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THE RISE OF THE
EDWARDSEAN
THEORY OF THE
ATONEMENT

& THE 'MISSING' ACCOUNT OF THE
YOUNGER EDWARDS'S RECEPTION

JOHN SHERWIN BANKS

Cover Design:

The movement of the stars of heaven with a person in the foreground symbolizes the interconnectedness of humanity to the universe and ultimately with God. The Enlightenment chose to see the universe as a closed system whereby meaning is only possible by deduction from its various parts in relation to one another; however, for Jonathan Edwards the universe was a way that we might also perceive the mind of God. The world was filled with shadows and reflections of God's nature. These images, he claimed, were a way to perceive the invisible God with the sense of the heart. The universe in all its systems and subsystems was but a way, as St. Paul said, that mankind might 'feel their way toward him and find him'. Edwards's theory of the atonement was a theological exercise as much as it was an ontological one. Edwards's student Joseph Bellamy counselled his daughter Betsey to purchase a copy of *Mr. Edwards's History of Redemption*, in which you have a map of the road to that [heavenly] world, and a glimpse of its glory'. Atonement was for Edwards the intersection of the divine with humanity in its most compelling and metaphysical capacity. Thus, this cover seeks to represent the grandeur of Edwards's project.

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VRIJE UNIVERSITEIT

**THE RISE OF THE EDWARDSEAN THEORY OF THE ATONEMENT AND
THE ‘MISSING’ ACCOUNT OF THE YOUNGER EDWARDS’S RECEPTION**

ACADEMISCH PROEFSCHRIFT

ter verkrijging van de graad Doctor of Philosophy aan
de Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam,
op gezag van de rector magnificus
prof.dr. J.J.G. Geurts,
volgens besluit van de decaan
van de Faculteit Religie en Theologie
in het openbaar te verdedigen
op vrijdag 2 mei 2025 om 13.45 uur
in de universiteit

door

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geboren te Nova Scotia, Canada

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prof.dr. L. D'Andrea-Winslow

SUMMARY

Jonathan Edwards is considered the most innovative theological-philosophical mind in America. While much of his system has been mapped out, there still remains some debate over his atonement thinking. The traditional departure view claims that Edwards's son, Jonathan Edwards Jr. shifted from a received penal approach to a moral government approach. Recently, some have suggested that perhaps Edwards Sr. had left the door open. While there have been genetic studies in the past, very few of them take the time to do a "close reading" of how the transitional thinkers characterized the elder Edwards's system. Furthermore, a comparative analysis of Petrus van Mastricht's *Theologia Theoretico-practica* (1699) is largely overlooked despite Edwards's high view of this systematic theology. This thesis provides a comprehensive analysis of how Edwards Jr. received his father's atonement thinking in light of his mentoring relationship with Joseph Bellamy, Samuel Hopkins, and his own father's materials in coordination with Van Mastricht.

The key findings of this research indicate that Edwards Sr. had a robust theological vision received from Dutch Reformed Orthodoxy. Specifically, if Van Mastricht's infralapsarian focused atonement theory emphasizing union is the core, then the subsequent layers of Edwards's thinking find exposure in his engagement with the British moral philosophers. Since the theological formulations of Edwards Sr. are in conversation with moral philosophy, this dissertation gave a greater weight to how Bellamy, Hopkins, and Edwards Jr. characterized their mentor's system. Edwards Sr.'s students focused on different aspects of their mentor's project. This thesis shows that Edwards Jr. was attempting, in his own writing, to mediate the moral philosophical project of Hopkins on the one hand and Bellamy's engagement with the larger epistemological project of Edwards Sr. on the other. In short, Edwards Jr. is not a follower of a Grotian Moral Government Theory, but rather a chief receiver of an Edwardsean Theory of the Atonement.

The application of this research for systematic and historical theology indicates that the Edwardsean Theory of the Atonement is a mosaic of satisfaction, penal, and governmental theories. Specifically, Edwards had proposed a consistency between the act of atonement and the pure act

subsistence of the Trinity. In short, the atonement is a shadow of the internal subsistence and yet a real salvation for the elect based on its origin in the perfect idea and persons of the deity. This has the result that, like the governmental theory, there is a high degree of interest in framing the atonement as having an ultimate end in the glorification of God by affirming the dignity of his nature (similar to satisfaction), and a subordinate end in redeeming the elect specifically (similar to penal). In keeping with an Edwardsean vocabulary, the redemption of the elect is *implied* in the glorification of God's nature—they are really *one and the same thing*.

The mechanism of this reconciliation is found in the union made by Christ with a sinner by a willingness to exchange happiness for misery. This was a real atonement because it was predicated on the real idea in God that sent the Son to atone for created beings. This makes a temporal atonement *tandundem* to be *idem* because of two factors. First, the temporal exchange depends on the eternal intra-trinitarian subsistence to make them a just equivalence. Second, Christ's merit and satisfaction are said to differ relatively *but not* essentially. The merit to happiness and the satisfaction to punishment are the same. The exchange is contingent upon the Son freely standing "in the room" of the sinner's misery. The Son metaphysically touches the actual guilt of the sinner and the legal guilt on the other somewhat like a Venn-Diagram.

The historic findings of this research indicate that Edwards Jr. was influenced by Bellamy in his early ministry until he received his father's manuscripts. When he began to edit his father's manuscripts in 1772 for the publication of *A History of the Work of Redemption* (1774), he also began to engage with John Murray the Universalist. At this point, his preaching began to shift. After which, a consistency between the *ad intra* subsistence and *ad extra* acts of God became defining *structural* feature. Furthermore, the use of the three-fold justice analogy seems to be a development out of a close reading of *Discourse on the Trinity*. In addition, the emphasis upon union derived from Petrus van Mastricht also appears to have informed Edwards Jr.'s perspective on imputation of sin and imputation of righteousness. Union with Adam or union with Christ is one of relational constitution rather than a declarative act. Thus, the obedience of Christ is not what saves *per se*, but rather *unio cum Christo* who is righteous. Reconciliation occurs by mediation, union, and exchange of misery for happiness.

DEDICATION

Ad gloriam Dei, dilectae uxoris meae,
Abigail Laetitia, quae est perpetua fons laetitiae
et hereditas nostra in Domino, Adam, Noe, Ionas, Seth et Anna.

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ABBREVIATIONS

All references to the works of Jonathan Edwards are to the letterpress edition published by Yale University Press (1957-2006). References are given by the designation YE, volume number, colon, and then pagination; for example, YE1:21. When reference is made to the online version of the Yale Edition (located at <http://edwards.yale.edu>), it is given as WJEO, followed by volume number and pagination or section. Here is a complete list of the Yale letterpress volumes, given according to the abbreviations used in this volume:

- YE1 Jonathan Edwards, *Freedom of the Will: The Works of Jonathan Edwards*, Vol. 1, ed. Paul Ramsey (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1957).
- YE2 _____. *Religious Affections: The Works of Jonathan Edwards*, Vol. 2, ed. John E. Smith (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1959).
- YE3 _____. *Original Sin: The Works of Jonathan Edwards*, Vol. 3, ed. Clyde A. Holbrook (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1970).
- YE4 _____. *The Great Awakening: The Works of Jonathan Edwards*, Vol. 4, ed. C. C. Goen (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1972).
- YE5 _____. *Apocalyptic Writings: The Works of Jonathan Edwards*, Vol. 5, ed. Stephen J. Stein (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1977).
- YE6 _____. *Scientific and Philosophical Writings: The Works of Jonathan Edwards*, Vol. 6, ed. Wallace E. Anderson (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1980).
- YE7 _____. *The Life of David Brainerd: The Works of Jonathan Edwards*, Vol. 7, ed. Norman Pettit (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1984).

- YE8 _____. *Ethical Writings: The Works of Jonathan Edwards*, Vol. 8, ed. Paul Ramsey (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989).
- YE9 _____. *A History of the Work of Redemption: The Works of Jonathan Edwards*, Vol. 9, ed. John F. Wilson (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989).
- YE10 _____. *Sermons and Discourses, 1720-1723: The Works of Jonathan Edwards*, Vol. 10, ed. Wilson H. Kimnach (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992).
- YE11 _____. *Typological Writings: The Works of Jonathan Edwards*, Vol. 11, ed. Wallace E. Anderson and David Watters (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1993).
- YE12 _____. *Ecclesiastical Writings: The Works of Jonathan Edwards*, Vol. 12, ed. David D. Hall (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1994).
- YE13 _____. *The 'Miscellanies': Nos. a-z, aa-zz, 1-500: The Works of Jonathan Edwards*, Vol. 13, ed. Thomas A. Schafer (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1994).
- YE14 _____. *Sermons and Discourses, 1723-1729: The Works of Jonathan Edwards*, Vol. 14, ed. Kenneth P. Minkema (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1997).
- YE15 _____. *Notes on Scripture: The Works of Jonathan Edwards*, Vol. 15, ed. Stephen J. Stein (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998).
- YE16 _____. *Letters and Personal Writings: The Works of Jonathan Edwards*, Vol. 16, ed. George S. Claghorn (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998).
- YE17 _____. *Sermons and Discourses, 1730-1733: The Works of Jonathan Edwards*, Vol. 17, ed. Mark Valeri (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1999).
- YE18 _____. *The 'Miscellanies': Nos. 501-832: The Works of Jonathan Edwards*, Vol. 18, ed. Ava Chamberlain (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000).

- YE19 _____. *Sermons and Discourses, 1734-1738: The Works of Jonathan Edwards*, Vol. 19, ed. M. X. Lesser (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2001).
- YE20 _____. *The 'Miscellanies': Nos. 833-1152: The Works of Jonathan Edwards*, Vol. 20, ed. Amy Plantinga Pauw (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2002).
- YE21 _____. *Writings on the Trinity, Grace and Faith: The Works of Jonathan Edwards*, Vol. 21, ed. Sang Hyun Lee (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2002).
- YE22 _____. *Sermons and Discourses, 1739-1742: The Works of Jonathan Edwards*, Vol. 22, ed. Harry S. Stout and Nathan O. Hatch (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003).
- YE23 _____. *The 'Miscellanies': Nos. 1153-1360: The Works of Jonathan Edwards*, Vol. 23, ed. Douglas A. Sweeney (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2004).
- YE24 _____. *The Blank Bible: The Works of Jonathan Edwards*, Vol. 24, ed. Stephen J. Stein (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2006).
- YE25 _____. *Sermons and Discourses, 1743-1758: The Works of Jonathan Edwards*, Vol. 25, ed. Wilson H. Kimnach (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2006).
- YE26 _____. *Catalogue of Books: The Works of Jonathan Edwards*, Vol. 26, ed. Peter J. Theusen (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008).

All references to the works of Jonathan Edwards Jr. are to the Tyron Edwards edition published in Andover, MA by Allen, Morrill, & Wardwell (1842). References are given by the designation AE, volume number, colon, and then pagination; for example, AE1:21.

- AE1 Jonathan Edwards Jr. *The Works of Jonathan Edwards, D.D., Late President of Union College. With a Memoir [...]*. Vol. 1. Edited by Tyron Edwards. Andover, MA: Allen, Morrill, & Wardwell, 1842.

AE2 _____. In *The Works of Jonathan Edwards, D. D., Late President of Union College [...]*. Vol. 2. Edited by Tyrone Edwards. Andover, MA: Allen, Morrill, & Wardwell, 1842.

All references to the *Works of Samuel Hopkins* are to the Doctrinal Tract and Book Society published in Boston (1854). References are given by the designation DT, volume number, colon, and then pagination; for example, DT1:43.

DT1 Samuel Hopkins. *The Works of Samuel Hopkins, D.D., First Pastor of The Church in Great Barrington, Mass., afterwards Pastor of The First Congregational Church in Newport, RI. With A Memorial of His Life and Character by Edwards A. Park*. Vol. 1. Edited by Sewell Harding. Boston, MA: Doctrinal Tract and Book Society, 1854.

DT2 _____. *The Works of Samuel Hopkins, D.D., First Pastor of The Church in Great Barrington, Mass., afterwards Pastor of The First Congregational Church in Newport, RI. With A Memorial of His Life and Character by Edwards A. Park*. Vol. 2. Edited by Sewell Harding. Boston, MA: Doctrinal Tract and Book Society, 1854.

DT3 _____. *The Works of Samuel Hopkins, D.D., First Pastor of The Church in Great Barrington, Mass., afterwards Pastor of The First Congregational Church in Newport, RI. With A Memorial of His Life and Character by Edwards A. Park*. Vol. 3. Edited by Sewell Harding. Boston, MA: Doctrinal Tract and Book Society, 1854.

All references to the English translation of *Theoretical-Practical Theology* by Petrus van Mastricht are to the Reformation Heritage Trust Vols. published in Grand Rapids (2018-). References are given by the designation TPT, volume number, colon, and then pagination; for example, TPT3:103. When reference is made to the two volume 1699 Latin edition this dissertation will use the designation TPL, volume number colon, and then pagination; for example, TPL1:345.

- TPT1 Petrus van Mastricht. *Theoretical-Practical Theology*, Vol. 1, *Prolegomena*. Translated by Todd M. Rester. Edited by Joel Beeke. Grand Rapids, MI: Reformation Heritage Books, 2018.
- TPT2 _____. *Theoretical-Practical Theology*, Vol. 2, *Faith in the Triune God*. Translated by Todd M. Rester. Edited by Joel Beeke and Michael T. Spangler. Grand Rapids, MI: Reformation Heritage Books, 2019.
- TPT3 _____. *Theoretical-Practical Theology*, Vol. 3, *The Works of God and the Fall of Man*. Translated by Todd M. Rester. Edited by Joel Beeke. Grand Rapids, MI: Reformation Heritage Books, 2021.
- TPT4 _____. *Theoretical-Practical Theology*, Vol. 4, *Redemption in Christ*. Translated by Todd M. Rester. Edited by Joel Beeke and Michael T. Spangler. Grand Rapids, MI: Reformation Heritage Books, 2023.
- TPL1 _____. *Theoretico-Practica Theologia*, Vol. 1. Utrecht: Gerardum Muntendam, 1699.
- TPL2 _____. *Theoretico-Practica Theologia*, Vol. 2. Utrecht: Gerardum Muntendam, 1699.

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PREFACE

Having grown up in Evangelical Christianity, the legacy of Jonathan Edwards has always been around me—even though, perhaps, I was not fully aware of its extent in rural Nova Scotia, Canada. In 1745 members of the elder Edwards’s congregation joined with a larger force setting sail from Boston to lighten the French of their beloved Fortress Louisbourg in Cape Breton. The force landed in Canso, Nova Scotia, to reprovision before their siege. My early childhood home was just twelve miles northwest up the coast from this mooring. While not the most famous of Louisbourg’s falls to the British, it nevertheless coincided with the birth of Jonathan Edwards the younger. The muskets of New England were not the only connection with my native land, so were its New Light ministers. Daniel Hopkins, for example, the brother of Edwards’s more famous disciple Samuel, had even received a call to pastor a Presbyterian Church in Halifax in the late 1750s after graduating Yale.

After the expulsion of the Acadians by the British in 1758, Nova Scotia received the New Light revivalism through Henry Alline. In the early 1760s, Henry’s father immigrated to the Annapolis Valley to acquire fertile farmlands captured by the British. Alline grew up, and in the 1770-80s styled his itinerate ministry after Edwards, Davenport, Bellamy, Tennant, and Whitefield in the hamlets and coves which dot the shorelines of New Brunswick and Nova Scotia. While Alline was considered to be New Light, due to his method of calling for an immediate response to the gospel, he was more closely aligned with Wesley’s theology than that of Edwards. Yet, the reception of itinerate revival preaching from the First Great Awakening prepared the way for the methodology of the Second Great Awakening. Indeed, most of British North America was prepared for the altar call, special music, and tent meetings which Charles Finney introduced.

Charles Finney, I came to realize later, considered himself to be a son of the Edwardsean theological tradition. As a sensitive young man who responded to these ‘invitations’, I’ve always wanted to understand where these methods and theology had come from. This led me to a conversation with Dr. Michael A. G. Haykin about the study of the Second Great Awakening and the ‘Burned-Over Districts’ of Upstate New York. While encouraging, he suggested I narrow, and look at potential influences in New England Theology, which led me to Edwards Jr. and his father. The chain of custody from Edwards Jr. to Finney to Nova Scotia was, to me, a

circumlocutionary route. Narrowing the study, then, to those mentors who most directly interacted with the younger Edwards I realized must include the elder Edwards's manuscripts and Petrus van Mastricht.

While most certainly a back-door study of the Elder Edwards, I began to notice a tendency in 19th century biography to downplay the contribution of the Younger Edwards. The Younger Edwards was said to be devoid of the Spirit. This led me into a deep comparative study of his preaching manuscripts held at the Hartford International University, Yale Archives at the Divinity school and the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, as well as the Firestone Library at Princeton. By comparing his unpublished material, I began to see patterns of thought shared with his father as he was simultaneously editing his father's works for publication. The outgrowth of that study resulted in *The Forgotten Edwards: A New Examination of the Life and Thought of Jonathan Edwards Junior* (Jonathan Edwards Society Press 2021).

When I had completed this work, I began to recognize the potential of modern scholars to mischaracterize Edwards Jr.'s atonement thinking as a reception of the Grotian Moral Government Theory. This mischaracterization was a result of a shift from the Enlightenment conversation partners to those of German Romanticism. Much of the struggle to understand Edwards Sr., as well as his students arises from reading them apart from these conversation partners. The impact of the Enlightenment on theology, which manifested itself in new conceptual frameworks and grammar by which to discuss theology. Edwards Jr.'s conversation partners, such as Arminian and Calvinist Universalists and Deists, were reframing theology around their new worldview.

This thesis seeks to reconnect the theological formulations of Edwards Sr. and his students to this stream of conversation which existed in their day. In doing so, this dissertation gave a greater weight to how Bellamy, Hopkins, and Edwards Jr. characterized their Mentor's system. Even those who might have been friendly to the Reformed theology of the Edwardseans, understood that the Edwardseans were using the language of the Enlightenment. Those, like Robert Riccaultoun, who in a previous generation was a supporter of the Marrow Brethren in Scotland, critiqued Edwards's approach as a dangerous accommodation to the spirit of the age. Finally, this dissertation has also picked up the recently translated Van Mastricht volumes by Heritage Reformation Books and incorporated them into the study of atonement reception. Yet, Todd M. Rester's translation team could not keep up the pace, so acquiring theological Latin was required for me to make a thorough analysis up through the eighth book, *De Dispensatione Foederis Gratiae in Theoretico-practica Theologica*.

Many thanks to Michael A. G. Haykin who prepared me for this dissertation during my time at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, KY. He

kindly continued on in my PhD program and provided the online instruction in Theological Latin during the pandemic years when we were all limited in our ability to travel. Willem van Vlastuin of Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam provided me great insight into the process of a rightly framed research question, which guides one's research throughout the entire process. As a mentor in the research method, he was very happy to speak with me over video calling when clarification was needed. Of particular enjoyment was his kindness to pick me up at the Schiphol airport and ferry me to the Seminary retreat at Mennorode Hotel near Elspeet, NL. Yet, the most beneficial time was participating in classroom discussion with his volume on spiritual formation, *Be Renewed: A Theology of Spiritual Renewal*. I am grateful for his 'influence' upon my writing and research, and I hope to 'receive' his wisdom for future projects from this mentorship relationship.

Lastly, I would like to thank my family and church (Tabernacle Bible Church, Honesdale, PA) for permitting me the time and finances to invest in the field of historical theology. I pray that my efforts to understand the Edwardsean chain of custody through Edwards Jr. will have been useful for the preaching and teaching of God's word. The thousands of manually written sermons that I have examined speak of the great care that prior generations of pastors took to present God's word for their hearers. Knowing that every audience is potentially shaped by what they hear, teachers of God's word are given a great responsibility to present in a way that others will understand. This requires contextualization of 'the faith that was once for all delivered to the saints' (Jude 3).

As one generation contextualizes the theology received from those who have gone before them, may each subsequent generation take great care to respect those from whom they receive teaching. Perhaps, if we are all more faithful to represent those who have gone before us, then hopefully others will take the time to represent our lives and service accurately as well. In my experience, as a young boy in Nova Scotia, the efforts of those who sought to encourage spiritual formation in me used methods designed to this end received from the New Lights in New England. I have learned to respect the substance of their sermons because of their love for me. I am grateful for my parents whose involvement in these ministries was used by the Spirit to bring about faith so that I might also 'respond immediately' and own the covenant. While debate over atonement theory has disturbed many, this study has the potential to reinforce the beauty of the nature of God's intra-Trinitarian nature shining through the sacrifice of Christ with the aid of the Holy Spirit.

John Banks
October 4, 2024

CHAPTER 1

MANUSCRIPTS, MENTORS, AND VAN MASTRICHT

I. THE THESIS BRIEFLY DESCRIBED

Jonathan Edwards Jr. (1743–1801) claimed in his *Remarks on the Improvements in Theology by his father, President Edwards* that ‘the followers of Mr. Edwards have thrown new and important light upon *The Doctrine of Atonement*’.¹ Edwards Jr. prepared this short document during his brief presidency at Union College as an introduction for a reprint of his father’s works. Like his father, Edwards Jr.’s presidency was cut short by sickness. However, the original draft of these *Remarks* with two versions was found on a table after his death in August 1801 by his son Jonathan Walter Edwards. The first version does not include the topic of atonement whereas the second does.²

In the second version, Edwards Jr. highlighted how the followers of Jonathan Edwards (1703–1758) described atonement. Atonement, according to President Edwards’s followers, ‘does not consist in the payment of a debt, properly so called’. What had changed to cause them to be uncomfortable with Anselm’s satisfaction language? Anselm’s satisfaction theory, which withstood nearly five centuries, was becoming problematic in New England due to its pecuniary language.³ The traditional satisfaction terminology had been made to appear vulnerable owing, in large part, to change brought on by the Enlightenment thinkers who desired consistency in the application of the atonement. Ironically, this desire, according the Edwardseans, Anselm’s burden to discharge debt now put God ‘in man’s debt’.

¹ ‘Remarks on the Improvements Made in Theology by His Father, President Edwards’, AE1:481-92.

² Mary (Edwards) Hoyt, ‘Letter to Jonathan Walter Edwards, Oct. 11, 1801’, *Jonathan Edwards Collection*, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library (GEN MSS 151, Box 27, Folder 1493).

³ Anselm, *Cur Deus Homo*, 1.11-15.

Edwards Jr. described the root of this problem in his *Remarks* saying that ‘if the sinner’s *debt* be paid, how does it appear that there is any *pardon* or *grace* in his deliverance?’⁴ In other words, atonement is not of grace according to this analogy; rather, it is simply a sinner’s due. Universalists and Antinomians were beginning to say that ‘the atonement was the cause of salvation’.⁵ Antinomians suggested that once a debt was fully paid a creditor could make no further claim. Universalists like John Murray (1741-1815) asserted that Christ had suffered all punishment due to mankind.⁶ This pecuniary language led these groups to conclude that salvation was a philosophical necessity.

In response to these two groups, the followers of Edwards described the intention of Christ’s sufferings as designed to support ‘the divine government’ in its ‘due tone’. In other words, God’s honour is re-established by the unequivocal authority of divine law. How? By showing that the atonement is ‘equivalent to the punishment of the sinner according to the letter of the law’, salvation may be described as an act of real grace free from entitlement.⁷ In a desire to preserve God’s honour in the process of satisfaction, this ‘new and important light’ has often been called improperly the moral government theory of atonement.⁸

A. Differences Between Key Atonement Theories in this Dissertation

1) Moral Government Theory of the Atonement

This is a provocative claim since in many respects Edwards Jr. appropriates several key aspects of the Moral Government Theory of Atonement (MGT). MGT is a species of satisfaction theory (defined below), which is more properly attributed to

⁴ ‘Remarks’, AE1:486.

⁵ William Breitenbach, *New Divinity Theology and the Ideas of Moral Accountability*, PhD Diss. (New Haven, CT: Yale University, 1978), 140.

⁶ John Murray, *Letters, and Sketches of Sermons*, Vol. 3 (Boston: Joshua Belcher, 1813), 359-60.

⁷ ‘Remarks’, AE1:486.

⁸ Obbie Tyler Todd, *The Moral Government Theory of Atonement: Re-envisioning Penal Substitution* (Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2021).

Hugo Grotius (1583–1645). Grotius developed his version of the atonement in response to Faustus Socinus's (1539–1604) moral example theory.⁹

Grotius's view of the atonement is structured, according to Gert van den Brink, around three principles. First, 'a distinction between private and public law' and a consequentialist view of law. On a popular level these distinctions create an atonement which is concerned with a satisfaction of justice broadly for a Governor who must retain his moral authority. This leads to a subjective atonement that is not for anyone specifically; however, it does answer Socinus who claimed that God could forgive without any satisfaction.¹⁰ On the other hand, MGT seems to fall short as a vicarious punishment because it proposes a change in the atonement mechanism from a quantitative punishment (*idem*, the same) to a qualitative punishment (*tandundem*, similar). It is this last piece of MGT that makes squaring the followers of Edwards as consistent with a Reformed tradition. Penal substitution theory of the atonement (PSA) was the preferred expression of the atonement for most Protestants through the early eighteenth century.

2) Penal Substitution Theory of the Atonement

While Penal Substitution Theory of the Atonement (PSA) is the common position of the Reformed, it is by no means limited to the those who follow Calvin. Rather, PSA is, as Joshua M. McNall has pointed out, 'older than the pews' reaching back to the earliest centuries of the church.¹¹ While the sense of PSA has ancient roots it has developed into a great oak with, according to J.I. Packer, nine necessary

⁹ In the Grotian view sin does not necessarily require punishment of sin. See Oliver D. Crisp, 'Penal Non-substitution', in *Journal of Theological Studies* 59 (2008), 140-168; Ferdinand Christian Baur, 'The Grotian Theory of the Atonement', trans. by Leonard Swain, *Bibliotheca Sacra* 9, no. 34 (April 1852), 259-272. In the Socinian view God may at his pleasure forgive without satisfaction. See Frank Hugh Foster, 'A Brief Sketch of the History of the Grotian Theory of the Atonement', in *Defense of the Catholic Faith Concerning the Satisfaction of Christ Against Faustus Socinus* (Andover, MA: Warren F. Draper, 1889), xi-lvii.

¹⁰ Gert van den Brink, 'Hugo Grotius', 523-525 in *T&T Clark Companion to Atonement*, ed. Adam J. Johnson (New York: Bloomsbury, 2017), 524.

¹¹ Joshua McNall, 'Older than the Pews: Penal Substitution in Early Christian History', 99-126, in *The Mosaic of Atonement: An Integrated Approach to Christ's Work* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 219).

ingredients.¹² According to William Lane Craig, PSA is “the doctrine that God inflicted upon Christ the suffering that we deserved as the punishment for our sins, as a result of which we no longer deserve punishment”.¹³ Significant to Craig’s definition is a careful avoidance in claiming that the Father punished the Son. This being said, the question of what punishment constitutes and whether the God was justified to accept a substitute is what causes alternate theories to multiply. To a large degree, as has been noted by Stephen Holmes, PSA is understood as law-breaking and much of the debate over coherence centres on the justice of substitutional exchange in punishment.¹⁴ Closely related but qualitatively different is the medieval Satisfaction theory often attributed to St. Anselm of Canterbury.

3) Satisfaction Theory of the Atonement

Strictly speaking, PSA is not the same as Satisfaction Theory of the Atonement (STA). The difference, bearing some similarity to MGT, has to do with God’s relation to law. Anselm’s STA is commonly associated with feudalism because it is set in terms of a satisfaction of God’s honour. Law satisfaction is not primary for sin is such a heinous offense directed against God’s majesty.¹⁵ Fundamentally, the STA is, according to Oliver Crisp, ‘a supererogating act that is voluntarily offered as a gift to God instead of the punishment of the sinner. In other words, fundamentally, satisfaction is an act of compensation or reparation’.¹⁶ Debt to God’s honour and rather than law code is the structure of this compensation. Katherine Sonderegger

¹² J. I. Packer, ‘What did the Cross Achieve? The Logic of Penal Substitution’, 3-45, *Tyndale Bulletin* 25 (1974): 42-43.

¹³ William Lane Craig, *Atonement and the Death of Christ: An Exegetical, Historical, and Philosophical Exploration* (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2020), 147.

¹⁴ ‘Penal substitutionary atonement assumes the logic of the law court’. Stephen R. Holmes, ‘Penal Substitution’, 295-314, in *T&T Clark Companion to Atonement* (New York: Bloomsbury, 2017), 295.

¹⁵ Holmes, ‘Penal Substitution’, 307.

¹⁶ Oliver D. Crisp, *Participation and Atonement: An Analytical and Constructive Account* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2022), 97.

described this atonement as necessary as it ‘is compatible with, indeed identical to, Divine grace and sovereignty’.¹⁷

4) Edwardsean Theory of the Atonement

The New England species of atonement thinking has some subtle differences to distinguish it from Grotius’s version of MGT, which will become apparent in this dissertation. For now, put simply, the Edwardseans did accept the terminology of *tandudem*, but as Gert van den Brink puts it, ‘they gave it a deontological meaning and not a consequentialist one’. In this respect there is consistency with Petrus van Mastricht; however, there are some additional questions which seem to be addressed with respect to the law (PSA) and also the honour of God (SAT). The Edwardsean Theory of the Atonement also incorporates unique philosophical features arising out of the Enlightenment, which also make it hard to place it square in a MGT framework. Specifically, Edwards had proposed a consistency between the act of atonement and the pure act subsistence of the Trinity. This, of course, will need to be exegeted from Edwards’s thought by this dissertation. In short, the atonement is a shadow of the internal subsistence and yet a real salvation for the elect based on its origin in the perfect idea and persons of the deity.

Following Edwards who established a consistency between the *ad intra* subsistence and *ad extra* acts of God is its defining *structural* feature. This has the result that, like the MGT, there is a high degree of interest in framing the atonement as having an ultimate end in the glorification of God by affirming the dignity of his nature (similar to SAT), and a subordinate end in redeeming the elect specifically (PSA). In keeping with an Edwardsean vocabulary, the redemption of the elect is *implied* in the glorification of God’s nature—they are really *one and the same thing*. The mechanism of this atonement is in the union made by Christ with the sinner by a willingness to exchange happiness for misery. To these Edwardseans, this was a real atonement because it was predicated on the real idea in God that sent the Son to atone for created beings. This makes a temporal atonement *tandudem* to be *idem*, according to the Edwardseans, because of two factors. First, the temporal exchange depends on the eternal intra-trinitarian subsistence to make them a just equivalence.

