In Freedom of the Will, *Jonathan Edwards presents a critique of Arminian thought, which was rapidly replacing Calvinism as the dominant theology of eighteenth century New England. This article combines a historical study of Puritan New England with an examination of Edwards's logical arguments against Arminianism in order to provide needed historical context for today's theological debates.*

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On Free Will:
Edwards in Conversation with Arminians

Amanda Stevens

Because Arminianism has become the dominant Christian theology in America, American Protestants tend to hold Arminian assumptions. For evidence of Arminianism's prevalence, we can look to one of the fastest growing churches in America: Lakewood Church in Houston, Texas. Joel Osteen, the pastor of this non-denominational church of more than 30,000, tells his congregation that "All you've got to do is accept the free gift of God's salvation."[1] While we must not equate all of Osteen's views with Arminianism, this particular statement exemplifies Arminianism's main belief that humans have free will to accept or reject God's offer of salvation. It is tempting in our culture to view this and other Arminian assumptions as non-negotiable. However, if Arminian assumptions remain non-negotiable, then arguments of Calvinism can never get a fair hearing. The debate is rigged.

Jonathan Edwards offers a different perspective on the debate. Raised in the primarily Puritan atmosphere of early eighteenth-century New England, Edwards viewed the increasing popularity and prevalence of Arminianism as a threat to Christianity. In order to defend his Calvinist beliefs against the Arminian movement, Edwards wrote works such as *Freedom of the*

Will (1754), which refuted Arminian doctrines through both scriptural and logical arguments. These works have earned Edwards a place in history not only as an influential preacher of the First Great Awakening but also as one of the greatest theologians of all time.

Exploring Edwards's works provides insight into the predominately Calvinist perspective of early eighteenth-century America and the subsequent transition to dominant Arminianism. Such an examination will not only enrich our understanding of America's heritage but also will allow us to identify and reassess today's commonly-accepted Arminian assumptions. To that end I examine briefly the Calvinist roots of Puritan New England before turning to a study of Edwards's *Freedom of the Will.* Rather than an apology for Calvinism, this paper is a reconsideration of a cogent critique of Arminianism, a critique that has been largely erased—in some cases, as we will see, deliberately expunged—from the popular theology of the American church.

Dominant Calvinism

In 1629, less than a century before Edwards was born, John Winthrop gave his famous speech "A Model of Christian Charity" to a boat filled with hopeful Puritans on their way to settle New England.[2] With its rocky soil and unfriendly weather, New England did not begin as the most lucrative of American colonies. Thus, the colonists settled there for primarily religious reasons. Virginia DeJohn Anderson explains that "what set New England society apart was its Puritan heritage" and that "they imbued their society with a deeply spiritual significance."[3]

By the dawn of the eighteenth century, New England's population had experienced much growth. "Between 1660 and 1710," writes historian Bernard Bailyn, "209 new townships had been settled in New England, an average of over four per year."[4] Despite rapid population growth, New England retained its strong Puritan foundation. Though "the collapse of Puritanism"[5] was on the horizon, Mark A. Noll writes that until the 1740s, "an identifiably Puritan tradition survived in New England, where theology retained the major Calvinist emphases as these had been defined in the founding generation."[6]

Two popular figures exemplify the predominately Calvinist mindset of the time. First, Edwards's grandfather, Solomon Stoddard, whom historians call "the magisterial 'pope' of Northampton,"[7] preached Calvinist doctrine. Second, George Whitefield, the most famous of the Great Awakening evangelists, also subscribed to Calvinism. There is little doubt that Calvinism was New England's prevalent doctrine in the early eighteenth century. As a result, Arminianism was judged with disdain.

Edwards was born into this Puritan culture in 1703. As an adult, he became preacher of the church in Northampton, Connecticut, where his grandfather had "built an empire, like some Biblical Pharaoh."[8] In Northampton, Edwards experienced an unexpected revival in his community that inspired "A Faithful Narrative of the Surprising Work of God." Edwards became known as an important preacher of the First Great Awakening largely because of this narrative. As evidence of Edwards's impact, George Marsden records that "According to Jonathan's later estimation, of all the pastors in the region, only his grandfather, Solomon Stoddard, oversaw more local awakenings."[9]

In all of his sermons and writings, Edwards emphasized God's sovereignty as the key to salvation. However, only after Edwards had struggled with this doctrine did he come to accept it. In fact, Edwards ties his own conversion experience "to his reconciliation to God's sovereignty, his realization that he could accept with full satisfaction what he had once objected to so strenuously."[10] Because Calvinistic doctrine of God's sovereignty was instrumental in his own conversion, Edwards assumed it was instrumental in everyone's conversion. This strong allegiance to Calvinism would soon fuel his fight against Arminianism.

