and distorted to that degree."<sup>47</sup> This seemingly mundane, inconsequential instance of childhood frivolity functioned, at least in Loring's mind, as a seminal happening in his life. His seeming haplessness was, in actuality, a pivotal moment of divine guidance, setting in motion a series of events which incidentally led to an ensuing calling as a cleric.

In good Puritan fashion, Loring retrospectively ascribed providential import to this occurrence and framed it in a typological explanation of biblical proportions. His injured wrist inhibited him from continuing his writing lessons under the minister of Hull, Reverend Zechariah Whitman (1644–1726). Given this incapacity, Loring's father, John, "got a Grammar" for him and he made "some progress in that, thro' Mr. Torrey of Weymouth, [Reverend Samuel Torrey (1632–1707)] and Mr. Whitman." These tutors subsequently prevailed upon John to bring Israel "up to Learning," marking God's remarkable grace in bringing about his "liberal education."<sup>48</sup> In looking back, Loring found solace in the Lord's wise, yet enigmatic foresight, as it proved that "the afflictions which his people meet With are Subservient to promote their good, temporal as Well as Spiritual."<sup>49</sup> Like Joseph, God had preordained his life's course, forming the basis of his spiritual advancement through physical obstacles and emotional difficulty. Without the initial turbulence created by his accident, Loring believed the chances of him joining New England's clergy were slim. Therefore, he regarded the orchard incident as a profoundly significant episode. It encapsulated his early religious

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47. *Ibid.*, 3.

48. *Ibid.*

49. *Ibid.*, 4.

leanings and underlined an axial shift in his day-to-day behavior. As Loring described it, “my fall proved the Means of my rising.”<sup>50</sup>

The method by which Loring interpreted his “fall” had a distinctively Puritan hue to it. Contrasting the glory and graciousness of God with his own abject impiety, he viewed his formative years through the same psychological lens that pervades other portions of the journal. His acceptance of a kinship with Joseph belies a deeper desire to fear God righteously, in a similar manner to the biblical intermediary he assigns to John—Obadiah. This, coupled with the general tone of his reassessed childhood, evidence the type of potent seventeenth-century values his parents inculcated. The prejudices he imbibed in youth laid the foundation for the belief system that matured in his later life. But it was his ministerial training that sheltered these early roots, enabling them to grow and eventually flourish.

### Formative Relationships and the Nature of Self-Inspection

Completing his program of education under Rev. Whitman, Loring entered Harvard College in June of 1697, at sixteen years old. Upon commencing his studies Loring’s spiritual condition collapsed, as he “fell from good beginnings” by growing “Dull and lifeless in the ways of religion.”<sup>51</sup> Indolence and errant behavior nearly ruined him, at least by his account. However, considered within the journal’s overarching narrative context, Loring’s comments largely reflect a continuation of puritanical thinking regarding the self and God. Following the mode of preparation, he was “awakened” from his apathy, brought into a state of “distress,” and moved to a stage of conscious self-examination through contrition before reaching emptying his soul in humiliation.<sup>52</sup> Once God provoked Loring to recognize his waywardness,

50. Ibid.

51. Ibid., 5

52. The style of preparation Loring seems to describe is ambiguous, leaving room for an interpretation of it as containing elements reminiscent of both Hooker’s and Shepard’s various formulations on preparatory doctrine. Although an alignment with Shepard would be expected, given his upbringing in late seventeenth-century Massachusetts and the general milieu in which he developed his own thought, his description does appear to contain some elements more suggestive of a congeniality with Hooker. Loring’s journal does imply in some form that he stirred himself with “assistance of the Spirit,” in line with Hooker’s propounded theory on the issue. However, one may read into a potential separation between phases of conviction and compunction redolent of Shepard. The description provided is short, personalized, and heavily introspective, making it more difficult to ascertain Loring’s precise method. For further consideration of Hooker’s view see, *The Unbelievers Preparing for Christ* (London, 1638), 2:2, 40, 70; *The Soul’s Humiliation* (London, 1638), 135–50; *The*

he dutifully sought out scripture and fortuitously opened his Bible to the fourteenth chapter of Hosea where he read, "O Israel, return to the Lord thy God, for thou hast fallen by thine iniquity."<sup>53</sup> Jolted by these words, he found a path toward joyous reconciliation, reorientation, and contentedness of the soul. Yet, outside of Loring's immediate psychological preoccupation of self-examination there remain questions of how his studies and the relationships he formed at college reinforced the sentiments and practices his private writings conveyed.

The blossoming of Loring's religious affections at various times in his early life often coincided with the encouragement and guidance, not simply of God, but of his various mentors. As his journal entries intimate, the reverends Whitman and Torrey detected an aptitude for writing and grammar in Loring since at least he injured his wrists in the orchard, and probably before then. While this conflicts with Loring's narrative of providence, he was already under the tutelage of Whitman prior to his fall.<sup>54</sup> It seems fair to assume that Whitman was aware of his intellectual capabilities and had already taken an interest in his continued education before he began grammar lessons.<sup>55</sup> Moreover, that Torrey also impressed upon John Loring the importance of raising his son for ministry is significant. An eminent New England clergyman, despite never having completed his formal theological training, Torrey preached three election sermons and received two separate offers to assume the presidency of Harvard, in 1681 and 1684, though he declined it on both occasions.<sup>56</sup> Similarly, he maintained

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*Application of Redemption*, 15–20, 110–15. For Shepard see, *The Sound Believer* (London, 1645), 4–54, 129, 147; *The Sincere Convert* (London, 1646), 220–40. For secondary source comparison see, Petit, *The Heart Prepared*, 86–124; and also, Abram C. Van Engen, *Sympathetic Puritans: Calvinist Fellow Feeling in Early New England* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2015), 63–67.

53. Loring, *Journal*, 6.

54. *Ibid.*, 3. Loring states that "when I learned to read I was Sent to School to the Rev'd. Mr. Whitman, the Minister of the town, to learn to Write." Whitman also knew Loring's parents well since his parent were members of his congregation and John served as a church deacon. Moreover, he baptized Israel and recorded his mother's final words on her deathbed. See pages 89 and 415, respectively.

55. Throughout this early section of the journal, it is best to view Loring's recollection of events as somewhat unreliable, considering the large gap of time between when they occurred and when he recorded them. One must also bear in mind his purpose in writing the journal and its function as a spiritual autobiography.

56. Davis, *Biographical Sketches*, 5:363–64. For Torrey's election sermons see, *An Exhortation Unto Reformation* (Cambridge, Mass., 1674); *A Plea for the Life of Dying Religion from the Word of the Lord* (Boston, 1683); *Mans Extremity, Gods Opportunity* (Boston, 1695).

intimate friendships with William Stoughton (1631–1701) and Samuel Sewall (1652–1730), who frequently called upon him to provide advice for Massachusetts's leadership regarding the colony's knottier problems.<sup>57</sup> If Torrey saw promise in the young Loring, his recommendation probably acted as a powerfully persuasive factor in swaying John toward allowing his son to pursue further education.

While Whitman and Torrey promoted Loring as a possible candidate for ministry, their impact upon his life, though discernable in certain respects, paled in comparison to the man under whose tutelage he labored at Harvard, William Brattle (1662–1717).<sup>58</sup> An Anglophilic latitudinarian, Brattle graduated from Harvard in 1680, staying at the college under the formal title of fellow until 1696, when he was ordained pastor of the church in Cambridge. This additional professional obligation notwithstanding, he continued to serve Harvard until his death in 1717, training students and working as an unofficial administrator with his close associate and later college president, John Leverett (1662–1724). Due to Increase Mather's rather laissez-faire approach toward managing collegiate affairs during his presidency, which lasted from 1685–1701, Leverett and Brattle gained tremendous influence acting as de-facto superintendents and were later contributory in forcing Mather to vacate the post.<sup>59</sup> This insubordination and the internecine political squabbles it produced chafed the Mather family, particularly Increase's son, Cotton, who later described Leverett as "that unhappy Man," responding to the news of his passing in 1724.<sup>60</sup>

Although specific details regarding their relationship are sparse within either man's writings and personal correspondence, the lasting effects of Brattle's theology, ministrations, and pedagogy on Loring remains apparent in what little direct evidence still exists and in their similarities of style. Both Leverett and Brattle were considered "Fathers to many Ministers and Younger Gentlemen," and for Loring this was certainly the case.<sup>61</sup>

57. Frederick C. Torrey, *The Torrey Families and their Children in America* (Lakehurst: N.J., 1924), 26.

58. Loring, *Journal*, 5.

59. Stout, *New England Soul*, 135; Michael G. Hall, *The Last American Puritan: The Life of Increase Mather* (Middletown, Conn.: Wesleyan University Press, 1988), 280–89; Rick Kennedy, "Thy Patriarchs' Desire: Thomas and William Brattle in Puritan Massachusetts" (PhD diss., Univ. of California, Santa Barbara, 1987).

60. Cotton Mather, *Diary of Cotton Mather, 1681–1724* (Boston: Mass. Historical Society, 1911) 2:723–24; Middlekauff, *The Mathers*, 361.

61. Benjamin Colman, *A Sermon at the Lecture in Boston* (Boston, 1717), 28. American Antiquarian Society Archives; hereafter AAS.

Following his graduation from Harvard, Loring preached in several parishes in the region around Hull. Hoping to receive a call to Yarmouth, where he had been serving temporarily since early 1705, Loring “earnestly requested” that God present a clear path forward. His confidence was soon shattered, however, when news reached him that Thomas Barnard (1663–1723) had been asked to fill Yarmouth’s vacancy instead. Despondent, if not somewhat incredulous, Loring traveled to Boston in order to confirm the rumors concerning Barnard. Once assured of their veracity, he set out for Cambridge to discuss the matter with Brattle. Either in the course of their conversation or shortly thereafter, Matthew Stone (1660–1743), a deacon of Sudbury, arrived to inquire whether Brattle knew any promising new ministers willing to preach in their parish that coming Sunday. Naturally, Brattle proposed Loring, providing the means for him to receive a call there less than two months later.<sup>62</sup>

In spite of Loring’s rather laconic retelling of the episode given his characteristic concern with its providential meanings and spiritual nuances as opposed to the human elements involved, the intimacy of his and Brattle’s relationship as student and teacher still shines through. This closeness manifests in how both men comported themselves behind the pulpit and among peers. The parallels between descriptions of their styles bear striking resemblances. In pedagogy and preaching Brattle was “all calm and soft and melting,” and perceived as “Wise and Discreet; Humane, Affable, Courteous, and Obliging.”<sup>63</sup> Likewise, while Loring was described as “energetic and forcible” in deploying his sermons, he was also depicted as “calm” and “affectionate.”<sup>64</sup>

Moreover, Loring inherited an irenic ecclesiology from Brattle. Once telling a former student that he aimed to “exercise his thoughts” with “weightier things” than the myriad, petty controversies of his times, Brattle confessed that, “I hopefully shall for ever be cautious how I let my religion spend itself in those trifling controversies.”<sup>65</sup> In his mind, Congregationalism in New England was best served by a theology of peace, one open to reconciliation with the Church of England and the larger Anglican Com-

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62. Loring, *Journal*, 25. It is also noteworthy that Brattle requested Loring preach at his Church in Cambridge the Sunday after his initial service in Sudbury and persuaded him to serve “three Sabbaths” in Groton through late August and early September of 1705.

63. Colman, *A Sermon at the Lecture*, 29, 34.

64. Pope, *Loring Genealogy*, 29.

65. William Brattle to Mr. Dudley, 18 November 1700, Massachusetts Historical Society, C. E. French manuscripts.

munion. For Brattle “true wisdom is peaceable” and when this is forgotten “religion suffers.”<sup>66</sup>

Nevertheless, his ecclesiology never conflated peacemaking with dogma. Doctrine, in Brattle’s work, received due attention and defense. As one of his students famously attested: “he searched out vice and browbeat and punished it with the authority and just anger of a master.”<sup>67</sup> The general theological outlook of Brattle amounted to a wealthy, well-educated elite with an additional predilection for symbolic gestures of goodwill toward a wider Anglican establishment. In short, he was a classical, dogmatic Puritan in the mold of Mather intellectually, but a hopeful mediator like Cotton at heart. It was these same theological and social aspirations which Loring readily adopted from his mentor.