¹⁷ Katherine Sonderegger, ‘Anselmian Atonement’, 175-193, in *T&T Clark Companion to Atonement* (New York: Bloomsbury, 2017), 185.

Second, Christ's merit and satisfaction are said to differ relatively *but not essentially*. Furthermore, ETA is largely an exposition of Petrus van Mastricht's approach to the atonement as the 'Middle One' (the Son) takes the 'Middle Thing' (punishment), which touches on the one hand the actual guilt of the sinner and their legal guilt on the other. This will be developed in chapter six below.

Thus, in an effort to distinguish itself from Grotius, this New England variety has also been known as the Edwardsean Theory of the Atonement, New England Theory, the Hopkinsian Theory, or the Consistent Theory.¹⁸ In the mid-nineteenth century, Professor Edwards Amasa Park of Andover Theological seminary claimed that the most prominent advocate of this atonement theory was Jonathan Edwards Jr.¹⁹ In this dissertation, so as to avoid confusion with that of Grotius, the Edwardsean Theory of Atonement (ETA) will prove to be serviceable as a designation. In many respects, the ETA seems to be something of a mixture of the other three.

B. Struggle to Define the Edwardseans in the Mid-nineteenth Century

In Professor Edwards Amasa Park's era, the theory of atonement associated with Jonathan Edwards Jr. was no longer 'new' but considered an aberrant innovation by Old School Calvinists at Princeton. From 1850-1852 Charles Hodge of Princeton and Edwards Amasa Park of Andover debated this point.²⁰ Daniel W. Cooley, in his PhD dissertation, described this conflict as an 'argument over the "true" legacy of

¹⁸ Edwards Amasa Park, 'The Rise of the Edwardsean Theory of the Atonement: An Introductory Essay', ix-lxxx, in *The Atonement: Discourses and Treatises by Edwards, Smalley, Maxcy, Emmons, Griffin, Burge, and Weeks* (Boston: Congregational Board of Publications, 1859), ix.

¹⁹ Park, 'Introductory Essay', ix.

²⁰ Edwards Amasa Park, 'The Theology of the Intellect and That of the Feelings', *Bibliotheca Sacra* 7 (1850): 533-69; Charles Hodge, 'Professor Park's Sermon', *Biblical Repertory and Princeton Review* 22 (1850): 642-74; Edwards Amasa Park, 'Remarks on the Princeton Review', *Bibliotheca Sacra* 8 (1851): 135-80; Charles Hodge, 'Prof. Park's Remarks on the Princeton Review', *Biblical Repertory and Princeton Review* 23 (1851): 306-47; Edwards Amasa Park, 'Unity Amid Diversities of Belief, Even on Imputed and Involuntary Sin: With Comments on a Second Article in the Princeton Review Relating to a Convention Sermon', *Bibliotheca Sacra* 8 (1851): 594-647; Charles Hodge, 'Professor Park and the Princeton Review', *Biblical Repertory and Princeton Review* 23 (1851): 674-95.

Calvinism in the United States and the legacy of Jonathan Edwards'.²¹ Atonement was a central feature of this debate.

This debate resulted in an articulation of several key differences between Reformed Confessionalism and the New England Theology as it was called by the Princetonians. The New England side drew its strength from its founding father Jonathan Edwards, whereas the Confessional side claimed to rest in the 'limitations' of historic confessional statements.²² Six years after this debate, Park published a systematic 'demonstration' of the atonement thinking in Edwards and his successors.²³

In his essay, Park described two schools of thought on atonement. Each of these schools found representation in the older and younger Edwards with some overlap through Bellamy and Hopkins.²⁴ The development of these different schools occurred by these overlapping lives, thoughts, and intermural debate. The first school included the elder Edwards, Bellamy, and Hopkins as a formidable triumvirate. In their lifetime they had to defend the atonement from Arminian opposition arising out of Boston. About a decade after Edwards's untimely death, Edwards Jr. would take his father's place in the triumvirate and define the atonement for a new school which would grow up with him.

During the subsequent decade after his father's death the second school began to defend the atonement against antinomian and universalist antagonists. The debate was paused during the American Revolution but resumed quickly afterwards. This shift in dialogue partners shaped the way the younger Edwards's school articulated their atonement view. This nuance was recognized by Park who claimed that the original three were 'in substantial agreement' with the school of the younger Edwards. However, in that they were 'independent thinkers', each differed from each other at times.²⁵ As both Bellamy, Edwards Jr., and Hopkins passed from the scene, John Smalley and Stephen West carried the younger Edwards's thinking into the early Republic. The continuity between the older and the younger Edwards was intentionally developed by Hopkins and Bellamy.

²¹ Daniel W. Cooley, 'The New England Theology and the Atonement: Jonathan Edwards to Edwards Amasa Park', PhD diss. (Deerfield, IL: Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, 2014), 1.

²² Hodge, 'Professor Park and the Princeton Review', 682.

²³ Park, 'Introductory Essay', vii-lxxx.

²⁴ Park, 'Introductory Essay', lxiii.

²⁵ Park, 'Introductory Essay', lxiv.

Yet, in spite of this effort to define and defend the ETA from its Princeton detractors, Edwards A. Park's history of ideas tends to focus on the trajectory towards Andover and leaves the lineage from Edwards Jr. relatively undeveloped. In the literature section below, I have included figures (figures 1.1-3) to assist understanding this development as presented by Professor Park. Yet, despite a lack of clarity, this does bring up questions about Edwards Jr.'s mentorship.

B. Edwards Jr.'s First Mentors

Edwards Jr. did not benefit from a direct mentorship by his father. Due to his father and mother's early death in 1758, Edwards Jr. was orphaned just before he would have entered preparatory school for Princeton. Nevertheless, through benefactor assistance, he successfully graduated even attaining a master's degree in 1768. Edwards Jr. took his father's place through the subsequent mentoring of Samuel Hopkins and Joseph Bellamy.

After graduation with his bachelor's degree in September 1765, Edwards Jr. spent the winter with Samuel Hopkins first. During his stay in Great Barrington, Massachusetts, the younger Edwards had the opportunity to read his father's manuscripts under the keen eye of Hopkins. According to Hopkin's early nineteenth century biographer, Edwards Jr. objected to several his father's primary tenets. However, after an evening of reflection upon them, he had come around to accept them.²⁶ That spring, rather than return to Princeton, Hopkins sent Edwards Jr. to intern with Joseph Bellamy.

Joseph A. Conforti described how both Hopkins and Bellamy had adopted the younger Edwards as a son to ensure he would follow in his father's footsteps. When Hopkins sent Jonathan Edwards Jr. to study in Bethlehem, Connecticut, in 1766, he wrote Bellamy telling him the son of the great theologian 'will take it kindly if you converse with him particularly about his personal religion and act the part of a father to him, in freely giving him your best counsel and advice'.²⁷

²⁶ William Patten, *Reminiscences of the Late Rev. Samuel Hopkins, D. D. of Newport, RI [...]* (Providence, RI: I. H. Cady, 1843), 45-47.

²⁷ Joseph A. Conforti, *Samuel Hopkins and The New Divinity Movement: Calvinism, the Congregational Ministry, and Reform in New England Between the Great Awakenings* (Grand Rapids: Christian University Press, 1981), 38.

C. Inheritance of Edwards's Manuscripts

After his internship, Edwards Jr. was examined and licensed to preach. This was a prerequisite for Edwards Jr. to be in receivership of his father's manuscripts according to Edwards Sr.'s will. Thus, his brothers and sisters signed over custody of their father's manuscripts to him in 1767.²⁸ As the legal heir to all his father's manuscripts, he had the opportunity to be mentored by his father's manuscripts as he began to transcribe some of them for printing. While some in his congregation felt that this was a distraction to his ministry in New Haven, Roger Sherman, on the other hand, proposed that the effort to transcribe not only 'serve[d] the interest of religion', but also to 'fix [his father's theology] in Edwards Jr.'s memory much better than merely reading them'.²⁹

Three years after pastoral settlement in New Haven in 1769, Edwards Jr. began transcribing sermons and notebooks. Kenneth Minkema pointed out that Samuel Hopkins is often recognized as 'the most important producer of Edwards's posthumous works', however, his son was in reality 'the most active in this regard'.³⁰ This observation is important for this dissertation because the first transcription to appear in Scotland by the younger Edwards was his father's *History of the Work of Redemption* (1774).

Edwards Jr. adapted his father's sermon series by this name as it was preached at Northampton in 1739. The edited version was his attempt to capture his father's wishes to create 'a body of divinity, in a new method, and in the form of a history'. While Edwards Jr. recognized his own inability to fill out this volume, his impulse to publish led him to consider other aspects of his father's unfinished theological project like the atonement.

²⁸ 'Agreement, arranging for deposit of Edwards manuscripts to Jonathan Edwards, signed by seven of his siblings, March 27, 1767', *Jonathan Edwards Collection, Series 10*, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library (Gen. MSS 151, Box 37, Folder 1666).

²⁹ Roger Sherman, 'Letter to David Austin from New York, March 1, 1790', *Roger Sherman (1721-1793) Collection*, Yale University Library Manuscripts and Archives (MS 447, Box 1, Folder 13).

³⁰ Kenneth Minkema, *The Edwardses: A Ministerial Family in Eighteenth-Century New England*, (PhD diss., The University of Connecticut, 1988), 430.

D. Prioritization of Petrus van Mastricht

While not an entirely new method, Adriaan Neele and Jan van Vliet have demonstrated that Petrus van Mastricht's *De Dispensatione Faederis Gratiae* in Volume 8 of *Theoretico-practica Theologica* is a most likely source for Edwards's *A History of the Work of Redemption* (hereafter, *HWR*).³¹ There were many bodies of divinity already accessible for Jonathan Edwards; however, neither John Owen's *Theologoumena pantodapa*, nor William Ames's *Medulla Theologica*, nor Francis Turretin's *Institutio Theologiae Elencticae* are as closely parallel to Edwards's sermon series.

A dependency on Van Mastricht in the 1739 sermon series, which became *HWR* is not coincidental. Edwards highly recommended Van Mastricht to his students. In a letter to Joseph Bellamy, Edwards unequivocally recommend Van Mastricht, saying, 'But take Mastricht for divinity in general, doctrine, practice, and controversy; or as a universal system of divinity; and it is much better than Turretin or any other book in the world, excepting the Bible, in my opinion'.³²

Edwards Jr. recognized his father's desire to create this 'body of divinity, with a new method'. He referenced his father's letter to the trustees of Princeton and this early transcription is indicative of his own priority of Van Mastricht in study and research. According to Edwards Amasa Park, Edwards Jr. read *Theoretico-practica Theologica* at least seven times in his lifetime.³³ How Van Mastricht's 'universal system of divinity' has been received by Edwards's students has not yet been considered. This dissertation will show how Van Mastricht's atonement thinking had a profound effect upon Edwards Sr. In fact, Edwards adapted portions of Van Mastricht's systematic presentation in *HWR* while adopting Van Mastricht's emphasis on the Mediator in the eternal and temporal covenant of grace. It is surprising how frequently Van Mastricht is acknowledged, yet how few scholars develop Edwards's reception.

Indeed, the Dutch theologian ought to be considered part of the mentorship of each of these three men. Both Joseph Bellamy and Samuel Hopkins took their

³¹ Adriaan C. Neele, *Before Jonathan Edwards: Sources of New England Theology* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2019), 201; Jan van Vliet, 'William Ames: Marrow of the Theology and Piety of the Reformed Tradition', PhD Dissertation (Philadelphia: Westminster Theological Seminary, 2002), 410-424.

³² YE16:217.

³³ Edwards A. Park, 'New England Theology', *Bibliotheca Sacra* 9, no. 33 (1852), 191.

mentor's advice and requested the resource for their use. First, Edwards lent *Theoretico-practica Theologica* to Bellamy in 1747 three years before he published *True Religion Delineated*. Second, Hopkins also had an interest in Van Mastricht after Bellamy's volume came out in 1750. Hopkins requested use of Van Mastricht's work twice in a two-year span, once in 1754 and the other in 1756.³⁴

Due to a prioritization of Van Mastricht, Van Mastricht's theological writing could be counted as mentorship along with the manuscripts of his father. In the preparation of *HWR* for publication, Edwards Jr. left a structural clue which needs further research. Recognizing, though, the inability to capture his father's vision completely, he suggested that the sermons in *HWR* were a kind of 'framework'. This framework, said Edwards Jr., was designed to strengthen one's 'faith in God's government of the world'.³⁵

While government and providence were not new theological concepts to describe God's sovereignty, the focus was different here. The old understanding of covenant restricted to specific people in the colonial era was shifting towards universal, even global, language. For example, Mark Valeri observed that the covenant framework, which was the colonial worldview, gradually dissipated in favour of a universal moral law transcending all things.³⁶ In the sixth chapter of this dissertation the 'frame work' of God's government and providence will be seen to be derived from Van Mastricht's systematic harmonization of divine simplicity and divine decrees.

Edwards Jr.'s version of the atonement is sometimes compared or contrasted directly with his father's writing on the atonement; however, this approach does not answer the question of how Edwards Jr. as the leader of a new school on the atonement, arrived upon this 'new and important light'. The arrival upon this new understanding did not occur in a vacuum. Nor did it occur in isolated reflection. These ideas occurred in community as lives overlapped in mentorship. Rhys Bezzant has observed that Edwards not only established a theological pattern for future pastors, but also a *method of mentoring* theologians. Edwards employed 'letter writing, personal conferencing, shared living, recommended reading, personal example, and

³⁴ YE26:339-40.

³⁵ Jonathan Edwards Jr., 'Preface', in *A History of the Work of Redemption. Containing the Outlines of a Body of Divinity, in a method entirely new. By the late Reverend Mr. Jonathan Edwards, president of the College of New Jersey* (Edinburgh, Scotland: W. Gray and J. Buckland, 1774), iv.

³⁶ Mark Valeri, 'The New Divinity and the American Revolution', *William and Mary Quarterly* 46, no. 4 (Oct. 1989): 744-45.

the cultivation of friendship'.³⁷ This mentorship model had a direct impact on the reception and transmission of his 'framework' and tools for the articulation of the atonement.

To some degree a direct comparison and contrast of Edwards and his son is useful; however, this dissertation will investigate how Edwards Jr. received and processed his father's thoughts on atonement as transmitted to him through Bellamy, Hopkins, and Van Mastricht. Again, Van Mastricht lived and died without physically overlapping with any of these Edwardseans, yet conversations about Van Mastricht or the manuscripts of the elder Edwards occurred in the context of this mentorship paradigm.

II. SCHOLARSHIP RELATED TO THE RECEPTION

Before proceeding to explain this dissertation's research methodology, a survey of historical and systematic scholarship should be considered. Scholarship related to the reception of Edwards's atonement thinking can be divided into two approaches: genetic or systematic. This survey will highlight the value and limitations of these approaches, serving to accent the need to examine how Edwards Jr. received and processed his father's thoughts on the atonement as transmitted to him through his mentors.

A. Genetic Surveys³⁸

1) Edwards Amasa Park (1859)

The oldest genetic survey is captured in Edwards Amasa Park's 'Introductory Essay' published with the collected discourses and treatises of Jonathan Edwards Jr., John Smalley, Jonathan Maxcy, Nathanael Emmons, Edward D. Griffin, Caleb Burge, and William R. Weeks. Published in 1859 as *The Atonement*, Park develops

³⁷ Rhys Bezzant, *Edwards the Mentor* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2019), 5.

³⁸ In this context, the term 'genetic' is being used to describe a methodological approach that focuses on tracing the origins, development, and lineage of ideas or concepts.

‘nine principles’, which were deemed to be the essential thinking on the atonement ‘for more than sixty years’.³⁹ Park applied these nine principles to the writings of Edwards to find traces of their origin. After tracing them, Park identified a general difficulty in defining Edwards’s position on the atonement.

Some theologians, said Park, have concluded that the elder Edwards had irreconcilable contradictions, while others have suggested only ‘seeming contradiction’. Park, in his own way, suggested that Edwards use of theological jargon, at times, tended towards generalizations and at other times towards a ‘restricted’ sense. For example, at times Edwards may describe sinners as having internal merit derived from their union with Christ as imputed and at other times, he limits justification to God’s absolute sovereignty apart from any imputation. Edwards Amasa Park suggested that the ‘successors’ of Edwards tended to restrict themselves to ‘precise’ theological language.⁴⁰

Park’s conclusion about Edwards’s successors is useful; however, this tendency to move from general to specific was left undeveloped. Unfortunately, Park examined Bellamy’s thinking on the atonement, not on the basis of relationship to Edwards, but mostly in contrast to ‘Old Calvinism’.⁴¹ While there is a genetic link established, there is not a sufficient understanding of how Bellamy benefited from a direct mentorship from Edwards.

When considering Samuel Hopkins, Park pointed back to Edwards more than he did with Bellamy. In his analysis of relationships, Park provided a theory of conceptual expansion from Edwards through Hopkins. Hopkins is considered to be the key link between the older three ‘contemporaries’ and the younger three (Edwards Jr., Stephen West, and John Smalley).⁴² Because Hopkins did not have a direct mentoring relationship with Smalley, Hopkins is seen to be the stronger point of connection (see figure 1.1). This is a workable theory; however, it tends to overlook the advantage Edwards Jr. had in the reception of his father’s manuscripts that Bellamy lacked and to a lesser extent Hopkins (see figure 1.2). Hopkins had been

³⁹ Park, ‘Introductory Essay’, xi.

⁴⁰ Park, ‘Introductory Essay’, xxxviii.

⁴¹ Park, ‘Introductory Essay’, xxxix-xlix. One notable exception is a comparison of Bellamy and Edwards’s view of the extent of the atonement. On the one hand, Bellamy seems to prefer a ‘general atonement’, while Edwards favored a ‘limited atonement’. Park, ‘Introductory Essay’, xlvii.

⁴² Park, ‘Introductory Essay’, lxx-lxvi.

custodian of these manuscripts, a year short of a decade (1758–1767), when Edwards Jr. received them.

Park's purpose in this 'Introductory Essay' is revealed in the last few paragraphs as an apology for Andover Theological Seminary where he was a professor. Park's presentation focuses on the reception history of the atonement from Edwards to Andover Seminary through Bellamy, Hopkins, West, and then finally, Samuel Spring (see figure 1.3).⁴³ Park writes:

Through Samuel Spring, a pupil of Bellamy, of Hopkins and of West, and, in a double sense, the brother of Emmons, the personal influence of these divines was transfused into the Constitution of Andover Theological Seminary. In similar methods have a multitude of theologians been interlocked more or less intimately with the four men whose express instructions or tacit intimations have either introduced, or paved the way for introducing, the Edwardsean theory of the Atonement.⁴⁴

Park's intention in this 'Essay' was to safeguard the integrity of Andover, due to the public debate with Princeton's Charles Hodge in the early-1850s. Hodge doubted the Andover claim to have received Edwards's mantle. Because of this, Park's project generally overlooks how Edwards Jr. received his father, and thus fails to expound Edwards Jr.'s position on the atonement—indeed, it is largely 'missing'. The complexity of the Edwardsean Theory of the Atonement has caused many to start with Edwards Amasa Park's research project.⁴⁵ Park's research is a natural starting point, but a failure to understand Park's purpose tends to overlook Edwards Jr. role. While Edwards Jr. had mentoring conversations with Bellamy and Hopkins, he also enjoyed a more direct connection with his father through this vast manuscript inheritance. Furthermore, he also shared his father's analytical capacity.

⁴³ Park, 'Introductory Essay', lxxviii.

⁴⁴ Park, 'Introductory Essay', lxxviii.

⁴⁵ Bruce M. Stephens, 'An Appeal to the Universe: The Doctrine of the Atonement in American Protestant Thought from Jonathan Edwards to Edwards Amasa Park', *Encounter* 60, no. 1 (Winter 1999), 55-72.; Obbie Tyler Todd, *The Moral Government Theory of Atonement: Re-envisioning Penal Substitution* (Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2021).

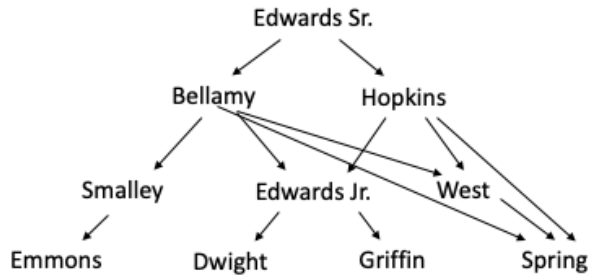


Figure 1.1: Edwards Amasa Park's Mentorship Map

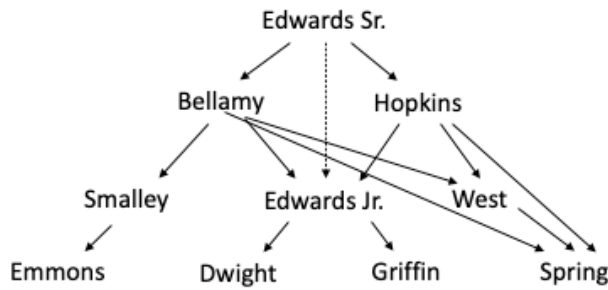


Figure 1.2: Modified Mentorship Map

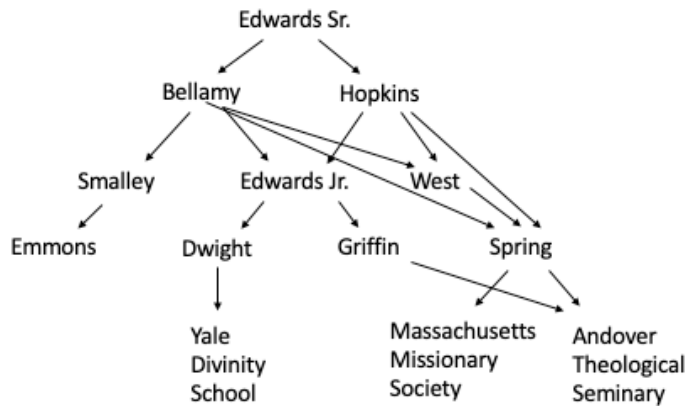


Figure 1.3: Park's Mentorship Map and Andover Theological Seminary

2) Boardman (1899)

In 1899 George Nye Boardman, professor of Systematic Theology at Chicago Theological Seminary wrote *A History of New England Theology*. When writing this history, from his vantage point, ‘more recent movements have been away from Hopkinsianism’.⁴⁶ Hopkinsianism was a term derived from Samuel Hopkin’s name and used to describe the New School of Calvinism introduced by the successors of Edwards. Boardman used Park’s ‘Introductory Essay’ as a source, and therefore, also minimized Edwards Jr.’s role. From this standpoint, Boardman’s usefulness to understand how Edwards Jr. received his father’s thinking is minimal.

3) Foster (1907)

Frank Hugh Foster, in consultation with Edwards Amasa Park personally, developed a history of the New England Theology.⁴⁷ Foster clearly built on Boardman’s work, too.⁴⁸ Yet, Foster made significant advance in the analysis of Bellamy and Hopkins building upon Park’s work. To this end, Foster noted just how radical Bellamy’s view of the atonement was. Seeking to understand where this tendency came from, mistakenly, he turned to Grotius’s *Defence of the Satisfaction of Christ* and William Pynchon. Foster proposed that Bellamy began to conceive God

as acting always from love, and his justice becomes modified both in what it demands and in the reason for its infliction, then God must act in the matter of punishment from general motives, dictated by love, or he must act as a general person, and in this case as the divine Governor.⁴⁹

⁴⁶ George Nye Boardman, *A History of New England Theology* (New York: A. D. Randolph Company, 1899), 3.

⁴⁷ Frank Hugh Foster, *A Genetic History of the New England Theology* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1907), v.

⁴⁸ Foster and Boardman both share a similar historical background leading up to Edwards. Of note, both men highlight William Pynchon (1590–1662) who was about a century ahead of the rest of New England. Boardman, *History*, 221-225; Foster, *Genetic History*, 16-21.

⁴⁹ Foster, *Genetic History*, 114.

Foster suggested that this line of thinking came from Grotius; however, he did not cite support for this conclusion. Instead, he referred to his historical introduction to the translation of Hugo Grotius's *Defence*. In his historical introduction to Grotius's *Defence*, Foster described the ethical root of the 'entire [New England] system is the idea of love to every creature according to its worth, and that the Grotian theory is the only theory of the atonement which fits this idea in combination with the idea of the freedom of the will'.⁵⁰ He concluded that Grotius's thinking pervaded Hopkins's system as well as Edwards Jr.⁵¹

When discussing Samuel Hopkins, Foster also observed that the moral character of God can only be comprehended in relationship to his love. In other words, God's holiness can only be understood in connection to his perfection of love.⁵² He even proposed that this emphasis may be 'the whole line of New England divines'. In other words, 'the tendency of Hopkins' whole scheme is thus to maintain the loving government of God'—even God's decrees.⁵³

In consideration of the atonement, Foster concluded that Hopkins is also 'altogether Grotian (or Edwardsean) in his theory'. Foster believed that Hopkins had stepped away from the concept of God as 'offended party', and rather as a Governor, the sufferings of Christ become a public display of God's justice.⁵⁴ In his early analysis, Foster showed Hopkins's continuity with a penal substitutionary theory; however, in this move towards a Grotian position he did not fully explain how this position is received and processed from Edwards.⁵⁵

Foster aptly links eschatology with the atonement. First, he summarized the main elements of Edwards Jr.'s three sermons on the atonement. Then he engaged with Edwards Jr.'s arguments against the universalism of Charles Chauncy. The necessity of an unending eschatological punishment is required, according to Edwards Jr., for God to be good. In other words, for God to be good, he must punish sin so that his laws will agree with his threatenings.⁵⁶ Foster began to recognize the importance of

⁵⁰ Frank Hugh Foster, 'Translator's Preface', in *A Defense of the Catholic Faith Concerning the Satisfaction of Christ, against Faustus Socinus*, trans. Frank Hugh Foster (Andover: Warren F. Draper, 1889), lvi.

⁵¹ Park, 'Introductory Essay', xlvi-lix.

⁵² Foster, *Genetic History*, 165.

⁵³ Foster, *Genetic History*, 172.

⁵⁴ Foster, *Genetic History*, 180.

⁵⁵ Foster, *Genetic History*, 178-79.

⁵⁶ Foster, *Genetic History*, 209.

eschatology in view of the atonement. This observation is not fully developed and will be revisited in this dissertation in chapter two. But, like his predecessors, Foster did not really deal with Edwards Jr.'s thinking in relationship to either Bellamy, Hopkins, or Edwards.

4) Harpole (1924) and Widenhouse (1931)

Ralph Harpole argued in his 1924 dissertation (Yale) that the first phase of atonement thinking in Jonathan Edwards's generation (including Bellamy and Hopkins) had at its centre Anselm's 'doctrine of penal satisfaction'; however, this, he says, was a 'modified Calvinism' not intended to 'weaken the tenets of Calvinism, but a relentless shaping of these doctrines into a rigid system which was more rigoristic than the body of divinity found in the Institutes'.⁵⁷

The second generation—including Smalley, Stephen West, and Edwards Jr., Jonathan Maxcy, Nathaniel Emmons, and Nathaniel Taylor—are said to have been indebted to Grotius.⁵⁸ Yet, in the analysis of Edwards Jr.'s sermons, he showed that Phillip Doddridge may have influenced the younger Edwards's three-fold definition of justice.⁵⁹ The analysis provided is helpful but also lacks how Edwards Jr. processed and received his father's thinking on the atonement in light of the whole.

⁵⁷ Harpole's designation of Anselm's theory as 'penal satisfaction' is a mistake. It is rather a satisfaction theory. Ralph O. Harpole, 'The Development of the Doctrine of Atonement in American Thought from Jonathan Edwards to Horace Bushnell', PhD diss. (New Haven, CT: Yale University, 1924), 1.

⁵⁸ Harpole, 'The Development of the Doctrine of Atonement', 91.

⁵⁹ Jonathan Maxcy's use of Doddridge's lectures may have been used by both Maxcy and Edwards Jr. Harpole, 'The Development of the Doctrine of Atonement', 97-98, n1. Harpole claims that Grotius is referred to as an authority for Doddridge's definition of the atonement: 'Whatever that is, which is being done or suffered either by an offending creature himself or by another person for him, shall secure the honours of the divine government in bestowing on the offender pardon and happiness'. According to Harpole, Doddridge elaborates on satisfaction as that which 'signifies to content a person aggrieved, and is put for some valuable consideration, substituted instead of what is a proper payment, and consistent with a remission of that offense for which supposed satisfaction is made'. Harpole, 'The Development of the Doctrine of Atonement', 98.

Earnest C. Widenhouse's 1931 dissertation (Hartford) also posits Grotius as the basis by which Calvinism began to change after Edwards.⁶⁰ In the development of Edwards Jr.'s position, he did what others had not done; that is, begin to examine unpublished sermons. Widenhouse proposed that Edwards Jr. struggled with the implications of the commercial view in his early ministry but then made the switch 'from the commercial theory to the rectoral theory' as early as 1779.⁶¹ Since Widenhouse had access to the majority of Edwards Jr.'s unpublished manuscripts at the Hartford Seminary Library, he used them to evaluate this transition. While noting this important advance in the study of Edwards Jr., the purpose of his dissertation was too broad to work toward an understanding of how Edwards Jr. received and processed his father's atonement thinking.

5) Haroutunian (1932)

Joseph Haroutunian established a long-standing decline narrative, which has been difficult to overcome. In his book, *Piety Versus Moralism: The Passing of the New England Theology*,⁶² Haroutunian argued that Edwards's successors were intent upon making Calvinism relevant to their rationalistic age. He wrote that 'in repudiating 'mysticism' the Calvinists repudiated the only chance they had of giving meaning to their theology'.⁶³ Their attempt to make a science out of theology accordingly created a 'metaphysical and unimaginative rationalism [that] was in no position to vindicate the theology of a socially dead religion. [...] Metaphysics breeds upon the remains of dead religion'.⁶⁴

Haroutunian analysed this decline through Bellamy and Hopkins, but then related his findings to Edwards Jr.'s writing on the will and the atonement. When he referenced Edwards Jr.'s debate with Chauncy over the extent of the atonement and

⁶⁰ Ernest Cornelius Widenhouse, 'The Doctrine of the Atonement in the New England Theology from Jonathan Edwards to Horace Bushnell', PhD diss. (Hartford, CT: Hartford Theological Seminary, 1931), 34-36.

⁶¹ Widenhouse, 'The Doctrine of the Atonement', 160.

⁶² Joseph Haroutunian, *Piety Versus Moralism: The Passing of the New England Theology*, 1932; reprint (New York: Harper and Rowe, 1970).