Major Transitions and the Arminian Threat

On the one hand, the Great Awakenings brought about a religious fervor in Puritan New England. On the other hand, the Puritan aspect of the region's religiosity was decreasing. Bailyn has described "a Puritan world whose inner spirit, once powerfully creative and fearless, had survived into a third generation in a faded and defensive form."[11] Mark Noll also comments, "By the 1740s Puritan theology was indeed breaking apart into divergent strands."[12] Thus, the Puritan nature of New England did not survive long beyond the time of Edwards.

Internal controversies in the Puritan church included disputes over who could become a church member and who could receive the sacraments of baptism and communion. Another schism in the church resulted from the friction between Old Lights and New Lights. While Old Lights were "horrified at the fanaticism of the revivalists," the New Lights, including Edwards, embraced the affections that accompanied revivalism.[13]

External controversies affected the church as well. While Edwards participated in the disputes within the church, he also greatly cared about these disputes outside of the church. *The Edwards Reader* explains that "the young Edwards hoped to rescue Christianity from the deadweight of rationalism and the paralyzing inertia of skepticism."[14] Indeed, Enlightenment-induced rationalism crept into New England society and posed a threat to Christianity. For instance, the rationalistic idea that humans could properly reason on their own contradicted the Christian idea that human reason required the assistance of divine revelation.

At the center of these controversies was the Calvinist/Arminian debate. New England Puritans insisted that the doctrine of God's sovereignty was necessary for the survival of Christian morality. Since Puritans believed that Arminianism compromised this doctrine, they feared that Arminianism would lead to the destruction of "vital piety" and "strict morality."[15] They reasoned that humans could never maintain morality if they trusted in themselves rather than in God.

Thus, Puritans became anxious as they perceived Arminianism making appearances in many places, including the English homeland, Harvard, and Yale. George Marsden describes the English homeland as "riddled with fashionable heresy and lax morals." In the Church of England, one of these fashionable heresies was "an attractive Christian moralism," which suggested humans had an innate ability to overcome moral weaknesses.[16] Although they acknowledged that not all Anglicans subscribed to Arminianism, Puritans certainly "thought of most Anglicans as Arminian."[17] Back in America, when Increase Mather lost his position as president of Harvard, Puritans feared Harvard would abandon its orthodox Calvinist views also. In response, Connecticut's clergy founded Yale. Thus, when Rector Cutler and others at Yale began calling for a return to Anglicanism, Puritans

were shocked. Philip Gura writes, "This new emphasis on man's free will sent a shudder through most New England Calvinists."[18] The unsettling event, which Increase Mather called the "Connecticut Apostacie,"[19] made quite an impact on Edwards, who was studying at Yale during this time. Witnessing the Arminian threat, Edwards decided that he would one day defend Calvinism from the pulpit.[20]

Puritan New England experienced major transitions in the eighteenth century. Arminianism, aided by Enlightenment assumptions, was quickly taking root. Gura explains that "Arminianism . . . gained new adherents among those who valued man's powers of reason and the remarkable new view of the physical universe, explicable in terms of empirical science, it allowed."[21] According to Allen Guelzo, even the Old Lights, who were once strong Calvinists, "were eventually to reject Calvinism in favor of Arminianism."[22]

The growing popularity of Arminian theology provoked Edwards to write many famous works concerning the Calvinist/Arminian debate. Believing Arminianism to be a serious threat to Christianity, Edwards constructed every argument he could to save the Calvinist tradition. In his sermons and other works, Edwards uses Scriptural arguments. However, in *Freedom of the Will,* Edwards uses logical arguments. According to Marsden, "Edwards countered that, in addition to [Arminianism] being inconsistent with Scripture, it involved a number of plain contradictions that could be demonstrated by logic alone."[23] In our endeavor to understand the eighteenth-century Calvinist perspective, we will examine Edwards's critique in *Freedom of the Will* of the following Arminian assumptions:

1. Freedom Requires the Self-Moved Will
2. Moral Necessity Violates Freedom
3. Moral Inability Violates Freedom
4. Foreknowledge Leads to Contingency, Not to Necessity
5. Freedom Requires the Indifferent Will
6. Moral Necessity Eliminates Praiseworthiness and Blameworthiness
7. Calvinism Leads to the Problem of Evil

Freedom Requires the Self-Moved Will

Arminians believe that freedom requires that a person can determine his own will. In the words of Edwards, Arminians believe that "the will determines the will."[24] Edwards, however, denies the existence of the self-moved will and asks "whether any such thing was or can be conceived of."[25]

Instead, Edwards offers a different definition of freedom, which does not require the self-moved will. Edwards writes that "the plain and obvious meaning of the words 'freedom' and 'liberty' in common speech, is power, opportunity, or advantage, that anyone has, to do as he pleases."[26] Notice that Edwards does not define freedom as the ability to *determine* what one pleases, but the ability to *do* what one pleases. To illustrate, if someone wants to steal money, he is considered free if he can steal money. However, freedom does not require that the person can determine whether he wanted to steal money in the first place. Edwards states it this way: "For the will itself is not an agent that has a will: the power of choosing, itself, has not a power of choosing."[27] Freedom for Edwards is *doing* what one wills, not *determining* what one wills.

According to Edwards, the concept of the self-moved will leads to an infinite regress. If all choices must be self-determined, then the choice to make a choice must be self-determined as well. Edwards explains the infinite regress in the following way:

> if the will determines all its own free acts, then every free act of choice is determined by a preceding act of choice, choosing that act. And if that preceding act of the will or choice be also a free act, then by these principles, in this act too, the will is self-determined; that is, this, in like manner, is an act that the soul voluntarily chooses; or . . . it is an act determined still by a preceding act of the will, choosing that.[28]

To illustrate the problem with the self-moved will, Edwards describes a train of wills, as depicted below.

$$Will_1 \quad \rightarrow \quad Will_2 \quad \rightarrow \quad Will_3 \quad \rightarrow \quad Action$$

Will to will to will to steal money $\rightarrow$ Will to will to steal money $\rightarrow$ Will to steal money $\rightarrow$ Steal money

For example, a person must will to will to steal money ($Will_2$). But if he must will to will to steal money, he also must will to will

to will to steal money (Will$_1$). Logically then, Will$_1$ must also be determined by another preceding will. Edwards says, "if the first act in the train, determining and fixing the rest be not free, none of them all can be free."[29] Paul Ramsey, editor of the 1957 Yale edition of *Freedom of the Will*, notes that "Edwards succeeds in refuting self-determination if this means that in a preceding action the soul determines to determine or chooses to choose."[30] According to Edwards, because of the notion of infinite regress, the Arminian notion of freedom is not logically possible.

Moral Necessity Violates Freedom

Now that we have discussed the different definitions of freedom, we must discuss the role "necessity" plays in those definitions. According to Edwards, necessity means that a thing must be and cannot be otherwise.[31] Edwards describes two different kinds of necessity: moral and natural. Moral necessity involves a necessary connection between volition and its preceding action.[32] Thus, moral causes ("inclination . . . or motives") lead to moral actions.[33] By natural necessity, Edwards means "such necessity as men are under through the force of natural causes."[34] Examples of natural necessity are gravity causing downward motion or a wound causing pain.

Edwards points out that both moral and natural necessity are absolute. In other words, there is a sure connection between the cause and the necessary effect.[35] Under normal circumstances, gravity will pull someone toward the ground if he jumps off a cliff. Gravity (the cause) always pulls objects in the direction of gravity (the effect). In the same way, moral causes always lead to moral effects. Edwards explains that "the will is always determined by the strongest motive."[36] Though someone may have many motives at one time, the strongest motive will always win out. For example, if a person wants to steal money from a friend but he also wants to avoid stealing because he cares about the friend, the stronger of the two desires will triumph. Therefore, moral necessity is just as absolute as physical necessity. Arminians would not agree with this statement. While they would acknowledge natural necessity, they would consider moral necessity a violation of human freedom. According to Arminians, if a moral cause necessarily

moves someone's will, then he does not have a self-moved will and therefore is not free.

Moral Inability Violates Freedom

Arminians not only contend that moral necessity violates human freedom, but also that moral inability violates human freedom. For Arminians, if someone is subject to his strongest desire and thus is unable to act contrary to this desire, he is not free. Unlike the Arminian definition of freedom, Edwards's definition of freedom allows for moral inability. In other words, even when someone is morally unable to choose otherwise, he is still acting according to his strongest desire, which makes him free.