It is unsurprising that Loring’s ecclesiology, theological sensibilities, and rhetorical techniques matched those of his eminently charming and successful tutor. Many, if not most or all, of Brattle’s students lavished their compassionate and charitable teacher with high praise, extolling his capacity to uphold orthodox Puritan principles while allowing for greater toleration and accommodation of other Protestant denominations. Even Increase Mather admitted to “taking much comfort in his conversation,” despite intellectual and ecclesiological divergences, and recommended him to the church in Cambridge.<sup>68</sup> Yet most important were the values of humility and ideas of moderation, as well as conservation, that Brattle inculcated in Loring and his other pupils.

Salient among these virtues was the method by which Loring’s recollections were recorded: conscious self-examination. From Brattle, Loring learned the importance of understanding humanity’s moral turpitude and God’s infinite grace in the context of religious introspection. Despite their theological differences in several significant strands of thought, both believed firmly that previous generations’ admonitions to “know thyself,” was a tradition worth conserving. Yet as Brattle taught his young pupil, seeking the self required meekness and strength of spirit.<sup>69</sup> Loring came to investigate his own life with these qualities in mind, consistently struggling with the profound mercies of God that granted him success and the

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66. William Brattle, sermon on James 3:17, March 16, 1700, Harvard University, Houghton Library, MS Am 1100.

67. John Langdon Sibley, *Biographical Sketches of Harvard Graduates*, vol. 3, 201.

68. Increase Mather in the preface to Joseph Sewall, *Precious Treasure in Earthen Vessels* (Boston, 1717), AAS.

69. Loring, *Journal*, 26.

evil inextricable from his human condition. As such, he fluctuated from the heights of joy to the nadirs of self-loathing with the caprices of everyday life. This vacillation holds as a primary theme throughout his autobiographical journal and hinges upon an exacting deployment and understanding of the terms “I” and “self.”

### Understanding the “Self:” Puritan vs. Evangelical Mindsets

The uses of these terms ties Loring to older Puritan writing within the same literary genre, which served a similar purpose. Unlike early Evangelicals, many of whom began to record their spiritual excursions thirty to forty years after his, in the late 1730s through the 1740s, Loring’s journal was built upon an epistemological structure that adhered to Puritan precepts and idealizations more than a semi-subjective, individualized, and, in some cases, mystical Evangelical emphasis on firsthand experience. In the latter tradition, which overlapped with Loring’s later life, assurance of conversion grew increasingly pivotal and the location of a singular, momentous instance of redemption in God’s presence proved one’s salvation.<sup>70</sup> This reliance on experience, assurance, and evidence of salvation separated Loring from most Puritans and some later fourth and nearly all fifth generation New Englanders. Although a latent interest in this experiential framing of conversion had infiltrated the works of some earlier Puritans, most notably Solomon Stoddard and Increase Mather, it never reached the degree of potential excesses displayed by mid-century evangelicals.<sup>71</sup>

In the style of Mather and Stoddard, Loring’s journal contains distinctively proto-Evangelical overtones. However, it does not enter into a dialog on the certainty of transformation, a trend that became commonplace in later decades. By the 1740s, men and women like David Brainerd (1718–1747) believed that through self-examination and communication with God, one could enjoy “the full assurance of His favor.”<sup>72</sup> In opposition to this position, Loring’s autobiographical writings are filled with withering

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70. Jerald C. Brauer, “Conversion: From Puritanism to Revivalism,” *Journal of Religion* 58 (July 1978): 234–35; James S. Lamborn, “Blessed Assurance? Depraved Saints, Philosophers, and the Problem of Knowledge for Self and State in New England, 1630–1820” (PhD diss., Miami University, 2002), 210–25.

71. Solomon Stoddard, *A Treatise Concerning Conversion* (Boston: Franklin, 1719), 75–85.

72. Jonathan Edwards, *The Life of David Brainerd, Missionary to the Indians*, in the *Works of Jonathan Edwards*, Vol. 7, ed. Norman Pettit (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1984), 143.

doubt and self-loathing punctuated by transient periods of ineffable joy in describing God's goodness. Approximating some earlier Puritans from elites like John Bunyan to obscure laymen in the making of Nehemiah Wallington, he was seldom secure in his feelings of election nor absolute in his knowledge of God's character.<sup>73</sup> Although the Divine's salient traits were discernable as omniscience, omnipotence, and omnibenevolence, He remained largely inscrutable. As Loring comprehended it, the "Spirit of God Works where and When he pleases."<sup>74</sup> This interpretation meant that he perceived the "self," or his "I" in the text, as available for introspection only in the soul's relationship to God and humanity, not as open to answering definitively the mystery connoted by predestination.

Moreover, Loring's sense of self or "I" in the journal is associated with the larger communion of saints and by extension some emphasis on wider society. Since his autobiography contains no central point of unqualified conversion or salvation, he consistently renews his covenant with God, lending to an uneasy, palpable anxiety regarding assurance of salvation.<sup>75</sup> This uncertainty is not confined to the individual "self," as is the case with Evangelical spiritual autobiographies; instead it encompasses family, neighbors, New England, Britain, and the greater Protestant world. Concerned with the sin and redemption of these groupings, his journal points to a Puritanical notion of community reminiscent of Michael Wigglesworth's (1631–1705) apocalyptic poem *The Day of Doom*.<sup>76</sup> And, in a like-manner to Wigglesworth, his language supports these sentiments. Tormented over his own destiny and the fates of his neighbors, Loring acted according to divine prescriptions in spite of his depravity, not because of his salvation.

This subtle difference placed Loring in a discrete category from most Evangelical leaders. He was not a radical individualist and he did not see conversion as an extraordinary event marking the certainty of sainthood. Instead, he behaved as most ordinary Puritans throughout generations,

73. See, John Bunyan, *Grace Abounding to the Chief of Sinners*, eds. John Stachniewski and Anita Pacheco (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008); and Paul S. Seaver, *Wallington's World: A Puritan Artisan in Seventeenth-Century London* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1985).

74. Loring, *Journal*, 40.

75. Loring's entire diary is littered with examples, in particular entries at the end and beginning of the year. For some examples see, *Journal*, 10–11, 15–16, 21–24, 222–23, 243–44; for instances regarding his sense of salvation as containing certain communal or social aspects see pages 113–16.

76. "The Diary of Michael Wigglesworth, 1653–1657," ed. Edmund S. Morgan in *Publications of the colonial Society of Massachusetts*, xxxv, 311–444 (Boston, 1951).



that conversion was something “not wrought all at one instant, but in continuance of time, and that by certain measures or degrees.”<sup>77</sup> To Loring, conversion and the experiences of anxiety and faith concomitant with it were cyclical, occasionally imperceptible changes in one’s spiritual life. Behavior preceded conviction of salvation and redemption for the Puritans. Conversely, Evangelicals gradually broke from this inclination, assigning significance to an increase in holy “doings” that followed a seminal, transformative moment of “awakening.” That Loring’s writings traced the contours of a Puritan model rather than an early Evangelical one, displays a psychological, spiritual, and linguistic mindset that drew heavily from earlier traditions, binding him more to his past than his immediate present.<sup>78</sup>

### Autobiography and Typology in Focus

Loring’s psychology of abasement and his related conceptions of conversion and salvation stressed his affirmation of Puritanism’s regnant doctrines. To him, man wallowed in uncertainty and the potential for regeneration rested solely with the omnipotence of God. These core beliefs informed his worldly and spiritual outlooks, forming him in a Puritan as opposed to early Evangelical mold throughout the 1730s and early 1740s. Loring’s journal supports these dogmas in its opening pages in its description of his father, John. John Loring, who migrated to Massachusetts as a child with his family in 1634 and served as a town clerk in Hull, functions as a paragon of probity and piety in the text. Depicting his father as a man “much in prayer, heavenly meditation, and self-examination,” and who “as it was said of Obadiah...feared the Lord from his youth,” Israel subtly submits a typological lineage.<sup>79</sup> Like his father, he too lived in a manner evocative

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77. William Perkins, *Works* (Cambridge: J. Legat, 1616), I: 637.

78. On Puritan conversion see, Murray Murphey, “The Psychodynamics of Puritan Conversion,” *American Quarterly* (summer, 1979): 135–47; James Hoopes, *Consciousness in New England: From Puritans and Idea to Psychoanalysis and Semiotic*, (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1989), 24–26. On Evangelicals see, Kenneth P. Minkema, “A Great Awakening Conversion: The Relation of Samuel Belcher,” *William and Mary Quarterly* 44 (January 1987): 121–26; D.W. Bebbington, *Evangelicalism in Modern Britain: A History from the 1730s to the 1980s* (London: Unwin Hyman, 1989), 43–45; Thomas S. Kidd, *The Great Awakening: The Roots of Evangelical Christianity in Colonial America* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2007), 45–47.

79. Loring, *Journal*, 2; See also, Thomas Foxcroft, “A Discourse on The Great Happiness, Which God Hath Laid Up For: Occasioned by the Death of Mr. John Loring, Late Ruling-Elder of the Church at Hull” (Boston: S. Kneeland, 1720); Charles Henry Pope, *Loring Genealogy*, ed. Katharine Peabody Loring (Cambridge, Mass.: Murray and Emery,

of Obadiah. Deploying the rhetoric of declension, he is quick to imply an inferior moral status when compared with his father, and by metaphorical extension, Obadiah. His spiritual autobiography, published writings, and portions of his sermonic corpus suggest this, and the way he illustrates his own life in the journal confirms it.

While typology in itself does not prove Loring's Puritan tendencies, when combined with his lack of assurance and activism, it becomes evident that his psychological and spiritual approach was incongruent with those of rising Evangelicalism. To appreciate this is to understand that there Loring stood in continuity with his ancestors, not in radical departure from them. The state of his mind was one of fear, uncertainty, grace, and redemption as prescribed by the Puritans and carried on through the later generations despite increasing social and cultural alterations. Loring's psychology of self and society emphasized the centrality of life and faith in relation to predestination, springing not from an assurance of conversion or salvation, but a strain of Calvinistic Protestantism with transatlantic, historical roots.

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1917), 13–15. For excellent studies on the history of Puritan concern with exemplary figures, typology, and spiritual autobiography see, Margo Todd, "Puritan Self-Fashioning: The Diary of Samuel Ward," *The Journal of British Studies*, Vol. 31 (July, 1992): 236–64, and John R. Knott, "A Suffering People: Bunyan and the Language of Martyrdom" in *Puritanism: Transatlantic Perspectives on a Seventeenth-Century Anglo-American Faith*, ed. Francis Bremer (Boston: Massachusetts Historical, 1993). Loring also used the biblical figure of Obadiah to describe the Rev. Mathew Henry, see *Journal*, 49.

# Means to Understanding in John Flavel's "Pneumatologia"

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DAVID VAN BRUGGE

The Puritan John Flavel deserves more attention.<sup>1</sup> His biblical knowledge, his foundational commitment to religious affections, and persevering character reflect the broader legacy of the Puritans; a legacy summarized by John MacArthur at the end of the recent Puritan conference as a "great core of theology and biblical insight and faithful pastoral application."<sup>2</sup> Recent research has pointed out how Flavel was a biblical theologian concerned with the work of Christ and the Holy Spirit in a person's heart, including through their suffering.<sup>3</sup>

But Flavel also deserves more intent study due to his delight in learning and his ability to teach.<sup>4</sup> He was "humble, godly, and learned."<sup>5</sup> John Murray has pointed out Flavel's conviction that affection could only flow from

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1. Brian H. Cosby, "John Flavel: The 'Lost' Puritan," *Puritan Reformed Journal* 3, no. 1 (2011): 113; Iain Murray, "John Flavel," *Banner of Truth*, no. 60 (September 1968): 5.

2. John MacArthur, "The Enduring Legacy of the Puritans," Session 12 of the Puritan Conference held October 5–7, 2022, at Grace Community Church, Los Angeles, California. Video of the Session can be found at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gJMle1H05p4>; a transcript of the session can be found at <https://www.gty.org/library/sermons-library/pc22-2/>

3. See as examples, Brian Cosby, *Suffering and Sovereignty: John Flavel and the Puritans on Afflictive Providence* (Grand Rapids: Reformation Heritage Books, 2012); Adam Embry, *Keeper of the Great Seal of Heaven: Sealing of the Spirit in the Life and Thought of John Flavel* (Grand Rapids: Reformation Heritage Books, 2011); Paul Gibson, "The Humiliation of Christ in the Preaching of John Flavel (1627–1691)" (PhD diss., Edinburgh Theological Seminary, 2022); Stephen Yuille, *The Inner Sanctum of Puritan Piety: John Flavel's doctrine of mystical union with Christ* (Grand Rapids: Reformation Heritage Books, 2007).