⁶³ Haroutunian, *Piety Versus Moralism*, xxvii.

⁶⁴ Haroutunian, *Piety Versus Moralism*, xxviii.

eternal punishment, he said, ‘Edwards the son had none of his father’s glowing mysticism and natural piety. He was the arch-moralist among the Calvinists. In him that legalism which has previously been observed as creeping into Calvinism finds its supreme expression’.⁶⁵

I have argued to the contrary that Jonathan Edwards Jr. had a ‘relish’ for true religion and served to advance New England Theology in his father’s system. This advance is seen in many of the unpublished weekly sermons out of the Sermon on the Mount.⁶⁶ The extreme charges laid upon Edwards Jr. are based exclusively on his published works, which were designed for engagement with public intellectuals. Edwards Jr.’s weekly preaching demonstrates a pastoral side which is contrary to this false characterization.

6) Rudisill (1971)

Dorus Paul Rudisill’s *The Doctrine of the Atonement in Jonathan Edwards and His Successors* is probably the most widely known resource, and yet, it is the least helpful with regard to Edwards Jr.⁶⁷ In fact, he neglects him entirely jumping from Bellamy and Hopkins to West. In the final chapter of his book, his critical assessment on five theories of how the atonement theory is best viewed, he provided a helpful complement to Edwards Amasa Park’s mapping out which school of thought might take the preeminent place. Yet, this help is negated by the absence of Edwards Jr.

7) Wells (1987) and Noll (2001)

David Wells delivered a four-part series of lectures at Dallas Theological Seminary (April 1987) and then these were later published in *Bibliotheca Sacra*. These lectures

⁶⁵ Haroutunian, *Piety Versus Moralism*, 150.

⁶⁶ John S. Banks, ‘Jonathan Edwards Jr.’s Relish for True Religion: The Advance of the New England Theology in the Sermon on the Mount’, *Evangelical Quarterly* 91, no. 1 (2020), 66-92.

⁶⁷ Dorus Paul Rudisill, *The Doctrine of the Atonement in Jonathan Edwards and His Successors* (New York: Poseidon Books, 1971).

represent the successors of Edwards as fumbling their theological inheritance.⁶⁸ Specifically, Nathaniel Taylor is cited as representing the tradition in ‘its closing days of real degeneracy’.⁶⁹ Yet, as helpful as this lecture series is on the debate between Hodge (Princeton) and Taylor (Yale), or to a lesser extent Andover Seminary where Professor Park taught, it casts doubt on their atonement thinking without exploring how these successors of Edwards processed the atonement. While not the purpose of these lectures, this fact demonstrates in itself a need to reevaluate the reception of Edwards Jr.’s thinking on the atonement specifically.

Mark Noll’s *America’s God: From Jonathan Edwards to Abraham Lincoln* puts into historical narrative the propositions of Joseph Haroutunian’s decline after Jonathan Edwards from spirituality into moralism. Noll claimed that ‘Hopkins and other New Englanders did not stress as much [...] the secret of a changed heart, and so the secret of godly action, was not the exertion by itself, as would become the norm in the early nineteenth century, but a special infusion of grace’.⁷⁰ In the same way, Noll downgraded Edwards Jr. For example, Noll claimed that the *Brief Remarks on the Improvements Made in Theology by His Father, President Edwards* ‘marked a reconstruction of theological reasoning in response to a moral agenda massively reshaped since the days of the older Edwards by ideologies of liberty and right’.⁷¹

⁶⁸ David F. Wells, ‘American Society as Seen from the 19th-Century Pulpit’, Part 1 of The Debate over the Atonement in 19th-Century America, in *Bibliotheca Sacra* 144, no. 574 (April-June 1987), 123-43.; David F. Wells, ‘The Shaping of the 19th Century Debate over the Atonement’, Part 2 of The Debate over the Atonement in 19th-Century America, in *Bibliotheca Sacra* 144, no. 575 (July-Sept 1987), 243-53.; David F. Wells, ‘The Collision of Views on the Atonement’, Part 3 of The Debate over the Atonement in 19th-Century America, in *Bibliotheca Sacra* 144, no. 576 (Oct-Dec 1987), 363-76.; David F. Wells, ‘Aftermath and Hindsight of the Atonement Debate’, Part 4 of The Debate over the Atonement in 19th-Century America, in *Bibliotheca Sacra* 145, no. 577 (Jan-Mar 1988), 3-14.

⁶⁹ Wells, ‘The Shaping’, 243-44.

⁷⁰ Mark A. Noll, *America’s God: From Jonathan Edwards to Abraham Lincoln* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), 274.

⁷¹ Noll, *America’s God*, 275.

8) Sweeney (2003) and Cooley (2014)

In his *Nathaniel Taylor, New Haven Theology, and the Legacy of Jonathan Edwards* (2003),⁷² Doug Sweeney planted the seeds which would come to bloom in Daniel W. Cooley's 2014 dissertation.⁷³ Doug Sweeney pointed out that there is a difference between how Calvinistic Edwardseans understood and described the atonement and the way in which Grotius, an Arminian, did. Therefore, 'faith does not elicit, but rather responds to, supernatural grace' according to the followers of Edwards.⁷⁴

Cooley's dissertation, under Sweeney's watchful eye, highlights the historiography outlined by Edwards Amasa Park. Through Sweeney's mentorship, Cooley also traced the genetic link of later Edwardseans but with a view to that Calvinistic variation on Grotius's moral government theory. In contrast to Rudisill, and others—Cooley's dissertation argued that Park's interpretation of the historiography on the atonement is indeed 'a connected chain of thought' back to their founder.⁷⁵ Cooley's work fills gaps in Park's presentation and balances Foster's *Genetic History*.

More than any other scholar, Cooley showed how aspects of Edwards Jr.'s three sermons appear in the writings of his Father. The resemblance between the two Edwards is seen in the three forms of justice, as well as the restoration of God's honour through a substitution.⁷⁶ This dissertation complements their work by prioritizing Van Mastricht and Edwards Jr.'s use of his father's manuscripts in conversation with the British Moral Philosophers of their day.

9) Individual Studies: Ferm (1976), Conforti (1981), and Valeri (1994)

To these genetic histories are added the individual studies of Edwards's successors. Robert Ferm's *A Colonial Pastor: Jonathan Edwards the Younger (1745-1801)*

⁷² Douglas A. Sweeney, *Nathaniel Taylor, New Haven Theology, and the Legacy of Jonathan Edwards* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003), 98-108.

⁷³ Daniel W. Cooley, 'The New England Theology and the Atonement: Jonathan Edwards to Edwards Amasa Park, PhD diss. (Deerfield, IL: Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, 2014).

⁷⁴ Sweeney, *Nathaniel Taylor*, 106.

⁷⁵ Cooley, 'The New England Theology', 14.

⁷⁶ Cooley, 'The New England Theology', 141, 149-51.

has been an indispensable resource for scholars.⁷⁷ However, since its printing in 1976, it has needed to be expanded and updated as new resources have been discovered. This work still provides a solid starting point in the biography of Edwards Jr. as well as an introduction to the theological debate in his lifetime. The issues of Universalism and Antinomianism as they relate to atonement are introduced by Ferm. While staying away from the Haroutunian decline narrative *per se*, his biographical sections tend to be skewed along the mid-nineteenth century's negative characterization of Edwards Jr.'s preaching style. A more careful analysis of the changing dynamics in congregationalism, specifically in Connecticut, and more broadly in the Revolution era would help balance this caricature. Edwards Jr.'s congregation was not the only one to atrophy during and after the War for Independence.⁷⁸

Joseph A. Conforti's *Samuel Hopkins and The New Divinity Movement* provides the most recent study of Hopkins's participation in the theological conversation in the late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century New England.⁷⁹ Even after forty years, this volume is still useful for its combination of historiography, context, and mentoring conversations among the first Edwardsean school. Conforti's work is one of the early efforts to reassess 'the standard historical interpretation of the New Divinity movement' produced by Haroutunian and Foster.⁸⁰

Mark Valeri's *Law and Providence in Joseph Bellamy's New England*,⁸¹ on the other hand, developed Bellamy's theological system along the lines of Haroutunian's premise. For example, in his introduction, he suggested that by elevating law in his ministry that Bellamy 'unwitting[ly] betrayed' Calvinism, producing 'a loss of vital piety and decline into moralism'.⁸² Valeri argued that Bellamy 'tended to

⁷⁷ Robert L. Ferm, *A Colonial Pastor: Jonathan Edwards the Younger (1745-1801)* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing, 1976).

⁷⁸ See John S. Banks, *Forgotten Edwards: A New Examination of the Life and Thought of Jonathan Edwards Junior* (Fort Worth, TX: Jonathan Edwards Society Press, 2021), 55-63.

⁷⁹ Joseph A. Conforti, *Samuel Hopkins and The New Divinity Movement: Calvinism, the Congregational Ministry, and Reform in New England Between the Great Awakenings* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm B. Eerdmans Publishing, 1981).

⁸⁰ Conforti, *Samuel Hopkins*, vii.

⁸¹ Mark Valeri, *Law and Providence in Joseph Bellamy's New England: The Origins of the New Divinity in Revolutionary America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994).

⁸² Valeri, *Law and Providence*, 7.

dichotomize law and faith, moral obligation and regeneration'.⁸³ While these impulses may or may not be true, Valeri seems to use Haroutunian's decline theory uncritically as a platform to explore the use of moral law in the Revolutionary era.

B. Systematic and Analytic Studies

To these historical studies are added those of a systematic or analytic concern. The attempt to retrieve from the Edwardsean Theory of Atonement (ETA) has proven to be difficult. To understand or even reconcile the atonement among the Edwardseans themselves, let alone with the historic reformed atonement view, further complicates these studies.

1) Oliver D. Crisp (2007-08)

In two articles posted a year apart in separate journals, Oliver D. Crisp posted two contrasting, but complementary articles titled 'Non-penal Substitution' (2007)⁸⁴ and 'Penal Non-substitution' (2008).⁸⁵ In the first article, Crisp interacts with John McCleod Campbell's atonement theory said to be modelled after a lacuna provided by Edwards. In Campbell's view the substitution of Christ is a vicarious penance inclusive of his blameless life and death. According to Campbell, because Christ is not a *mere* man, but the God-Man, a vicarious penance may be sufficient for atonement.⁸⁶ Crisp develops two ways in which an Edwardsean vision of a non-penal substitution might be satisfactory: 1) vicarious humanity and 2) speech act. After comparing these ways with McCleod, he concludes that Edwards may have left open the door for a non-penal substitution such as penance; however, even then there are difficulties, which occur because substitution creates a 'legal fiction' one way or

⁸³ Valeri, *Law and Providence*, 25.

⁸⁴ Oliver D. Crisp, 'Non-Penal Substitution', in *International Journal of Systematic Theology* 9, no. 4 (Oct 2007), 415-33.

⁸⁵ Oliver D. Crisp, 'Penal Non-Substitution', in *Journal of Theological Studies*, NS 59, no. 1 (April 2008), 140-68.

⁸⁶ Crisp, 'Non-Penal Substitution', 415-16.

another.⁸⁷ The question, however, still remains to be answered: does Edwards espouse a non-penal substitutionary view? Crisp defines a penal substitutionary view along that of John Owen, thus assuming that Edwards's position is non-penal.

In the second article, Crisp moved to examine Jonathan Edwards Jr.'s version. This article claims, almost apologetically, to avoid the 'intricacies of historical exegesis (important though that enterprise undoubtedly is)' that are necessary for the understanding of the atonement theory.⁸⁸ Even though Crisp frames Edwards Jr.'s position 'in his own voice', he recognizes the difficulty to reconcile the many voices involved in the New England tradition. Again, as in his previous article, Crisp recognized the difficulty of truly taking another's punishment and absolving the guilty of their guilt. In this respect, Crisp draws out the problem of both the penal and non-penal atonement theories have in common.⁸⁹ In contrast to the penal theory, the moral government theory is 'not sufficient' to atone for any fallen human being because 'Christ does not stand in the place of sinful humanity to offer himself up instead of them', says Crisp.⁹⁰ Yet, he is not willing to suggest an inability to save since there is a strong sovereignty element held by the Edwardseans, which corresponds to election rather than the atonement itself.⁹¹ In the final analysis, Crisp categorized the moral government theory as hypothetical necessity in contrast to penal which is absolutely necessity.⁹² Absolute necessity means that 'it was the only way to make satisfaction for sin'.⁹³

In this second article, Crisp engaged with Edwards Jr. more directly than others, and while Crisp's engagement was based on published works, Crisp's admission that many Edwardsean voices in the process of doctrinal development have created some of the complexity in the evaluation of their positions. Later in another article on Bellamy's version of the atonement, Crisp seems to be prepared to describe Edwards's view as in keeping 'within the bounds of satisfaction and penal

⁸⁷ Crisp, 'Non-Penal Substitution', 433.

⁸⁸ Crisp, 'Penal Non-Substitution', 143.

⁸⁹ Crisp, 'Penal Non-Substitution', 165.

⁹⁰ Crisp, 'Penal Non-Substitution', 165.

⁹¹ Crisp, 'Penal Non-Substitution', 167.

⁹² Crisp, 'Penal Non-Substitution', 167.

⁹³ S. Mark Hamilton, 'S. Mark Hamilton, 'Re-thinking Atonement in Jonathan Edwards and New England Theology', *Perichoresis* 15, no. 1 (2017), 85.

substitution version of the doctrine'.⁹⁴ This 'revision' by Crisp also presents challenges in the understanding of Edwards Sr. as well as his son because of his own admission that a comprehensive study would be too lengthy and involved. The question remains: did Edwards Sr. and Edwards Jr. adopt a penal non-substitutionary view, or what exactly is it?

2) S. Mark Hamilton (2013-)

S. Mark Hamilton has contributed a significant number of resources on Edwards and his successor's views of the atonement.⁹⁵ In this introduction I will only touch on his most recent published thoughts on the Edwardsean atonement theory, in which he seems to take a stance against his prior agreement with Crisp. Citing his own work⁹⁶ and Crisp's chapter in *After Jonathan Edwards*,⁹⁷ he proceeded to set up an argument that Edwards and his successors both fail to adequately distinguish between the rectoral and retributive demands of divine justice and how Christ's work stands to meet those demands'.⁹⁸

This led him to ask how debts of punishment and retribution are understood. Hamilton concluded that Christ cannot possibly perform both requirements of debt repayment and debt of punishment.⁹⁹ This then lead Hamilton to say that there is a 'great deal more work to be done on Edwards's doctrine of atonement' and that he is 'no longer convinced that we can make definitive claims about this adherence to

⁹⁴ Oliver D. Crisp, 'Moral Government of God: Jonathan Edwards and Joseph Bellamy on the Atonement', 78-90, in *After Jonathan Edwards: The Courses of the New England Theology*, eds. Oliver D. Crisp and Douglas A. Sweeney (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012), 78.

⁹⁵ 'S. Mark Hamilton, 'Jonathan Edwards on the Atonement', *International Journal of Systematic Theology* 15, no. 4 (Oct. 2013), 394-415.; S. Mark Hamilton, 'Jonathan Edwards on the Election of Christ', *Neue Zeitschrift für Systematische Theologie und Religionsphilosophie* 58, no. 4 (2016), 525-548.; S. Mark Hamilton, 'Jonathan Edwards, Anselmic Satisfaction and God's Moral Government', *International Journal of Systematic Theology* 17, no. 1 (Jan. 2015), 46-67.; S. Mark Hamilton, 'Re-thinking Atonement in Jonathan Edwards and New England Theology', *Perichoresis* 15, no. 1 (2017), 85-99.

⁹⁶ S. Mark Hamilton, 'Jonathan Edwards, Anselmic Satisfaction and God's Moral Government', *International Journal of Systematic Theology* 17, no. 1 (Jan. 2015), 46-67.

⁹⁷ Oliver D. Crisp, 'Moral Government of God'.

⁹⁸ Hamilton, 'Re-Thinking Atonement', 86.

⁹⁹ Hamilton, 'Re-Thinking Atonement', 90.

the penal substitution model'.¹⁰⁰ From Hamilton's perspective, the purposes of this dissertation are welcomed.

3) Obbie Tyler Todd (2021)

A very recent attempt to produce a historically contextual and systematic synthesis of the MGT is found in Obbie Tyler Todd's work *The Moral Government Theory of Atonement*.¹⁰¹ Todd has just begun to publish research in New Divinity era thinking on the atonement.¹⁰² This volume is a thorough reconstruction of this view organized around the following principles: glory and goodness, sovereign grace, public justice, and faith as duty. While incorporating good scholarly research, nevertheless, it is missing key input which might otherwise be had from Edwards Jr. The biggest example of this absence is in a section on God's glory. Oddly, Todd brings John Piper as a representative for Edwards's position on benevolence against Hopkins. To debate with Hopkins's version of disinterested benevolence it would have been better to bring Jonathan Edwards Jr. who represented his father's position better than John Piper. Indeed, Edwards Jr. was critical of Hopkin's narrow understanding of disinterested benevolence.¹⁰³ Positively, this book does much to advance the Edwardsean notion that atonement is not only salvific but also revelation of God's nature.¹⁰⁴ Todd's work would benefit from greater access to what is otherwise a generally limited understanding of Edwards Jr.

¹⁰⁰ Hamilton, 'Re-Thinking Atonement', 98.

¹⁰¹ Obbie Tyler Todd, *The Moral Government Theory of Atonement: Re-envisioning Penal Substitution* (Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2021).

¹⁰² Obbie Tyler Todd, 'Purchasing the Spirit: A Trinitarian Hermeneutic for Jonathan Edwards's Doctrine of the Atonement', *Puritan Reformed Journal* 10, no. 2 (2018): 148-167.; Obbie Tyler Todd, 'A Public Atonement: The Public Nature of Sin and Salvation in the American Moral Government Theory of Atonement', *International Journal of Systematic Theology* 21, no. 3 (July 2019): 251-264.; Obbie Tyler Todd, 'An Edwardsean Evolution: The Rise and Fall of Moral Government Theory in the Southern Baptist Convention', *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 62, no. 4 (2019): 789-802.; Obbie Tyler Todd, 'Rethinking Finney: The Two Sides of Charles Grandison Finney's Doctrine of Atonement', *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 63, no. 2 (Jun 2020): 332-343.

¹⁰³ Jonathan Edwards Jr., 'Letter sent to Samuel Hopkins, Oct 29, 1793', *Park Family Papers*, Yale University Library (MS 384, box 2, f. 16-29).

¹⁰⁴ Todd, *Moral Government*, 192.

III. THE AIMS OF THIS RESEARCH

The aim of this dissertation is to discover how the distinctive Edwardsean Theory of the Atonement came about through Edwards Jr. Therefore, inquiry into transitional thinkers who received and processed Edwards's writing is needed. For example, the earlier studies have rested on Park's presentation, which for the most part overlooks Edwards Jr. due to his focus on protecting the reputation of Andover Theological Seminary where he taught.

Other studies have adopted Foster's premise of Grotian dependency, and while Foster does elevate interest in Edwards Jr., he established a well-worn way of viewing the Edwardsean atonement that others have trod. While Sweeney and Cooley direct readers to recognize the difference between a Calvinist and Arminian adaptation of Grotius, there is still a more thorough review of Edwards Jr. needed. Daniel Cooley's dissertation in 2014 has had the most success to date.

An awareness of how Edwards Jr. came to describe his doctrine of the atonement may assist the historiography of the New England Theology. For example, Doug Sweeney and Oliver Crisp have claimed that New England theology is the most significant theological school in America of which 'little is known'.¹⁰⁵ Among the big-first three inheritors of Edwards, Edwards Jr. is the most neglected. Further, a lack of knowing of how Edwards Jr. received and processed atonement has produced divergent theories to reconcile the 'governmental' theory with the classic reformed view of 'penal substitution' theory. For example, Oliver Crisp attempts to synthesize a penal and a non-distributive view of atonement calling it 'non-penal substitution',¹⁰⁶ while Mark Hamilton sees the penal and governmental views as utterly irreconcilable.¹⁰⁷ In my view, both approaches fall short due to a relatively obscured reception *history*, and thus would benefit from new research in theological mentorship of Edwards Jr.

The research plan was developed to situate the thinking of the older and younger Edwards side-by-side. This first part is a close reading as a comparative study. In

¹⁰⁵ Oliver D. Crisp and Douglas A. Sweeney, *After Jonathan Edwards: The Courses of the New England Theology*, ed. by Oliver d. Crisp and Douglas A. Sweeney (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012), 4.

¹⁰⁶ Oliver Crisp, 'Non-Penal Substitution', *International Journal of Systematic Theology* 9. No. 4 (2007): 415-433.

¹⁰⁷ Hamilton, S. Mark, 'Re-thinking Atonement in Jonathan Edwards and New England Theology', in *Perichoresis* 15, Issue 1 (2017): 85-99.

theory, a gap should be discovered that justifies the second part of the research. The second part is also close reading of transitional thinkers who are also Edwards Jr.'s chief mentors. The final part brings the opportunity to summarize as well as assess Edwards Jr.'s thinking in light of his father factoring in mentorship. To assist in this process, an 'interlude' has been provided between the first and second parts for reflection and anticipation of the work to discover how atonement thinking passed from Edwards Sr. to Edwards Jr.

Main Research question:

How did Edwards Jr. receive and process Edwards's thoughts on atonement as transmitted to him by the reception of Bellamy, Hopkins, and Van Mastricht?

Subquestions:

Part 1: A comparison of Edwards's atonement thinking

1. How did Edwards Sr. express his thoughts on the atonement? (chapter 2)
2. How did Edwards Jr. express his thoughts on the atonement? (Chapter 3)

Interlude: Reflection and Anticipation

Part 2: An analysis of mentors on the atonement

3. How did Edwards Jr. receive and process Edwards's thoughts on the atonement through Bellamy? (Chapter 4)
4. How did Edwards Jr. receive and process Edwards's thoughts on the atonement through Hopkins? (Chapter 5)
5. How did Edwards Jr. receive and process Edwards's thoughts on the atonement through Van Mastricht? (Chapter 6)

Part 3: An assessment of Edwards Jr.'s atonement view

6. How do Edwards Jr.'s thoughts on the atonement compare with Edwards? (Chapter 7)

IV. THE METHOD AND SCOPE

The main research method employed in this project is comparison;¹⁰⁸ however, rather than a macrolevel of inter-faith exploration the research will be a microlevel comparison within the reception history of atonement thinking of Jonathan Edwards's students. This project will be limited to the period 1630–1803 in which Edwards Jr. lived and overlapped with his father and mentors.

In the process of comparison, there needs to be a starting point. Because the older Edwards's view of atonement is necessarily related to his own system of divinity, which could be its own research project, there must be a framework to compare the reception of an atonement theology with Edwards Jr. To simplify this starting project, this project will use the recent Trinitarian framework established by Kyle Strobel in his Ph.D. dissertation, which shows that Edwards's theology is properly characterized as a kind of biblical theology of redemption based on the internal relations of the Trinity.¹⁰⁹

This 'new school' approach to Edwards prioritizes the reception of Van Mastricht in Edwards's seminal sermon series that occurred early in his ministry career. This series became known as *A History of the Work of Redemption (HWR)*, edited and published by his son in 1774. In this new view, the Trinitarian godhead works out his purposes in the cosmic drama of history. Kyle Strobel argued Edwards Sr. saw redemption as the outworking of reconciliation in three plains of reality (heaven, earth, and hell). Thus, the atonement has a significant place in Edwards's theology.¹¹⁰

Strobel, however, limited his dissertation to consider how the Trinitarian relations work out their purposes in only the first two plains of reality, that is, heaven and earth. He also does not develop 'key doctrines such as atonement, justification

¹⁰⁸ Michael Strausberg, 'Comparison', in *The Routledge Handbook of Research Methods in the Study of Religion*, 21-39, ed. Michael Strausberg and Steve Engler (New York: Routledge Taylor & Francis Group, 2014).

¹⁰⁹ Kyle C. Strobel, *Jonathan Edwards's Theology: A Reinterpretation*. T&T Clark Studies in Systematic Theology 19, ed. by John Webster, Ian A. McFarland, and Ivor Davidson (New York: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2013).

¹¹⁰ Strobel, *Jonathan Edwards's Theology*, 12.

and sanctification'. While Strobel's dissertation does not fully develop Edwards's atonement view, in a later collaborative volume with Oliver Crisp he develops Edwards Sr.'s thinking on the atonement in light of his original framework.¹¹¹ While Strobel is right to orient Edwards Sr.'s framework in the nature of the Trinity, he does not consider Edwards Sr.'s use of Van Mastricht outside of his vision for a new theological method integrating history, systematics, and apologetics.

Since Edwards Jr. was young when his father died, Edwards's students stepped in to mentor him. Both Samuel Hopkins and Joseph Bellamy had a role in the development of Edwards Jr.'s thinking on the atonement. Joseph Bellamy wrote the first polemic theology of New Divinity and Samuel Hopkins wrote the first comprehensive systematic theology. This project will be a diachronic study of how these students received Edwards's atonement thinking. Van Mastricht will also be examined to observe to what extent his father's favourite theologian contributed to Edwards Jr.'s thinking on the atonement as well.

Van Mastricht, who adopted a Ramus argument style, resonated with Edwards. His approach to divine simplicity, eternal decrees, and covenant of grace proved to be foundational in *HWR*. The earliest indication of Edwards's reception of Van Mastricht can be seen in *Freedom of the Will* in which he retrieves Van Mastricht's sensitivity to God's eternity in relationship with time. Indeed, the Dutch theologian's approach to the atonement shows up nearly word-for-word in the fourteenth sermon of *HWR*. This dissertation will show how Mastricht's modified infralapsarianism arising out of Dutch debate over the covenant of grace is a feature in Edwards's atonement thinking.

This comparative and evaluative process will be an attempt to discover the historiography of Jonathan Edwards Jr.'s doctrine of the atonement. Each theologian had an emic (internal) view of the atonement formed by their systematic tendencies; however, in a genetic development of the ETA an etic (outward) view was formed in the process of reception and relation to each other's views. The comparative approach will evaluate what was rejected, included, modified, or synthesized by Edwards Jr. Closely related to this evaluation is the question of motivation for the focus and the need to articulate the atonement theory in a fresh way.

¹¹¹ In his dissertation he does not develop this aspect; Oliver D. Crisp and Kyle C. Strobel, *Jonathan Edwards: An Introduction to His Thought* (Grand Rapids: MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 2018), 121-145.

This project will also use historical methods¹¹² when interacting with primary sources assigning epistemological weight to each source through document analysis.¹¹³ Through the process of comparing specific sources, each source will be considered in regard to the weight of each source. For example, a published treatise has greater weight than notebooks of ideas. Letters shared between theologians may at times have an even stronger bearing on thinking especially if it clarifies a published work. Sermons are theological application of atonement thinking as well. Even sermons can be categorized as occasional or regular. Occasional sermons were often intended for publishing while regular sermons were for the local congregation. Regular sermons bring relevance to the intellectual aspects of doctrine as they are intended to be formative in the listener.

The historical method also takes time to evaluate the conversations occurring in the time period of the person under consideration. For example, Edwards Sr. was having conversations with other thought-leaders either chronologically just prior to himself or contemporaneously. For example, as Edwards was preparing his manuscript on the *Nature of True Virtue* and the *End of Creation*, he was in dialogue with the Moral Philosophers whose ideas were beginning to challenge biblical authority. Even as he was preparing this manuscript, he was also in mentorship relationship with Samuel Hopkins and Joseph Bellamy. The conversations and manuscript critique would provide a profound influence on Hopkins's and Bellamy's theological development. Even in Van Mastricht's day, *Theoretico-practica Theologia* included explicit dialogue partners like Scotus, Socinus, Cartesians, and Cocceius. As this dissertation will show Bellamy and Hopkins used their Mentor's work to engage the 'refined antinomianism' in their day. These were different dialogue partners and so their writings push Edwards Sr.'s writings in new directions as they are used by his students. Edwards Jr. also contextualized his father when he engaged with Charles Chauncy and John Murray who were Universalists.

This dissertation will consider the context and framework of Edwards Sr., Edwards Jr. Joseph Bellamy, Samuel Hopkins, and Petrus van Mastricht. Taking the time to research the historical context and theoretical framework of their thinking

¹¹² Jörg Rüpke, 'History', *The Routledge Handbook of Research Methods in the Study of Religion*, 285-309, ed. Michael Strausberg and Steve Engler (New York: Routledge Taylor & Francis Group, 2014).

¹¹³ Grace Davie and David Wyatt, 'Document Analysis', in *The Routledge Handbook of Research Methods in the Study of Religion*, 151-160, ed. Michael Strausberg and Steve Engler (New York: Routledge Taylor & Francis Group, 2014).

will allow for a better point of comparison. Furthermore, it will also allow each theologian to have their own voice. Along the way, constructive criticism will be provided to show how systematic and analytic theologians have misunderstood the Edwardsean Atonement Thinking. In short, this dissertation will show how Edwards Jr. faithfully developed his Father's theological system as a development of Petrus van Mastricht's *Theoretico-practica Theologia*. This Edwardsean system was made to be consistent as it engaged British Moral Philosophers, Arminian and Calvinistic Universalists, and Enlightenment thinkers in the founding era of the Republic.

V. OVERVIEW OF THE DISSERTATION

Chapter two will establish a biblical theological framework for the Edwardsean atonement by considering Kyle Strobel's thesis that Edwards's theology is best seen as a biblical theology of redemption. Rather than reargue Strobel's position *per se*, this chapter will seek to understand how this framework, which incorporates a redemptive-historical structure is important for knowing how atonement functions in Edwards's theology. In using Strobel's framework this project will research how Edwards describes atonement in his writings as the axis of redemption history. Furthermore, this chapter will demonstrate how Edwards Jr. had a good understanding of his father's theological aim by comparing the thin difference between Strobel and Crisp on what led to the creation of the world in the first place.

This chapter will elucidate how Edwards's judicious utilization of Locke's ideas can contribute to an interpretation of Edwards's framework. This will serve as a pivotal step towards comprehending Edwards's atonement theory, as it demonstrates how Locke's grammatical structure has been overlooked. Without a clear understanding of Edwards's theological methodology, which aims to reveal the concealed existence of God through the actions of God in the created world, the atonement of the Son will lack coherence. Once this method is understood, approaching the History of the Work of Redemption can take place, where Locke's ideas of reflection are applied to the atonement.