Edwards's discussion of natural and moral inability helps us understand the Calvinist view. Edwards says people can have a natural inability to do something even if they will to do it. For example, someone cannot fly unaided even if flying is his strongest desire. In contrast to natural inability, people have a moral inability precisely because of what they will. A person cannot remain abstinent if he either lacks the desire to remain abstinent or has a strong desire in the opposite direction. Concerning this, Edwards writes, "Moral inability consists . . . either in the want of inclination; or the strength of a contrary inclination."[37]

According to Edwards, some people may have a moral inability to commit certain sins and some to refrain from certain sins. To illustrate this, Edwards offers some examples: "A woman of great honor and chastity may have a moral inability to prostitute herself," and "A drunkard, under such circumstances, may be unable to forbear taking a strong drink."[38] To avoid misunderstanding, Edwards qualifies what he means by inability. If we say a drunkard has a *moral* inability to refrain from taking a drink, we are not saying he has a *physical* inability to restrain his hand from the cup. On the contrary, he still maintains the physical ability to either drink or not drink. Though his strongest inclination will determine what he physically *does*, his strongest inclination will not determine what he physically *can do*.

Foreknowledge Leads to Contingency, Not to Necessity

First, foreknowledge means that God knows everything about the past, present, and future. Both Calvinists and Arminians believe that God has complete foreknowledge (omniscience). Second, Edwards defines a contingent thing as "something which has absolutely no previous ground or reason, with which its existence has any fixed and certain connection."[39] While the necessary thing must happen and cannot happen otherwise, the contingent thing lacks necessity and can happen otherwise.

Concerning these terms, Edwards debates whether God's perfect foreknowledge leads to contingency (as Arminians suggest) or necessity (as Calvinists suggest). Much is at stake for Edwards in this issue. According to Edwards, Arminians accuse Calvinists of attacking "the reasonableness of God's commands, promises and threatenings" and "the sincerity of his counsels and invitations."[40] Calvinists believe that God wills everything that He foreknows and everything necessarily must come to pass according to His perfect will and foreknowledge. Arminians wonder why God would issue commands, promises, and threats if foreknowledge yields necessity and God already wills what happens. Thus, Arminians reject that foreknowledge yields necessity and claim that foreknowledge instead yields contingency. Furthermore, when Christ gives invitations in the New Testament for people to come to Him, it seems He is insincere if He has already determined that some of those invited will not come. Despite these accusations, Edwards believes the notion of necessity is important in keeping a proper perspective towards God's sovereignty. As discussed above, Edwards associated his conversion experience with his acceptance of God's sovereignty.

Edwards writes the following about the relationship between foreknowledge and necessity: "All certain knowledge, whether it be foreknowledge or after-knowledge, or concomitant knowledge, proves the thing known now to be necessary."[41] As evidence he says, "there is properly now, in the mind of God, a certain and perfect knowledge of the moral actions of men, which to us are an hundred years hence." For example, if God knows that one hundred years from now Country X will launch World War III, the action of Country X launching World War III has already

happened in God's mind, even though it has not yet happened in time. Because the event has already happened in God's mind, "it is now impossible these moral actions should not come to pass."[42]

Freedom Requires the Indifferent Will

Arminians argue that humans cannot freely act unless the will is in a state of indifference. If any external force interferes with the will's deliberation between two choices, then the will cannot freely choose between the two options. Edwards explains the Arminian perspective by saying, "it is such an indifference as leaves the will not determined already, but free from actual possession, and vacant of predetermination, that there may be room for the exercise of the *self-determining power* of the will."[43] In contrast, Edwards argues that freedom does not require an indifferent will.

In order to demonstrate inconsistency in the Arminian concept of indifference, Edwards puts forth two arguments. First, he writes that a soul cannot be simultaneously in a state of choice and a state of indifference, "for the strength of the will, let it be never so great, does not at all enable it to act one way, and act the contrary way, both at the same time."[44] If someone is indifferent toward two choices, why would he choose either? For there is no force moving the will one way or another. Edwards writes further that "this is the same thing as to say, the soul prefers one thing to another, at the very same time that it has no preference."[45] The philosopher Renè Descartes reinforces Edwards's argument. In *Meditations on First Philosophy*, Descartes insists that inclination toward the good is the best kind of freedom and indifference is the worst kind of freedom. Descartes adds, "But the indifference I feel when there is no reason pushing me in one direction rather than another is the lowest grade of freedom . . . For if I always saw clearly what was true and good, I should never have to deliberate about the right judgment or choice."[46] Thus, Descartes disagrees (as does Edwards) with the Arminian requirement of indifference to bring about freedom of the will.