4. "The Life of the late Rev. Mr. John Flavel, Minister of Dartmouth," *The Works of John Flavel* (first published by W. Baynes and Son, 1820; reprinted London: Banner of Truth, 1968), 1:vi. Hereafter this work will be abbreviated as WJF.

5. Joel R. Beeke and Randall J. Pederson, *Meet the Puritans: With a Guide to Modern Reprints* (Grand Rapids: Reformation Heritage Books, 2006), 248.

understanding, and how a preacher's great work is to "aid his hearers" by expounding Scriptures "in a manner calculated to make men understand and value them."<sup>6</sup> That concern for personal understanding and appreciation can be seen in the full titles of numerous writings.<sup>7</sup>

Flavel's concern for understanding was not limited to the content of a message or treatise. His sermons and treatises display epistemological considerations that reflect a mind concerned with the means of understanding. How might the common people best understand? His writings display that Flavel worked within the tradition where knowledge, experience, and reason were valued as means toward understanding.<sup>8</sup> He follows the popular method described by Andreas Hyperius, using analogies, rhetoric, philosophy, emblems, and illustrations: "in sum, he omits nothing that in any way has the power to persuade and impress minds."<sup>9</sup> Flavel himself notes that people know by inferences—in one location he lists considerations that allow him to state things beyond all rational doubt: "the Scripture is plainly for it. And, there is nothing in reason against it."<sup>10</sup> In another place he spoke of doing "all that is capable of attracting an intellectual nature."<sup>11</sup> In yet another place he says, "we have three standing, ordinary, and sufficient

6. Murray, "Flavel," 6.

7. See John Flavel, "A Practical Treatise of Fear: Wherein the various kinds, uses, causes, effects, and remedies thereof are distinctly opened and prescribed, for the relief and encouragement of all those that fear God in these doubtful and distracting times," *WJF*, 3:239–320; John Flavel, "Planelogia: A succinct and seasonable Discourse of the Occasions, Causes, Nature, Rise, Growth, and Remedies of Mental Errors," *WJF*, 3:413–94; John Flavel, "Divine Conduct: Or, the Mystery of Providence, Opened in a Treatise Upon Psalm lvii.2," *WJF*, 4:336–497; John Flavel, "Husbandry Spiritualized: Or, the Heavenly Use of Earthly Things. Consisting of many pleasant observations, pertinent applications, and serious reflections...." *WJF*, 5:3–205.

8. See Daniël J. Maritz, "By Scripture and plain reason: A historical retrieval of the relationship between theology and philosophy to better engage with present-day secularism," *In die Skriflig* 57, no. 1 (2023):a2905 <https://doi.org/10.4102.ids.v57i1.2905>; Maarten Wisse, "Reformed Theology in Scholastic Development," in *The Oxford Handbook of Reformed Theology* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2020), 59. Though Flavel is not primarily concerned here with evidences for God, or natural theology, see also Aza Goudriaan, *Reformed Orthodoxy and Philosophy, 1625–1750: Gijsbertus Voetius, Petrus van Mastricht, and Anthonius Driessen* (Leiden: Brill, 2006), 74–79.

9. Andreas Hyperius, *De recte formando*, 368–70; quoted in Donald Sinnema, "The Distinction between Scholastic and Popular: Andreas Hyperius and Reformed Scholasticism," in Carl R. Trueman and R. S. Clark, eds., *Protestant Scholasticism: Essays in Reassessment* (Carlisle, UK: Paternoster Press, 1999), 133.

10. John Flavel, "Pneumatologia: A Treatise of the Soul of Man," *WJF*, 3:39.

11. Flavel, "Pneumatologia," *WJF*, 2:487.

means" to warn of death: "the Scriptures, reason, and daily examples."<sup>12</sup> Indeed, Flavel was convinced that though those means may ask and answer unusual questions, they would be beneficial to non-scholastic minds that were searching for truth.<sup>13</sup>

This article describes the various means toward understanding which appear in Flavel's "Pneumatologia: A Treatise of the Soul of Man." According to the Dictionary of National Biography, this treatise seems to have been first published posthumously in 1698, though at least one remaining 1698 version notes that it was the second edition.<sup>14</sup> The treatise can be introductorily understood by its original full title:

Pneumatologia: A Treatise of the Soul of Man: Wherein the Divine Original, Excellent and Immortal Nature of the Soul are opened; its Love and Inclination to the Body, with the necessity of its Separation from it, considered and improved. The Existence, Operations, and States of separated Souls, both in Heaven and Hell, immediately after Death, asserted, discussed, and variously applied. Divers knotty and difficult Questions about departed souls both Philosophical, and Theological, stated and determined. The Invaluable Preciousness of Human Souls, and the various Artifices of Satan (their professed Enemy) to destroy them, discovered. And the great Duty and Interest of all men, seasonably and heartily to comply with the most great and gracious Design of the Father, Son, and Spirit, for the Salvation of their Souls, argued and pressed.<sup>15</sup>

Within the "Pneumatologia," Flavel displayed a willingness to use a variety of means that "humbly and peaceably applied themselves to the impartial search of truth."<sup>16</sup> Flavel's value as a teacher concerned with epistemological considerations can be seen in his non-simplistic and intentional use of various means, including faith in revelation of Scripture, recognized wisdom in historical sources, and reasoning that comes from personal experience, all for the purpose of understanding and being prepared for eternity.

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12. Flavel, "Pneumatologia," *WJF*, 3:66.

13. Flavel, "Pneumatologia," *WJF*, 2:478; 2:480.

14. Thomas Hamilton, "John Flavel," in *Dictionary of National Biography*, edited by Leslie Stephen (London: Smith, Elder, & Co., 1889), 19:253–54.

15. John Flavel, *Pneumatologia: A Treatise of the Soul of Man* (London: Printed by J.D. for Tho. Parkhurst at the Bible and Three Crowns near Mercer's Chappel in Cheapside, 1698), i.

16. Flavel, "Pneumatologia," *WJF*, 2:478.

### Faith in Scripture

Flavel turned to scriptural truths to explain the soul and its value. As Flavel defined the soul, it “is a vital, spiritual, and immortal substance, endowed with an understanding, will, and various affections; created with an inclination to the body, and infused therein by the Lord.”<sup>17</sup> However, and more specifically, Flavel promoted Scripture and his readers’ faith in Scripture, by building his treatise about the soul on the exposition of several main passages of Scripture, providing other scriptural support, and considering the soul in light of Scripture’s redemptive teaching.

The trust in Scripture was developed by expositions of passages that were obviously about the soul, and others that dealt with the soul by implication. The obvious passages included Genesis 2:7: “And the Lord God formed man out of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul”; as well as Matthew 17:26: “For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul? Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?” The passages that were less obvious, and dealt with the personal soul by implication included Revelation 6:9–11: “I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the Word of God”; Ephesians 5:29: “For no man ever yet hated his own flesh, but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church”; 2 Peter 1:13–14: “As long as I am in this tabernacle, to stir you up, but putting you in remembrance: knowing that shortly I must put off this my tabernacle”; Hebrews 12:23: “And to the spirits of just men made perfect”; 1 Peter 3:19: “By which also he went and preached unto the spirits in prison”; and Ephesians 5:16: “Redeeming the time because the days are evil.” The expositions of these passages were developed to answer more particular questions about the value of the soul, and applications or inferences drawn did not necessarily reflect the broader context of the original text.

The promotion of a trust in, and assent to, Scripture’s teaching was not limited to texts that headlined sections of the treatise. Throughout the various sections, Flavel was generous with supporting texts that buttressed his aims. As one example, under one inference about the daily providence of continued breath within people, Flavel noted six supporting texts: Deuteronomy 30:20; Daniel 5:23; Psalm 104:29; Psalm 66:9; Exodus 25:26; and Psalm 27:12.<sup>18</sup>

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17. Flavel, “Pneumatologia,” *WJF*, 2:495.

18. Flavel, “Pneumatologia,” *WJF*, 2:545.

Flavel's supporting texts came from both the Old and New Testament. They were often illustrations, or further detailing, of the broader point in the main exposition. Within the teaching from Genesis 2:7, Flavel also pointed to "that excellent place of Solomon, in Eccl. xii. 7. 'Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was; and the spirit to God who gave it'... The two constitutive parts of man are a soul and a body: these two parts have two distinct originals: the body, as to its material cause, is dust; the soul, in its nature, is a spirit, and as to its origin, it proceed[s] from the Father of spirits; it is his own creature."<sup>19</sup>

Some of the uses of Scriptures were listed as possible objections to the content Flavel was teaching. In this Flavel displayed not only awareness of Scripture, but also of common thoughts and arguments. His response was to further explain the passage beyond the common understanding. For example, one objection he brought forward against his own teaching was based on various scriptures such as 2 Samuel 14:14: "We must needs die, and are as water spilt on the ground, which cannot be gathered up again," as well as Psalm 88:10–12 and Isaiah 38 that seem to confirm the cessation of the soul's activity upon death: "the dead cannot praise thee." Flavel's explanation is that these words are "not to be understood absolutely, but respectively: and the meaning is, that the soul is in the body as some precious liquor in a brittle glass, which being broken by death, the soul is irrecoverably gone.... All the means in the world cannot fetch it back into the body again."<sup>20</sup> The soul will never return to the same body and same activity that it had on earth: this "denies not life to departed souls, but affirms the end of this animal life at death: the life we live in the other world is of a different nature."<sup>21</sup>

Flavel similarly took supporting passages and expanded them to make them personal. In one section, he wrote, "Holy Paul appeals to God in this matter; Rom. i. 9. 'God is my witness (saith he) whom I serve with my spirit; q.d. I serve God in my spirit, and he knows that I do so. I dare appeal to him who searches my heart, that it is not idle and unconcerned in his service."<sup>22</sup> In another section Flavel wrote, "We believe this very same numerical body shall rise again, Job xxi. 27 by the return of the same soul into it, which now dwelleth in it; and that we shall be the same persons that now we are: the remunerative justice of God requiring it to be so."<sup>23</sup>

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19. Flavel, "Pneumatologia," *WJE*, 2:516–17.

20. Flavel, "Pneumatologia," *WJE*, 2:579.

21. Flavel, "Pneumatologia," *WJE*, 2:579.

22. Flavel, "Pneumatologia," *WJE*, 2:535.

23. Flavel, "Pneumatologia," *WJE*, 2:576.

One of Flavel's favorite supporting passages seemed to be Matthew 10:28: "Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell." He referenced the passage at least six times. He considered the security of souls in Christ the greatest argument against fear, in part because it was stated by the Savior Himself.<sup>24</sup> Even if God permits the destruction of a body, that soul is secure, sometimes by the ministry of angels, and by God's own hand and power.<sup>25</sup>

Therefore, the soul needs the redemption that Scripture revealed. Flavel saw the Scriptures affirming the sin of Adam being passed down to future souls.<sup>26</sup> He pointed to Scriptures to propose the doctrine that "the souls or spirits of all men who die in a state of unbelief and disobedience, are immediately committed to the prison of hell, there to suffer the wrath of God due to their sins."<sup>27</sup> And yet Flavel also affirmed the biblical teaching of the Holy Spirit restoring the beauty of souls, noting that "it restores it with this advantage, that it shall never be lost again; holiness is the beauty of God impressed upon the soul, and the impression is everlasting."<sup>28</sup>

In all his Scripture quoting, Flavel did not lose sight of the redemptive message of Scripture. He recognized the knowledge of Christ to be the most excellent and necessary teaching; but the worth of Christ would remain unknown, until the personal value and dangers of souls would be realized.<sup>29</sup> He used Bible texts not just to define and illustrate, but to point to Christ. He noted that "if our souls perish with our bodies, Christ would be greatly disappointed: Nor can that promise be ever made good to him; Isa. liiii. 11. 'He shall see of the travail of his soul and be satisfied.' He hath done his work, but where is his reward? See how this supposition strikes at the justice of God, and wounds his faithfulness in his covenant with his Son."<sup>30</sup>

While Flavel did sprinkle Scripture texts throughout his treatise, and structure the treatise around various passages, it was not merely for text-proofing reasons. He sincerely saw the truths of Scripture revealing invisible truths that are necessary for the proper valuing of the soul. And yet that is not the only means he used to persuade people of the value of their souls.

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24. Flavel, "Pneumatologia," *WJE* 3:281.