In chapter three, Edwards Jr.'s thinking on the atonement will be presented considering his writing, preaching, and correspondence. New to the study of Edwards Jr. will be the introduction of his sermon manuscripts which were composed under the watchful eye of Joseph Bellamy and at key points of development. The atonement

thinking of Edwards Jr. will be considered between the start of his ministry in New Haven (1769) and his transition to the presidency of Union College in 1799. This chapter will present his maturing thoughts on the atonement in coordination with the acquiring of his father's manuscripts as his chief inheritance. Edwards Jr. will be seen to understand his father's approach to Trinitarian equality in *Discourse on the Trinity* and apply it to his thinking on the atonement. Through the eyes of his student Maltby Gelston (1766–1865), this chapter will bring more understanding to Edwards Jr.'s position.

Chapter four will develop Bellamy's reception and transmission to Edwards Jr. Joseph Bellamy will be considered first as he was the first student of Edwards to publish *True Religion Delineated* (1750). This chapter will evaluate how Bellamy received and processed his mentor's thoughts on atonement by looking at *True Religion Delineated* as well as the *Works of Bellamy*. This chapter will introduce a key piece of correspondence between Bellamy and one of his students Punderson Austin. This letter purports to be a key to understand Edwards's *Nature of True Virtue*. Bellamy's own view of the atonement and *True Religion* may be better understood by this correspondence. Out of this research a comparison with the writings of Edwards Sr. and Jr. on the atonement will also be considered and presented.

Edwards's mentorship of Hopkins will be our next focus in chapter five. Samuel Hopkins is considered next because he published after Bellamy *The Nature of True Holiness* (1791). Rather than simply examining only those writings which deal with the atonement, this chapter will also situate this doctrine within *System of Doctrines* (1793). Hopkins, like Bellamy, developed his approach to the atonement out of his understanding of *The Nature of True Virtue*. By the time Hopkins came to write *The Nature of True Holiness* he had shifted the received paradigm that he and Bellamy had received from Edwards in *True Virtue*. New to this research will also be his correspondence giving explanation to how his moral philosophy orientated his explanation of the atonement theologically and pastorally. Out of this research a comparison of the writings of Edwards Jr. on the atonement will also be considered and presented.

Chapter six will evaluate the prominent place Petrus van Mastricht's *Theoretico-practica Theologica* was given by Edwards and his students. This is an important part Edwards Jr.'s reception and processing of his father's atonement thinking. This chapter makes use of the newly translated works by Van Mastricht by Heritage Reformation Books but also incorporates the untranslated Latin volumes not yet in print. Many have remarked about the glowing recommendation of Van Mastricht to

Edwards's students, but few have taken the time to research impact on their thinking. This chapter will also explore how Edwards Jr. used it in conversation with his own contemporary debate partners.

Finally, the last chapter will serve as a conclusion offering analysis of the positions of both Edwardes. Through a comparison of Edwards Jr.'s position on the atonement with that of his father's position analysis will be provided with consideration to the reception of Edwards through mentorship. Recommendations will be made for how this research may aid historical, systematic, and analytical scholars.

PART 1

A COMPARISON OF THE EDWARDS'S ATONEMENT THINKING

CHAPTER 2

THE ELDER EDWARDS THOUGHTS ON ATONEMENT

I. THE SEARCH FOR EDWARDS'S THEOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK

The hunt for Edwards's unifying principle began with Perry Miller. By focusing on Edwards's Enlightenment tendencies, Miller revived academic interest in Edwards. Edwards, according to Miller, used new philosophical categories to structure his Calvinist and Biblicist heritage.¹ Conrad Cherry, responding to Miller's intellectual framework, moved Edwards back to his Reformed roots by focusing on a very narrow aspect of justification by faith.² Stephen Holmes, at the turn of the 21st-century, took Cherry's instincts and situated Edwards in the reformed orthodoxy of Petrus van Mastricht and Francis Turretin.³ Holmes proposed that Edwards was motivated to deepen his predecessor's appreciation for the glory of God. Thus, Edwards's project was to work out theodicy.⁴ McClymond and McDermott, on the other hand, proposed that Edwards's theology was a 'work-in-progress'.⁵ In their magisterial *Theology of Jonathan Edwards*, they proposed five themes in Edwards's 'theological orchestra' that were in progress over his lifetime.⁶ Theirs is an open

¹ Perry Miller, *Jonathan Edwards* (New York: William Sloan Associates, 1949), 45-49.

² While Edwards is certainly an intellectual, Cherry proposed that the organization of Edwards's thoughts should be based on 'his theory of faith' as a 'Calvinist theologian'. Conrad Cherry, *The Theology of Jonathan Edwards: A Reappraisal*, 1966; reprint (Indianapolis, IN: Indiana University Press, 1990), 3-6.

³ Stephen Holmes, *God of Grace and God of Glory: An Account of the Theology of Jonathan Edwards* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing, 2001), 30.

⁴ Holmes, *God of Grace*, 31-32.

⁵ Michael J. McClymond and Gerald R. McDermott, *The Theology of Jonathan Edwards* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012), 8-9.; Whitney Oates, Introduction to *Basic Writings of Saint Augustine*, 2 vols. (New York: Random House, 1948) 1:ix-xii.

⁶ The five constituent parts begins with the notion of *Trinitarian communication*, followed by *creaturely participation*. The third and fourth parts are *necessitarian dispositionalism* and *theocentric*

system approach. Yet even McClymond and McDermott have conceded that a unifying theme must eventually become dominant. Over the last several decades, scholars have identified a Trinitarian framework. This Trinitarian emphasis has been examined in depth by Amy Plantinga Pauw, William J. Danaher, Jr., Steven Studebaker, and most recently, Kyle Strobel.⁷

What set Strobel's work apart from others was an ability to see Edwards's Trinitarianism as a synthesis of a psychological and social model. Scholars, previous to Strobel, have argued a prioritization of one model over the other.⁸ In addition, Strobel developed a new way of organizing Edwards's theology by assigning weight to sources.⁹ This method, in contrast to Sang Hyun Lee, allowed Strobel to notice the development of a 'blended' Trinitarian model that permeated other aspects of Edwards's theology.¹⁰ Ontologically, Strobel described this integrated model as 'personal beatific-delight'.¹¹ This approach is not entirely unanticipated.¹² For

voluntarism. The last element being *harmonious constitutionalism*. McDermott, *Theology of Jonathan Edwards*, 4-7.

⁷ Amy Plantinga Pauw, *The Supreme Harmony of All: The Trinitarian Theology of Jonathan Edwards* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2002); William J. Danaher, Jr., *The Trinitarian Ethics of Jonathan Edwards*, Columbia Series in Reformed Theology (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2004); Steven M. Studebaker, 'Jonathan Edwards's Social Augustinian Trinitarianism: a Criticism of and an Alternative to Recent Interpretations' (PhD diss., Marquette University, 2003); Kyle Strobel, *Jonathan Edwards's Theology: A Reinterpretation*, *T&T Clark Studies in Systematic Theology*, Vol. 19, ed by. John Webster, Ian A. McFarland, and Ivor Davidson (London: Bloomsbury, 2013).

⁸ Sang Hyun Lee, the editor of volume 21 of the *Works of Jonathan Edwards*, seems to advance the view that Edwards held to a form of the psychological model by describing it as 'a dispositional essence' that creates along the same pattern of repetition. Sang Hyun Lee, 'Editor's Introduction', in YE21:38. Sang Lee interprets the Trinity out of a philosophical premise in line with Miller. Sang Hyun Lee, *The Philosophical Theology of Jonathan Edwards* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000).

⁹ This new hermeneutic was first described by Oliver D. Crisp a year prior to Strobel. See Oliver D. Crisp, *Jonathan Edwards on God and Creation* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012), 3-5.

¹⁰ Strobel, *Jonathan Edwards's Theology*, 17-20.

¹¹ Strobel, *Jonathan Edwards's Theology*, 65-71, 69.

¹² John S. Banks, *Forgotten Edwards: A New Examination of the Life and Thought of Jonathan Edwards Junior* (Fort Worth, TX: Jonathan Edwards Society Press, 2021), 105-106.; Herbert Richardson was the first to develop a study of Edwards's Trinitarian theology with an ontological turn. In a remarkably similar way to Strobel, Richardson observes that Edwards 'synthesized the disparate philosophical and mythological movements [in 16th and 17th Trinitarian debates] with a third way: a Trinitarian ontology. The Trinitarian ontology enabled Edwards to give ontological significance to reason and will with the additional category of affection or feeling. The addition of the category of affection replaced the notion that the soul consists of the two faculties of understanding and will. In Edwards' psychology,

example, Pauw recognized that Edwards had a ‘high toleration for theological tension’ in that ‘Edwards employed two distinct models of the immanent Trinity’.¹³ Strobel brought Pauw’s observation forward by noticing how Edwards synthesized them.

Strobel highlighted Edwards’s use of *emanation* and *remanation* as a circular metaphor. Edwards used these terms to describe how the glory of God, as beams proceed from a great luminary like the sun, ‘are refunded back again to their original’.¹⁴ Strobel called this representation of pure act ‘beatific-delight’.¹⁵ This was a sensitive use of Edwards’s doctrine of divine simplicity and is derived from Reformed Orthodoxy’s preference for Ramism’s dialectic approach.¹⁶ As for the ‘personal’ aspect, Strobel would likely prefer to say that this is ‘something like a psychological analogy’ yet having ‘a degree and manner’ of ontological perfection that defied analogy because this personhood is not limited to that which is inherent to human comprehension.¹⁷ Comprehension of what can be known of the divine nature was a significant part of Edwards’s theological agenda and will be developed later in this dissertation.

Before picking up this as an epistemological project, Edwards sensed that a Trinitarian framework was needed by which to frame the work of redemption in the visual world. In notes prepared for an early draft of this ‘Rational Account’ of

the role of the understanding is to know objects of sense perception and reflection. The will is the mind’s consent to the relation between objects or the consent that constitutes relation between the subject and object’. Studebaker, ‘Jonathan Edwards’s Social Augustinian Trinitarianism, 51-52.; Herbert W. Richardson, *Toward an American Theology* (New York: Harper and Row, 1967), 220-90.; See also Krister Sairsingh, ‘Jonathan Edwards and the Idea of Divine Glory: His Foundational Trinitarianism and Its Ecclesial Import’, PhD diss. (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1986).

¹³ Pauw, *The Supreme Harmony*, 11.

¹⁴ YE8:531.

¹⁵ Strobel, *Jonathan Edwards’s Theology*, 12-20.

¹⁶ This will be developed in greater detail in chapter six. In brief, this approach uses the tensions in positive and negative propositions as refinement and deduction. For example, divine simplicity is held as a negative and considered against the positive perfections of God to arrive at a doctrinal conclusion.

¹⁷ Oliver D. Crisp & Kyle C. Strobel, *Jonathan Edwards: An Introduction to His Thought* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2018), 40, n. 4.

Christianity, Edwards set a reminder to develop his thoughts on the Trinity as part of its introduction.¹⁸ Edwards wrote this reminder, expressing his desire,

To explain the doctrine of the Trinity before I begin to treat of the work of redemption; and of their equality, their equal honour in their manner of subsisting and acting, and virtue. But to speak of their equal honour in their concern in the affair of redemption afterwards, after I have done with all the doctrines relating to man's redemption.¹⁹

In this statement of intention one can piece together a chain of connect from *Discourse on the Trinity* to *A History of the Work of Redemption*. The Trinity loomed large in Edwards's mind as it related to redemption.²⁰ Yet, within the reformed tradition, this connection is expected as a necessary point in covenant theology whether crafted by Heidelberg or Westminster. Covenant theology had several developments before being handed to Edwards.

The first major development from two to three covenants came as a way to distinguish the *pactum salutis* from the covenant of grace. The agreement by the Father and the Son from eternity (*pactum salutis*) had specific consequences for how redemption would occur in the history of the world; whereas, the covenant of grace referred to the basic stance of God in Christ with believers after violation of the

¹⁸ See Ava Chamberlain, 'Editor's Introduction', in YE18:33. According to Thomas Shafer, Edwards's proposed 'Rational Account' was abandoned after 1740. Perry Miller, on the other hand, suggested that the 'Rational Account' was a 'subterranean' current running through the 'Miscellanies'. See Thomas Safer, "Editor's Introduction," 1-90, in YE13:7.

¹⁹ YE6:396.

²⁰ During his lifetime the orthodox doctrine of the Trinity was under attack by those who were concerned with a rational faith. In the previous century, debates raged between William Sherlock and Robert South. Samuel Clarke had just published *The Scripture Doctrine of the Trinity* in 1712 inviting rebuttal from Daniel Waterland and others. This controversy and attempt to use only scriptural terms would pull in Isaac Watts. Jonathan Edwards had at one time 'bragged' in Miscellany Entry 94 on Trinity that he was 'not afraid to say twenty things about the Trinity which the Scripture never said'. Ironically though, he never published his *Essay or Discourse on the Trinity*. YE13:257.; Philip Dixon, *Nice and Hot Disputes: The Doctrine of the Trinity in the Seventeenth Century* (London: T&T Clark, 2003), 170-207.; Scott Aniol, 'Was Isaac Watts Unitarian? Athanasian Trinitarianism and the Boundary of Christian Fellowship', *Detroit Baptist Seminary Journal* 22 (2017): 91-103.

covenant of works.²¹ Thus, the death of Christ on the cross, which corresponds to the *pactum salutis* in eternity, is the crux of the covenant of redemption in the unfolding of time as dispensations of grace.

With this awareness, we should not be surprised that the early 1739 draft of *HWR* has a direct correspondence between the Trinitarian agreement and the atonement made by Christ. The thirty years of Christ's life culminating in the death and resurrection, said Edwards, had a direct correlation with 'all that was done before the beginning of time in the eternal counsels of God, and that eternal transaction there was between the persons of the Trinity'.²² Yet, there is more to this connection that Edwards intended to develop. Specifically, he desired to analyze the shadows of the inseparable operations in the visual world to understand the ineffable light within the Trinity through a careful crafting of the dispensations of grace.

In 1757, in a letter to the Trustees of the College of New Jersey, he described this project as

a body of divinity in an entirely new method, which I call *A History of the Work of Redemption*, being thrown into the form of an history, considering the affair of Christian theology, as the whole of it, in each part, stands in reference to the great work of redemption by Jesus Christ which I suppose is to be the grand design of all God's designs, and the *summum* and *ultimum* of all the divine operations and degrees; particularly considering all parts of the grand scheme in their historical order.²³

Edwards's stated goal was to write a new kind of systematic theology along the lines of a history descriptive of redemption's outworking through time. But take note how this project might also reveal "all the divine operations and degrees." To be clear, this history was intended to be a way to explain theology proper—the being of God. He recognized the need to establish a Trinitarian framework first, as he had proposed in his notes about 'A Rational Account', out of which creation and atonement would be properly understood. Specifically, he says of this forthcoming history, that it

²¹ Willem van Vlastuin, 'Federalism and Reformed Scholasticism: Jonathan Edwards's doctrine of the covenant in its reformed context', 184-198, in *The Oxford Handbook of Jonathan Edwards*, eds. D. Sweeney and J. Sieverman (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2021), 184-85.

²² YE9:281-370, 294.

²³ YE16:727-28.

will be carried on with regard to all three worlds, heaven, earth, and hell: considering the connected, successive events and alterations, in each so far as the Scriptures give any light; introducing all parts of divinity in that order which is most scriptural and most natural: which is a method which appears to me the most beautiful and entertaining, wherein every divine doctrine, will appear to greatest advantage in the brightest light, in the most striking manner, showing the admirable contexture and harmony of the whole.²⁴

Even though Strobel alluded to this intention as support for his *personal beatific-delight* thesis as a framework, nevertheless, he does not develop Edwards’s atonement thinking in *HWR* in light of the framework. Instead, he borrowed Edwards’s analogy of wheels to support his emanation and remanation proposal but neglected the metaphor’s purpose to *expose the perfections of God* in the visual world. This neglect creates a tantalizing opportunity. If, as Edwards’s claimed, there is a ‘harmony of the whole’ of God’s system—through the realms of heaven, earth, and hell—then the turning of the wheels of God’s providence in time are a potential way to look into God’s Being as if by a mirror—even if God is a simple.

Yet, how Edwards thought about the connection between God and the visual world (creation) has been the subject of the scholarly work of Oliver Crisp, too. Strobel, as well as many others, have benefited from the insights of Crisp on the philosophical *Zeitgeist* in which Edwards lived. Indeed, Crisp has proposed that Edwards had come to a kind of immaterialism to that of Bishop George Berkeley; however, with his own distinct markings of anti-realism.²⁵ From a historical philosophical point of view, both Crisp and Strobel identify this strain in Edwards as a reaction to Thomas Hobbes’s materialist realism.²⁶ In doing so, they provide a convincing argument that Edwards embraced an immaterial anti-realist position in reaction. In brief, this argument is derived from Edwards’s contention that ‘there is

²⁴ YE16:728.

²⁵ Oliver Crisp, *Jonathan Edwards on God and Creation* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012), 147-48.

²⁶ Oliver D. Crisp and Kyle C. Strobel, *Jonathan Edwards: An Introduction to his Thought* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2018), 68-69. John Bombaro identified Edwards’s brand of ‘Berkeley-like idealism’ as sourced from Henry More, Malebranche, Smith and Norris, and Locke. Bombaro, *Edwards’s Vision of Reality*, 294-95.

no proper substance but God himself.²⁷ While not the total sum of Crisp’s argument, as is the case, those who come after often provide another sober look and tend to improve the conversation. For example, S. Mark Hamilton has provided a convincing counterpoint to the anti-realist thesis of a Berkeleyan immaterialism. Hamilton, on the other hand, proposed that due to Edwards’s inclusive statements on spirits he is not entirely anti-realist, to wit, ‘beings which have knowledge and consciousness [because] spirits are the only proper substance’.²⁸

While this dissertation will not adjudicate the merits of Hamilton’s argument in opposition to that of Crip, I will only point out in passing that the ‘science is not settled’ on how exactly Edwards integrated his philosophy in all his theological projects. Furthermore, in this chapter, I will argue that in seeking to advance a ‘theologian first’ thesis that Strobel missed Edwards’s intention to *HWR* to be a rational lens by which to view the interior Trinity. This becomes more apparent when considering how Edwards used perception theory derived from John Locke throughout *HWR* and meaningfully in the act of atonement itself in Sermon 16. Furthermore, while Strobel (Crisp to a lesser extent) argued that Edwards is, ‘first and foremost, a theologian’ *contra* Sang Hyun Lee,²⁹ he had neglected to consider how Edwards used Locke’s metaphysical grammar to assist ‘human understanding’ of God’s being since ‘knowledge and consciousness’ is common to all spirits.

Strobel rightly argued that Edwards was not a Lockean *per se* but conceded that Locke ‘provided Edwards with a grammar to colour his Trinitarian thought’.³⁰ It is true that on several points Edwards disagreed with Locke, but he nevertheless

²⁷ YE6:215.

²⁸ YE6:206. See also YE6:204, 207. S. Mark Hamilton, *A Treatise on Jonathan Edwards: Continuous Creation and Christology* (Fort Worth, TX: Jonathan Edwards Society Press, 2017), 22-27.

²⁹ Strobel, *Jonathan Edwards’s Theology*, 19. I agree with Strobel’s premise that Sang Hyun Lee has misread Edwards as promoting a new dispositional ontology; however, I believe, as I will argue, that *contra* Lee, Edwards Jr. properly understood his father’s use of metaphysical grammar made popular by John Locke. Lee concludes wrongly that ‘Edwards saw reality not in terms of substances and forms, as had been done for so many centuries, but as a network of law-like habits and dispositions’. Lee is correct that Edwards was in transition; however, Edwards still retained the nominal grammar of Locke to describe doctrinal development which can be ascertained about God in creation and redemption. Hang Sang Lee, ‘Does History Matter to God? Jonathan Edwards’s Dynamic Re-conception of God’s Relation to the World’, 1-12 in *Jonathan Edwards at 300: Essays on the Tercentenary of His Birth*, ed. Harry S. Stout, Kenneth P. Minkema, and Caleb J. D. Maskell (Lanham, MD: University Press of America), 1-2.

³⁰ Strobel, *Jonathan Edwards’s Theology*, 53 n86, 151, n3, 175 n100. Paul Helm, ‘John Locke and Jonathan Edwards’ A Reconsideration’, *Journal of the History of Ideas* 7, no. 1 (1969), 51-61.

incorporated Locke’s metaphysical grammar into his theological musings. In some respect, he, like George Berkeley, was a ‘phenomenalistic idealist’ who allowed for the Spirit to excite ideas and sensations within upon a person ‘from without’.³¹ This is an important concession to which Jonathan Marko lends support. Marko, a leading Locke scholar in this generation, argued that ‘scholars wrestle with the implications of Edwards’ ‘spiritual knowledge’ or ‘sense of the heart’, not observed in Locke *per se*, yet placed in a Lockean epistemological framework’.³² This Lockean ‘epistemological framework’ shows up frequently in Edwards’s work.

For example, in preparation for *HWR*, Edwards described the way *finite beings* understand an *infinite being*. In Miscellany No. 777, Edwards listed four ways ideas are shared with others: (a) images or resemblances, (b) words and declarations, (c) effects, and (d) *a priori* deductions. These, he said, ‘are the only ways in which any creature can see or know God’.³³ John Locke’s *Essay Concerning Human Understanding* develops a theory of ideas that are derived through experience, sensation, and reflection. Through these three avenues, all ideas can be assessed in the four ways Edwards summarized in Miscellany No. 777.³⁴ Norman Fiering suggested that these categories of investigation are not entirely original to Locke and simply part of the *Zeitgeist*,³⁵ I argue that Edwards merely benefited from Locke’s popularization of these

³¹ Wallace E. Anderson, ‘Editor’s Introduction’, in YE6:97, 101-102, 112-15.

³² Jonathan Marko, ‘Edwards’ Religious Epistemology in the Wake of John Locke: ‘Miscellanies’, No. 782’, 157-178, in *The Jonathan Edwards Miscellanies Companion*, Vol. 3, ed. Robert L. Boss (Fort Worth, TX: Jonathan Edwards Society Press, 2023), 158. Marko argued that Locke is largely misunderstood by scholars on the matter of his stance towards Christianity. He was looking for the marrow of doctrine to which all could participate within Christianity. Locke was issuing warnings to deists who rejected the necessity of divine revelation. Jonathan Marko, *John Locke’s Theology: An Ecumenical, Irenic, and Controversial Project* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2023).

³³ YE18:428-29. His appreciation for Locke is also evident in that he had encouraged his young son to read John Locke’s *Essay on Human Understanding* at just 11 years of age. By all appearances he would have also prepared him for college, too. William B. Sprague, *Annals of the American Pulpit [...]*, Vol. 1. New York: Robert Carter and Brothers, 1857), p. 658.

³⁴ See, Locke, *Essay* for images and resemblances, (2:8 §§ 7, 15), words, declarations, and signs (2:11 § 8), and effects (2:8 §§ 18-21), and *a priori* (1:3 §§ 1-3). John Locke, *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, ed. Peter H. Niddich (New York: Oxford University Press, 1975).

³⁵ ‘Many historians seem to have little awareness of the extent to which Locke himself was dependent upon his predecessors, both Scholastic and Cartesian. The consequence of this unawareness is that various ideas held by Edwards and other thinkers who happen to have read the *Essay Concerning Human Understanding* are automatically attributed to the influence of Locke, when in fact these ideas were the common coin of philosophical scholarship in the late seventeenth century’.

methods in *Essay*.³⁶ Locke’s grammar was a widely accepted way to analyse an *infinite mind* capable of creating the universe, and the frequency of Edwards’s early engagement with Locke substantiates the claim that *Essay* is one of Edwards’s handy philosophical tools.³⁷ A reintroduction of Locke’s method into the conversation serves to develop Edwards’s Trinitarianism and ultimately the atonement.

Before developing how a Trinitarian framework impacts Edwards’s thinking on atonement, we must consider the merits of Crisp and Strobel’s theological-philosophical approach. This analysis will provide a bridge to *HWR* where Edwards’s Trinitarian framework is employed. In their chapter on ‘God and Creation’ in *Jonathan Edwards: An Introduction to His Thought*,³⁸ I focus on their respective differences on why and how the Trinity communicates himself in creation. I will offer a third way in which Edwards Jr. may provide an interpretation of his father’s position. This will prove to be an important step towards understanding Edwards’s atonement thinking with Locke’s grammar. Without a clear sense of Edwards’ theological method to explicate the hidden life of God by acts of God in the created world the atonement by the Son will have little coherence.

II. PHILOSOPHICAL-THEOLOGICAL APPROACHES TO EDWARDS’S ATONEMENT THINKING

Analytic theologians like to use Edwards as a dialogue partner to untangle the problems typically associated with the traditional penal substitution theory of atonement (PSA). Edwards, though, tends to create more problems than he solves

Norman Fiering, *Jonathan Edwards’s Moral Thought and Its British Context* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1981), 14.

³⁶ In Scotland, Locke had replaced Aristotle’s metaphysics by the time John Erskine was a student in Edinburg University. This exemplifies how Locke’s work was ubiquitous in the conversations of Shaftesbury, Hutcheson, as well as Malebranche and John Norris. Jonathan Yeager, *Enlightened Evangelicalism: The Life and Thought of John Erskine* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 29.

³⁷ ‘The Mind’, Nos. 2-3, 10-11, 41. YE6:338-39, 341-33, 359-60. Miscellany Nos. aa, ee, 4, 123, YE13:177-78, 182-83, 200-201, 286-87. See also Miscellany No. 94. YE13:256-258. cf. *Discourse on the Trinity* YE21:114-16.

³⁸ Oliver D. Crisp & Kyle C. Strobel, *Jonathan Edwards: An Introduction to His Thought* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2018).

because he is continually testing his theology with a variety of philosophical tools.³⁹ Despite this difficulty, there have been three general approaches to Edwards’s atonement thinking: philosophical,⁴⁰ theological,⁴¹ and blended.⁴² Strobel and Crisp’s more recent blended approach is a more nuanced way of handling the vast corpus of Edwards’s published and unpublished manuscripts. In this way, the following section closely follows Strobel’s proposal of ‘mutual beatific-delight’ *via* personhood, perception, and delight as developed in the first two chapters of their joint work.⁴³ Without discounting the subterranean occasionalism and immaterialism noted by others within Edwards studies,⁴⁴ Locke’s influence must also be factored in because the knowledge of God is at least a subordinate if not an ultimate end of creation as proposed in the Westminster catechism.⁴⁵

³⁹ See the literature review in the prior chapter specifically Crisp and Hamilton. Oliver Crisp, ‘Non-Penal Substitution’, *International Journal of Systematic Theology* 9. No. 4 (2007): 415-433.; Mark S. Hamilton, ‘Re-thinking Atonement in Jonathan Edwards and New England Theology’, in *Perichoresis* 15, Issue 1 (2017): 85-99.

⁴⁰ For example, see Chris Woznicki, ‘The Coherence of Penal Substitution: An Edwardsean Defence’ in *Tyndale Bulletin* 70.1 (2019), 95-115. Sang Hyun Lee, *The Philosophical Thought*; Pauw, *The Supreme Harmony*; John Bombaro, *Jonathan Edwards’s Vision of Reality: The Relationship of God to the World, Redemption History, and the Reprobate*, Princeton Monographs Series (Eugene, OR: Pickwick Publications, 2012).

⁴¹ For example, see Brandon James Crawford, *Jonathan Edwards on the Atonement: Understanding the Legacy of America’s Greatest Theologian* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2017); Brandon James Crawford, ‘Divine Love as the Organizing Principle of Jonathan Edwards’s Doctrine of the Atonement’, in *Journal of Evangelical Theology* 62.3 (2019): 563-582.

⁴² Crisp and Strobel, *Jonathan Edwards*.

⁴³ Crisp and Strobel, *Jonathan Edwards*, 40.

⁴⁴ Crisp described this as a “Neoplatonism [that] implies some sort of panentheism, or something very like panentheism.” Crisp, *God and Creation*, 139. Also, Douglas Elwood, *The Philosophical Theology of Jonathan Edwards* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1960). John J. Bombaro, *Jonathan Edwards’s Vision of Reality: The Relationship of God to the World, Redemption History, and the Reprobate* (Eugene, OR: Pickwick Publications, 2012).

⁴⁵ Strobel is close to making this connection when he says that ‘it is unclear to me (Strobel) that Edwards is employing an analogy at all. Edwards utilizes the category of personhood to delineate the threefold reality of the divine essence (something like mind, understanding, and will). But Edwards does not seem to be utilizing an analogy. This is just what it means to be personal: God or human’. He quotes Edwards who identifies a commonality in the ‘psychology’ of a created being and that of God. The only difference is that of ‘degree and manner’. The interplay of mind, understanding, and will is corollary to Locke’s theory of perception and applied to ‘God or human’ by Edwards. Crisp and Strobel, *Jonathan Edwards*, 40, n4.

Crisp and Strobel helpfully point out how Edwards affirmed perfect being theology grounded in the Reformed Scholastic tradition of Jean Calvin, Francis Turretin, and Petrus van Mastricht.⁴⁶ As such, Edwards agreed with divine simplicity which teaches that God’s attributes are never unrealized—they are always actualized because anything less would cause God not to exist—therefore, God exists as ‘Divine Simple Pure Act’.⁴⁷ In other words, God is a simple and pure immaterial being who has no unrealized potential.⁴⁸ God’s ontology, structured this way, is the occasion to ask why God create the world in the first place. If he has no unrealized potential, then does God have dispositions? If not, then what does this say about God if he has unrealized attributes?

In response to this question Crisp and Strobel lay out four contemporary views on a spectrum ranging from a strong dispositional approach (Lee-Bombaro) to a Neoplatonist approach (Crips-Strobel). The tension between all these views is related to Edwards’s received Reformed Orthodoxy and Enlightenment philosophy. To settle Edwards into a clean definition is likely impossible but the effort to do so creates opportunity for further scholarly consideration.⁴⁹ Since this dissertation is situated in the Crisp-Strobel trajectory, I am proposing a *via media* between Crisp and Strobel. This mediation may, in the end, draw them even closer together by the incorporation of Edwards Jr.’s interpretation of his father’s theological project. First, a careful consideration of the slight differences between Crisp and Strobel is in order.

⁴⁶ Crisp and Strobel, *Jonathan Edwards*, 74.; see also, Willem J. van Asselt, *Introduction to Reformed Scholasticism* (Grand Rapids: Reformation Heritage Books, 2011), [Calvin] 80-83, [Van Mastricht] 146-147, [Turretin] 157-163.

⁴⁷ Crisp and Strobel, *Jonathan Edwards*, 84.