Edwards's second argument is this:
1.   If the will must be perfectly indifferent, it must conform to the rule of indifference.
2.   If the will must conform to the rule of indifference, the will is influenced by something outside the will.

3. If the will is influenced by something outside the will, the will is not free according to the Arminian definition of freedom.
4. Thus, if the will must be perfectly indifferent, the will is not free according to the Arminian definition of freedom.[47]

The second statement of the syllogism states the meaning of the following quote by Edwards: "[the will's] determination is not altogether from itself, but it was partly determined before, in its prior inclination" to revert to the state of indifference before making a decision.[48] To illustrate how this contradicts the Arminian-type freedom, suppose the will must decide between choice A and choice B. Arminians insist freedom requires that the will start in a state of indifference. However, "if there be the least degree of antecedent preponderance," the will would not begin at perfect equilibrium but instead somewhere closer to choice A (for instance) than choice B. Below is an illustration of such a continuum where the will at first is not at perfect equilibrium.

Choice A	Indifference	Choice B
*Will		
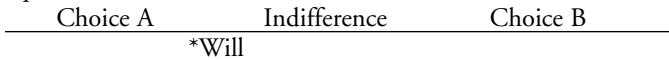
In order for the will to make a free decision, the will must first move slightly back to the right so as to be at perfect equilibrium, or in the state of indifference. As Edwards points out, this restriction on the will is not compatible with the Arminian concept of freedom, which says nothing can interfere with the will.[49] Therefore, Edwards concludes that the Arminian requirement of indifference for Arminian freedom also constrains Arminian freedom. According to Edwards, Arminianism again falls under its own weight.

Moral Necessity Eliminates Praiseworthiness and Blameworthiness

In the words of Daniel Whitby, Edwards's Arminian opponent, "If all human actions are necessary, virtue and vice must be empty names . . . for who can blame a person for doing only what he could not help?"[50] If God predetermined according to His will that St. Peter would deny Jesus three times, St. Peter could not have done otherwise. If St. Peter could not have done

otherwise, then how can he be blamed for his denial of Jesus? Again, we see the issue of necessity and contingency come into play.

Whitby's position resounds with many Americans today. Indeed, it seems that praiseworthiness and blameworthiness cannot be compatible with necessity. Even the church in Rome to which the Apostle Paul wrote had a similar difficulty of understanding. In Romans 9, the Apostle Paul asserts that God hardened Pharaoh's heart in order to display His power.[51] Anticipating his Roman audience's response to such a statement, Paul remarks, "You will say to me then, 'Why then does he still find fault? For who can resist his will?'"[52] Understanding the persistence of this view, Edwards spends a large part of *Freedom of the Will* confronting the issue.

Before arguing in the abstract, Edwards provides three concrete examples to combat Whitby's assertion that praiseworthiness and necessity cannot coexist. First, God is necessarily holy and we praise Him for His holiness. Even Arminians agree with this statement, believing that God is both "necessarily holy" and "supremely praiseworthy."[53] Next, Edwards devotes a large amount of text to proving that Jesus' death on the cross was both necessary and praiseworthy. Finally, Judas's betrayal of Jesus was no doubt necessary for the salvation of humankind, but also blameworthy.

Edwards continues in his argument by first citing Whitby, who concedes that "it may become 'exceedingly difficult' for men to do good, having a strong bent, and powerful inclination to what is evil."[54] Edwards replies that "if an impossibility of avoiding sin wholly excuses a man; then, for the same reason, its being difficult to avoid it excuses him in part."[55] In other words, the fault of humans should be lessened since the difficulty to do good is great. We start down a slippery slope if we say that the impossibility of perfection relieves humans of the duty to be perfect.