25. Flavel, "Pneumatologia," *WJE* 2:585.

26. Flavel, "Pneumatologia," *WJE* 2:521.

27. Flavel, "Pneumatologia," *WJE* 3:130.

28. Flavel, "Pneumatologia," *WJE* 2:539–40.

29. Flavel, "Pneumatologia," *WJE* 2:476.

30. Flavel, "Pneumatologia," *WJE* 2:572.



## Wisdom from Historic Sources

While Flavel was a preacher of God's Word and sought to instill a high level of knowledge of Scripture in his hearers, he did not avoid other sources. In line with Augustinian tradition, he recognized wisdom from a broad range of historic sources.<sup>31</sup> This was not for the appearance of worldly wisdom but reveals searching for truth in all ways that would press home the importance of the soul.

Flavel's use of other sources from history may be surprising, considering that early in the treatise he wrote that the account of Moses in Genesis "is full of sense, reason, congruity, and clearness; and such as renders all the essays of all the Heathen philosophers to be vain, inevident, self-repugnant, and inexplicable theories."<sup>32</sup> Further, in the preface to the treatise, he wrote that "the helps philosophy affords in some parts of this discourse are too great to be despised, and too small to be admired. I confess I read the definitions of the soul given by the ancient philosophers with a compassionate smile.... One word of God gives me more light than a thousand such laborious trifles."<sup>33</sup> And yet, "Pneumatologia" reveals Flavel readily used other sources, including poets, philosophers, historians, and theologians.

Flavel used poetry as a means to understanding. Early in the Epistle Dedicatory to "Pneumatologia," Flavel quoted the Roman poet Juvenal, "know thyself, as an oracle descending from heaven."<sup>34</sup> This was not a one-time display of broader knowledge, or artistic appeal, but part of Flavel's desire for every means in the humble search for the truth. Later, Flavel used the Greek poet Homer as an illustration, calling him an "incomparable poet" of worth and excellency.<sup>35</sup> But it was not just historic poets who were quoted. Flavel referenced John Davies, an English poet and politician, who was "the learned author of that small, but excellent" poem, which was "true and ingenious."<sup>36</sup>

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31. See Augustine, *On Christian Doctrine*, 2.40, trans. D. W. Robertson, Jr. (Upper Saddle River, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1997).

32. Flavel, "Pneumatologia," *WJE*, 2:489.

33. Flavel, "Pneumatologia," *WJE*, 2:485.

34. Juvenal, *Satires*, XI, line 39. The edition used for reference here was Charles Badham, ed., *The Satires of Juvenal* (London: A. J. Walpy, 1814).

35. Flavel, "Pneumatologia," *WJE*, 3:162.

36. Flavel, "Pneumatologia," *WJE*, 2:505. Flavel quotes five stanzas of John Davies's poem *Nosce Teipsum*. In English anthologies, it has been titled "The Intellectual Powers of the Soul."

More common than poets were the philosophers. Flavel referenced numerous philosophers for illustration. He pointed out various philosophers' definitions of the soul: "Thales calls it a nature without repose; Asclepiades, an exercitation of sense! Hesiod, a thing composed of earth and water: Parmenides, a thing composed of earth and fire: Galen saith it is heat."<sup>37</sup> He used the Roman philosopher Pliny's account of mermaids as an illustration of a Proverbs 9:17 warning that "that which tickles the fancy stabs the soul."<sup>38</sup>

Flavel was not against using philosophy or philosophers for affirmation. He followed their distinctions of the understanding, noting that philosophers "rightly called it" the leading faculty.<sup>39</sup> However, he was not afraid to acknowledge that "both scripture and philosophy consent in this, that the soul is the chief, most noble, and principal part of man."<sup>40</sup> The ancient Greek physician Hippocrates was quoted regarding a definition of soul,<sup>41</sup> and then later is used to "decide this matter" of the soul's incorruptibility.<sup>42</sup> Aristotle, the ancient Greek philosopher, is cited regarding a definition of soul,<sup>43</sup> the habits of sin,<sup>44</sup> and the terribleness of death.<sup>45</sup> Flavel also used the Roman historian Suetonius's account of Caesar's impending death as evidence of premonitions of death.<sup>46</sup>

Within "Pneumatologia" Flavel seemed to have considerable awareness, and affinity, with Seneca, the Roman Stoic philosopher.<sup>47</sup> That does not mean Flavel was blind to the renowned moralist's weaknesses.<sup>48</sup> However, Flavel went as far as to say, "there is a *real truth* in that strange expression of Seneca."<sup>49</sup> In another place, "It was a *great saying* of an Heathen, I am greater, and born to greater things, 'than that I should be a slave to my body.'"<sup>50</sup>

37. Flavel, "Pneumatologia," *WJE*, 2:485.

38. Flavel, "Pneumatologia," *WJE*, 3:196.

39. Flavel, "Pneumatologia," *WJE*, 2:503.

40. Flavel, "Pneumatologia," *WJE*, 2:496.

41. Flavel, "Pneumatologia," *WJE*, 2:485.

42. Flavel, "Pneumatologia," *WJE*, 2:561.

43. Flavel, "Pneumatologia," *WJE*, 2:485.

44. Flavel, "Pneumatologia," *WJE*, 3:193.

45. Flavel, "Pneumatologia," *WJE*, 3:140.

46. Flavel, "Pneumatologia," *WJE*, 3:68.

47. This is not just true within "Pneumatologia." There are 40 references to Seneca in Flavel's work, and only 10 are within the treatise under consideration.

48. Flavel, "Pneumatologia," *WJE*, 2:448.

49. Flavel, "Pneumatologia," *WJE*, 2:603; emphasis added.

50. Flavel, "Pneumatologia," *WJE*, 2:536; emphasis added.

In yet another Seneca was noted as "the wise Heathen."<sup>51</sup> The greatness of sinful habits was also recognized by Seneca, and appreciated by Flavel.<sup>52</sup>

More particularly, Flavel suggested the power of truths as expressed by Seneca should convict Christians: "It is admirable, and very convictive of most Christians, what we read in a Heathen. I confess (saith Seneca) there is a love to the body implanted in us all; we have the tutelage and charge of it; we may be kind and indulgent to it, but must not serve it; but he that serves it, is a servant to many cares, fears, and passions."<sup>53</sup> In another passage he quoted Seneca describing the foolishness of those who live unbridled lives, concluding, "O what a shame is it to hear Heathenism out-brave Christianity!"<sup>54</sup>

But it was not just Greek and Roman sources Flavel appreciated. He also looked to a long line of various Christian theologians, reaching back to the early church. The early bishop of Carthage, Cyprian, was noted,<sup>55</sup> as were Tertullian<sup>56</sup> and Athanasius.<sup>57</sup> Chrysostom, an influential archbishop in Constantinople, was recognized for able observations,<sup>58</sup> and valuable quotes.<sup>59</sup> Flavel also referred to, and quoted from, Salvian, an early Christian writer and teacher of rhetoric from Gaul.<sup>60</sup>

Augustine was another favorite of Flavel.<sup>61</sup> One expression of Augustine was described as rational, scriptural, and justifiable.<sup>62</sup> Flavel used Augustine for illustrations,<sup>63</sup> to support his own conclusions,<sup>64</sup> as well as

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51. Flavel, "Pneumatologia," *WJF* 3:194.

52. Flavel, "Pneumatologia," *WJF* 3:193.

53. Flavel, "Pneumatologia," *WJF* 2:583–84.

54. Flavel, "Pneumatologia," *WJF* 3:196.

55. Flavel, "Pneumatologia," *WJF* 3:69; 3:211. Cyprian is noted 9 times in the entire *WJF*.

56. Flavel, "Pneumatologia," *WJF* 2:495. Tertullian is noted 32 times in the entire *WJF*.

57. Flavel, "Pneumatologia," *WJF* 2:488. Athanasius is noted 15 times in the entire *WJF*.

58. Flavel, "Pneumatologia," *WJF* 2:570, 3:180.

59. Flavel, "Pneumatologia," *WJF* 3:195. Chrysostom is noted 28 times in the entire *WJF*.

60. Flavel, "Pneumatologia," *WJF* 3:150, 3:174; 3:211. Salvian is noted 11 times in the entire *WJF*.

61. Though there are fewer references to Augustine than to Seneca within the entire *WJF*, as well as within this treatise.

62. Flavel, "Pneumatologia," *WJF* 2:493.

63. Flavel, "Pneumatologia," *WJF* 2:595; 3:27; 3:78; 3:188.

64. Flavel, "Pneumatologia," *WJF* 3:24; 3:81.

for presenting conjecture regarding why departed souls attain knowledge with more ease than when they had bodies.<sup>65</sup>

Flavel also pointed to Catholic theologians. The contemplative Bernard is referred to six times in the treatise.<sup>66</sup> Flavel also drew on Thomas Aquinas twice in this treatise, once affirming what Aquinas said as truth, and another time using Aquinas for illustration.<sup>67</sup>

Flavel also used a broader range of Protestant sources. Wolfgang Musculus, a German Reformed theologian, is referenced positively as having excellent words.<sup>68</sup> John Knox, the Scottish reformer, is used for a confirming illustration.<sup>69</sup> Jerome Zanchius, an Italian Protestant educator, was appreciated as learned—even as he cited Cicero.<sup>70</sup> William Fenner, a fellow English Puritan, was also referenced in “Pneumatologia.”<sup>71</sup> John Sterne, an Irish physician and ecclesiastical writer, was used as support for some of Flavel’s concerns.<sup>72</sup> Interestingly, while he referenced Calvin forty-four times throughout the rest of his works, Calvin received no explicit reference in this work. Similarly, William Ames received one footnote in the treatise, while referenced thirty times throughout the rest of Flavel’s works.

In all of this, Flavel seemed to follow the thought of Joseph Justus Scaliger, a French Calvinist who appreciated and expanded classical history, referencing Scaliger at least three times in “Pneumatologia.”<sup>73</sup> They both saw philosophers can agree with Scripture.<sup>74</sup>

The value of retrieving more use of other sources does not lie in mere imitation or quotation. Flavel was still discerning about his sources. He realized some truths were stifled and suppressed by atheists, while others were accepted and abused by the sensualists.<sup>75</sup> His references to Aristotle were not all positive: “How have the schools of Epicurus, and Aristotle, the Cartesians, and other sects of philosophers abused and troubled the world with a kind of philosophical enthusiasm, and a great many ridiculous

65. Flavel, “Pneumatologia,” *WJE* 3:46; 3:130.

66. Flavel, “Pneumatologia,” *WJE* 2:475; 2:505; 3:51 (twice); 3:173; 3:211.

67. Flavel, “Pneumatologia,” *WJE* 2:493; 2:572. Aquinas is referenced at least 5 other times in the *WJE*.

68. Flavel, “Pneumatologia,” *WJE* 2:539.

69. Flavel, “Pneumatologia,” *WJE* 3:67.

70. Flavel, “Pneumatologia,” *WJE* 2:564.

71. Flavel, “Pneumatologia,” *WJE* 2:510.

72. Flavel, “Pneumatologia,” *WJE* 3:69; 3:73; 3:75.

73. Flavel, “Pneumatologia,” *WJE* 2:478; 3:44; 3:161.

74. Flavel, “Pneumatologia,” *WJE* 2:497.

75. Flavel, “Pneumatologia,” *WJE* 2:482.

fancies about the original of the soul of man!"<sup>76</sup> Similarly, Flavel pointed out errors from Philo, Plutarch,<sup>77</sup> as well as Plato and Origen.<sup>78</sup> He recognized that he avoided more modern philosophers since they clouded the issue with controversies, and obscure scholastic terms.<sup>79</sup> He quoted Thomas Manton's evaluation of Pelagius.<sup>80</sup>

In this, it should be clear that the means Flavel used for promoting understanding went beyond Scripture to wisdom from other sources.

### **Reasoning from Experience**

Flavel also promoted personal reasoning and reflection on experience as a means towards understanding. While truth about souls may seem invisible and eternal and therefore distant from the human mind, Flavel found it possible to be heavenly minded through the natural abilities of the mind, as well as the gracious principles of the renewed mind.<sup>81</sup> The soul has abilities and powers, sensitive of all natural and spiritual light, which pursues truth: "it pursues eagerly after it, and even spends itself and the body too in the chase and prosecution of truth; when it lies deep, as a subterranean treasure, the mind sends out innumerable thoughts, reinforcing each other in thick successions, to dig for, and compass that invaluable treasure."<sup>82</sup> While Flavel expected a degree of universal reasoning, he appealed for his readers to think carefully, using his own thought process as a personal example.