⁴⁸ Crisp and Strobel, *Jonathan Edwards*, 79.; Edwards supports this view by referring to Andrew Baxter’s explanation of divine simplicity. ‘The eternal duration which was before the world, being only the eternity of God’s existence: which is nothing else but his immediate, perfect, and invariable possession of the whole of his unlimited life, together and at once; *vitae interminabilis, tota, simul et perfecta possessio*’. YE1:385-86.

⁴⁹ Schultz concludes that there is in the end no ‘positive internal necessity’ and that Edwards himself concludes that God’s decision to create is ‘ultimately inscrutable’. Walter J. Schultz, ‘Must God Create? Dispositions and the Freedom of God in Jonathan Edwards’s End of Creation,’ 202-219, in *Regeneration, Revival, and Creation: Religious Experience and the Purposes of God in the Thought of Jonathan Edwards*, eds. Chris Chun and Kyle C. Strobel (Eugene, OR: Pickwick Publications, 2020), 218-219.

A. Crisp's Necessitarian View Derived from Neoplatonism

In *Jonathan Edwards: An Introduction to his Thought*, Crisp proposed that Edwards considered God's eternity to include a disposition to create. This conclusion comes about because God's existence outside of time provides a context for all potentials to be accounted for in the mind of God. According to Crisp, eternity itself led Edwards to believe that anything we might call disposition is simply pure act. In other words, a disposition to create is just the way God exists as a spirit—simply with no parts, accidents, or attributes. Crisp quotes from *The End of Creation* where Edwards described God's propensity 'to diffuse himself [which] may be considered as a propensity to have himself diffused, or to his own glory existing in its emanation'. Simply put, God is a mind which exists in the fulness of his own thought. This fulness includes an 'infinite of possible worlds God has chosen not to actualize' and the one world he chose to actualize in time.⁵⁰ This framing of God's disposition to create is an argument from a negative which leads one to ask if God really had a choice at all? That Crisp has been interpreted as advocating a necessitarian view, although compatibilist in orientation, is corroborated by Chris Woznicki's recent article in which he supports Crisp in opposition to Strobel's 'non-necessitarian view' on this very point.⁵¹

In contrast to Strobel, who will be considered below, Crisp's proposal makes God into something less personal. God becomes to some degree like an artificial intelligence uncontained by time holding an infinite degree of computations before itself including those scenarios where God does not exercise his creative attributes.

⁵⁰ Crisp and Strobel, *Jonathan Edwards*, 96.

⁵¹ 'Given that Crisp and Strobel agree that God is disposed to create because God is a communicative being, how are we to adjudicate between Strobel's non-necessitarian view and Crisp's necessitarian view? I suggest that Edwards's divine determinism and his use of the terms, 'fittingness' and 'condescend', in other passages should lead us to accept Crisp's view as being correct. God, in other words, is a communicative being who necessarily creates'. Chris Woznicki, 'Creation is Condescend: Necessary Creation and God's Self-communicative Disposition in Jonathan Edwards's Thought', 267-282, in *The Jonathan Edwards Miscellanies Companion*, Vol. 3 (Fort Worth, TX: JESociety Press, 2023), 276.

This propensity to create from his atemporal essence, Crisp claims, is an Edwardsean adaptation of Neoplatonism to avoid anthropomorphism.⁵²

As helpful as Crisp's observations are, nevertheless, they do not adequately account for the volitional and affective nature of God.⁵³ Crisp's interpretation produces a necessity to create that, in the end, arises out of the eternal divine nature, in a way that leaves God without option to *not* create. Crisp would likely not want to be perceived as coming to this conclusion since there is a compatibilist aspect to God's nature as an agent; however, this is the end trajectory in what is a very slight difference between he and Strobel. Edwards's emphasis upon agency is pervasive, as for example, in Miscellany No. 854 where Edwards said that 'it appears that the Creator did act as a voluntary agent, proposing final causes in the work of creation'.⁵⁴ By 'proposing final causes', Edwards claimed God chose to create along a foreseen and *desired* outcome. Yet, Crisp suggests that the eternal nature of God makes it so that things like desire and disposition are not to be read anthropomorphically.⁵⁵

I would caution that Edwards does not need to avoid anthropomorphism since, as pointed out by Strobel, he recognized that 'though the divine nature be vastly different from that of created spirits, yet our souls are made in the image of God: we have understanding and will, idea and love, as God hath, and the difference is only in the perfection of degree and manner'.⁵⁶ While Edwards certainly leans upon the occasionalism associated with Neoplatonism and a Berkeleyan metaphysic, in some respects Crisp is overstating Edwards's position on the eternal and temporal distinction to make his point.⁵⁷ Furthermore, to make his point, Crisp suggests that Edwards might have in mind something like a multiverse, saying, '[In] one sense [counterfactual states] are "actual" because they really do exist. It's just that they exist

⁵² Crisp and Strobel, *Jonathan Edwards*, 97. YE8:439.

⁵³ Crisp and Strobel, *Jonathan Edwards*, 95-96. Walter Schultz also sees that Edwards found himself against the wall of inscrutability. The only inference or possible reason that can be found must be derived from God's freedom. Walter J. Schultz, 'Must God Create? Dispositions and the Freedom of God in Jonathan Edwards's End of Creation', 202-219, in *Regeneration, Revival, and Creation: Religious Experience and the Purposes of God in the Thought of Jonathan Edwards*, ed. Chris Chun and Kyle C. Strobel (Eugene, OR: Pickwick Publications, 2020).

⁵⁴ YE20:95. See also, YE1.

⁵⁵ Crisp and Strobel, *Jonathan Edwards*, 96.

⁵⁶ YE21:113. Cf. Crisp and Strobel, *Jonathan Edwards*, 40, n4.

⁵⁷ Consider, as well, Edwards's argument that the first cause of creation must be from an 'intelligent voluntary agent'. YE18:392-398.

as ideas of what might have been'.⁵⁸ This is doubtful because, Edwards says elsewhere that

There is no other way that a being can exist before its actual proper existence, but only existing in some representation. [...] The representation of the future thing aimed at by the first cause is no otherwise present with that first cause, before actual existence, than all other possible being not actually existing.⁵⁹

Edwards deepens this argument, in Miscellanies 880 *Being of God*, by claiming that chain of being through time must support one another by cause or infinitely not at all. By the same logic, there cannot be an infinite array of uncaused elements in nature, for otherwise there would be a cause of these uncaused causes. Further, to simply increase the length of time by the infinity of eternity, does not in itself increase the probability of an ultimate cause. In other words, there cannot be an 'absolute universal nothing', rather God's ideas of the universe are rooted in his absolute existence.⁶⁰

So then, ideas of what might have been, are no different than ideas that have been chosen. But, with this fundamental distinction, only those ideas *acted on* can be said to exist properly in time—what Crisp calls 'temporal effects'.⁶¹ Nothing is *real* until they are called into existence *ex nihilo*—which is the basis of continuous creation. Ironically, Crisp's necessitarian view is somewhat like the atonement controversies in subsequent generations of New England theologians. The antinomian and universalist spoke of a *necessity* to atone for all because a fallen mankind was necessary in the redemptive plan in the first place. In other words, atonement is not of grace; rather, it is simply a sinner's due based upon the divine necessity to carry out salvation. This is not to say that Crisp espouses these spurious views but rather that these views could find solace in this line of argument. Yet, contrary to the antinomians and universalists, God is free to create along the lines of his *natural*

⁵⁸ Crisp and Strobel, *Jonathan Edwards*, 96. In other places, Crisp has argued that Edwards is not Neoplatonist. Oliver D. Crisp, 'Jonathan Edwards on Creation and Divine Ideas', 185-201, in *Regeneration, Revival, and Creation: Religious Experience and the Purposes of God in the Thought of Jonathan Edwards*, ed. Chris Chun and Kyle C. Strobel (Eugene, OR: Pickwick Publications, 2020).

⁵⁹ YE18:395.

⁶⁰ YE20:121-139.

⁶¹ Crisp and Strobel, *Jonathan Edwards*, 97.

inclination without creating a multiverse of what might have been according to his good pleasure. An inclination is a disposition rooted in an eternal relation.⁶²

Crisp, in other places, gives recognition to Edwards’s commitment to Locke’s method of perception, reflection, and affections.⁶³ Yet, he does not develop this connection with as much vigour as he does in the areas of occasionalism, continuous creationism, and four-dimensionalism. This lacuna will become important in subsequent chapters in which Edwards Jr., Bellamy, and Hopkins develop their mentor’s system of theology paying closer attention to the perception language of Locke. With regard to ‘temporal effects’ relative to God’s ‘eternal act’, Edwards processed the temporal world using of Locke’s perception theory as a way to know the mind of God. As a method of scientific inquiry Edwards’s use of Locke is a way to discover the *personal* aspect of God’s being. In many respects, Strobel has derived his *personal beatific-delight* as a development from Locke whether he realizes it or not.

B. Strobel’s Non-necessitarian View

Admittedly, the distance between Crisp and Strobel is very slight. Yet, Strobel, on the other hand, sees Edwards describing God as existing in fullness without a necessity to exercise his creative attributes *per se*. This position lends itself to a non-necessitarian interpretation because the very fullness of Being as the first cause ‘excited him to create the world’.⁶⁴ In other words, ‘emanation is fully actualized’, and thus Strobel argued, ‘it is fitting that this emanation flows forth *ad extra* (therefore, God creates)’. Creation, then, becomes ‘a projection or overflow of

⁶² See Miscellany No. 1062. ‘God’s natural inclination to glorify and communicate himself in general’ is said to be derived from the ‘natural subjecting one to another [...] should be agreeable to the order of their subsisting’. YE20:430-32.

⁶³ ‘Edwards’s commitment to a version of idealism similar in many respects (though distinct from) that of Berkeley, along with a species of phenomenalism about the objects of perception. [...] and is in keeping with Locke’s famous discussion of substance in his *Essay Concerning Human Understanding* 2.23’. Oliver D. Crisp, *Jonathan Edwards on God and Creation* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012), 34-35.

⁶⁴ YE18:392-398.

⁶⁴ YE18:392-398.

⁶⁴ Crisp and Strobel, *Jonathan Edwards*, 101.; YE8:435.

himself in the created order' like a fountain.⁶⁵ With regard to God's fulness, he exists in a state of *beatific-delight*. *Beatific-delight* is captured in the word *excite*, which is used to describe the remanation of the Spirit in the emanation of the Son *ad intra*.⁶⁶ While Strobel does not explicitly develop this correlation, nevertheless, a link can be found in Miscellany No. 749 to a non-necessitarian reason for creation. Here, Edwards argued that as the first cause, God must exist as voluntary pure act.

Though there be no proper passions [in God] as in created minds, yet voluntariness is exercised to an infinitely greater height. The divine love, which is the sum of all the exercises of the divine will, is infinitely stronger, more lively and intense, as not only the light of the sun, but his heat, is immensely greater than that of the planets whose light and heat is derived from him.⁶⁷

This is, in any regard, 'God willing to exercise his attributes in emanating himself in creation in a way that is fitting but not necessary'.⁶⁸ This only serves to highlight the slight difference between Crisp and Strobel's positions.⁶⁹

In trying to avoid the alternative conclusion that God has a kind of disposition *à la* Lee, Strobel downplayed the influence of Locke, which was common in the analysis of Paul Helm, and had tended to lead to a dispositional view of God's nature.⁷⁰ However, Edwards does use aspects of Locke's metaphysics, but without losing his own theological opinion as noted by Thomas Schafer. Indeed, Schafer suggested that his idealism was developed apart from Locke.⁷¹ Yet, Schafer identified how Edwards's early sermon on 1 Cor. 2:14 (1725) incorporates aspects of Locke's 'reflex knowledge' into spiritual understanding. This sermon in Bolton, NY seems to be a draft picked up later for his more famous *Divine and Supernatural Light* (1734) eleven years later. While Edwards does develop a unique idealism that is in the main

⁶⁵ Crisp and Strobel, *Jonathan Edwards*, 101.; YE8:433.

⁶⁶ YE21:142. Cf. Strobel, *Jonathan Edwards's Theology*, 75-104.

⁶⁷ YE18:392-98, 395.

⁶⁸ Crisp and Strobel, *Jonathan Edwards*, 101.

⁶⁹ Chris Woznicki, 'Creation is Condecenent'.

⁷⁰ Strobel, *Jonathan Edwards*, 53, 151. For the alternative disposition view see Lee, *The Philosophical Thought*; Pauw, *The Supreme Harmony*; Bombaro, *Jonathan Edwards's Vision of Reality*.

⁷¹ Thomas Schafer, 'Editor's Introduction', YE13:47.

immaterial, he does use Locke's perception terminology in his description of the Trinitarian relations. For example, the Son is said to be a 'reflex or contemplative idea' of the Father in his 1730 draft of *Discourse on the Trinity*.⁷²

Yet, Strobel and Crisp are correct, Edwards does not collapse God into the mould of human ideation entirely. For example, in Miscellany No. 782, Edwards considered how humanity processes ideas in contrast to God who can hold a real idea (as opposed to a sign or symbol) before his view without overloading his 'circuits'. For example, God's ideation of himself is a real eternal and infinite generation. In contrast to God, humanity does not have the capacity to process the idea of oneself because of the immense energy that would be required to 'excite' the mind to duplicate ourselves perfectly like God. Thus, humanity must process ideas in a nominal way. Locke is cited directly by Edwards as an authority on the use of symbols to assist our finite mind process ideas as a substitute for those actual things themselves.⁷³

Since God processes ideas in a greater way than humanity the ideas which will be acted upon are real however immaterial they might be because they have their origin in God who is real. At this point, much confusion may begin to build. In coordination with Edwards's commitment to immaterialism, his use of Locke seems to indicate that he is nevertheless a realist—at least with respect to beings and spirits as pointed out by Mark Hamilton (see discussion above). Regarding Edwards's position on why God created an immaterial world in which spirits proceed from the mind of God, it would seem that God did so freely on the basis of his own nature as a perceptive being, that is, his being was excited to do so.

In response to Crisp, who argued on the basis of eternity there was a necessitarian impulse to create the world, there is a sense in which choosing not to create other kinds of worlds (material or immaterial) is not a function of pure act. In other words, the non-created options do not correspond and will never correspond to anything. In other words, it's just nothing.⁷⁴ Edwards says that 'the diffusive disposition that excited God to give creatures existence was rather a communicative disposition in

⁷² YE21:116-17, 141-42.

⁷³ YE18:454-61. See also Miscellany No. 822 where he says that the actual view of God's glory 'excites and extends the soul' to have an increase in appetite for the happiness that a view of God's happiness produces. YE18:533-34. Locke, *Essay*, 2:22.

⁷⁴ YE18:457-58.

general, or a disposition in the fullness of the divinity to flow out and diffuse itself.⁷⁵ This is more in line with Strobel's point, that the fullness of God's nature neither predisposed him by disposition nor by necessity, rather the fullness simply 'excited' him to create as 'a communicative disposition'.⁷⁶ Yet, in Strobel's larger work in *Jonathan Edwards's Theology: A Reinterpretation*, he claimed that this fullness occurs voluntarily through the Son's mediation as *Personal Beatific-Delight*. Yet, what is this mediation? Is it not an idea of reflection in God? The main difference between Crisp and Strobel's perspective,⁷⁷ in this author's opinion, is a *personal* impulse in the *beatific-delight* implies knowledge. But knowledge implies *ideas of reflection*. The personal relations excite the Godhead through reflection and compel the Trinity to create other intelligent beings with which to remanate happiness. This 'reflex knowledge' seems to provide a way to mediate between the two positions and appears to be understood by Edwards Jr.

C. Edwards Jr.'s Collective-Distributive View

Support for Strobel's non-necessitarian view is surprisingly found in Edwards Jr. Although, finding this support requires a careful use of Locke's grammar. This view has a ring of closed system deism; however, after careful consideration of the terms used one can see the influence of Locke's perception grammar to clarify the reason for creation. In *Remarks on the Improvements Made in Theology* Edwards Jr. says,

Mr. Edwards was the first, who clearly showed, that both these [*happiness of creatures and the declarative glory of the Creator*] were the ultimate end of the creation, that they are only one end, and that they are really one and the same thing. According to him, the declarative glory is the creation, taken, not distributively [*sic*], but collectively, as a system raised to a high degree of happiness. The creation, thus raised and preserved, is the *declarative* glory of God. In other words, it is the exhibition of his *essential* glory.⁷⁸

⁷⁵ YE8:434-35.

⁷⁶ Crisp and Strobel, *Jonathan Edwards*, 102.

⁷⁷ Crisp and Strobel, *Jonathan Edwards*, 102.

⁷⁸ Emphasis original. AE1:481.

In Edwards Jr.'s handwritten notes prepared for the published version of his *Remarks*, he originally wrote that his father was the first to say that 'the declarative glory of God is a system the creation, taken, not distributively [sic] but collectively, as a system, is the declarative glory of God; and view so raised to a high degree of happiness'.⁷⁹ The scratched out words above provide a clue to how his son read his father's thoughts. While not the final published version they do provide supplemental insight. On the question of ultimate ends of creation, Edwards Jr. claimed, his father was innovative in three ways.

First, by saying that the declarative glory is the creation Edwards emphasized the *collective* system rather than the *distributive* sub-systems therein. Uniquely, Edwards Jr. used elements of Locke's grammar to describe this innovation. A collective system is analogous to complex ideas. A complex idea is a collection of simple ideas. Thus, creation is a *collective* system declaring God's glory *in se*. The *distributive* parts of the created order are important but of lesser importance in the overall project.⁸⁰ Creation, as a collective system, arises for the purpose of 'the exhibition of his *essential* glory'.⁸¹ This exhibition is the ultimate end of creation, and the subsystems align with subordinate ends. In other words, there is a correspondence between the decree to create a foreseen complex system from eternity and its distributive 'temporal effects'. This piece of Locke's grammar is not in competition *per se* with Edwards's other well-established philosophical starting points like occasionalism, immaterialism, and four-dimensionalism. The next two innovations introduce Locke's sensation grammar more directly as a mechanism to explain the creation of the world.

Secondly, Edwards Jr. represented his father's theology using Locke's term *essential* with reference to glory rather than the word *internal*. This is an interesting switch. For example, in *The End of Creation* Edwards used the word *internal* and not *essential* to describe the glory of God. Glory is the emanation of the internal, that is, it's essential glory as substance.⁸² The substitution of *essential* is significant in light of how mankind understands God's *internal* glory through sensation. Yet, Locke

⁷⁹ Edwards Jr. does not include this paragraph in the first draft, whereas he does in the second draft. Jonathan Edwards Jr., 'Improvements in Theology Made by The Late Rev. Jonathan Edwards, Draft 2', *Jonathan Edwards Jr. Papers (Sermons, etc.)*, Hartford International University Library (Box 169, Folder 2754, Item 76645), 14.

⁸⁰ Locke, *Essay*, 2:12; YE20:108.

⁸¹ AE1:481.

⁸² YE8:513.

defined an *essence* as consisting of both a nominal and real essence. That is, a real essence is 'constantly found to co-exist with the nominal essence; that particular constitution, which everything has within itself, without any relation to anything without it'.⁸³ In Locke's definition one can hear elements of the Athanasian and Nicene Creeds. *Only* the Son and Holy Ghost may claim to know the essence of the Father because they are co-existent with the Father as both real and nominal because they have a shared essence. This is the very mystery of the Trinity. Everything that proceeds from the triune God such as the universe is a relation of God's real essence. The universe are shadows and signs of God's essence, but they cannot claim to be God.

With respect then to Edwards's doctrine of creation, God's glory in creation is a representation of God essence, but it is not God. This is an important distinction for three reasons. First, nominal representations can be a sign which may or may not be a real substance. The chain of being begins with the triune God and all that proceeds from him are temporal effects. In other words, creation is a collective system designed to show God's essence *nominally*. This, however, does not answer the question to which inquiring minds desire to know: are there any proper substances outside of the mind of God? In other words, is creation simply a tableau that exists in the mind of God? It would seem that there are other kinds of substances which exist to receive and process creation as signs of God's essence held forth. This is apparent when Edwards used the plural to say 'spirits only are properly substance' *i.e.*, real substances like God but with less capacity.⁸⁴ Secondly, to understand God's being man must be content with analogy of God's essence because of his finite capacity. Thirdly, because no one has seen God, man must rely upon observable characteristics through signs to construct an idea about God's essence.⁸⁵

If Edwards Jr. is using Locke's terminology as it would seem, then he is claiming that his father made a distinction between God's internal glory, which is real and the external glory, which is analogized in creation as a collective system. In other words, there is an internal glory in God that that is distinct from the shadows inherent in creation. Yet, these temporal effects may have a touch of realism inherent to their origins in the mind of God. Lisanne D'Andrea-Winslow has pointed out, that 'ideas

⁸³ Locke, *Essay*, 3:6 § 6.

⁸⁴ YE6:204, 207. This point is developed by S. Mark Hamilton extensively. See Hamilton, 'Spirits are Real', 17-27, in *Treatise on Jonathan Edwards*.

⁸⁵ Locke, *Essay*, 3:6 § 5; Locke, *Essay*, 4:4 § 12.

in God's mind are ontologically real types'. In other words, 'types are not mere human assignments, but are ontologically real since they represent ideas in God's mind, which are also real'.⁸⁶

Edwards Jr. introduced an alternative interpretation, which goes in a slightly different direction than that of Strobel and Crisp. They differentiate Edwards's view from pantheism by terming it panentheism; however, they seem to miss Edwards's purpose in distinguishing God from creation.⁸⁷ For example, they propose Edwards conceived 'creation [as] existing in a somewhat *attenuated* state in the divine mind as a set of stable ideas'.⁸⁸ Yet, this *attenuated* state is more properly a collection of ideas of what will be. These ideas about creation exist in the mind of God as pure act until the fulness of time, at which point, they display God's glory as temporal effects. To this author, Edwards Jr. seems to understand his father's use of Locke to be rooted in perception and communication from one substantial being to another. To put it another way, Edwards Sr. said that '[t]he works of God are but a kind of voice or language of God, to instruct intelligent beings in things pertaining to himself'.⁸⁹

Thirdly, and from Edwards Jr.'s earlier draft, he demonstrated the visual import of creation by the word *view*. And yet, while not his final choice of words, it does hint at the reason for this collective system. This system is 'raised and preserved'⁹⁰ to reflect or provide a *view* of his own happiness in the collective system. For example, in Miscellany No. 1099 *End of the Creation. Glory of God. God's Declarative Glory*, Edwards notes that the view of creation is of 'infinite importance in his eyes' and that 'God's declarative glory, as it is in God's view, is truly an infinitely great thing'. This *view* of creation, like the Father's internal *view* of the Son, creates a bond of union with his creation that is nevertheless a distinct relation.⁹¹ Accordingly,

⁸⁶ Lisanne D'Andrea-Winslow, 'A Great and Remarkable Analogy: Edwards's Use of Natural Typology in Communicating Divine Excellencies', 220-234, in *Regeneration, Revival, & Creation: Religious Experience and the Purposes of God in the Thought of Jonathan Edwards*, eds. Chris Chun and Kyle C. Strobel (Eugene, OR: Pickwick, 2020), 223.

⁸⁷ Crisp and Strobel, *Jonathan Edwards*, 104.

⁸⁸ Crisp and Strobel, *Jonathan Edwards*, 105; YE6:215-16, 344.

⁸⁹ YE11:67. See Winslow, 'A Great and Remarkable Analogy,' 222-24.

⁹⁰ The phrase 'raised and preserved' may also be a way of addressing his father's doctrine of continual creationism. AE1:481.

⁹¹ That Edwards sees a distinction of Creation from himself is obvious in Miscellany Nos. 1039 and 1041 where he deduces from comets that the '*World is Not from Eternity and Will Come to an End*'. YE20:377-79, 380-82.

Edwards wrote that '[it] is fit that he should take delight in his own excellencies being seen, acknowledged, esteemed, and delighted in'.⁹² Again, creation has a *visual* purpose to communicate God's *real* essence although in an analogical way.

D. Loose Ends

Crisp and Strobel recognized that creation is dependent upon God's preservation, but do not fully develop how the realms of heaven, earth, and hell display God's internal glory.⁹³ If creation is designed to be a visual display of God's perfections, then we should expect to see an outworking of God's essence in this world. Specifically, as Edwards states in *End of Creation*, 'Thus it appears reasonable to suppose, that it was what God had respect to as an ultimate end of his creating the world, to communicate of his own infinite fulness of good'.⁹⁴ Likewise, the atonement is a centrepiece in which God's internal glory (*personal beatific-delight*) is shared with creatures who in turn raise God's *beatific-delight* to 'a high degree of happiness'. Therefore, when approaching *HWR* one should expect that the atonement will provide a *view* of God's *real essential* glory in some way.

If Edwards Jr. is correct about his father's system of theology, then creation and redemption are intended at least to be a visual display of his essential nature and at most a very intimate sharing of this essence by the Holy Spirit. Therefore, any account of redemption history must serve to illumine God's being and create union with other minds. The atonement is a major mechanism for this gift of the Spirit to be infused in sinners so there is an intimate sharing. Even though Strobel and Crisp hold a difference of opinion on the degree to which creation is necessitarian or non-necessitarian, in the end, they correctly show that Edwards considered the love and wisdom of God as the theological foundation of atonement.⁹⁵ In this respect, I argue that just as creation is non-necessitarian so also is the atonement. In the course of

⁹² YE8:437-38.

⁹³ Strobel admits a neglect of how hell functions in 'Edwards's tri-level scheme'. Strobel, *Jonathan Edwards's Theology*, 12. Crisp does develop some of the logic of hell in his chapter 'Consummation' located in Crisp, *Edwards on God and Creation*, 164-89.

⁹⁴ YE8:433.

⁹⁵ Crisp and Strobel, *Jonathan Edwards*, 122-23. 'Everything that was contrived and done for the redemption and salvation of believers, and every benefit they have by it is wholly and perfectly from the free, eternal, distinguishing love and infinite grace of Christ towards them'. YE24:617.

this chapter, I will show that this conclusion is espoused by Edwards Sr. and is owing to the voluntary nature of the Son as mediator *ad extra* corresponding to the Son's 'natural inclination' as the Second Person of the Trinity *ad intra*. This connection informs Edwards's atonement thinking on many levels.

Because Strobel and Crisp do not factor in Locke's grammar, they overlook Edwards's desire to unveil the invisible world. The *reason d'être* for *HWR* was to reveal to human understanding God's *personal beatific-delight*. For Edwards 'the work of redemption' serves to display God's essential glory with other created minds. In this way, atonement declares what God is like. The Holy Spirit impresses upon the mind the reality of God through 'images or resemblances' in this world.⁹⁶ Said another way, atonement, in all its complexity, serves not only to display the essential glory of the Trinity in 'signs held forth', but to infuse the elect with capacity to perceive God in all of life. The Holy Spirit excites a response in a sinner so as to receive God's glory as it was intended to be shared by God. This is regeneration as a fruit of the atonement by the gift of the Spirit. Yet, it is also a remanation. As a subunit in the system of creation, the emanation in man by the Spirit results in a remanation as others see the fullness of God.

Edwards intended to work out the riddle of God's real essence through the empirical study of the signs of God's glory in heaven, earth, and hell.⁹⁷ Yet, if creation is a collective system with many distributive parts, then how do they work together to reveal the Trinity? The answer is found in *HWR*. Edwards Sr. replied, 'in all this [affair of redemption] God designed to accomplish the glory of the blessed Trinity in an exceeding degree. God had a design of glorifying himself from eternity, to glorify each person in the Godhead. The end must be considered first in the order of nature and then the means'. For Edwards, the end is found in the Trinity's 'natural inclination' towards mediation. The means is found in the decree that the Son be a substitute for sinners. The work of redemption in time reveals the 'blessed Trinity in an exceeding degree' in eternity⁹⁸ or as Edwards Jr. summarized his father's position:

[T]he declarative glory is the creation, taken, not distributively [*sic*], but collectively, as a system raised to a high degree of happiness. The creation,

⁹⁶ YE13:428; YE9:355-56.

⁹⁷ YE16:729; YE18:291.

⁹⁸ YE9:125.

thus raised and preserved, is the *declarative* glory of God. In other words, it is the exhibition of his *essential* glory.⁹⁹

In practical terms, the next question that must be addressed relates to how creation and its subsequent redemption reveals the Trinity ultimately bringing union between substantive beings.

III. HOW CREATION (AND REDEMPTION) REVEAL(S) THE TRINITY

A. Creation as a Collective System

Edwards was convinced very early in his career that creation was a collective system, designed to reveal the internal glory of God. To describe creation's purpose, he used a clock and its internal wheels as a metaphor. In *Miscellany No. tt.* (1723), he proposed that each part (wheel) of a system (clock) is meaningless unless it contributes to the whole. Nevertheless, each part 'hanging together, and sweetly harmonizing and corresponding' contributes to the whole.¹⁰⁰ Creation, like a clock with its distributive wheels, was designed to transfer knowledge from one being to another as a collective system. Therefore, the lesser wheels were important but not as important as the whole. But, a clock and creation, have different 'future ends'. A clock tells time; whereas creation and its redemption are designed to excite happiness in other intelligent beings.¹⁰¹

Creation, like a clock, has a feature called time. Through time, excitement to happiness occurs as God's being is revealed in two ways. First, through the wheels of

⁹⁹ Emphasis original. AE1:481.

¹⁰⁰ YE13:189-90. Cf. 'The Mind', no. 43, YE6:361-62.

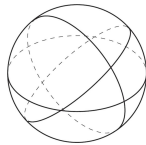
¹⁰¹ A few months later, in another entry about the future end of creation being happiness, he considers that 'intelligent beings are that consciousness of the creation that is to be the immediate subject of this happiness'. YE13:200; YE20:280-86; YE13:190-91; YE13:190-91; Creation is God's collective system 'to that good' purpose to share happiness, where every sequential movement in the system has consequence for what comes next, moving to the future end. YE18:392-93; Also see *Miscellanies* 867. YE20:108.

historical movement and second in prophetic incursions into time.¹⁰² Of the second of these ways, Edwards says, prophetic utterances in Scripture indicate that God ‘foresees that future thing, or that it exists already in his idea, just as much as if he foretold it’.¹⁰³ Therefore,

Things past, present, and future are all alike before God, all alike in his view; and when God declares to others what he sees himself, he is equally obliged to truth, whether the thing declared be past, present, or to come. [...] *futurition* is now present with God when he threatens [punishment]—present in his mind, his knowledge.¹⁰⁴

Like wheels in a clock, which move in sequence distributively, each wheel is nevertheless indispensable and is part of the collective system that turns in God’s mind as one. In figure 2.1 below the collective knowledge of God is illustrated as a collective idea in God’s mind that corresponds to God’s knowledge distributively revealed as wheels in creation.