By this point, Arminians must concede, as Whitby does, that humans no longer possess the power to be perfectly obedient since the fall of Adam corrupted human nature.[56] According to Arminians' own contention, then, humans should not be held responsible for their inability to perform perfect obedience.[57] Therefore, Edwards concludes the following about Arminians:

"by their own scheme, the imperfections of our obedience don't deserve to be punished."[58] If this is true, Christianity becomes meaningless. According to Arminians, if humans cannot help but be disobedient, they should not be blamed for their disobedience. If humans should not be blamed for their disobedience, then humans should not be condemned. If humans should not be condemned, writes Edwards, "what need [is there] of Christ's dying to satisfy for [their sins]?"[59] For if humans are not condemned, there is no need for Christ to save us from condemnation. The entire purpose and beauty of Christ's sacrifice crumbles if humans lack blame. Arminians would never assert that humans are blameless, for they realize that this is heresy. However, Edwards contends that Arminians must arrive at such a conclusion if they subscribe to Whitby's assertion concerning praiseworthiness and blameworthiness.

Calvinism Leads to the Problem of Evil

Finally, we come to perhaps the most disturbing of all Christian issues: the problem of evil. According to Arminians, if everything is necessary rather than contingent, then God causes everything. If God causes everything and evil exists, then God is the author of sin.[60] As Whitby states, the necessity of the human will "would cast all the blame of all the wickedness committed in the world, upon God."[61] In this way, Arminians accuse Calvinism of making God the author of evil.

Though the problem of evil is the most difficult of theological issues, it requires Calvinists the shortest defense. Edwards argues that the problem of evil does not only present a problem for Calvinists but rather for every Christian who believes in foreknowledge, which includes Arminians.[62] If anyone believes in foreknowledge, he must admit that "God knew . . . if he ordered and brought to pass such and such events, such sins would infallibly follow."[63] Thus, Edwards says, "this supposed difficulty" is one "wherein the Arminians share with us."[64]

Though Edwards need not defend Calvinism against the problem of evil since it is a problem for Arminians as well, he proposes an explanation. Edwards explains that if "author of sin" means that God is "the agent, or actor of sin, or the doer of the wicked thing," then God is certainly not the author of sin.[65] However, if "author of sin" means "the permitter, or not a

hinderer of sin; and . . . a disposer of the state of events . . . for wise, holy and most excellent ends," then God must be this.[66] The skeptic might ask, "How can God be all-loving and still permit sin, even if He is not the agent?" In response, Edwards explains the difference between the following two wills of God: the secret or disposing will and the revealed or preceptive will.[67] For example, God's revealed will commands humans not to murder. However, His secret will allows, or even ordains, that murder takes place. Though God's secret will seems unholy, Edwards insists that it is "for wise, holy and most excellent ends and purposes."[68] Thus, even God's secret will is holy.

Edwards's Arminian opponents inquire further how God's two wills can be both approving and disapproving of certain human actions. In order to use the best illustration possible to support his theology, Edwards invokes the crucifixion. On the one hand, God willed that Jesus be crucified and sacrificed for the sins of His people. On the other hand, God hated with a perfect hatred the injustice committed against His son.[69]

Unfortunately, Edwards does not solve the problem of evil. The fact that God created everything and evil exists still suggests that God is the author of evil. However, Edwards does succeed in showing that the problem of evil is a problem shared by Calvinists and Arminians alike.

Rejection of Edwards's Calvinism

Much to the surprise of his contemporary critics, Edwards became wildly popular after his death, with his fame climaxing during the Second Great Awakening. Gura writes that Edwards became a household name as his works were widely read from the 1790s and into the 1840s.[70] Nevertheless, as America grew increasingly Arminian, Edwards's Calvinistic stance became a growing problem. For example, having contempt for Calvinism but still wanting to herald Edwards as a great evangelist, the Tract Society purposely concealed or even omitted the overtly Calvinistic parts of Edwards's works.[71] Though Edwards expected people to treasure his theological works, fans of Edwards flocked instead toward his evangelical works concerning emotions and signs of conversion. This kind of selective editing performed by the Tract Society and other editors of Edwards highlights the transition from a predominantly Calvinist community to an Arminian one. In this

type of culture, Calvinism easily becomes an enemy to Christian theology and is no longer valued as a valid perspective.

After examining Jonathan Edwards's perspective, we should be able to understand our current environment more fully. As we have seen from *Freedom of the Will*, Calvinism presents strong arguments against Arminian assumptions, such as the assumption of the self-moved will. However, some who approach the Calvinist/Arminian debate act as if we need not discuss these issues. In a twenty-first-century American culture that embraces Arminian assumptions, it is tempting to say that humans have free will without investigating the matter first. However, we know that Jonathan Edwards and many others in the eighteenth century did not start with this assumption, for the self-moved will was contradictory to their Puritan worldview. Although we might ultimately conclude that Arminian assumptions are correct, we may not do so without first refuting the valid competing arguments presented by Edwards and centuries of other Calvinists. The Calvinist/Arminian debate must be conducted with knowledge and respect for competing historical worldviews.