Flavel did expect a universal experience of reflection from his audiences. Experience and reason were to be every man's careful consideration.<sup>83</sup> The relationship between body and soul "is plain and sensible to any man."<sup>84</sup> The fact that all people seem to be able to reflect on the soul displayed a

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76. Flavel, "Pneumatologia," *WJE* 2:488.

77. Flavel, "Pneumatologia," *WJE* 2:501.

78. Flavel, "Pneumatologia," *WJE* 2:514.

79. Flavel, "Pneumatologia," *WJE* 2:486.

80. Flavel, "Pneumatologia," *WJE* 2:506–507.

81. Flavel, "Pneumatologia," *WJE* 3:102.

82. Flavel, "Pneumatologia," *WJE* 3:156. In this Flavel seems to parallel or reflect ideas of Peter Martyr Vermigli, who described philosophy as "a capacity given by God to human minds, developed through effort and exercise, by which all existing things are perceived as surely and logically as possible, to enable us to attain happiness" in "Philosophy and Theology," in *Philosophical Works: On the Relation of Philosophy to Theology*, Volume 4 of The Peter Martyr Library, trans. and ed. Joseph C. McLelland (Kirksville, Missouri: Sixteenth Century Journal Publications, 1996), 7.

83. Flavel, "Pneumatologia," *WJE* 2:571.

84. Flavel, "Pneumatologia," *WJE* 2:592.

universality that was important: "For if it were not a truth agreeable to the light of nature, and so easily received by all men upon the proposal of it, it were impossible that all the nations in the world should embrace it so readily, and hold it so tenaciously as they do."<sup>85</sup> In other words, it is not just the spread of a tradition: the soul itself amounts to evidence of the reality and existence of invisible things:

For as the natural senses and their organs prove that there are colours, sounds, savours, and juices; as well as, or rather because there are eyes, ears, &c. naturally fitted to close with; and receive them; so it is here, if the soul naturally looks beyond the line of time, to things eternal, and cannot bound and confine its thoughts and expectations within the too narrow limits of present things, surely there is a such a future state, as well as souls made apprehensive of it, and propense to close with the discoveries thereof.<sup>86</sup>

Other common experiences and desires, such as justice, also pointed to the immortality of the soul.<sup>87</sup>

And yet not everyone who thinks, properly understands the value of the soul, or the search for truth. Personal reflection on the soul does not guarantee appropriate conclusions. Flavel recognized there were those who did not receive the full blessing of the gift: "For its self-reflecting and considering power, it seems in many to be a power received in vain. It is with most souls as it is with the eye, which sees not itself, though it sees all other objects."<sup>88</sup> There are many who have groundlessly imagined no ideas, or only wrong ideas, about souls.<sup>89</sup> There are others whose reflections are limited by their own bodies: "The experience of the whole world shews us how the apprehensions, judgments, wit, and memory of old men fail, even to that degree that they become children again in respect of the abilities of their minds."<sup>90</sup> The age of debauchery, and those who chase such expressions, reveals some people "have lost the sense of sin, the restraints of shame and fear, and then what is left to check them in their course?"<sup>91</sup> In other words, general humanity is not able to provide all moral solutions.<sup>92</sup>

85. Flavel, "Pneumatologia," *WJE*, 2:565.

86. Flavel, "Pneumatologia," *WJE*, 2:537–38.

87. Flavel, "Pneumatologia," *WJE*, 2:577.

88. Flavel, "Pneumatologia," *WJE*, 2:482.

89. Flavel, "Pneumatologia," *WJE*, 3:15; 2:557.

90. Flavel, "Pneumatologia," *WJE*, 2:561.

91. Flavel, "Pneumatologia," *WJE*, 3:208.

92. Flavel, "Pneumatologia," *WJE*, 3:218.

While Flavel even allowed for significant purposes in dreams,<sup>93</sup> he did not permit personal experience as subjective license. Personal experience was a gift from God. The conscience's ability to reflect, as well as its passions and affections, are placed by divine Wisdom.<sup>94</sup> Among all the gifts of the Creator upon the soul, "the ability of reflection and self-intuition, are peculiar, invaluable, and heavenly gifts."<sup>95</sup> Elsewhere, Flavel pointed out apprehensions and desires as clues.<sup>96</sup> Even fear should uncover truths.<sup>97</sup> Indeed, human understanding allows a person to apprehend and judge all intelligible things, distinguishing truth from error and falsehood, and guiding into proper musing, or inward speaking, of the mind.<sup>98</sup> The gift of experience should seal on hearts a confidence of communion with God.<sup>99</sup> And it was not that all those experiences had to be positive: "You may plainly see the wisdom of God in all the afflictions and burdens he lays upon his people in this world, and find that all is but enough to wean their souls from their bodies, and make them willing to part with them."<sup>100</sup> And so what Flavel said about the proximity of regenerate souls to eternity, could apply to the experiences of all regenerate souls: "Ponder this with pleasure."<sup>101</sup>

Flavel admitted there was a mysterious element to experience, particularly of the soul. "It is a most astonishing mystery to see heaven and earth married together in one person."<sup>102</sup> And yet mystery was not the answer to everything either: "We must remain ignorant of some things about our souls, till we come into the condition of just men made perfect. Mean time, I think it much more our concernment to study how we may get sin out of our souls, than to puzzle our brains to find out how it came into them."<sup>103</sup>

Consequently, Flavel desired others to use their own reasoning from experience properly. Those experiences could be hypothetical and logical. In dealing with the possible independence of the soul from the body, Flavel points to Scriptures, but then asks a hypothetical reflection:

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93. Flavel, "Pneumatologia," *WJE* 3:70.

94. Flavel, "Pneumatologia," *WJE* 3:158.

95. Flavel, "Pneumatologia," *WJE* 2:482.

96. Flavel, "Pneumatologia," *WJE* 2:569.

97. Flavel, "Pneumatologia," *WJE* 2:591.

98. Flavel, "Pneumatologia," *WJE* 2:503.

99. Flavel, "Pneumatologia," *WJE* 3:48.

100. Flavel, "Pneumatologia," *WJE* 2:599.

101. Flavel, "Pneumatologia," *WJE* 2:547.

102. Flavel, "Pneumatologia," *WJE* 2:493.

103. Flavel, "Pneumatologia," *WJE* 2:520.

Though in its ordinary actions in this life, it doth use the body as its tool or instrument in working, doth it thence follow that it can neither subsist or act separate from them in the other world? Whilst a man is on horseback in his journey, he useth the help and service of his horse, and is moved according to the motion of his horse; but doth it thence follow, he cannot stand nor walk alone, when dismounted at his journey's end? We know angels both live and act, without the ministry of bodies, and our souls are spiritual substances as well as they.<sup>104</sup>

Their experience could be personal. People were to look within themselves and consider their own minds and wills: they were to look to their hearts, think, sit down and count the cost, still live, choosing to be sincere and plain-hearted.<sup>105</sup> In the Epistle Dedicatory to "Pneumatologia," he appealed: "If you will but allow yourselves to think close to the matter before you, I doubt not but you may find somewhat in it apt both to inform your minds and quicken your affections.... [I hope you] can and do find time to sit alone, and bethink yourselves of a much more important business."<sup>106</sup> If people would reflect on souls properly, they would learn things about themselves.<sup>107</sup> In pastorally aiming at this, Flavel addressed souls in a personal way:

What say you, Souls? Will you at last open the door to Jesus Christ, or will you still exclude him? If you will open to him, he will not come empty-handed.... But, if you will not open to him, than I call heaven and earth to witness against you this day, that you have once barred the doors of your soul against him, whose pleasure and power gave them their very beings; against him who is their sovereign Lord, and rightful Owner. And consequently this act of yours must stop your mouths, and deprive you of all pleas and apologies.<sup>108</sup>

These humble reflections on experience needed to be proper. They were to bring about a degree of honesty and realism regarding life: "Many ships are gone down to the bottom, for all the brave names of the *Success*, the *Prosperous*, the *Happy Return*, and so will you. There is a knowing of ourselves

104. Flavel, "Pneumatologia," *WJF*, 2:578.

105. Flavel, "Pneumatologia," *WJF*, 2:598–99. See also Flavel, "Pneumatologia," *WJF*, 3:15; 3:18.

106. Flavel, "Pneumatologia," *WJF*, 2:478.

107. Flavel, "Pneumatologia," *WJF*, 3:34.

108. Flavel, "Pneumatologia," *WJF*, 2:541.



by taste and real experience, Heb. x. 34, which doth a soul more service in a suffering hour, than all the splendid names and titles in the world."<sup>109</sup>

And yet, even while appealing for personal reflection, Flavel remained discriminating regarding the thoughts of the unregenerate. It is not that Flavel thought the unrighteous were thoughtless: they had just not thought through to the end of their actions: "Ponder it, thou poor Christless and unsanctified soul. Get thee out of the noise and clamour of this world, which make such a continual din in thine ears, and consider how thou hangest over the mouth of hell itself, by the feeble thread which is spun every moment out of thy nostrils; as soon as that gives way, thou art gone for ever. What shift do you make to quiet your fears, and eat, and drink, and labour with any pleasure?"<sup>110</sup>

To help others to think and reflect, Flavel provided examples of his own thought process. His personal experience could also be a means toward helping others understand truth. Regarding the origin of the soul, he wrote, "to me it is clear, that the soul receives not its beginning by traduction or generation.... Nor is it imaginable how a soul should be produced out of matter.... As it is most reasonable, so it is most scriptural."<sup>111</sup> Regarding the function of the soul, he realized, "I can neither see, hear, nor feel it, but I both see, hear, and feel by it.... I find my soul to be a vital, as well as a spiritual substance."<sup>112</sup> Regarding the value and glory of the soul, he noted his own contemplations: "my dim eyes see but little of its excellency... I cannot conceive of it, but by it... I find my soul to be the most substantial and noble part of me; it is not my body, but my soul which makes me a man. And if this depart, all the rest of me is but a dead log, a lump of inanimate clay."<sup>113</sup> Flavel himself felt the guilt of forgetting the value of the soul: "I studied to know many other things, but I knew not myself."<sup>114</sup>

One reason Flavel saw so much potential in human experience, is because he saw people as "prospecting" creatures. What they worked at, and

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109. Flavel, "Pneumatologia," *WJE*, 2:599.

110. Flavel, "Pneumatologia," *WJE*, 2:548. This illustration of hanging over hell by a thread may be what inspired Jonathan Edwards in his later, more famous sermon, "Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God." This illustration appears numerous times in Flavel, whom Edwards read.

111. Flavel, "Pneumatologia," *WJE*, 2:515.

112. Flavel, "Pneumatologia," *WJE*, 2:523.

113. Flavel, "Pneumatologia," *WJE*, 2:522. See also Flavel, "Pneumatologia," *WJE*, 3:23.

114. Flavel, "Pneumatologia," *WJE*, 2:483.

loved, would bring them pleasure.<sup>115</sup> That did not mean they should expect any spiritual blessing apart from the Holy Spirit.<sup>116</sup> The truth is not all such prospecting was in the right direction. Many people only delve into the present: “We keep ourselves in such a continual hurry and crowd of cares, thoughts, and employments about the concerns of the body, that we can find little time to be alone, communing with our own hearts about our great concernments in eternity.”<sup>117</sup> But in an Augustinian sense, people’s restlessness and uncenteredness was to propel spiritual reflection: “I find that I am in a continual motion towards my everlasting abode, and the experience of my time; and many infirmities tell me that I am not far from it: by all which I am strongly prompted to look forward, and acquaint myself as much as I can, with my next place and employment. I look with a greedy and inquisitive eye that way. Yet would I not be guilty of an unwarrantable curiosity in searching into revealed things.”<sup>118</sup>

And with such a conviction of prospecting humanity, Flavel addressed all who might hear or read: “Let me persuade every soul of you to express your love to the body, by labouring to get union with Jesus Christ, and thereby to prevent the utter ruin of both to all eternity. Souls, if you love yourselves, or the bodies you dwell in, shew it by your preventing care in season, lest they be cast away forever.”<sup>119</sup> Their understanding of souls should be influenced by their own reflection on their own soul.