Pure Act in Eternity (*futurition*)



Act in Time (past, present, future)

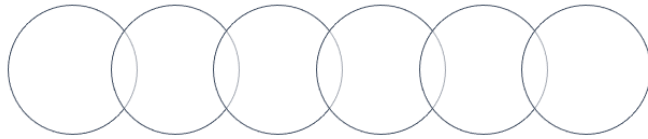


Figure 2.1 *Three Dimensional and Diachronic Representation of Reality*

¹⁰² In the tenth sermon of *HWR*, Edwards says that ‘there are two ways [...] by which the Work of Redemption is carried on: one is by history, and another is by prophecy’. *YE9:242*.

¹⁰³ *YE18:393*. In *Miscellany No. 896*, Edwards supposes that ‘Things that are future are some way present with it. [...] that the state of one thing may be conformed to, and in harmony with, the state of another’. *YE20:154*.

¹⁰⁴ *Emphasis added. YE18:446-47*. See also *Miscellany No. 896. Being of God. God an Intelligent, Voluntary Being*. ‘Things that are future are some ways present with it. There is, in its disposition of things, respect to something else in another place; that the state of another, and also to something to come [to] some end to be obtained’. *YE20:154*.

B. Futurition as God’s Collective Knowledge

While describing the effect of prophecy in time, Edwards used the word *futurition* to describe God’s knowledge. To Edwards, a *futurition* is a complex web of ideas in God’s mind corresponding to his internal glory. As such, these ideas exist as ‘works and revolutions’ to finite beings sequentially revealed in the history of the world.¹⁰⁵ According to Edwards, borrowing from Locke, God’s ideas are shared with other minds by (1) images or resemblances, (2) words and declarations, (3) effects, and (4) *a priori* deductions as these ‘are the only ways in which any creature can see or know God’.¹⁰⁶

This is the place to address the potential collapse of everything into an anti-realism in Edwards’s four-dimensionalism.¹⁰⁷ In this respect, the fourth dimension is the numeric sequence of each revolution of time and could represent his continuous creation as the Venn-diagram overlap shows in figure 2.1 above. Please consider how Edwards differentiated the word ‘begotten’ as a reference to the Son in distinction to things which exist temporally. He noted that

[so] that by God’s reflecting on himself the Deity is begotten, there is a substantial image of God begotten. [...] God has no succession. For everything that is, has been, or shall be, having been perfectly in God’s idea from all eternity, and a perfect idea (which yet no finite being can have of anything) were equally present with God, and there is not alternation made in [his] idea by presence and absence as there is in us.¹⁰⁸

In other words, the intervals of time and space create a succession in the created world but not in God himself. S. Mark Hamilton has convincingly argued that despite Edwards’s immaterialism a realist understanding of stage theory is possible since realism

¹⁰⁵ Mankind has such a limited scope because of the shortness of their lives; however, angels are ‘fit witnesses and spectators of God’s works here below, and might behold all parts of the divine scheme, and see how it was accomplished in the divine works and revolutions [wheels] from age to age’. YE18:99.

¹⁰⁶ YE18:428-29.

¹⁰⁷ YE6:241-42.

¹⁰⁸ YE13:258.

hinges on the difference between the relation of minds and ideas to those stages. And the difference is this. I [Hamilton] think that the content of these stages is made up of various simple and complex ideas, which together compose stages that are *nothing more than mental projections; divine mental projections*, to be more precise.¹⁰⁹

This is an important point which advances my argument that futurition is a collection of ideas (complex ideas), which are in actuality ‘various simple ideas’ on successive temporal stages.¹¹⁰ In short, what holds these worlds together from moment to moment allows for at least a realism of other beings within what is largely an immaterial world and to a greater extent the ideas themselves are still dependent upon God himself.¹¹¹ Indeed, Edwards believed that ‘the course and *series of his exciting ideas*, as if they, the things supposed, were in actual idea’.¹¹²

Creation as a collective system, then, declares God’s essential glory in a linear way through time so other intelligent beings may understand God’s essential glory in creation.¹¹³ Through longform historical progress God gradually reveals his internal glory in distributive systems so that other intelligent beings may comprehend his unseen nature. Prophetic utterance, on the other hand, is a unique intrusion of a *futurition* showing us the atemporal pure act of God’s infinite wisdom.

¹⁰⁹ Emphasis original. S. Mark Hamilton, *Treatise on Jonathan Edwards*, 35-36.

¹¹⁰ See also YE6:357.

¹¹¹ ‘I answer, there has been in times past such a course and succession of existences that these things must be supposed to make the series complete, according to divine appointment of the order of things; and there will be innumerable things consequential which will be put out of joint—out of their constituted series—without the supposition of these. [...] Yea, there must be a universal attraction in the whole system of things from the beginning of the world to the end [...] the whole system and series of ideas in all created minds, so that these things must necessarily be put in to make complete the system of the ideal world’. YE6:357.

¹¹² YE6:357.

¹¹³ YE18:428.

C. *Discourse on the Trinity and Futurition*

Discourse on the Trinity seems to have been the intended prerequisite to a greater work on redemption.¹¹⁴ This document is also pivotal in Strobel's *personal beatific-delight* scheme and needs to be summarized here in brief. Critical to Edwards's approach is a generation of the Son to *mediate* the love of the Holy Spirit. Edwards conceived the Trinity as consisting of the Father's visualization of himself in the Son from a distance, and this distance produced 'excitement' between the two. Significantly, Edwards uses Locke's ideas of reflection as analogy to describe this *ad intra* relation to process delight in the beauty of excellence.¹¹⁵

There is, then, a long teleological discussion about the Spirit as divine love, disposition, and holiness as one and the same.¹¹⁶ As the argument progresses, and noted by Strobel, Edwards shows that the Holy Spirit 'acts economically as he acts immanently [...] Edwards offers the reader a glimpse into his trinitarian vision of redemption'. Of particular importance to the argument of this dissertation is how Edwards freely considers the *ad extra* relations in redemption to be fair game for understanding the *ad intra* relations.

In *Discourse*, Edwards says that he is 'sensible [of] a hundred other objections may be made' and that 'I am far from pretending to explaining the Trinity so as to render it no longer a mystery. [...] But in time, with reason may [be] led to say something further of it than has been wont to be said'. Then Edwards proceeds to make a bold claim that

It seems to me that what I have here supposed concerning the Trinity is exceeding analogous to the gospel scheme, and agreeable to the tenor of the whole New Testament, and abundantly illustrative of gospel doctrines; as might be particularly shown, would it not exceedingly lengthen out this discourse.¹¹⁷

Then, Edwards makes a move to consider the *ad extra* equality in these relations, saying that the Son as the image and Word of God, takes this role to mediate or

¹¹⁴ YE6:396.

¹¹⁵ YE21:114-16.

¹¹⁶ YE21:122-34. Cf. Strobel, *Jonathan Edwards's Theology*, 57.

¹¹⁷ YE21:134.

‘purchase’ the Love of the Holy Spirit in redemption; yet this ‘move’ provides mutual happiness through the person of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is ensured equality in dignity and honour because as ‘the thing purchased’. He is equal to all three persons. In other words, the willingness of the Son to take on a service role is by no means less in honour because of the reward for doing so. The price paid for the reward also ensures the Son’s honour because the ‘thing purchased was as much as to be the price’.¹¹⁸

The dignity and honour of each person is preserved in this arrangement. Thus, the great end of the eternal movement of God is the *personal beatific-delight*.¹¹⁹ Furthermore, this analogy of exchange in which the Son becomes a mediator purchasing the Holy Spirit preserves the honour and dignity of the Son and the Holy Spirit in a way that is a *fair analogy* of the *ad intra* relations. While there is a necessity in the generation of the Son, there is also an unconstrained delight to do so—an *excitement* that does not need coercion. It is His *natural inclination* to mediate *ad intra* as he does *ad extra*. In this sense there is a voluntary mediation *ad intra*. This is the basis of Strobel’s non-necessitarian position on why God created the world and extends to the atonement.

Personal beatific-delight is God’s pure act but the shadows and effects in creation and redemptive history *ad extra* provide insight into God’s nature *ad intra*. God’s pure act does not only relate to his own nature but also includes that dense web of *real* ideas of future acts to create and redeem the world. These ideas correspond to his internal glory, but they exist in a state of *futurition* until they present themselves in history (see figure 2.1 above). These ideas show up as ‘effects’ and ‘shadows’ to reveal ‘*a priori*’ God’s nature in the world. For example, the *voluntary* nature of God in mutual delight is what God is and knows. It is his pure act and futurition of that nature, which will be unveiled distributively through past, present, and future acts in creation, redemption, and atonement.

¹¹⁸ YE21:137.

¹¹⁹ In Miscellany No. 1047. *Trinity. The Holy Ghost*, Edwards references John Owen’s *Discourse Concerning the Holy Spirit* to describe the Spirit as the ‘mutual love of the Father and the Son’ as necessary to ‘the being and blessedness of God’ and “in these mutual, internal actings of themselves’ (i.e. the person of the Trinity) ‘consists much of the infinite blessedness of the holy God’”. YE20:389.

D. Method and Natural Inclination

Amy Plantinga Pauw characterized Edwards's Trinitarianism as 'an employment of two distinct models of the immanent Trinity', but, more accurately, he discarded the classic distinction of immanent and economic.¹²⁰ Edwards's move is well-known as the eternal submission of the Son theory. What is less well understood is how and why he makes this move. First, to make this move, Edwards makes two significant adjustments to the classic distinction between the immanent Trinity and economic Trinity. First, he revised the Covenant of Redemption to *methodology*.¹²¹ Then he redefined what would be traditionally called internal processions as simply the expression of *natural inclination*. He wrote that 'God's determination to glorify and communicate himself' is the *natural* [read: voluntary] *inclination*, which is logically 'prior' to the decision of a specific 'method'.¹²²

To Edwards these two aspects, *method* and *inclination*, are 'diverse' from one another and should not be seen as the same. Yet, the *method* of disclosure is 'agreeable [read: harmonious] to the order of their subsisting'.¹²³ The *method*, says Edwards, reveals 'from the nature of things [...] being plainly deduced' actions that are 'agreeable to the order of their subsisting'. Indeed, this ordering is fit and decent, even pleasurable and beautiful.¹²⁴ The first cause is resident in God's nature that is excited to beget, to create, and to redeem. Edwards is proposing that the veil which typically shields observers from making inferences about the immanent Trinity can be taken away if one recognizes that the Covenant of Redemption exposes a 'natural inclination' which would *lead* to the *pactum salutis*. This does not mean that Edwards has dispensed with economic relations in creation; rather, he is simply suggesting that theologians make too much of the difference between the *ad intra* and *ad extra* operations and focus less on their similarity.

By Edwards's thinking, this does not diminish the equality of the immanent relations. As noted above, *Discourse on the Trinity* preserved equality in the exchange

¹²⁰ Pauw, *The Supreme Harmony*, 11.

¹²¹ Jonathan Edwards Jr.'s editorial hand is seen in this document by the addition of 'Observations concerning the' to the title of Miscellany No. 1062. *Economy of the Trinity and Covenant of Redemption*. YE20:430-444.

¹²² YE20:431-32.

¹²³ YE20:432.

¹²⁴ YE20:433.

of mediation with the Spirit. From Edwards's point of view the equality inherent in the immanent Trinity is preserved even though there is a differentiation of eternal relation along the lines of 'inclination'. This is important for understanding Edwards's intentions in *HWR*. Edwards was determined to magnify the Son in the work of redemption but not at the expense of the harmony of the whole Trinity. Edwards's Trinitarianism focused upon the *natural inclination* of mediation *ad intra* and the *method* of this disclosure, he argued, must agree *ad extra*.¹²⁵

Before we proceed, we must also recognize that the *method* is closely related to *futurition*. Since *futurition* corresponds to the collective real ideas from eternity as pure act and related to creation and redemption. God's essential glory is progressively revealed in redemption history as the wheels of the system turn. By way of reminder, mankind gets a glimpse of God's *futurition* in the works of God *and* prophetic utterance. Again, the *futurition* of ideas (past, present, and future) is a revelation to other intelligent beings of how the Trinity subsists in its *natural inclination*. By these distinctions Edwards was not proposing redemption created the economic Trinity. Rather, the life of the Trinity, in its simplicity, created a universe to reveal the processions of God who exists as pure act love. Call it *personal beatific-delight*. God did this to raise the collective system 'to a high degree of happiness' to show others the happiness which exists in the Trinity through mediation.¹²⁶ The unseen God who exists in this relation intends to be observed, enjoyed, and glorified by other intelligent beings as they observe the declaration of his essential glory. This is God's excellency.¹²⁷ It is out of this tendency of excitement to love, to mediate that there is a voluntariness or non-necessitarianism in God which is seen in the shadows of the atonement as the God-man freely embraces the misery of the cross.

¹²⁵ By calling the intra-trinitarian mediation a 'natural inclination', Edwards may be pointing to the only place in the universe where love and consent may truly be said to follow without a need for the intellectual process of reflexive analysis of the will because of divine simplicity. Edwards demonstrates a familiarity with Malebranche, but also Locke for he describes the relations of the Trinity as ideas of reflection in *Discourse on the Trinity* (YE21:114-116. For Malebranche, see Norman Fiering, *Jonathan Edwards's Moral Thought and Its British Context* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of NC Press, 1981), 79-80).

¹²⁶ AE1:481.

¹²⁷ Thomas Schafer, 'Editor's Introduction', YE13:53-58.

C. The 'Exhibition of God's Essential Glory'

Edwards Jr. said his father saw creation as an 'exhibition' of God's Trinitarian nature.¹²⁸ If creation is a display of God's essential glory, then heaven is theatre seating. In other words, the longitudinal projection of God's essential glory through time was designed to help finite beings visualize infinite *personal beatific-delight* by the shadows, images, and analogies of God. According to Edwards, positing Locke's grammar, there is no other way to view God except through images, words, effects, or deductions. An immediate knowledge is reserved for God 'There can be no view or knowledge that one spiritual being can have of another, but it must either immediate and intuitive, or mediate, or by some manifestations or signs'.¹²⁹

Often creation is separated systematically from the doctrine of soteriology, however Edwards merged them together. More properly, it is the redemption of creation that is, to quote his son, an 'exhibition of God's *essential* glory' in its fullest sense.¹³⁰ Towards the end of *HWR*, Edwards says that

This Work of Redemption is so much the greatest of all works of God, that all other works are to be looked upon either as part of it, or appendages to it, or are some way reducible to it. And so all the decrees of God do some way or other belong to that eternal covenant of redemption that was between the Father and the Son before the foundation of the world; every decree of God is some way or other reducible to that covenant. And seeing this Work of Redemption is so great a work, hence we need not wonder that the angels desire to look into it.¹³¹

Creation, with all its redemptive purposes, is like a clock that if dismantled, would be comprised of many wheels. One of these wheels includes the fall so that creation might have redemption. Another wheel would be the incarnation, followed by the cross and resurrection. The 'harmony of the whole' serves to declare God's glory collectively. In *HWR* Edwards acts as a curator of the shadows and effects of the Trinitarian operations as they appear in redemption history. Very early in *The*

¹²⁸ AE1:481.

¹²⁹ YE18:427, 427-34.; See also Miscellanies 555. *Heaven. Separate State. Angels.* YE18:99-100.

¹³⁰ Emphasis Original. AE1:481.

¹³¹ YE9:513-14; YE18:510.

Miscellanies (May-June 1723), Edwards recognized that the projection of God's perfections is not for the sharing of knowledge only, but so that other intelligent beings might be 'moved with joy at the sight'.¹³²

D. Summary

Edwards Sr. told the trustees of the College of New Jersey that he was going to write *HWR* using a new theological method. While he did not at that time reveal the substance this methodology, it is apparent that it would have included a Lockean metaphysical grammar to explain how the visual world declares the inner beauty of the Trinity. As a prerequisite to this great work, *Discourse on the Trinity* was his attempt to work out the Trinitarian framework which logically preceded the decrees of God. From *Discourse on the Trinity*, Kyle Strobel has articulated a new organizational principal to deal with the intricacies of Edwards's Trinitarianism. This new principle he calls *personal beatific-delight*. While Edwards has no systematic work on the atonement, nevertheless, one can be found in *HWR* albeit narratively constructed as a hybrid of biblical theology with points of systematic presentation along the way.

To gain a full understanding of Edwards's atonement thinking there are four essential tools needed. In brief, these fourfold tools are (1) a Trinitarian framework built upon Strobel's thesis, (2) a Lockean metaphysical grammar, (3) *A History of the Work of Redemption*, and (4) *The 'Miscellanies'*. Since Edwards's writing project had never been finalized, *The 'Miscellanies'* are necessary to reconstruct what may have been included in his *magnum opus HWR*.¹³³ According to Thomas Schafer, "[h]ence, though the "Miscellanies" cannot be identified with the "Rational Account" [...]. If he had lived to write his great work, the "Miscellanies" would have provided much if

¹³² YE13:200. In *The 'Miscellanies' a-500* is a chart laying out the proximate timeframe in which Edwards composed these notes on theological and philosophical topics. 'Table 2. The 'Miscellanies' and Chronological Parallels: May 1719-August 1731'. Thomas A. Schafer, 'Editor's Introduction', in YE13:91-108.

¹³³ *The 'Miscellanies'* were a testing ground for ideas to be culled for later publication. For example, in the 'Preface' to *The End for Which God Created the World*, Samuel Hopkins claimed that he had found 'some brief hints, or sentiments minuted down, on loose papers, found in the manuscripts'. These loose papers are now the four volumes called *The 'Miscellanies'*. Samuel Hopkins, 'Preface', *Concerning the End for which God Created the World*, in *Ethical Writings, The Works of Jonathan Edwards*, Vol. 8, ed. Paul Ramsey (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1989), 401.

not most of its content'.¹³⁴ For example, due to either the nature of preaching or planned neglect, when he came to Gethsemane in his sermons, Edwards only hinted at what occurred in 'the narrowest sense of redemption'. Yet, *The 'Miscellanies'* contain more information about Gethsemane that was passed over when he preached.

By linking these together, to borrow John Locke's terms, a *clear sense* of the ETA appears, which is both philosophically *real* and existentially *visual*. Without these four tools Edwards's view becomes *confused*.¹³⁵ Edwards's Trinitarian framework must be prioritized without neglect of the other three. To neglect the other tools will limit the depth of his atonement thinking to a realist or penal atonement alone, when he intended to articulate a visual aspect as well.

IV. ATONEMENT THINKING IN A *HISTORY OF THE WORK OF REDEMPTION*

A. The Work of Redemption in its Broad Sense

In *HWR*, Edwards referred to redemption in two ways: narrowly and broadly. When expressed broadly, he conceived redemption as a reference to *method* (covenant of redemption), which finds agreement with God's *natural inclination* (or *personal beatific-delight*). In choosing a *method*, which corresponds with the Son's *natural inclination* to be a mediator, the collective system serves to be an exhibition of his *essential glory* which is eternal happiness.¹³⁶

Even though Edwards used traditional theological terms in his sermon series on redemption, he was beginning to adapt them to a Lockean epistemology in use by British Moral Philosophers, like Lord Shaftesbury and Francis Hutcheson, which he sought to engage with *The Nature of True Virtue*. This claim will have to be accepted for the moment but will be substantiated in the fourth chapter in which I show how Bellamy explains his mentor's system in conversation with these moral philosophers.

¹³⁴ Thomas Schafer, 'Editor's Introduction', in YE13:8.

¹³⁵ Locke, *Essay*, 2:29.

¹³⁶ Glory and blessedness are the end or effect, which extends into eternity as 'the sum of all the fruits' of redemption. YE9:119.

For now, it should be understood that Shaftesbury, who had been tutored by Locke, perceived complex systems like the universe as only making sense in a closed universe. A closed universe contains many subsystems which can be compared with one another. The consistency of a closed system provided mankind with the ability to know anything absolutely.¹³⁷ While this claim is broadly true, it should not be taken as though Edwards rejected supernatural intervention or even the sustaining of the universe through a continuous creationism or even being *in* the universe.

Rather, because he was engaged with the current discourse of his day, Edwards used the categories of deism to describe his 'system' to gain a hearing. Thus, he proposed a theological presentation in which

All the various dispensations that belong to [the method of redemption] are united, as the several wheels in one machine, [serve] to answer one end and produce one effect. ... The various dispensations of God that are in this space do belong to the same work, tend to the same design, and have all one issue and therefore are all to be reckoned but as several parts of one work, as it were several successive motions of one machine to strike out, in the conclusion one great event.¹³⁸

This plan of redemption, broadly speaking, is described as having distributive parts of which atonement is redemption's most narrow part. While using the classic covenant of grace as his narrative frame he nevertheless showed how each dispensation of grace served to raise 'the elect to an exceeding pitch of glory' as they gain understanding of God's nature through his method of redemption.¹³⁹

Edwards developed the general outline for his redemption sermon series on three general dispensations in which incarnation to resurrection *was* the centre of the 'wheels of providence'.¹⁴⁰ This centre wheel he called the narrow work of redemption, but Gethsemane to the resurrection was the *narrowest* of all. The first sermons serve to anchor Edwards's view of history and prophecy as *futurition*. By way of review,

¹³⁷ Anthony Ashley Cooper, *Characteristics of Men, Manners, Opinions, Times*, 1714; reprint, ed. John M. Robertson (London: Grand Richards, 1900), 63-64.

¹³⁸ YE9:117-18.

¹³⁹ YE9:125-26.

¹⁴⁰ 1) From the fall of man to the incarnation of Christ, 2) the incarnation of Christ to the resurrection, and 3) from the resurrection to the end of the world. YE9:128.

futurition is the infinite wisdom of God existing as a complex web of ideas outside of time, which are revealed progressively through time. *Futurition* is tied to God's pure act and is seen in creation acts and prophetic utterance. As redemption history unfolds, God's interior nature can be observed even as he accomplishes a real atonement for sinners.

1) The *Natural Inclination* of the Son to be a Mediator *ad intra*.

Edwards believed that the Son's Trinitarian mediation was the power which effects the atonement. In this way atonement is real, but it is also visual, as mediation ties each phase of redemption history together through the work of Christ. The mediatorial role of Christ from eternity appears early in the sermon series, remarkably, immediately after the fall. Edwards also saw a redemptive necessity, which in some respects, indicates that Edwards received and benefited from Van Mastricht's modified infralapsarianism.¹⁴¹ Edwards proposed that God's *natural inclination* to harmony and proportion via mediation is seen broadly 'by degrees' in God's mercy to the elect and judgment of the non-elect through time.¹⁴²

While God chose a *method* agreeable to himself, Edwards explained that the effects of Christ's 'interposition' can be seen in the progress of history.

As soon as man ever fell, Christ the eternal Son of God clothed himself with his mediatorial character and therein presented himself before the Father. He immediately stepped in between an holy, infinite, offended majesty and offending mankind, and was accepted in his *interposition*; and so wrath was prevented from going forth in the full execution of that ensuing curse that man had brought on himself. 'Tis manifest that Christ began to exercise the

¹⁴¹ YE13:283-84. Edwards cites Van Mastricht as support for a modified infralapsarianism, which intends to redeem a group and damn another group but then elect specific individuals after the fall. In Reformed Orthodoxy there is a tendency to gravitate towards an infralapsarianism as a way for God's mercy and justice to be seen in creation. Petrus van Mastricht, *Theoretical-Practical Theology*, Vol. 3, trans. Todd M. Rester (Grand Rapids: Reformation Heritage Books, 2021), 36-37.

¹⁴² God's enemies 'shall by degrees consume vanish away by a secret curse of God till they come to nothing' while God's people are subject to 'the fruits of mercy [...] through all the changes of the world'. YE9:113.

office of mediator between God and man as soon as man fell because mercy began to be exercised towards man immediately.¹⁴³

This ‘mediatorial character’ is directly related to Edwards’s view of the *natural inclination* of the Son to mediate *ad intra*. Prior to preaching this series, Edwards penned four Miscellanies with *Mediator* in the heading. The earliest of these entries, Miscellany Nos. 32 and 113 were composed five and six years before this sermon series.¹⁴⁴ Of the two, No. 32 indicates that Edwards had considered mediation necessary in the covenant of works although not explicitly stated in Scripture. This he claimed was due to the ‘nature, and eternal reason, and the justice of God, and the immutable nature of order and harmony that admits [it]’.¹⁴⁵ Edwards mulled over the order and harmony that exists within the Trinity and saw a ‘mediatorial character’ *ad intra* that is extended to the elect *ad extra*.

Much closer to the inaugural Redemption Series are Miscellany Nos. 733 and 737,¹⁴⁶ where he wrote that ‘The Spirit is the sum of all that the Father doth through the Mediator, to and for the saints, terminates in the Spirit’.¹⁴⁷ This specific ‘terminus’ language agrees not only with how Edwards sees the *ad intra* life of God *ad extra*, but also aligns with how he thought about the work of redemption.¹⁴⁸ This redemptive work was designed to bring about the happiness of creatures through the declarative glory in atonement.

¹⁴³ Emphasis added. YE9:128.

¹⁴⁴ No. 32 in the summer of 1723; No. 113 in the spring of 1724. Schafer, ‘Table 2. The “Miscellanies” and Chronological Parallels’, 93-94.

¹⁴⁵ YE13:217-18.

¹⁴⁶ Nos. 733 and 737 seems to be written within a year of Feb. 1739, likely the fall of 1738. Chamberlain, ‘Table 2. Selected Dates for the Composition of ‘Miscellanies’, 48.

¹⁴⁷ Miscellany No. 733 *Why the Mediator [is] the Second Person in the Trinity. Wisdom of God in the Work of Redemption*. YE18:359.

¹⁴⁸ Drawing upon elements found in *Discourse on the Trinity*, Edwards describes the Holy Spirit as ‘the sum of all good things’. YE21:136; YE21:146-147. Although composed at a much later date, this argument is a harmonious with his understanding of ‘the order of [the Trinity’s] subsisting’ in Miscellany No. 1062 *Economy of the Trinity and Covenant of Redemption*. YE20:433.

2) Mediation as the *Method* to save Elect Sinners *ad extra*.

In respect to sinners, a mediator is absolutely necessary otherwise the Father's love would not be able to redeem sinners. Edwards claimed that 'the success of everything in his mediation depends upon that [prior love for Christ]'.¹⁴⁹ Mediation is necessary for God's own sake, for man's sake, and the atonement so that ultimately 'the immutable nature of order and harmony' of God may be *seen* by other intelligent beings. This mediation is also necessary for the equal yet opposite reason of mercy, that is, the wrath of God would 'immediately destroy'.¹⁵⁰ Through the mediatorial ministry of Christ, he governs the 'lower world' and 'in some respect the whole universe'.¹⁵¹ Indeed, this mediatorial role caused Jesus to be a 'public person'.¹⁵² With the use of the term 'public person', Edwards makes an important step towards an atonement in which God's collective system was designed as 'the exhibition of his essential glory' to be displayed in Christ's atonement.

3) The Mediator and Mediation Reveal God's *Natural Inclination*.

The moral governance of 'this lower world' is intentional and demonstrated by the occasional appearances of the second person in 'sacred history'. The Son's entrance into the storyline as Christophany is said to be like a master builder who inspects a building to ensure it conforms 'to his design of redemption'.¹⁵³ This is an important point for Edwards's understanding of *futurition*.¹⁵⁴ God wants to share his *natural inclination, which is both mediatorial and voluntary*, with other intelligent beings. Appearing, often in human form, the Son shows up 'as [the Father's] image or symbol'.¹⁵⁵ The historical progression of redemption, though, must conform to the blueprint or *futurition* of ideas that are in the mind of God. Paramount in God's

¹⁴⁹ YE18:363-64.

¹⁵⁰ YE9:130.

¹⁵¹ YE9:131.

¹⁵² YE18:148.

¹⁵³ YE9:131,

¹⁵⁴ As a reminder, *futurition* is the infinite wisdom of God existing as a complex web of ideas outside of time, which are revealed progressively through time.

¹⁵⁵ YE9:129.

mind is the Holy Spirit mediated by the Son. According to Edwards, a prophetic act or utterance is a *futurition*—a revelation of this mediatorial and voluntary inclination of the Son. I will provide two examples of how specific acts in *HWR* reveal the *natural mediatorial inclination* of the Son as temporal effects.

4) Two Examples of *Futurition* of God's *Natural Inclination*

First, the Son demonstrates his eternal mediation to Adam and Eve by appearing and enacting animal sacrifice and skin covering, which prefigured his future atonement. This object lesson is just as much a prophetic act as Genesis 3:15 is a prophetic utterance (*futurition*).¹⁵⁶ Genesis 3:15 reveals God's intention to redeem fallen man 'first signified in heaven before it was signified on earth' and the sacrifice of animals 'did foreshadow Christ to come'.¹⁵⁷ Both the historical act and prophetic utterance are glimpses of the mediatorial relationship of the Son but is subservient to the greater work of redemption, in which the love of the Son was made known 'among the angels that Christ now had taken upon him the office and work of a mediator between God and fallen man'.¹⁵⁸

In the upper world, the angelic host witness the 'effect [of the Work of Redemption]' saving of Adam and Eve, that is, 'the rescue of the first two captives' from the devil's grasp. And in the first instance of the death of Abel, a redeemed person,

the angels in heaven had the opportunity to see so wonderful a sight as the soul of one of the fallen race of mankind that had been sunk by the fall into such abyss of sin and misery actually brought to heaven in the enjoyment of heavenly glory [...] Thus they by this saw the glorious effect of Christ's redemption in the great honour and happiness that was procured to sinful, miserable creatures by it.¹⁵⁹

¹⁵⁶ Genesis 3:15 (KJV) 'And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel'.

¹⁵⁷ YE9:132, 136.

¹⁵⁸ YE9:131-32.

¹⁵⁹ YE9:140.

In these closing sentences of the second sermon Edwards focused the listener's attention upon the 'glorious effect of Christ's redemption' to one like Abel. Other intelligent beings can catch a glimpse of the impenetrable happiness of God *through* these effects.