NOTES

[1] William Martin, "Prime Minister," *Texas Monthly* 33:8 (Aug. 2005): 174.

[2] I use the words "Puritanism" and "Calvinism" largely interchangeably.

[3] Virginia DeJohn Anderson, "Migrants and Motives: Religion and the Settlement of New England," *New England Quarterly*, LVIII (1985): 339-383, in *Major Problems in American Colonial History*, 2nd ed., ed. Karen Ordahl Kupperman (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 2000), 109.

[4] Bernard Bailyn, *The Peopling of British North America: An Introduction* (New York: Knopf, 1986), 93.

[5] Mark A. Noll, *America's God: From Jonathan Edwards to Abraham Lincoln* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), 31.

[6] *Ibid.,* 21.

[7] John E. Smith, Harry S. Stout, and Kenneth P. Minkema, eds., *A Jonathan Edwards Reader* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995), 10.

[8] Perry Miller, *Jonathan Edwards* (New York: W. Sloane Associate, 1949; reprint, Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1981), 9 (page references are to reprint edition).

9 George M. Marsden, *Jonathan Edwards: A Life* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003), 25.

10 Philip Gura, *Jonathan Edwards: America's Evangelical* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2005), 65-6.

11 Bailyn, 91.

12 Noll, 21.

13 Allen C. Guelzo, *Edwards on the Will: A Century of American Theological Debate* (Middleton, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 1989), 143.

14 Timothy Smith, *Revivalism and Social Reform: American Protestantism on the Eve of the Civil War* (New York: Abingdon, 1957; reprint, Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University, 1980), xii.

15 Marsden, 138.

16 *Ibid.*

17 *Ibid.,* 86.

18 Gura, 27.

19 *Ibid.,* 28.

20 *Ibid.,* 28-9.

21 *Ibid.,* 27.

22 Guelzo, 143.

23 Marsden, 91.

24 Jonathan Edwards, *Works of Jonathan Edwards*, vol. 1, ed. Paul Ramsey, *Freedom of the Will* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1957), 172.

25 *Ibid.,* 163.

26 *Ibid.*

27 *Ibid.*

28 *Ibid.*

29 *Ibid.,* 156.

30 Paul Ramsey in *Works of Jonathan Edwards*, vol. 1, ed. Paul Ramsey (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1957), 24.

31 Edwards, *Works of Jonathan Edwards*, 149.

32 *Ibid.,* 156.

33 *Ibid.*

34 *Ibid.*

35 *Ibid.,* 157.

36 *Ibid.,* 160.

37 *Ibid.,* 159.

38 *Ibid.,* 160.

39 *Ibid.,* 155.

40 *Ibid.,* 269.

41 *Ibid.,* 264.

[42] *Ibid.,* 267.
[43] *Ibid.,* 204.
[44] *Ibid.*
[45] *Ibid.,* 207.
[46] Renè Descartes, *Meditations on First Philosophy,* revised ed., trans. and ed. John Cottingham (Cambridge: Cambridge, 1996), 40.
[47] Edwards, *Works of Jonathan Edwards,* 205.
[48] *Ibid.*
[49] *Ibid.,* 207.
[50] Quoted in Edwards, *Works of Jonathan Edwards,* 277, n. 1.
[51] Romans 9:17, NRSV (New Revised Standard Version).
[52] Romans 9:19, NRSV.
[53] Edwards, *Works of Jonathan Edwards,* 277-8.
[54] Quoted in Edwards, *Works of Jonathan Edwards,* 297, n. 7.
[55] Edwards, *Works of Jonathan Edwards,* 297.
[56] *Ibid.,* 299.
[57] *Ibid.,* 300.
[58] *Ibid.,* 300-301.
[59] *Ibid.,* 300.
[60] *Ibid.,* 397.
[61] *Ibid.*
[62] *Ibid.,* 398.
[63] *Ibid.*
[64] *Ibid.,* 399.
[65] *Ibid.*
[66] *Ibid.*
[67] *Ibid.,* 406-7.
[68] *Ibid.,* 399.
[69] *Ibid.,* 407.
[70] Gura, 222.
[71] *Ibid.,* 224.

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