## Conclusion

Flavel’s content has much to teach us, but so does his method. His variety of sources in the pursuit of knowledge is not singular and reflects a breadth that is not entirely novel within the Puritans.<sup>120</sup> Regardless, he did not denigrate Scripture, or the authority of revelation, as Scripture itself includes common knowledge, reasoning, and belief. Indeed, even in “Pneumatologia,” Flavel was not working against the Reformational principle of *sola Scriptura*. Rather, he was consistent with a broader tradition that did

115. Flavel, “Pneumatologia,” *WJF*, 3:43.

116. Flavel, “Pneumatologia,” *WJF*, 2:478.

117. Flavel, “Pneumatologia,” *WJF*, 3:16.

118. Flavel, “Pneumatologia,” *WJF*, 2:485.

119. Flavel, “Pneumatologia,” *WJF*, 2:608.

120. Richard Muller recently discussed something similar in a colloquium regarding John Owen. His speech can be viewed at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p7xedAm7FnU>.

not eliminate all other sources but considered Scripture the final authority over other sources.<sup>121</sup>

Recognizing Flavel's method has implications for Christian ministry today. In general, the Puritans should not be guarded as a legacy because they used Scripture instead of other sources; they used Scripture as the authority for all the content and methods of their understanding. The value of the Puritan legacy also lies in their epistemology; their teachings cannot be understood apart from their foundational commitments to Scripture and epistemology. Within this, it must be recognized that Flavel used a variety of sources to appeal at a popular level. His own learning was to serve the people.

This has further implications for those preparing, and listening to, sermons. The authoritative statements in a sermon are not developed from any variety of sources. The Scriptures are explicated. But if following the Puritan example of John Flavel, for matters of clarification and support, in order to promote and defend the truth, a variety of sources may be used.

The goal in such a search for strongly supported truth, is and remains proper Christian affections prior to death. As Flavel himself said, "If you will but allow yourselves to think close to the matter before you, I doubt not but you may find somewhat in it apt both to inform your minds *and quicken your affections*."<sup>122</sup> And all means were valid when proper Christian response would result: "Could I think of any other means or motives to secure your souls from danger, I would surely use them: could I reach your hearts effectually, I would deeply impress this great concern upon them: But I can neither do God's part of the work, nor yours; it is some ease to me, I have in sincerity, (though with much imperfection and feebleness) done part of my own. The Lord prosper it by the blessing of his Spirit in the hearts of them that read it."<sup>123</sup>

The goal of such Christian affections is most helpful because of its eternal significance. Then whether making social commentary or providing counsel, teaching a class or writing a conference speech, allowing various

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121. Consider Daniël J. Maritz, "By Scripture and plain reason: A historical retrieval of the relationship between theology and philosophy to better engage with present-day secularism," in *In die Skriflig* 57, no. 1 (2023):a2908. Retrieved <https://doi.org/10.4102/ids.v57i1.2908>; Kevin J. Vanhoozer, *Biblical Authority After Babel: Retrieving the Solas in the Spirit of Mere Protestant Christianity* (Grand Rapids: Brazos Press, 2016), 111. See also the related concept in Belgic Confession Article 2.

122. Flavel, "Pneumatologia," *WJF*, 2:478.

123. Flavel, "Pneumatologia," *WJF*, 3:238.

means to increase understanding may be helpful in preparing people for eternal realities. Or, as Flavel put it, “the wisdom of a Christian is eminently discovered in saving and improving *all* opportunities in this world, for that world which is to come.”<sup>124</sup>

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124. Flavel, “Pneumatologia,” *WJF*, 3:226. Emphasis added.

## Book Reviews

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Boss, Rob. *Thunder God, Wonder God: Exploring the Emblematic Vision of Jonathan Edwards*. Dallas: JESociety Press, 2023.

The present volume is Boss's expanded edition of his 2015 work, *God-Haunted World: The Elemental Theology of Jonathan Edwards*.<sup>1</sup> In *Thunder God, Wonder God*, Boss provides readers with an up-to-date treatment of Jonathan Edwards's typological interpretation of nature, as well as the latest scholarly work on this aspect of Edwards's thinking. Boss has also added an entirely new section in "Part Two." This section categorizes the notebook of Edwards's "Images of Divine Things" systematically—in a way that Edwards himself did not—and places them alongside other similar emblem works from his contemporaries. This, Boss believes, gives the reader "a deeper understanding of Edwards' emblematic world and an opportunity to compare his thought to other emblem writers" (vii).

*Thunder God, Wonder God* provides an important scholarly contribution to the field by showing how this often-mysterious aspect of Edwards's oeuvre was "substantially inspired by Scripture," and was part of the mainstream of the "emblem book genre" from the Renaissance era forward.<sup>2</sup> In addition, Boss takes the scholarly conversation on Edwards's

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1. Boss, *God-Haunted World: The Elemental Theology of Jonathan Edwards* (Dallas: JESociety Press, 2015).

2. An emblem book, Boss notes, is a "collection of emblems produced in book form for devotional, political, or entertainment purposes" that unfolds the "associations and significances [between] the created order and the spiritual realm" through "visual devotional aids with meditative verse." The emblem itself is a "type of 'combined art' in which a verbal phrase or slogan is coupled with a visual image, followed by a subscription." Such works, Boss notes, spring forth from a "world view [that] considers nature to be rich in moral and spiritual truths that are expressed symbolically or hieroglyphically." Creation, therefore, is a place of

natural typology a step further by providing a “systematic scriptural study” of Edwards’s “Images of Divine Things.” He does this through an “in-depth analysis of [its] precise doctrinal content.” Boss’s research concentrates on the “history, analysis, and hermeneutics of Edwards’s ‘Images of Divine Things’” (16).<sup>3</sup> The central thesis of *Thunder God, Wonder God* is that “Edwards rehabilitated and refined the Renaissance emblematic view of the world through the emblem book genre in order to reinscripturate creation, and that the central text of his program of reinscription is his emblem book ‘Images of Divine Things’” (33).<sup>4</sup>

To accomplish this task, Boss separates his work into two parts: “Edwards’s Emblematic Vision” (Part One), and “Language and Lessons of Nature” (Part Two). Part One is taken up with the book’s weightier material that describes the development of this imagistic world view from its origins in medieval symbolism through the Renaissance to its demise during the Enlightenment. Part One situates Edwards and his “Images” notebook within this story over six chapters.

The first chapter introduces the reader to Boss’s argument and provides an introductory survey of the book’s content. The second chapter provides context for Edwards and his typological worldview by tracing the rise and decline of this worldview from the Renaissance through the Protestant Reformation and into the early modern period. Boss also examines the evolution of the emblem book genre. The third chapter treats the symbolic worldview of several early evangelicals, in addition to their employment of the emblem book. Boss discusses Joseph Hall, Ralph Austen, John Bunyan, Benjamin Keach, and Cotton Mather. He argues that their imagistic

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“signs, symbols, and emblems that serve as windows to spiritual reality.” God designed these worldly inscriptions for humans to interpret and enjoy (x, 4, 13, 21, 29).

3. One can find Edwards’s “Images of Divine Things” in his *Typological Writings*, vol. 11 of *The Works of Jonathan Edwards*, ed. Wallace Anderson, Mason Lowance, and David Waters (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1993): 50–142. This private notebook is comprised of 212 entries in which Edwards mused over the religious and moral messages that he believed God wrote into the natural world. Boss argues that Edwards’s secret, but “true design” of this notebook was to serve as the seedbed for a “systematic exposition and defense of his emblematic world view, which had as its central thesis that God designed all creation to ‘represent spiritual things’” (28).

4. By “reinscription” Boss means to “express Edwards’s recovery and reassignment of scriptural relevance to the particulars of the natural world that had been *de-inscribed* during the Enlightenment. Edwards felt that the created order possessed an inherent linguistic element; just as the Bible is an inscripturated record of God’s spoken revelation, so is the world that was spoken into being” (17).

theology has the “same goal and scope” as Edwards’s “Images” notebook—differing only in their comprehensiveness and style (32). The fourth chapter then documents the similarities and differences between Edwards’s own “Images” notebook and the similar writing of these other early evangelicals. Boss does so with an eye toward Edwards’s intertwining of Scripture and Christian doctrine to interpret nature in concert with Scripture. In the fifth chapter, Boss reconfigures and simplifies Edwards’s “Images” notebook into theological groups to “illustrate the doctrinal precision and scope of his vision and ambition” to “reinscripturate the world” (33). Boss contends that while Edwards did pursue the Renaissance’s quest “for meaning through discovering the poetic aspects of the world,” his project was far more “doctrinally comprehensive” and operated on a “much larger scale” than his evangelical contemporaries, this being the case even as he was “doing the same thing in principle” (176). The sixth chapter draws Boss’s work to a close with a summary of his argument that Edwards’s “Images” notebook is a refined and robust take on the Renaissance emblem book genre. Boss underscores that Edwards’s secret project was unique in his thoroughly biblical and “reinscripturated” interpretation of how “the Book of Nature is replete with analogies and correspondences that echo and illustrate the Book of Scripture” which itself interpretively shapes the former (177). But, with that in mind, Boss underscores that Edwards’s project is astonishingly similar to “Hall, Austen, Bunyan, and Keach’s emblematic work” (179). In Part Two, Boss provides a categorical reconfiguration of Edwards’s reflections in his “Images” notebook under various subject headings. In this reconfiguration, the reader finds over 180 different entries. Examples range from objects like “bowels” to “furnaces” and from “tears” to “winter,” or actions like “ascending a hill” or “kindling a fire in the morning.” With each entry, Boss provides a modernized paraphrase of Edwards’s musings from his “Images” notebook. And, when possible, Boss also provides one, or more, similar meditations from another writer of the early modern era. Boss does this that the reader might appreciate Edwards’s private reflections in their proper context.

Boss’s *Thunder God, Wonder God* is a splendid volume and makes an important contribution to Edwards studies in two respects. First, Boss’s volume overwhelmingly shows that Edwards’s typological worldview as embodied in his “Images” notebook was not “innovative” (35). Going back to Perry Miller’s introductory essay and publication of the “Images” notebook in 1948, Miller contended, along with several other scholars in the twentieth century, that Edwards’s nature typology was “original” and

untraditional—as compared to his biblical typology which was unoriginal and “quite traditional.” Miller argued, as did others following his lead, that Edwards led a kind of “typological revival in America” through “his effort to extend [typology] into nature and history,” an effort which, up until that time, had not been attempted or contemplated.<sup>5</sup> Boss’s volume, however, puts to rest this notion that Edwards’s typological thinking evidenced in his “Images” notebook was without any historical or theological precedent. Boss amply shows that Edwards’s thinking is squarely in line with the emblem book tradition dating back to the Renaissance. Boss concludes that “the notion that Edwards is wholly novel is mitigated by the fact that Hall, Austen, Bunyan, and Keach all expanded typology beyond Scripture into the natural world (106).<sup>6</sup>

Boss’s *Thunder God, Wonder God* is also an important scholarly contribution given his argument that Scripture thoroughly informed and supported Edwards’s “reinscripturation” of nature. As Boss shows throughout his volume, “Edwards’ emblematic world view is based on scriptural precedent and is subject to its authority... Edwards adhered to the authority

5. Miller, “Introduction,” in *Images or Shadows of Divine Things*, ed. Perry Miller (Yale University Press, 1948), 1–41, 6, 27. For other authors who describe Edwards’s natural typology as “original,” see Mason Lowance, “‘Images or Shadows of Divine Things’ in the Thought of Jonathan Edwards,” in *Typology and Early American Literature*, ed. Sacvan Bercovitch (University of Massachusetts Press, 1972): 209–44, 209–10; Wallace Anderson, “Editor’s Introduction,” in *Typological Writings*: 32–33; Thomas Davis, “The Traditions of Puritan Typology” (PhD diss., University of Missouri, 1968); Barbara Lewalski, *Protestant Poetics and the Seventeenth-Century Religious Lyric* (Princeton University Press, 1979); Sacvan Bercovitch, *The Puritan Origins of the American Self* (Yale University Press, 1975); Sang Lee, *The Philosophical Theology of Jonathan Edwards: Expanded Edition* (Princeton University Press, 2000); Ursula Brumm, *American Thought and Religious Typology*, trans. John Hooglund (Rutgers University Press, 1970), 86–108; Rowena Revis-Jones, “Edwards, Dickinson, and the Sacramentality of Nature,” *Studies in Puritan American Spirituality* 1 (Dec. 1990): 225–53; Conrad Cherry, *Nature and the Religious Imagination: From Edwards to Bushnell* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1980); Diana Butler, “God’s Visible Glory: The Beauty of Nature in the Thought of John Calvin and Jonathan Edwards,” *Westminster Theological Journal* 52 (1990): 13–26.