Secondly, Edwards developed how the suffering of Christ atones by pausing to reflect on the redemption of Israel. Remarkably, though, Edwards does not focus on the Passover, but on the burning bush. As Edwards looked upon the burning bush, he saw a shadow of the greater redemption in Christ. Just as prophetic act and utterance occurred in the sacrifice of animals to clothe Adam and Eve, in the bush is found prophetic act and utterance. To Moses there was a declaration of redemption out of the iron furnace of Egypt, but Edwards saw the bush as representative of Christ's human nature.¹⁶⁰ Edwards elaborated in this way:

The bush burning with fire represented the sufferings of Christ in the fire of God's wrath. It burned and was not consumed, so Christ though he suffered extremely yet perished not, but overcame at last and rose from his suffering. Because this great mystery of the incarnation and suffering of Christ was here represented, therefore Moses says, I will turn aside and behold this great sight. A great sight he might well call it when there was to be seen represented God manifested in the flesh, and suffering a dreadful death, and rising from the dead.¹⁶¹

This prophetic act in the burning bush was an object lesson of God's intention of deliverance of Israel from 'the iron furnace' through 'a paschal lamb'.¹⁶² Egypt is represented as the realm of hell and the cruelty of the Satanic host, and deliverance is emblematic of redemption 'from a furnace of fire and everlasting burnings'.¹⁶³

The underworld is not referenced much beyond the fifth sermon, but these almost passing comments are fruitful references to the effects of the work of redemption in relation to hell. Even though Edwards does not engage hell as thoroughly in the whole series does not mean that he wasn't thinking about its relationship to the Mediator. Later, in his letter to the Trustees of the College of New

¹⁶⁰ Christ is called a branch growing out of a dry ground (Isaiah 11:1, 53:2).

¹⁶¹ YE9:175.

¹⁶² YE9:176.

¹⁶³ YE9:175.

Jersey, he communicated intent to fill-in this gap.¹⁶⁴ At the time of writing this letter, he was no doubt intending to integrate the multitude of *Miscellanies* entries on hell, torment, and future state.¹⁶⁵ Despite the underdevelopment of hell, nevertheless, there are many examples other examples the mediatorial and voluntary inclination of the Trinity which appear throughout the first eleven sermons. Space does not permit a full enumeration.¹⁶⁶

Having now considered the first period of Edwards's exposition, we must move to the wheel at the centre of the wheels,¹⁶⁷ that thirty-to-forty-year period of the Mediator, which Edwards calls the work of redemption in its *narrow sense*.¹⁶⁸ The work of redemption in its *narrow sense* consists of that period from incarnation to the resurrection. The next series of sermons, supplemented with *The 'Miscellanies'* clarify Edwards's atonement thinking. Edwards was interested in a visual theology that promoted human understanding of God's *natural inclination*. Mediation is a central feature of this period.

¹⁶⁴ Yet for now, suffice it to say, in Edwards's understanding, hell and heaven has a symbiotic relationship to one another to highlight the infinite happiness that exists within the *personal beatific-delight* of the Trinity.

¹⁶⁵ *Miscellany* Nos. 44, 258, 275, 279-80, 282, 288, 316, 318, 407, 418, 425, 427, 441, 456, 478, 480, 505, 509, 527, 545, 550, 557, 558, 559, 562, 572, 574, 575, 579, 592, 690, 730, 866, 870, 905, 910, 916, 921, 924, 926-27, 929, 931, 93, 985, 995, 1004, 1179, 1187, 1270, 1294. YE16:728.

¹⁶⁶ After the creation and subsequent fall, the second person of the Trinity began the role of mediator, which corresponds most natural to his voluntary service within Trinity. In Edwards's way of thinking, this economy was existent prior to the covenant of redemption because it is central to Trinitarian *personal beatific-delight*. Furthermore, the second person of the Trinity, in cooperation with the Holy Spirit, work together to raise to a greater height happiness among the elect. For example, angelic beings see this happiness through Enoch's translation. His translation is one of those lesser wheels in the clock which anticipates a greater height God's glory in eternity. YE9:143-44. In Sermons 6 and 7, Edwards discusses how the Holy Spirit is active in the younger generation in the wilderness and in the formation of a school of the prophets in the days of Samuel. The spirit of prophecy was the coming Christ. YE9:192, 199-203, 238. In sermon 11, Edwards also characterizes Ezra's era as a great time of pouring out the Holy Spirit. 'God's manner in every remarkable new establishment of the state of his visible church, to give a remarkable outpouring of his Spirit'. YE9:266.

¹⁶⁷ Coming to the end of the sixth dispensation of grace, anticipating the great period of the Christ, he says, 'This period being the last period of the Old Testament and the next to Christ's coming, seems to have been remarkably different from all others in the great revolutions that were among the nations of the earth to make way for the kingdom of Christ'. YE9:244.

¹⁶⁸ YE9:294.

B. The Work of Redemption in its Narrow Sense

In these five middle sermons, Edwards expounded on the essential features of atonement. Edwards concluded that in prophecy and acts, the 'great wheels of providence' centre upon the mediator sent from God 'to declare his mind'.¹⁶⁹ This Mediator, in a greater way than a burning bush or Abel's sacrifice, visually enacts *personal beatific-delight ad extra*. For example, the Son's purchase of the elect through mediation has a *visual* correspondence to a *real* purchase of the Spirit *ad intra*. In sermon fourteen, Edwards recapitulated this exact point while claiming that the 'eternal counsels of God, and that eternal transaction [that] was between the persons of the Trinity' have respect to *how* the purchase of redemption was made in time.¹⁷⁰

1) Taking on a Capacity for Suffering

Incarnation is the first step in atonement. Robert Jensen has proposed that Edwards is unorthodox in this regard;¹⁷¹ however, Edwards stood in line with the historic church, which recognized the need for divinity to be united with flesh. The taking on of capacity is in keeping with historic views of kenosis which is aptly described by Gregory Nazianzen as an 'assumed' humanity.¹⁷² For atonement to occur, suitable human flesh must be prepared for sacrifice. In some respects, Jensen's observations are correct. Edwards does make 'remarkable move[s]' with respect to the person of the incarnate Son of God and continuity of memory, which will be seen below in the account in Gethsemane. This, Jensen said, is a 'reabsorbed Christology back into the doctrine of the Trinity'.¹⁷³ This author does not see these moves to be

¹⁶⁹ YE9:282-86.

¹⁷⁰ YE9:294.

¹⁷¹ 'Readers who come to Edwards' drafts from the traditional discussion must first be struck that this Calvinist teaches a "real" communication of God's divine attributes to the human reality of Christ that might have seemed a bit unguarded even to Cyril of Alexandria or Martin Luther'. Jensen, *America's Theologian*, 115.

¹⁷² Gregory Nazianzen reasons, 'For that which he has not assumed, he has not healed; but that which is united to his Godhead, is also saved'. James Stevenson and B. J. Kidd, eds., *Creeds, Councils, and Controversies: Documents Illustrative of the History of the Church A.D. 337-461* (New York: Seabury Press, 1966), 90.

¹⁷³ Jensen, *America's Theologian*, 121.

overly problematic and contrary to Jensen, I would describe this as development in harmony with the Cappadocian fathers.

What sets Edwards apart is his use of Locke's metaphysics to explain how this 'assumed' humanity produced atonement. For example, Edwards described the incarnation as a needed process 'to capacitate [the Son] for this purchase' in a way that is strikingly similar to that of Locke.¹⁷⁴ According to Locke, capacity is to occupy space three-dimensionally. However, when applied to intelligent beings, capacity is more than mere physicality. Capacity is the ability to perceive, sense, and understand a multi-dimensional world around us.¹⁷⁵ Intelligent beings also have capacity to act based upon an evaluation of the sensory world. Also, reasonable creatures hold more than one idea in the mind to compare them; however, man's natural capacity is such that he cannot assess more than two ideas simultaneously without great effort. Thus, Edwards believed that man's capacity for happiness and misery is limited, but if we were provided a greater capacity, then our sensation of happiness or misery would increase proportionally.¹⁷⁶

To *capacitate* is a remarkable choice of words for several reasons. Logically, the Son had to be *capacitated* to experience pain and sorrow because 'the divine nature is not capable of suffering, for it is impassable and infinitely above all suffering; neither is it capable of obedience to the law that was given to man'. Secondly, both of these capacities are connected to the purchase of atonement. A capacity for misery aligns with satisfaction, whereas the second capacity for happiness aligns with merit.¹⁷⁷ As the divine Son, his capacity for happiness is full already, because of infinite holiness apart from the law. By taking on a capacity for misery, the Son in his humanity would be able to compare suffering and happiness and then demonstrate mediatorial love by choosing to suffer for sinners. As subsequent

¹⁷⁴ YE9:265.

¹⁷⁵ Locke develops the idea of capacity prior to his discussion of sensation in large part due to existence necessarily occurring in space and not in a vacuum. Locke, *Essay*, 1:13 §§ 3, 21-27.

¹⁷⁶ Furthermore, Edwards conceives of heaven and hell as being a place of augmented capacity. For example, he says, in Miscellany No. 5, of those saints in heaven must have an enlargement of capacity since they are 'acted by pure reason'. YE13:201. Again, 'Our capacities will be exceedingly enlarged, and we shall be able to apprehend, and to take in, more extended and compounded proportions'. YE13:329; YE13:437-39.

¹⁷⁷ With respect to merit and satisfaction, he proposed three reasons why the incarnation was necessary. 1) To answer the law's demands with a human nature, 2) To answer the law's penalty in the same nature as a man, and 3) To carry out these acts in 'the same world that was the stage of man's fall and ruin'. YE9:295-96.

chapters will unfold, this move will be seen to be a development of Reformed Orthodoxy using Enlightenment vocabulary of sensation grammar.¹⁷⁸

2) Satisfaction as a Meritorious Purchase.

Christ was *capacitated* to purchase happiness for others by taking on a capacity for misery. Edwards did use the classic mercantile metaphor but stressed the *essential* equivalence of satisfaction and merit. Satisfaction and merit are said to ‘differ more relatively than they do essentially’. A debt paid positively frees one from obligation. Satisfaction obtains not only the freedom from our debt of punishment but also eternal happiness.¹⁷⁹ This fine nuance is directly correlated to his view of Trinitarian relations. In *Discourse on the Trinity*, Edwards says, ‘[t]he price, and the thing bought with the price, are equal’. Edwards views the Holy Spirit as ‘the thing purchased’ equal to the cost. In this case, the mediation of the Son purchases the Holy Spirit through *mutual-delight*. The Son voluntarily ‘moves’ to ‘gain’ the Spirit as reward.¹⁸⁰ This logic elevates the Holy Spirit by making the Spirit the ultimate end, as it were, of the internal glory of the Trinity. This is the same pattern of logic used by Edwards to equate satisfaction and merit by focusing on the future end which Edwards calls the ‘positive good’.¹⁸¹ The ‘positive good’, is more simply put in *HWR* this way: ‘The satisfaction of Christ is to free us from misery, and the merit of Christ is to purchase happiness for us’.¹⁸² In Edwardsean parlance this ‘positive good’ as it relates to atonement would be called the ultimate end whereas the subordinate end is that which frees the elect from misery as a negative good.

Both of these goods serve to advance an atonement in which the punishment finds its equivalence by a just exchange, which preserves the honour of the three persons of the Trinity. As noted above, the Son’s voluntary mediation purchased the

¹⁷⁸ This is a development of Van Mastricht’s atonement thinking in which the Mediator takes upon himself the misery of sin’s consequence of punishment. See below in chapter six.

¹⁷⁹ YE9:304. Cf. Van Mastricht who also recognizes that these do not differ except by nuance. ‘They differ only in reasoning, for that twofold righteousness, insofar as it concerns God, is called satisfaction; insofar as it concerns man, it is called merit’. TPT4:954-95.

¹⁸⁰ YE21:137.

¹⁸¹ YE9:304.

¹⁸² YE9:304.

Spirit thus preserving their inherent equality of *essence* and not a subordination. From this vantage point of the Trinitarian relations, the gift of the Spirit as the reward inherent in atonement preserves the honour of the Son as well. Furthermore, the Father's honour is preserved because the Son's vicarious sacrifice is deemed of equal value to the offence. This is the negative good which Edwards described as the satisfaction. The positive good in this equal exchange is the purchase of happiness. Edwards saw a correlation between the Trinitarian relations and atonement—this harmony of the whole thrilled Edwards's heart and mind. This commercial analogy in the Trinitarian relations is the basis on which all other forms of justice find their source. This will be further developed by Edwards Jr. as I will show in the next chapter.

3) Virtue of Christ as Mediator

The virtue of Christ is love. The virtue of Christ brings value to 'the thing purchased', whether the 'thing purchased' is the Holy Spirit or the elect. Said another way, the equivalence of the Son with Spirit *via* mediation is an infinite love that counterbalances the infinite punishment the elect owes to God. For the sake of the elect, the love of Christ is magnified by his being *capacitated* to experience misery and persevering in obedience all the way to the cross. Towards the end of sermon fourteen, Edwards observes 'that all that Christ did in his state of humiliation that had the nature of obedience, or moral virtue, or goodness in it in one respect or another, had the nature of merit in it, and was part of the price with which he purchased happiness for the elect'.¹⁸³ In Jesus's capacitation of misery, he nevertheless kept the covenant of works in its entirety, while at the same time taking upon himself 'the judicial fruit of sin', that is, punishment.¹⁸⁴ The love of Christ is an incentive for the Father to accept his service as just payment and purchase, but it is also a way for intelligent beings to observe the prior virtue of the Son to be a mediator in the Trinity. This virtue of love will be developed by Bellamy and Hopkins

¹⁸³ YE9:305.

¹⁸⁴ YE9:305. Below, in chapter 6, it will be seen that Edwards is using categories borrowed from Van Maastricht to describe the mediatorial process of standing in place of punishment as 'the judicial fruit of sin'. Capacitation for misery is an essential part of bridging the gap between man's fault and guilt toward God. Taking on misery is the penal aspect of substitutional atonement required for a just release from punishment owed.

in greater detail on the basis of their mentor’s framing of the Trinitarian relations along the lines of sensation and ectypal knowledge. I will develop this in greater detail in chapters four and five. For now, it is enough to see that these are seeds planted for other minds to water.

4) The Mediatorial Law

In keeping with an emphasis upon the Son as mediator, Edwards proposed that the incarnate Son was subject to a unique mediatorial law; although, this idea was not original to him.¹⁸⁵ This law, like the original law given to Adam, was a command to obey, which ‘consisted [of] his chief work and business in the world’. Unlike the first law provided to Adam, this law was ‘infinitely more difficult than what he had to do merely as a man or as a Jew’.¹⁸⁶ The test of his obedience consisted of *the narrowest period* between the agony in the garden and ending with the resurrection.¹⁸⁷ Unfortunately, this critical period, is quickly passed over in *HWR*, even though Edwards called this the *narrowest period* of the work of redemption in his earlier introductory sermon.¹⁸⁸ He left only traces of detail about the evening in Gethsemane. For example, Edwards described the ‘travail of [Jesus’s] soul’ in death as an act which ‘satisfies divine justice, the utmost that vindictive justice demanded, the whole debt’.¹⁸⁹ Twice he mentioned the agony in the garden, painting it with

¹⁸⁵ Miscellany No. 278 is the backdrop for this mediatorial law. In No. 278, he copies directly from William Harris’s twenty sermons on the representations of the Messiah in the Old Testament. Furthermore, Edwards began to associate God’s infinite pleasure in the Son’s Mediatorial law, and the infinite displeasure for rejecting the righteousness of the Mediator. This thought, however, is developed in the seventeenth sermon in the Redemption Series. William Harris, *Practical Discourses on the Principal Representations of the Messiah throughout the Old Testament* (London, 1724), 418-21, in ‘No. 278. Righteousness of Christ’, YE13:377-79; YE9:332-343.

¹⁸⁶ YE9:308-10.

¹⁸⁷ Edwards also surveys the various aspects of his life where obedience contributed to his meritorious act and ‘the virtues that Christ exercised and manifested in them’. I have chosen to look most closely at the pivotal moment of the mediatorial obedience. YE9:312-18.

¹⁸⁸ This what he meant by ‘restricted sense’ as opposed to a broader sense, or as he put it, ‘taken more largely, including all that God works or accomplishes tending to this end’. YE9:117.

¹⁸⁹ YE9:331.

sombre words and blood,¹⁹⁰ but then leaves it virtually undeveloped as a ‘wonderful love’.¹⁹¹ This is an unsatisfying aspect of his series because the introductory chapters of the Redemption series had promised a thorough development of the ‘restricted sense’ of the work of redemption.¹⁹² Many questions about the coherence of Edwards’s atonement theory would still be unanswered if Edwards had not been working on them leading up to a future published *HWR*. Turning to the *Miscellanies* we find greater depth concerning the *narrowest* period of redemption.

C. The Work of Redemption in its Narrowest Sense.

When Edwards talked about redemption in ‘its narrowest sense’ he did so with sensation language derived from Locke, made popular by Hutcheson. The era of the Enlightenment was in pursuit of Descartes’s ‘clear and distinct ideas’, for that alone might be considered to be real.¹⁹³ Edwards claimed that the Father gave the incarnate Son *a clear sense* of the misery he would experience at the zenith of separation in death. A *clear sense or idea* refers to an idea free from the confusion with other ideas, that is, a distinct idea rooted in *reality*.¹⁹⁴ In the Garden this *clear sense* was provided miraculously to Christ, but instead of resisting the *clear idea* of God’s wrath, Christ voluntarily submitted to mediation. That Edwards’s project was a depiction of God’s

¹⁹⁰ ‘Christ was in that dreadful agony in the garden. There came upon him a dismal gloom upon the soul of Christ that he began to be sorrowful and very heavy, and said, his ‘soul was exceeding sorrowful even unto death’, and was sore amazed. And so violent was the agony of his soul as to force blood through the pores of his skin, so that while his soul was overwhelmed with amazing sorrow his body was all blotted with blood’. YE9:328, 311.

¹⁹¹ YE9:321. Cf. Miscellany No. 402 in YE13:466-67.

¹⁹² YE9:117.

¹⁹³ Rene Descartes, *The Method, Meditations, and Philosophy of Descartes*, trans. John Vietch (London: M. Walter Dunne, 1901), 161. In chapter five we will see how the reception of Bellamy’s work in Scotland made this aspect of Edwards’s agenda clear to Robert Riccaltoun.

¹⁹⁴ While Frances Hutcheson and others were discussing the mechanics of epistemology, this was a conversation that predated Locke. Descartes began the conversation about clear and distinct ideas. Locke developed the process of human understanding in his essay and others like Hutcheson incorporated them into moral philosophy. See Locke, *Essay*, 2:29 §§ 1-16. Also, Garry J. Williams noticed this use of ideas as a ‘further development’ or innovation in atonement thinking, however, he does not connect it to Edwards’s use of Locke or to *Discourse on the Trinity*. ‘Garry J. Williams, ‘Jonathan Edwards’, 467-471, in *T&T Clark Companion to Atonement*, ed. Adam J. Johnson (New York: Bloomsbury, 2017), 470.

glory visually that is nevertheless rooted in absolute *reality* in the mind of God is rarely considered.

1) Union with the Elect a Real Union

Very early in his notebooks Edwards identified the logical difficulties in atonement as a kind of legal fiction. To rectify the problem of strict justice, Edwards claimed that the infinite love God has for Christ ‘counterbalanced his infinite hatred of sin’.¹⁹⁵ Yet, Edwards wondered how it might be possible for a misplaced punishment to bring real justice. Edwards appealed to metaphysical union with sinners so that they ‘may be looked upon as one’.¹⁹⁶ To get to this unity, Edwards proposed that obedience to the mediatorial law caused a union of Christ with sinners. The mediatorial law to which the Son voluntarily submitted himself to redeem sinners is parallel to the mediatorial relation of the Son within the Trinity. In other words, Edwards saw a metaphysical union that ran from the immanent Trinity through the Covenant of Redemption to the act of atonement. This from eternity act could properly be called equivalent on the basis of its origin in the nature of God; however, it becomes a spiritual union on the basis of a qualitative union. This occurs by affective love and in the infinite worth of God’s love.

In the first place, Edwards said that there is ‘no other way of different spirits’ being thus united, but by love’. But how much love is necessary to determine the genuineness of this union? Love that is willing to take on another’s ‘destruction upon himself, or what is equivalent to their destruction’ may be ‘looked upon as the same’.¹⁹⁷ In other words, there is *a real union formed in this willingness* to suffer for the other. Why? Because the voluntary loss of one becomes equivalent to the gain of the other. This balance and equality, like the equality of the Holy Spirit defined by the Son’s *willingness* to be the payment, is *the foundation of his atonement thinking*. This equivalence brings *weight* to the payment.

¹⁹⁵ Miscellany No. b. *Of Christ’s Meditation and Satisfaction* is only the second entry in the whole collection. YE13:164.

¹⁹⁶ YE13:165. Speaking from personal experience in No. 245, Edwards speaks of the process of forgiveness by a mediator. Should a close and dear friend intercede for a mutual friend who had offended him, he would find himself inclined to receive the one who offended if they recognized ‘how much his mediator had done and suffered’. YE13:360.

¹⁹⁷ YE13:463.

The second aspect of love's *weightiness* is just as important. Love on its own 'must hold with God'. Edwards recognizes that this metaphysical 'union must hold with God, as well as with the person beloved by the mediator'. The weight of the Son's love is measured by the Father's love for the Son, *and* the freeness of the Son's love for the sinner. This freeness is the second part of the Son's love, which creates equivalence. Love is not love if it is coerced—it must be voluntarily given. So then, the weight must hold in both directions, and the strength of this hold is contingent upon the *willingness* of the Son to serve. To 'counterpoise' the wrath of God, there must be 'laid in the balance' a sufficient weight 'in the opposite scale'.¹⁹⁸

Thus, it was necessary for the Son, who is infinite in dignity and love, to voluntarily 'offer to bear it himself and to suffer in [sinner's] stead, [...] acknowledges the infinite odiousness and demerit of sin, and manifests his sense of that, and gives sufficient testimony of his hatred of that, though he loves the person'. If all these are true, then yes, the substitution is just.¹⁹⁹ That the Son could *see* 'the infinite odiousness and demerit of sin' *and still be willing to suffer* is the foundation of a *real* atonement. How did the Son see clearly 'the odiousness and demerit of sin'?

2) A Clear Sense of Suffering

In *HWR*, Edwards claimed that the period from the garden to the resurrection was the *narrowest* period of the work of redemption, but it is in Miscellany No. 621 that Edwards discussed the existential reality of seeing clearly what he would encounter. Edwards claimed that there were 'two turns of suffering the wrath of God' in which the first occurred in the garden and the second on the cross. He proposed that

Christ might have a specimen of his sufferings beforehand, that he might know what it was that he was going to suffer, that he might have an idea what those sufferings were that must be undergone to make atonement for sin,

¹⁹⁸ YE13:464.

¹⁹⁹ YE13:401. In Miscellany No. 387, Edwards references his sermon on John 16:8 in which he declares the justice of imputed righteousness since the law was such that guilt was imputed. Because of the infinite worth and love of Christ creating union with the Father, mankind may properly be seen as having righteousness of another. YE13:454. Edwards, 'The Threefold Work of the Holy Spirit', 401-05.

that his undertaking them might be more his own act and choice. The undergoing those sufferings and his abiding their approach, could not be fully and perfectly his own actual choice as man, unless he knew what they were.²⁰⁰

This illustrates how Edwards thought about the voluntary out-workings that correspond to the voluntary in-workings of the Trinity. So that the love of the Son might hold, it was necessary for the decision to be his own—an uncoerced love for the Father and for sinners—as a mediatory love. Edwards considers how it might be that the Son might know what he would experience, feel the terror of it, and then entrust himself to the mercy of the Father.

But he could not fully know what they were, he could not have a clear and full idea of [them], without in a considerable measure feeling them. For a clear idea of sorrow, or joy, or any act, exercise or passion of the mind, is the very same thing in a degree existing in the mind that it is an idea of, as I have shown in my discourse about the Trinity.²⁰¹

In *Discourse on the Trinity*, Edwards built his trinitarianism on Locke's *Essay* by answering the following question: If finite minds are excited to love or anger when we experience ideas of reflection, then how much more infinite minds? How 'diligently we attend' ideas of reflection or how close to former circumstances we perceive these ideas to be, will proportionally recreate the 'act or motion of the mind' to what had occurred in the past.²⁰² These acts or motions of the mind are excitements which are produced by a sense of fear, dread, or misery in the contemplation of ideas.²⁰³ So, how is it possible for an idea of suffering to be provided to Christ in the garden of which he had not yet experienced?

²⁰⁰ YE18:152.

²⁰¹ YE18:152.

²⁰² YE21:114-16.

²⁰³ Ideas of Reflection is derived from Locke, *Essay*, 2:7 §§ 1-10. Edwards also addresses the deference between himself and Locke on how the Spirit provides a real sense, that is a clear idea of himself in conversion. Typically, the memory of ideas are faint representations but not the ideas themselves unless they are divine, and thus a genuine illumination of the heart is a gift of the Spirit. YE18:452-66. In an addendum to *Discourse on the Trinity*, Edwards uses the phrase 'reflex act' to describe the way in which God loves himself and so on. YE21:142.

It is possible that this repetition occurred in three ways. First, it is possible that the impassable Son of God was permitted to have a view of the separation in his humanity, which occurred in the incarnation of the Logos. Second, it is possible that in his humanity, the Son was permitted to experience the coming separation when atonement was being made. This would be similar to a prophetic utterance in which the Holy Spirit came upon a prophet and gave them a vision of the future. In this case, it would be that which resides in the mind of God, that is, a revelation of the pure act idea of atonement. This would be a function of *futurition* impressed upon the mind of Jesus.

A third, and perhaps more speculative option relates to the function of *futurition*, which would bring a union of the natures of the Logos and Jesus. Since God is impassable it would be theoretically impossible for there to be a future idea of suffering in a real and substantive way except in the agony of Gethsemane. The only parallel would be in the mediatorial role of the Son *ad intra*. Yet, it would be an inverse parallel. In this respect the procession of the Son is a reflexive act in which for the Father to gaze upon himself. This reflexive act is voluntary to purchase the mutual infinite happiness of the Father and Son as the Spirit. This is not new; however, it would seem that there is something deeper in the mind of Edwards which only atonement can reveal about this pure act.

Let me digress for a moment. The voluntary act of procession of the Son sets up the potential for excellence to occur. Excellence, according to Edwards consists in equality, proportion, and 'pleaseness'. Specifically, Edwards says,

Happiness, strictly, consists in the perception of these three things: of the consent of being to being, or being's consent to entity. The more the consent is, and the more extensive, the greater is this excellency.²⁰⁴

Thomas Schafer observed that 'since happiness comes from consent to being and misery comes from dissent, there must finally be a surplus of happiness over misery, not a mere equality of the two'.²⁰⁵ When pressed into a disjunction, this joy is unfathomable for humanity as much as the intensity of misery is unfathomable for the Holy Trinity—except in the hypostatic union by the Spirit. Schafer recognized that 'this is daring speculation, for it suggests the unfolding of the Trinity'. In this

²⁰⁴ YE6:332-38.

²⁰⁵ Schafer, 'Editor's Introduction', YE13:55.

way, there is a bond of union with the elect and Christ by the Spirit as Spirit is a bond of union of the Father and the Son.²⁰⁶

In all probability, Edwards considered all of these as part of what occurred in Gethsemane and served to magnify the ‘wonderful love’ of Christ. In Gethsemane, an advance view of this coming atonement is provided to the humanity of Christ so that the negative effect of misery, that is, the inverse of happiness might be anticipated, considered, and voluntarily embraced for the good of the universe and the glory of God. The coming misery is an immense darkness but much like how a shadow is created by an interruption of light. This shadow might be visualized, for example, when a space shuttle orbits the moon, it will go through a dark period of complete visual separation from the earth before it returns into view on the other side. The Son of God incarnate was given a clear idea of the agony which this separation would produce and yet he still submitted himself to the mercy of the Father to bring him back from the dark side of death. Edwards continues,

The sufferings that Christ felt in the garden seem to be from an idea he had of his approaching sufferings on the cross, as appears by Christ’s expressing himself. God saw fit to give Christ a very full understanding what his approaching sufferings were, just before they came, before he was apprehended, when he had yet opportunity to flee²⁰⁷

This quote shows the agency of the incarnate Son of God. A ‘very full understanding’ seems to indicate that in the capacity for misery, the incarnate Son of God was excited by the ideas of reflection upon *past* experience, in the *present*, as he anticipated the *future*. Like previous prophetic acts, this is also a *futurition* of ideas, which produce in the mind of Christ an intensity of excitement of terror and gloom, and at the same time, produced an excitement of love and delight in the mind of the Father for the Son.

The *futurition* of ideas in Son’s mind while in Gethsemane is a prophetic utterance of coming suffering and elicited terror in the physiology of Christ. This prophetic utterance is so vivid that it like the burning bush or the slaughter of animals for Abel it communicates the essence of the Trinity. Instead of fleeing the coming gloom of death, Edwards concluded,

²⁰⁶ Schafer, ‘Editor’s Introduction’, YE13:57-58. Cf. Miscellanies 94, 96, 104. YE13:256-64, 272-76.

²⁰⁷ YE18:152-53. See also, ‘MS. No. 521, Luke 22:44 (October 1739)’, WJEO54:L8.v–L11.r.

that his choosing them [elect] and abiding them [elect] might be his own act as man, that it might not be said that he undertook to suffer he knew not what. It was the will of God that that should be the act of Christ, both of the divine and human nature, that it might be a glorious manifestation of the love of both natures towards man, and it might be a more meritorious act of obedience.²⁰⁸

While the Son had been *willing* to serve the Father within the Trinitarian relations, this *willingness* was intended to be displayed to other intelligent beings in creation. Furthermore, because God is not naturally capacitated for misery, the only place where there might be a manifestation of *actual* misery would have to be in a universe where sin was a possibility, and the Son might mediate the Father's wrath in place of his Love. In eternity the Son never lost the sense of the Father's love when he voluntarily mediates to 'purchase' the Love of the Spirit. By taking on the capacity for misery in the incarnation, Edwards is saying that the Son of God was made capable of processing the *ideas* of misery and suffering proposed in the Covenant of Redemption from eternity. As ideas of sensation or reflection, they were not possible within *personal beatific-delight*. In other words, as the effects of evil are concerned, they could be proposed and understood as a function of futurity, but do not actually exist until they become 'temporal effects' of a decree.²⁰⁹

When Christ died, he lost sight of his Father losing touch with a capacity for happiness. Being granted a capacity to see suffering and misery in all its variegated pain increases the value, weight, and display of love so that it may be described as 'wonderful love'. But, in the redemption sermons, Edwards does not elaborate on these metaphysical ideas but teases the listener.²¹⁰

²⁰⁸ YE18:153.

²⁰⁹ Edwards proposes that a decree to permit sin does not mean that God is responsible for committing acts of sin. WJEO27:5.1.

²¹⁰ YE9:321.