6. For other authors who argue, like Boss, that Edwards’s natural typology did not lack the kind of historical precedent that Miller claimed, see Margaret Batschelet, “Jonathan Edwards’ Use of Typology: A Historical and Theological Approach” (PhD diss., University of Washington, 1977): 89–90; Gerald McDermott, *Everyday Glory: The Revelation of God in all Reality* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2018), 1–16, 45–62; Avihu Zakai, “The Theological Origins of Jonathan Edwards’s Philosophy of Nature,” *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 60 (2009): 708–24; Thomas Holbrook, “The Elaborated Labyrinth: The American Habit of Typology” (PhD diss., University of Maryland, 1984), 3–4.



of Scripture throughout his vast typology of nature.” It is the Scriptures that supply Edwards with his “governing paradigm,” for “outside the interpretive authority of the Bible, nature has no clear voice” (126–127). Boss helps to put to rest the scholarly notion stretching back to Perry Miller that “Lockean empiricism” and “Newtonian physics” drove Edwards’s “reinterpretation” of nature—rather than the Holy Bible.<sup>7</sup> In the words of Vincent Tomas, Edwards’s “master was the Bible, not Locke.” For “the Bible directed his notions of typology.”<sup>8</sup> Boss’s *Thunder God, Wonder God* powerfully seals this sentiment.

Boss’s volume is an important work with which serious scholars of Edwards’s typology and exegesis cannot fail to interact. But beyond the typical Edwardsean specialist, *Thunder God, Wonder God* will also prove fruitful reading for those who are interested in how Edwards viewed nature as a “God-haunted” place, informed and assisted by his reading of Scripture. Discerning God’s revelation in nature is not only a lively conversation for Christian theologians, but an important theological topic that supports life in the local, Christian church. For this reason, Boss’s volume is a valuable resource for scholars, pastors, and students alike.

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7. Miller, “Introduction,” 23, 25, 28; see also his “The Rhetoric of Sensation,” in *Errand into the Wilderness*, ed. Perry Miller (New York: Harper and Row, 1956): 167–83, 180. One also sees this thinking in Mason Lowance, “Jonathan Edwards and the Platonists: Edwardsean Epistemology and the Influence of Malebranche and Norris,” *Studies in Puritan American Spirituality II* (Jan. 1992): 129–52; and Griffin Black’s “‘Spectator’ of Shadows: The Human Being in Jonathan Edwards’s ‘Images of Divine Things,’” *Jonathan Edwards Studies*, Vol. 8, no. 2 (2018): 82–95.

8. Vincent Tomas, “Edwards’ Master was the Bible, not Locke,” in *Edwards and the Enlightenment*, ed. John Opie (Lexington, Mass.: Heath Publishers, 1969), 36–38. For those who draw the same conclusions, see Cameron Schweitzer, “See Notes On’: The *Blank Bible’s* Contribution to Edwards’s *Images or Shadows of Divine Things*,” in *The Jonathan Edwards Miscellanies Companion: Volume 2*, ed. Robert Boss and Sarah Boss (Dallas: JESociety Press, 2021): 227–60; Stephen R. C. Nichols, *Jonathan Edwards’s Bible* (Eugene, Ore.: Pickwick Publications, 2013), 88–89; Brian Fehler, “Jonathan Edwards on Nature as a Language of God: Symbolic Typology as Rhetorical Presence,” in *Religion in the Age of Reason: A Transatlantic Study of the Long Eighteenth Century*, ed. Kathryn Duncan (New York: AMS Press, 2009): 181–94, 181, 190; Jennifer Leader, *Knowing, Seeing, Being: Jonathan Edwards, Emily Dickinson, Marianne Moore, and the American Typological Tradition* (University of Massachusetts Press, 2016), 23–24; Diana Butler, “God’s Visible Glory: The Beauty of Nature in the Thought of John Calvin and Jonathan Edwards,” *Westminster Theological Journal* 52 (1990): 13–26.

Richard A. Muller, *Providence, Freedom, and the Will in Early Modern Reformed Theology* (Grand Rapids: Reformation Heritage Books, 2002)

This volume contains ten essays exploring the theme of the interaction of God's foreknowledge and providence with human freedom through the works of Reformed theologians from the sixteenth to eighteenth centuries. This is primarily a work of historical theology, yet its value will not only be for the one who desires to study the theologians whose writings are discussed, but for any student, minister, or inquiring Christian who seeks to grapple with this complex area of theology.

The present collection represents twenty-five years of Muller's writing on this topic, thus establishing him as among the most significant current thinkers in this field.<sup>9</sup> Four of the essays have been previously published, although they have been edited afresh for this volume and their bibliographies have been updated. Students will be more or less familiar with Muller's explanation of the thinking of Reformed theologians of the era. Each chapter could be read alone as a significant contribution regarding its object of study, but the broadly chronological arrangement of the chapters means that Muller is able to trace the thread of Reformed doctrine through a process of development via restatements, refinements, and reformulations of the key concepts. Reading the work as a whole entails accepting repetition of the same themes in very similar terms. However, both the complexity of the matter (which means that repetition is frequently clarifying) and the sense of a narrative through the generations mitigate against this as a problem. There is also a thread of engagement with modern philosophical treatment of divine providence and the contingency of human acts, specifically regarding the debate between Muller and Paul Helm. This is both an historical debate in relationship to Jonathan Edwards (1703–1758) and a discussion of theological definitions. This volume does not set out Helm's developed philosophical positions or discuss the biblical evidence in order to reach a determination of doctrine, but Muller convincingly establishes his understanding of the history of Reformed teaching.

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9. See also Muller's *Divine Will and Human Choice: Freedom, Contingency, and Necessity in Early Modern Reformed Thought* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2017); *Grace and Freedom: William Perkins and the Early Modern Reformed Understanding of Free Choice and Divine Grace* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2020).

Key to Muller's methodology is his tenet that the categories of modern debate should not be imported into the past. Instead, theologians should be heard in their own words with due appreciation of the purpose of individual treatises and their context of debate and tradition. This means that his treatment in each chapter is detailed in the investigation of the works of each writer. Muller shows how they fit into the Reformed tradition with their own strengths and weaknesses, and how they arise from the longer tradition of Aristotelian logic and metaphysics, Augustinian theology, and Thomist expression of thought. Seeing scholasticism as method rather than a commitment to doctrinal content (77–78), Muller engages in detailed exposition of the technical terms of scholastic theology which were essential to the reasoning and conclusions of these Reformed thinkers. Close reading is required as one bears in mind the distinctions between different types of cause, different uses of the idea of necessity, qualifications of ways in which freedom can be understood, the distinction between *voluntas* ("will") and *arbitrium* ("choice"), and the abundance of Latin terminology are just some of the challenges for the reader. However, Muller guides with a steady hand and frequent reminders of the meanings of these terms. Each chapter concludes with a helpful section summarizing and restating points of significance.

The book begins with a helpful introduction which gives a foretaste of each chapter and how the theologian portrayed fits into the development of Reformed thought. Muller includes some general reflections on the difference between the debates in which the Reformed theologians of the early modern era were engaging with Roman Catholic and Arminian opponents from more modern debates about human free will (5–8). This introduces the terminology of determinism, compatibilism, occasionalism, and libertarianism, although these are not explicitly defined at this point. It is not until the final chapters with their more direct engagement with Paul Helm that definitions of modern determinism and libertarianism are given (248–49). Here, Muller concludes that even if by some broad definition the Reformed should be called compatibilists, "they remain compatibilists of a rather different sort than Edwards." Since some sprinkling of comments on this issue does occur in earlier chapters, it might have been helpful for these definitions to come earlier.

The overarching thesis of Muller's historical survey of the Reformed doctrine regarding providence and the freedom of the will is summarized as "the rise, development and decline of Reformed orthodoxy" (11). This begins with Peter Martyr Vermigli (1499–1562) whose distinctions

regarding freedom, fuller use of the faculty psychology and establishment of the terms of a causal network within which to understand the concurrence of human and divine willing which were a broadening discussion of the issues beyond Calvin. Theodore Beza (1519–1605) in the second chapter is also shown as developing a more detailed exposition of Calvin's doctrine of providence and moving forward from Vermigli by showing the wider cosmological implications.

Chapter 3 examines the teaching of Jacob Arminius (1560–1609), and here Muller is concerned to pinpoint the areas of debate between Arminius and his Reformed opponents. He then locates this in the area of soteriology and specifically God's foreknowledge rather than in definitions regarding the freedom of the will in libertarian/determinist terms (99–100). This chapter includes an enlightening discussion of the Molinist idea of a *scientia media* ("middle knowledge"), and the Reformed response to this in John Calvin (1509–1564), the confessions, William Perkins (1558–1602) and others.

In chapter 4 on Robert Rollock (c. 1555–1599), Muller shows how Rollock's focus fell more on the development of the faculty psychology to explain the senses in which the will acts freely and under necessity. A more detailed exposition of the will within the four states of human existence (before the fall, as fallen, as regenerate, and in glory) stands as one of Rollock's contributions to the development of Reformed thinking.

Lucas Trelcatius Jr. (1573–1607) is discussed in chapter 5 as a representative of the Leiden tradition and stood against Arminius's developments. Again, the tropes of a fully fledged exposition of faculty psychology in relation to the four states, albeit with some differences in the use of terminology, are seen in detail. Trelcatius made a significant contribution by developing the analysis of causality as a key to explaining divine and human interaction.

Chapter 6 examines the work of Thomas Goad (1576–1638), a member of the English delegation at the Synod of Dort, whose work was posthumously published by the Arminian John Goodwin (1594–1665) and found its way into eighteenth century collections of Arminian writings. While finding that Goad adopted something of a middle way between the Reformed and Remonstrant positions, Muller argues that he remained within the ambit of Reformed thought on concurrence and contingency. He places Goad's work as "a piece of irenic Reformed theology" (186) concerned about tendencies in some Reformed writers toward deterministic views.

Another English theologian, Stephen Charnock (1628–1680), is the subject of the next chapter. His *Treatise of Divine Providence* is in the form of homiletical exposition of theological topics, with a desire for practical

lessons as well as learned explanation. Still within the Reformed tradition, his use of distinctions regarding God's power and the possibility of things gives another formulation of divine concurrence. His welcome openness to recognizing an "element of mystery" (199) in this area of theology is a reminder that he had a more popular audience in mind.

The final three chapters each deal with the theology of Jonathan Edwards. Muller's analysis here shows how Edwards departed from (and perhaps misunderstood) some of the scholastic distinctions regarding necessity and causality, leading to a denial of real contingency. His philosophical heritage from Hobbes, Leibniz, and Malebranche resulted in a form of determinism and a radical turning away from the Reformed orthodox avowal of concurrence. Muller discusses the reception of Edwards in the nineteenth century and debates about Edwards's conformity to the Reformed confessions, the differences between Francis Turretin (1623–1687) and Edwards, and the specific divergences from the Reformed tradition in Edwards's definitions of necessity, contingency, and freedom.

This collection of essays is a work of remarkable scholarship which will undoubtedly advance studies of the individual theologians named and provide surveys of the literature for those who wish to delve deeper. It should also be read as an important contribution to ongoing theological debate about the interaction of providence and free will.

—Simon Hitchings  
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Beck, Andreas J. *Gisbertus Voetius (1589–1676) on God, Freedom and Contingency: An Early Modern Reformed Voice*. Brill's Series in Church History and Religious Culture, volume 84. Leiden: Boston: Brill, 2022.

Gisbertus Voetius (1589–1676), pastor, theologian, professor and rector at the University of Utrecht, and leading figure of the Dutch *Nadere Reformatie*, will be a name known to many in the English-speaking world. However, English speakers may be less familiar with Dutch scholarship which analyzes the particulars of his life and work. This magisterial work by Andreas Beck, professor of historical theology and director of the Institute of Post-Reformation Studies at the Evangelische Theologische Faculteit in Leuven, is the first English monograph dedicated to Voetius's theology. This edition is a translation by Albert Gootjes of a revised and updated version of his

PhD thesis, written at Utrecht University, published in German in Göttingen in 2007.

By way of introduction, Beck sets out such matters as the state of scholarship on Voetius, his own methodological principles, and a very helpful discussion of the university disputation system (21–23). He then divides the work into three parts. The first is an overview of Voetius's life, his place in the *Nadere Reformatie*, his major theological works, and an introduction to the major controversies in which he was involved (particularly those with Descartes (57–90)). Second, Beck gives, following a structure suggested by Voetius (151), an overview of his theological method. This includes discussion of natural and supernatural theology (what may be learned of God from nature and from Scripture (157–85)), the definition of theology as a practical science (186–93), and his view of communion with God as the ultimate good of human life (195–200).

The third part, the major study of this book, traces in detail Voetius's doctrine of God, moving from his existence and name through attributes such as his knowledge, will, right, justice, and power, to the relation of his decrees with human action. The volume contains as appendices two lists of the disputations in Voetius's *Selectae disputationes theologicae*. The first appendix lists the disputations in the order in which they were published in five volumes between 1648 and 1668. The second gives them in the chronological order of their original delivery. They are invaluable for further research into Voetius's theology.

Since Voetius did not write a systematic theology, Beck collates his views from a variety of published works. As Beck rightly states, this search for consistent and fully worked out theological statements "is not a question imposed on the material from the outside, for it runs like a red thread throughout Voetius's most important and comprehensive works" (1). Several of his works provide structured approaches to the questions which Beck examines. In particular, we can note the order of topics in the *Selectae disputationes*, his *Syllabus problematum theologorum* (first part published in 1643), which is an index of questions to stimulate his students' study with the barest indication of Voetius's view (as Beck calls it "the skeleton of a Reformed dogmatics" (120). Also, Beck includes many references to his *Catechisatie over den Heidelbergschen Catechismus* (1653).

The argumentation in parts two and three is supported by discussion of the scriptural, medieval, and contemporary sources upon which Voetius drew and extensive Latin citations in the footnotes. These at times occupy more of the pages of the main text. Voetius was "a scholastic theologian

*par excellence*" (108) and Beck details the logical and conceptual apparatus of distinctions in which he grounded his theology. Perhaps, in recognition of the density of sections of the text, Beck himself recommends (24) that the major conclusions of the monograph can be gleaned by consulting the summaries at the ends of some sections. The whole book could be read by consulting these summaries and the final chapter, "Synthesis and Relevance" (466–86), before immersing oneself in the detailed argument.

Many significant themes emerge in the course of the work which will be of interest to students of early modern theology. The major thrust of the book's structure moves toward the chapter on the relationship between divine and human action. Beck shows how Voetius stands firmly in the tradition of Reformed orthodoxy in what Beck calls a non-determinist (439) view of God's concurrent action with a free human will. This is grounded in Voetius's understanding of how God as a necessary being relates to a contingent world through the acts of his will. Beck describes the doctrine of the will of God as expounded by Voetius as "the pivotal point between necessity and contingency" (472). In the words of Voetius, God "with his will effectively wills the [human] will not only to act but also to act freely" (463). Beck references modern discussions of this Reformed tradition, particularly those of Muller and Helm, but for the most part allows Voetius to speak for himself.

Throughout the book, the theological and historical background within which Voetius was working and the various traditions on which he drew are on display. Beck traces the roots of terminology and themes developed by Voetius in the works of medieval and baroque scholastics and finds both Thomist and Scotist influences. Voetius is eclectic in his use of Reformed and Roman Catholic writers. Beck's excellent extended discussion of debates around *scientia media* ("middle knowledge") (300–51) shows how thoroughly Voetius knew writings on both sides of this attempt to resolve questions about human freedom and divine sovereignty, as well as delineating his comprehensive response to the issues. It is notable when considering the question of intellectual tradition that Voetius claimed for himself and others in the Reformed world the name of "Reformed Catholics" (482).

Two other themes related to each other are worthy of note. Voetius has been portrayed as an intellectualist theologian, but Beck demonstrates convincingly that Voetius represents the way in which theology co-exists with practical piety. Voetius is indeed a fitting adherent of the *Nadere Reformatie* with its desire for ethical impact on society and culture. His inaugural oration at Utrecht in 1634 was entitled *De pietate cum scientia conjungenda*

("How piety should be combined with knowledge"), a "programmatic" title (48) which might also be taken as a description of how Voetius turns his theological conclusions to practical implications.<sup>10</sup> He saw theology as a *scientia practica* ("practical science") (186–93) which properly used will lead people to worship God and to live lives in service to Him. Indeed, his view of communion with God as the ultimate good of human beings embraces this theological endeavor (196).

Central to the debates between Voetius and Descartes was the question of the relation of theology and philosophy. Beck relates this to the "two-level theory" (200–208) which proposed a dualism between grace and nature, allowing an autonomous role for reason. Voetius stood in the Augustinian-Anselmian tradition of *fides quarens intellectum* ("faith seeking understanding") which saw philosophy as a handmaid to theology (206). It is true both that right reason is deployed in theology, and that when it is used correctly in other intellectual endeavors it will not reach conclusions which contradict God's revelation in Scripture. In the same way, natural theology, which is itself grounded in Christ the Logos (157), is a supplementary means of knowing God which uses its own tools. In terms of its contents, it is a sub-set of supernatural theology which derives fuller and saving knowledge of God from revelation given in Scripture (193). Voetius counters any attempt to create a separation between theology and philosophy or between grace and reason.

In Beck's analysis of the theology of Voetius, he has brought to the fore a relatively neglected theologian. His book is a rich source of Reformed orthodox theology which will contribute to understanding in many areas.

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Marsden, George. *An Infinite Fountain of Light: Jonathan Edwards for the Twenty-First Century*. Downers Grove, Ill. InterVarsity Academic Press. 2023.

In 2003, George Marsden wrote *the* critical biography of Jonathan Edwards. He wrote a shorter biography on Edwards in 2008 and his latest book, *An Infinite Fountain of Light*, came from a presentation of the Stone

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10. See also the title and theme of one of the few recent English-language books on Voetius, Joel R. Beeke, *Gisbertus Voetius: Toward a Reformed Marriage of Knowledge and Piety* (Grand Rapids: Reformation Heritage Books, 1999).



Lecture Series at Princeton Theological Seminary. The subtitle is insightful, *Jonathan Edwards for the Twenty-First Century* and this is the real intent of this book. However, Marsden understands speaking about Edwards in the modern era may prove difficult.

Beginning in chapter one, Marsden responds to this challenge by giving “several factors [which] stand out for understanding him in his personal and historical contexts” (13). First, Edwards grew up around large families, primarily women and children. He had an uncommonly high opinion of women as they were examples of Christian piety. Second, Edwards lived before the age of the “progressive outlooks” that led to the American Revolution. In an important admission, Edwards had enslaved laborers, yet, Marsden says,

while we can acknowledge that Edwards was wrong regarding slave owning, that fault surely does not nullify the value of his insights on many other matters. One good working principle in life is to recognize that we can learn things from people who have serious blind spots and moral failings even while we may criticize those shortcomings (15).

This value judgment is normally inappropriate for historical writing; however, in the recent controversy over Edwards’s enslaving persons, this reviewer found it was necessary. Marsden must be applauded for this attempt. Whether it was persuasive, the reader is left to decide.

The third and fourth factor go together. Edwards lived most of his life on the American frontier (15) and he had British loyalties that never changed. He was a Protestant and England was a Protestant country in opposition with Catholic France, Spain, and Portugal, etc. His biblical postmillennialism led him to regard the pope as the antichrist (15–16).

Lastly, “there is a positive side to Edwards having lived at the time he did” (16). He grew up surrounded by the Puritanism of his father, Timothy Edwards (1668–1759). Simultaneously, he was facing philosophical changes of Enlightenment thinkers that filled him with excitement initially. Taking these five insights into effect, we can expect to receive “light” from Jonathan Edwards. “As we shall see, many of his [Edwards’s] best spiritual and intellectual insights remain illuminating for Christians today” (18).

In chapter two, Marsden reveals his thesis: “My central argument in these reflections is that Edwards’s core vision, grounded as it is in mainstream Augustinian Christianity, has much of value to offer for renewal today” (23). After describing his thesis, Marsden compared Edwards to Benjamin Franklin (1706–1790) and views Franklin as representative

of the modern age. Franklin ultimately became a Deist but held to the objectivate morality from a benevolent Creator that expresses itself in “equal rights, individual opportunities, and liberty and justice for all.” Yet, Marsden surmises that a “gulf that separates their assumptions from the dominant outlooks of the twenty-first century” and Franklin cannot help us answer twenty-first-century challenges without a conception of an objective morality (34–35). Edwards offers a clear alternative to Franklin that Marsden considers in chapter three.

Edwards had contact to two different worlds: Puritanism and Enlightenment. As a child he was raised in the puritanism of his parents to hold to the absolute sovereignty of God, yet this involves a paradox: “How can God be sovereign and hold man morally responsible?” (40–41). Puritans said, according to Marsden, if all else fails, go with the sovereignty of God. But as a teenager, Edwards was persuaded by the Enlightenment philosopher John Locke (1632–1704) about the rights of man. Edwards was faced with a choice to establish belief in the sovereignty of God or man. Marsden relays the words in the *Personal Narrative*, “I...had quite another kind of sense of God’s sovereignty, than I had [earlier]. I have often since, not only had a conviction, but a *delightful* conviction... [an] inward, sweet delight in God and divine things.” But not only is God sovereign over everything that He has made, Edwards believed that God displays His sovereignty in His triune love. God is most essentially love and therefore, calls His people to experience the “dynamic of love” as “the center of reality” (50). This, Marsden concludes, was a turning point in his life.

That leads to another question, “If God is truly sovereign and loving how does this explain human suffering?” Edwards says that the loving God not only allows human suffering but *participates* in our suffering. When the Son of God was incarnated and suffered on the cross to save sinners, it was out of love for His people and dissatisfaction with the injustice of the world. In the modern world, one is taught from the earliest age that the world is to be seen as only physical and material, and to embrace natural laws as the source of ruling the creation. However, if God is essentially a loving being, He communicates that love everywhere and in everything. The greatest example of this love includes redemption through the person and work Christ. The embracing of a Trinitarian love enables one to find freedom, delight, and joy (65). When we come to experience the love of the person Jesus Christ, it effects our lives and therefore, we love what God loves (70).

In chapter four, Marsden takes a reprieve from Edwards and focuses on George Whitefield (1714–1770). Whitefield’s evangelicalism has produced several negative traits that have bearing on modern evangelicalism. Marsden shows several of them including (but not limited to) anti-authoritarianism; increasing levels of individualism versus institutions; a willingness to divide over doctrines and practices; strict puritanical self-examination and Lutheran pietism. However, Marsden explains that the most problematic of Whitefield’s evangelicalism was the innovative use of *sola Scriptura*. The Reformers, says Marsden, meant by this that the pope was not the highest authority of the church (93). They often used tradition of the patristic and medieval exegetes to get to the closest meaning of the God-inspired text.

In evangelicalism between the first and second great awakening, clergymen disregarded any tradition that fell into a posture contrary to Reformers. This concept gave birth to many *democratized* movements of Christianity such as the Disciples of Christ and the Church of Christ begun by Barton Stone (1772–1844) and Alexander Campbell (1788–1866). These churches desired Christians to reclaim the New Testament Church that expressed belief in the ongoing miracles, speaking in tongues, and new revelations. Though there were many pitfalls of the “Churches that Whitefield Built,” yet “the core gospel message that George Whitefield would recognize has survived... the Holy Spirit continues to speak offering to needy sinners a gospel that is the revolutionary message of God’s love manifest in Christ’s sacrifice on the cross” (101).

In the final chapter, Marsden gleans an insightful exposition of Edwards’s treatise on *Religious Affections*, or what Marsden calls, *A Treatise of Religious Loves*. The *Religious Affections* has many things to offer modern evangelicalism (104–39). To conclude the book, Marsden has an appendix on the sermon of “A Divine and Supernatural Life” preached in 1733.

I have two criticisms of Marsden’s book. In chapter four, Marsden expresses a very low assessment of George Whitefield and holds him responsible for the “negative traits” which still hinder modern American evangelicals. A more balanced approach seems necessary. I wonder if Whitefield bears more of the blame than he ought.

Second, Marsden leaves something to be desired in the claim in his discussion of *sola Scriptura*. True, the Reformers used tradition, but they meant more than simply the pope was not infallible. As a representative of the belief of the Reformers, one can cite the *Westminster Confession of Faith* chapter 1. These men meant by *sola Scriptura*, that God, who Himself is truth, inspired a Word which is true, and, although there are many proofs

to assume these things, the only “infallible truth” is the Holy Spirit “bearing witness with the Word in our hearts” of this truth. Not only that the pope was not infallible source of truth, or even the church, but all men were subject to the truth as it is only found in Scripture, which is most necessary, authoritative, and efficacious. The only infallible interpretation is the Scripture compared with other Scriptures to get the clear meaning of the text.

Overall, Marsden’s latest book is a notable work although it is introductory in nature. The reviewer would suggest that one whose interest has been piqued by the *Infinite Foundation* move on to read the *Short Life of Jonathan Edwards* before advancing to *Jonathan Edwards: A Life*.

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