2) How Christ's Atonement was Real

In Miscellany No. 664b, Edwards referred to the Son's experience in the garden, as the greatest trial because of 'the extraordinary effect that the idea of them had upon him when he had them in view and expectation'. As a magnification of this 'view and expectation', the greatness is not to be measured by the 'simple proportion of the greatness of the sufferings', rather the greatness of the suffering must be measured by 'the greatness and dignity of the sufferer'.²¹¹ How does this valuation work? By virtue of the distance from the state of happiness known *ad intra*. In other words, the calculus is computed by the Son's worth relative to the degree of removal from eternal happiness by his suffering. With respect to the second person of the Trinity, this removal from blessedness is infinite, by virtue of his prior position of honour *ad intra*. Therefore, when the Father hid his face from the Son 'the loss or deprivation of these manifestations of his love were so much more the bitter'.²¹² In many respects the 'temporal effect' was a momentary collapse of excellence as the Father refused to consent to the view of his Son bearing the weight of sin.

Edwards recognized that in suffering for sin, Christ's divinity supported him so that in his anguish he might be kept from 'utterly failing'. In other words, the capacity for happiness in his divinity kept him from being totally crushed by the weight of misery. By communicating to his humanity such a high degree of holiness and love to the Father, the obedience of Christ overcame the trial of the mediatorial law.²¹³ Yet, this capacity for happiness, was *suspended* at the exact *instance* of atonement. In this way the full force of the Father's hatefulness towards sin eclipsed the happiness of *mutual beatific-delight*.

In Christ's death, he experienced a *real* loss of 'the blessedness in the love and communion with God'. Edwards considers the degree of disparity of loss, saying, 'When a man has lost much, his grief is greater than his that has lost but little, though they are both become equally poor'.²¹⁴ The loss of happiness in the atoning moment was an infinite loss. In figure 2.2 I show how Edwards saw both capacities for happiness and misery overlap in the process of atonement and find commonality in the Son of God incarnate. In this Venn diagram, where the circles overlap and create

²¹¹ YE18:204.

²¹² YE18:205.

²¹³ See Miscellany No. 728. *Sufferings of Christ*. YE18:353.

²¹⁴ YE13:371. See also, Miscellany Nos. 516, 664b, and 1005.

a triangle, we see the capacities merging into the God-Man at the moment of atonement.

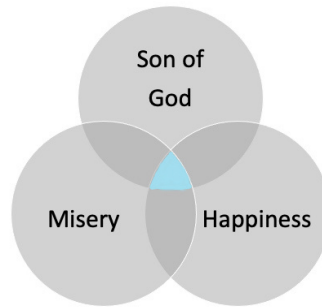


Figure 2.2 The union of capacities in the atonement

Edwards refined these concepts in Miscellany No. 1005 specifically capacity for misery. By taking on the capacity for misery, Christ was capacitated so he might have ‘a great and clear sight of the infinite wrath of God against the sins of men’. Yet, he might at the same time, in his divinity, have a ‘pleasant and sweet idea[s] fully to balance it’.²¹⁵ This was true of the incarnate Son throughout his days; however, when he was dying on the cross, a momentary imbalance occurred making the intensity of misery so great that atonement was made for sin. Edwards wrote:

And therefore if Christ had had a perfectly clear and full idea of what the damned suffer in hell, the suffering he would have had in the mere presence of that idea would have been perfectly equal to the thing itself, if there had been no idea in Christ in any degree to balance it, such as some knowledge of the love of God, of a future reward, future salvation of his elect, etc.²¹⁶

The wicked in hell do not have the capacity to know how disagreeable the idea of sin is to God’s holy nature; however, the Son by virtue of his capacity for happiness was able to know this degree of displeasure. Indeed, this is precisely what happened when the Father turned his back upon him. Edwards continued:

²¹⁵ YE20:331.

²¹⁶ YE20:331.

But pleasant ideas in their clearness being in a great measure withheld by reason of God's hiding his face, hence the awful ideas of the eternal death his elect people deserved and that dismal wrath of God of consequence filled the soul of Christ with inexpressible gloom. Though Christ knew the love of God to him, and knew that he should be successful in those sufferings, yet when God forsook him, those dismal views, those gloomy ideas, so fixed and swallowed up his mind that, though he had the habitual knowledge of these, yet he could have comparatively but little comfort and support from them, for they could afford support no further than they were attended to, or were in actual view.²¹⁷

In other words, by willingly subjecting himself to what the elect *might have suffered* for eternity, he allowed himself to be utterly cut off from the well of happiness. His dignity and honour, notwithstanding, created such a demonstration of love by obedience to the mediatorial law, and at the same time, an intense love for the elect by which he 'stood for them, and was substituted in their stead; and his love and pity fixed the idea of them in his mind, as if he had really been they, and fixed their calamity in his mind, as though it was really his'.²¹⁸ This is the crux of a union of the sinner with the Savior.

When a *real essence* of anything aligns with a *nominal essence*, according to Locke, they 'are found to coexist'.²¹⁹ Thus, Edwards may say, that Christ's substitution was an *immediate* kind of *mediation*, and he does. He concluded that, 'Thus Christ was tormented not only in the fire of God's wrath, but in the fire of our sins, and our sins were his tormenters: the evil and malignant nature of sin was what Christ bore immediately [i.e., on the cross], as well as more remotely [i.e., in Gethsemane], in bearing the consequences of it'.²²⁰ In the realm of real ideas and nominal representations, Christ experienced *the exact kind of punishment* that sinners experience when his Father turned his back away, when a capacity for a clear view of happiness disappeared and was replaced with a clear view of misery. The effect of God's wrath was such that 'the pleasant ideas and manifestations of his Father's love'

²¹⁷ YE20:331.

²¹⁸ YE20:331-32.

²¹⁹ Locke, *Essay*, 3:6 § 6.

²²⁰ YE20:330-31.

were withheld from the Son and he was handed over to the devil who is ‘God’s executioner, and the roaring lion that devours the damned in hell’.²²¹

Does this open Edwards up to the traditional objection that the suffering of Christ is *not equivalent* to the suffering of the damned because it is not everlasting? To some degree it does; however, from Edwards’s perspective no. In his philosophical work ‘The Mind’ he includes an entry on duration and space from which he proposes that since the universe is ‘a perfectly stable idea in God’s mind’ our existence in time is ‘an infinitely exact and precise divine idea, together with an answerable, perfectly exact, precise and stable will with respect to correspondent communications to created minds, and effects on their minds’.²²² In this respect, it is conceivable that Edwards saw the ‘infinitely exact and precise divine idea’ of the sufferings of Christ to be infinite from the standpoint of temporal duration as a fully actualized idea from eternity. In other words, the flicker from happiness to misery in the temporal universe is correspondent to the eternal idea as a fully actualized.

V. A SUMMARY AND IMPLICATION OF EDWARDS’S ATONEMENT VIEW

Edwards, in seeking to design a rational account of Christianity, began to compile original material for this project very early on. Beginning with *Discourse* he proposed a unity of essence in which Lock’s ‘idea of reflection’ is a divine person, the Son. The excitement to love which this ideation creates is also a divine person, the Holy Spirit. The centre of the three is the Son even though the movement ‘terminates’ in the Spirit. The Spirit is the purchased possession for which the Son voluntarily ‘separates’ himself from the Father to acquire the fulness of Spirit. As pure act, God’s happiness is full and neither the Son nor the Spirit is held in less honour because the reward of mediation brings ‘a harmony to the whole’.

As I have shown above, Edwards thinks of creation collectively like a clock as an exhibition of God’s glory. The distributive parts of creation include the introduction of sin, the fall, and atonement. Even atonement is a wheel in the system to contribute to the ‘harmony of the whole’. Atonement, though an instrument of distribution throughout the whole system, is the lynchpin because it is carried out by the divine Mediator. Atonement is designed to ‘terminate’ in the Spirit as ‘a positive good’ while

²²¹ YE20:334.

²²² YE6:343-44.

giving full vent and satisfaction to the just nature of God as ‘a negative good’. The future end within the deity has correspondence to the future end for creation to ‘accomplish the glory of the blessed Trinity in an exceeding degree’.²²³

In figure 2.3 one can see how the emanation of the Son as mediator provided the opportunity for the remanation of the elect into a state of happiness with God. Capacity for misery is acquired by the Son *via* incarnation to be qualified for satisfaction. As mediator a ‘positive good’ is acquired for himself and the elect. This ‘positive good’ is the gift of the Spirit to capacitate humanity for happiness. Everything in creation as a system moves to ‘a high degree of happiness’ as it ‘terminates’ in the Spirit. This is the ‘positive good’ which the atonement achieves for the elect specifically.

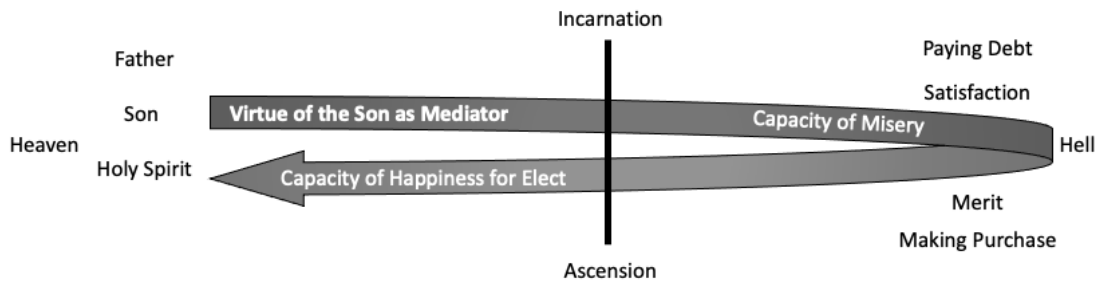


Figure 2.3. *Emanation and Remanation*

In the general system of creation, Edwards’s emphasis on punishment has significance. Punishment occurs for a ‘positive good’ in this collective moral system, too. When the Son took on a mediatorial role immediately after the fall, Edwards says that he become a ‘public person’.²²⁴ In this regard, the Son receives punishment for two reasons in Edwards’s thinking. First, he does so to ‘raise’ the ‘idea of God’s majesty’ which is linked directly with the immense terror of hell. Violation of God’s law necessitates, secondly, a meritorious punishment or else there will be a ‘visible defect, an unharmoniousness [sic], [an] unanswerableness in the things’.²²⁵ This governmental purpose in the Son’s suffering is designed to restore harmony to the collective system *visually* and *in reality*. Sin cannot go unpunished indefinitely.

²²³ YE9:125.

²²⁴ YE18:148.

²²⁵ YE20:106.

Consequently, outside of Christ is eternal misery for infinite crimes of the unregenerate.

Secondly, the Son receives punishment to affect a *real* penal satisfaction. Satisfaction for sin is a 'positive good' that sinners cannot obtain on their own. As argued above, Edwards used Locke's metaphysical grammar to claim that real union with sinners occurs. Specifically, a miraculous clear idea of misery was presented for his view. As Christ processed the ideas of misery, he chose to accept it. This was an entirely benevolent act which joined him to the identity of the elect by love. This was an act of disinterested benevolence, which caused the identity of elect to co-exist with Christ spiritually as one. Love joins two spirits together. The penal act inflicted upon the God-Man was satisfactory since a union with the elect's identity as sinner took place. The full weight of God's vindictive wrath is poured out upon the Son. Since he had acquired capacity for misery and in consequence of the union with the elect, the elect received a capacity for happiness.

In trying to understand Edwards's view on the atonement, both Strobel and Crisp have overlooked it as a system within creation as a collective system designed to 'accomplish the glory of the blessed Trinity in an exceeding degree'.²²⁶ This is largely due to their otherwise helpful focus on the theological implications that arise out of continuous creationism, immaterialism, compatibilism, and four dimensionalism. Consequently, Lockean sensation and reflection grammar is not as well-integrated into their system of explanation even though it features prominently in *Discourse on the Trinity*. Edwards was in conversation with a variety of Enlightenment ideas as he sought to defend supernatural revelation.

Furthermore, Edwards's use of Locke's complex and simple ideas as a way to analogize subordinate and ultimate ends provides a clue as to how atonement is a representation of God's *essence* and that which brings the elect into relationship with God. Along this line Edwards also highlighted capacity as a way to understand 'the narrowest sense of redemption'. Union between Christ and the elect occurs through ideas of reflection as he chose to exchange happiness for misery. Using the historic churches vocabulary, though, this would be called *deification* as an ontological union occurred between the elect and Christ in the exchange. This exchange was just because it was voluntary facilitating 'the purchase of the Holy Spirit' for the elect.

Without a synthesis of the four essential tools that I used in this chapter an incomplete understanding of Edwards's atonement thinking occurs. Atonement was

²²⁶ YE9:125.

a *real* satisfaction for sin and a *visual* display of God's *personal beatific-delight* in the exchange of happiness and misery as payment for sin. This is also the consequential moment in which the real idea of atonement implicit in the Covenant of Redemption is actualized as a temporal effect. Said another way, the sum of God's *futurition* occurs in the atonement guaranteeing the eternal happiness of heaven for the elect enlarging 'the glory of the blessed Trinity'. In the next chapter, I will provide an assessment of Edwards Jr.'s view of the atonement considering his father's work.

Edwards Jr. wrote in a context where Arminianism, Universalism, and Antinomianism threatened the evangelical gospel. These tendencies, along with a national revolution anxiety, caused Edwards Jr. to speak about atonement in ways that some have misinterpreted to be in variance with his father. Like his father, the younger Edwards crafted his argument in conversation within the Enlightenment mood of his era. While his father engaged the moral philosophers using their assumptions about the universe, Edwards Jr. crafted his atonement dialogue with the benefit of his father's system being established. This provided him the suppositional support to engage the second generation of Enlightenment ideas, which were then manifesting in the church as universalism, antinomianism, and to a lesser degree Arminianism. To the younger Edwards's atonement thinking we now turn.

CHAPTER 3

THE YOUNGER EDWARDS THOUGHTS ON ATONEMENT

I. INTRODUCTION: EDWARDS JR. AS THE POINT OF A SPEAR

Memoirists have noted similarities between Edwards and his son's life and ministry,¹ but none have considered the great difference in how each began their respective ministries. First, Edwards Sr. began his ministry working with his esteemed grandfather in 1727. When the elder Edwards came to assist his grandfather in Northampton, Massachusetts, the Deerfield Massacre (1704) was still a painful memory. Yet, while the fear of potential war with Native Americans was always present, it was a time of general peace. Regard for the young apprentice was high out of respect for the elder statesman who selected him. Furthermore, Jonathan Edwards Sr. respected his grandfather's philosophical mind and spirituality.² All of these factors assisted, and would have prepared the elder Edwards, for what might have been a ministry without significant conflict.

Yet, after Solomon Stoddard (1643–1729) passing Edwards began to make changes. After the Great Awakening, Edwards risked all the goodwill inherited from his predecessor's ministry. To everyone's surprise Stoddard's grandson proposed undoing his grandfather's permissive social order. Even more, Edwards proposed the dissolution of the half-way covenant, which had allowed infant baptism to children born of moral, yet unconverted, parents. This baptismal practice was considered necessary to retain meetinghouse influence in the community, but Stoddard had gone beyond, letting moral, yet unconverted people participate in communion. Stoddard believed that the Lord's Table could be a means of grace to convert. His grandson disagreed. Edwards Sr.'s twenty-four-year ministry quickly ended when

¹ Tryon Edwards, 'Memoir of his Life and Character', in *The Works of Jonathan Edwards, D. D. Late President of Union College. With a Memoir [...]*. ed. Tyron Edwards, ix-xl. Vol. 1 (New York: Dayton and Newman, 1842), xxxiii-xxxiv.

² YE13:387; YE16:381.

enough people realized what he hoped to accomplish. The relationship of pastor and parish came to a head and finished with his final sermon on July 1, 1750. This record has been well-established by George Marsden and others in the last century.³ On the other hand, Edwards Jr.'s biography has had less attention.⁴

Edwards Jr., unlike his father, began his ministry without universal affirmation. Ministry in New Haven, Connecticut began, essentially, where his father's ministry in Northampton finished. His father was ejected from his pulpit over the half-way covenant, whereas Edwards Jr. was recruited to deal a deathblow to it. Indeed, this chapter will show that he was the point of a spear designed to kill the eight-year experiment at the White Haven Church. This dovetail, as a starting point, ought to suggest that divergence between the two Edwards is more apparent than real; rather, their theological thinking must be at least within the same stream and orientation. Edwards Jr.'s context, unlike his father, has had less attention, which justifies a fresh examination of his historical context. This historical review is useful for the dissertation because it provides clarity on how and why Edwards Jr. expressed his thoughts on the atonement as he did. Furthermore, his published writings, which, on the balance, are more argumentative than his father's writings, have led some, like Harriet Beecher Stowe, to paint him in a negative light,⁵ which in turn, led others after her to describe him as insensitive to the Spirit as a communicator.⁶ As I have argued elsewhere, this narrative is built upon an incomplete view of Edwards Jr.'s

³ George M. Marsden, *Jonathan Edwards: A Life* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2003); Perry Miller, *Jonathan Edwards* (New York: William Sloane, 1949); Iain H. Murray, *Jonathan Edwards: A New Biography* (Edinburgh: Banner of Truth, 1988); Patricia J. Tracy, *Jonathan Edwards, Pastor: Religion and Society in Eighteenth-Century Northampton* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1980); Ola Winslow, *Jonathan Edwards, 1703-1758* (New York: Collier Books, 1940); Douglas A. Sweeney, *Jonathan Edwards and the Ministry of the Word: A Model of Faith and Thought* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2009).

⁴ Robert L. Ferm, *Jonathan Edwards the Younger, 1745-1801: A Colonial Pastor* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1976); Wesley Carl Ewert, *Jonathan Edwards The Younger: A Biographical Essay*, vol. 1 (PhD diss., Hartford Theological Seminary, 1953); John S. Banks, *The Forgotten Edwards: A New Examination of the Life and Thought of Jonathan Edwards Junior* (Fort Worth, TX: Jonathan Edwards Society Press, 2021).

⁵ Harriet Beecher Stowe, *The Minister's Wooing* (New York: Derby and Jackson, 1859), 334-35.

⁶ Writing in the early twentieth century with this caricature in his rearview, Joseph Haroutunian paints Edwards Jr. as a legalistic, 'arch-moralist among the Calvinists', and lacking any natural piety. Joseph Haroutunian, *Piety Versus Moralism: The Passing of the New England Theology*, 1932; reprint with 'Introduction' by Sydney E. Ahlstrom (New York: Harper and Row, Publishers, 1970), 150. See also, Joseph A. Conforti, *Jonathan Edwards, Religious Tradition, and American Culture* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1995), 14.

preaching ministry and reliance upon an insufficient documentary analysis.⁷ Additionally, Edwards Jr. lived in a transitional era in which theology was evolving. Several factors influenced this shift in social, politic, and theology. The first of these arose out of a shift from local to regional, even international, revivalism. While there had always been local revivals in New England, major social change began in the isolated colonies with the First Great Awakening. This chapter will focus first on the religious and cultural influences which led to Edwards Jr.'s own ministry and then examine Edwards Jr.'s direct engagement with the progressive elements in the church arising out of Enlightenment philosophy. After this historical context is provided, a systematic presentation of Edwards Jr.'s position take shape by an examination at his atonement thinking as it developed over his career. This examination will curate several new unexamined sources which include his unpublished sermons, his editorial care of his father's manuscripts, and his mentorship tools.

II. THE INFLUENCE OF THE GREAT AWAKENING ON CULTURE

The Northampton parish did experience revival during the ministry of Solomon Stoddard, but these were not as well-known. Jonathan Edwards, on the other hand, jumped to international attention with the publication of *A Faithful Narrative* (1737). Within a short time of this book's publication revival began to occur throughout New England in the early 1740s. Throughout this brief Great Awakening period, Edwards Sr. surveyed and found at least thirty-two communities in Massachusetts and Connecticut that experienced reviving. Yet, pastors in eleven of these communities were unsympathetic to the cause; however, of those surveyed two-thirds of those ministers saw the awakening as an authentic work of God.⁸ The majority of these were, for the most part, a younger generation of ministers who professed a

⁷ John S. Banks, 'Jonathan Edwards Jr.'s Relish for True Religion: The Advance of the New England Theology in the Sermon on the Mount', *Evangelical Quarterly* 91.2 (Jan 2020): 66-92. In addition, Conrad Wright identifies this tendency to look down upon the older generation but that it is without merit. Even the Transcendentalists might look down upon their liberal forefathers like William Ellery Channing. See Conrad Wright, *The Liberal Christians: Essays on American Unitarian History* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1970), 32.

⁸ C. C. Goen provides a helpful chart in the editor's introduction in YE4. He even notes which pastors were unsympathetic to the 'New Light' work. C. C. Goen, 'Editor's Introduction', in YE4:22-23.

sensitivity to the ‘new light’ of the Holy Spirit. Throughout New England’s Congregational churches, this younger generation became known as the New Lights and those who resisted were called Old Lights. Edwards and his two students—Joseph Bellamy and Samuel Hopkins—belonged to this informal coalition of likeminded revivalists in New England. Edwards’s preaching and writing about revival provided print resources for this friendly association.⁹ In time Edwards Jr. would also come of age and join his father’s two prominent successors to become an intellectual triumvirate. This younger coalition went beyond the borders of New England into the Middle Colonies through the itinerate ministry of George Whitefield.

A. Congregationalism and Presbyterianism during the Awakening

In the middle colonies of New York, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania, William Tennent (1673–1746) led an association of young Presbyterian ministers called the New Side in opposition to the Old Side. North of Philadelphia, and close to New Jersey, Tennent’s ‘Log College’ graduated New Siders like Gilbert Tennent, Samuel Blair, John Blair, Samuel Finley, and John Rowland.¹⁰ These ministers were sympathetically aligned with New Lights by George Whitefield’s itinerate preaching tours. Whitefield’s large outdoor gatherings drew the public attention and the ire of the establishment. Some, like Charles Chauncy in Boston, opposed the revivals in print.¹¹ In New Haven, where Edwards Jr. would eventually pastor, Joseph Noyes’s reserved approach to the awakening created division at the First Church. Complicating the situation was First Church’s close ties to Yale. In general, the independent polity of Congregationalism created localized church splits, whereas, in the middle Colonies, splits occurred mostly through Synod realignment.

In general, it was the Boston and Philadelphia clergy who disparaged this new movement. In response, both George Whitefield (1714–1770) and Gilbert Tennent

⁹ *A Divine and Supernatural Light, A Faithful Narrative, Distinguishing Marks, Some Thoughts Concerning the Revival, Religious Affections, and Freedom of the Will* can all be considered resources for the New Light fellowship of pastors. YE4; YE2; Jonathan Edwards, ‘A Divine and Supernatural Light’, YE17.

¹⁰ Ferm, *Edwards the Younger*, 29.

¹¹ Charles Chauncy, *Seasonable Thoughts on the State of Religion in New England* (Boston: Rogers and Fowle, 1743); Jonathan Edwards Sr., ‘Some thoughts Concerning the Present Revival of Religion in New England’, in YE4.

(1703–1764) claimed that many of these ministers were unconverted. Whitefield said, ‘as for the Universities [Harvard and Yale], I believe it may be said that their Light is become Darkness, Darkness that may be felt, and is complained of by the most godly Ministers’.¹² Yale College had allowed Whitefield to preach several times at the chapel, but as disorder began to grow the College withdrew support.¹³ This had the unintended consequence of increasing the disorder. David Brainerd, for example, was a student during this period and was famously reported as talking poorly of Mr. Chauncey Whittelsey, a Yale tutor, describing him as having ‘no more grace than this chair’.¹⁴ After an investigation Brainerd was expelled.

New Haven was a major crossroad for the itinerant preaching of Whitefield and Gilbert Tennent as they came north to New England from the Middle Colonies. To this crossroad town also came James Davenport (1716–1757), who, was himself swept up in the fervour. In 1741 he arrived in New Haven at the same time Jonathan Edwards was due to give the traditional commencement sermon. Davenport, whose grandfather had established the First Church in New Haven, copied Whitefield’s bold attack on Old Light ministers. Joseph Noyes (1688–1761), pastor of the First Church, was considered weak on key New Light doctrines like depravity and necessity of regeneration by the Spirit. This deficiency had become more pronounced over time and increased dissatisfaction.¹⁵ Because of his family ties to the First Church, Davenport was initially welcomed into the pulpit. This invitation was quickly rescinded as he began ‘to denounce [Noyes], in conversation and public prayer, as an unconverted man, a wolf in sheep’s clothing, and a destroyer of souls’.¹⁶

The same week that Davenport created this disturbance, Edwards preached his famous sermon *Distinguishing Marks of a Work of the Spirit of God* for commencement. While the sermon was a call for restraint, it also rebuked the Old Lights whose ‘long continued silence in such a case [of awakening] is provoking to God ... such silent

¹² George Whitefield, *A Continuation of the Reverend Mr. Whitefield’s Journal: The Seventh Journal* (London: W. Strathan, 1741), 56-57.; Gilbert Tennent, ‘The Danger of an Unconverted Ministry’, in *The Colonial Idiom*, 469-487, ed. David Potter and Gordan L. Thomas (London: Feffer & Simons, 1970).

¹³ Marsden, *Jonathan Edwards*, 231.

¹⁴ YE7:155. Marsden, *Jonathan Edwards*, 324-225.

¹⁵ Samuel William Southmayd Dutton, *The History of the North Church in New Haven: From Its Formation in May 1742, During the Great Awakening, to the Completion of the Century in May 1842: in Three Sermons* (New Haven, CT: A. H. Maltby, 1842), 21-22.

¹⁶ Dutton, *The History of the North Church*, 24.

ministers stand in the way of the work of God'.¹⁷ With the encouragement of Davenport and Jonathan Edwards's commencement sermon, James Pierpont (Edwards's brother-in-law) along with forty-three others left the First Church to form a 'separate society' called White Haven. They appealed to the Act of Toleration (1689) instituted during the reign of William and Mary because of their opposition to the Saybrook Platform (1708), which allowed for Half-way Covenant practice.¹⁸ In attendance at this organizational assembly and covenant signing, among other ministers, was Joseph Bellamy.¹⁹ This New Light factional church would eventually call Jonathan Edwards Jr. to be their pastor in 1768.

B. New Side Presbyterians and Princeton (The College of New Jersey)

The New Side Presbyterian churches began to organize themselves primarily in New Jersey as a rift grew between them and the Old Side within the Philadelphia Synod. As the Presbyteries of New Brunswick, Londonderry, and New York grew through the 1730s they joined together formally. Through this union, and especially in response to the closure of the 'Log College', they requested a new college charter. In 1746 the charter was granted by the colonial government of New Jersey. This required a new college board of trustees, and initially, was comprised entirely of those sympathetic to the New Side. Jonathan Dickinson served as the first President of the College of New Jersey, and Aaron Burr Sr. (1716–1757)²⁰ after him. Jonathan Edwards encouraged his son Timothy to attend this college instead of his *alma mater* Yale. This was, in part, because Yale had treated David Brainerd poorly, but even more so, because of the kindred spirits he found at this new college.

In spite of Yale's mishandling of Brainerd's expulsion, Aaron Burr Sr. made sure Brainerd was ordained, even rallying support for Brainerd's missionary work to the North American Indians. Due to a similar philosophy many New Side Presbyterian

¹⁷ YE4:272-73.

¹⁸ 'Declaration of 'Separated People', Copy of Official Court Documents', *White Haven Church Records, Series 1*, New Haven Museum (MSS 9, Box 1, Folder A).

¹⁹ Dutton, *The History of the North Church*, 31-32.

²⁰ Not to be confused with Aaron Burr Jr. (1756–1836) who became Vice President to Thomas Jefferson and in a dual shot and killed Alexander Hamilton. Aaron Burr Sr. was a graduate of Yale who was aligned with the Congregational New Lights during the Awakening. He became pastor of the Presbyterian Church of Newark, NJ prior to his appointment as president of Princeton.

Churches invited New Light Congregationalists from New England to occupy their pulpits.²¹ And in the case of Aaron Burr Sr., some married New Light daughters. Esther Edwards joined Aaron in Newark, Jew Jersey after their short courtship and subsequent marriage in 1750. Five years later they relocated to Princeton but shortly after the construction of Nassau Hall Burr Sr. died in 1757 followed by his own dear wife Esther Edwards Burr in 1758. After serving in Stockbridge, Massachusetts, Edwards Sr. received a call from the Trustees of the College to become the next President after Aaron Burr Sr. died. Seventeen fifty-eight proved to be a difficult year as both Jonathan and Sarah Edwards perished along with their daughter Esther. Three and a half years after Edwards himself died, the younger Edwards enrolled at the College in 1761.

In 1758 the two Presbyterian Synods (New York and Philadelphia) merged and attempted to mend fences through the 1760s. There was hope that the College of New Jersey in Princeton would be a place for unity. Samuel Finley led the school through 1766 as a friend of the New Side. Edwards Jr. was converted during these years and graduated in 1765. He served there as a tutor up to the arrival of John Witherspoon in 1768. Witherspoon, from Scotland, was supposed to be a New Side olive branch compromise with the Old after Finley's departure. But, according to Joseph Conforti, the presence of Witherspoon made life uncomfortable for New Side adherents and likely incentivized Edwards Jr. to actively seek a pastorate. Edwards Jr. resigned his tutorship to settle at his Uncle Pierpont's church in New Haven in 1769.²² During the same period that the Presbyterians were attempting to reunite through Princeton, the White Haven Church had also experimented with Old Light accommodation by bringing back the Half-way Covenant for a period of eight years (1760-68).²³

²¹ Ferm, *Jonathan Edwards the Younger*, 30-32. R. H. Nichols, 'The First Synod of New York, 1745-1758, and its Permanent Effects', 239-255, in *Church History* 14 (December 1945),

²² According to Joseph A. Conforti, Witherspoon lost no time in purging New Divinity influence out of the school. Edwards Jr. resigned his tutorship, pursuing a pastorate in New Haven. Joseph A. Conforti, *Samuel Hopkins and The New Divinity Movement: Calvinism, the Congregational Ministry, and Reform in New England Between the Great Awakenings* (Grand Rapids: Christian University Press, 1981), 74.

²³ Dutton, *History of the North Church*, 53-58.

C. New Light Congregationalism in New Haven

Samuel Dutton provided a detailed explanation of the political manoeuvres of the White Haven Church from 1743 through 1760 in which New Lights became the majority within parish shared with another church. Due to the state funding by a regulated tax system, full separation and establishment of a new society was difficult. After fourteen years watching their church tax funding the First Church, the General Assembly in 1757 finally granted a unique provision to New Haven. Each member of the society could elect themselves a presiding pastor of either 'Mr. Noyes' (First Church) or 'Mr. Bird's party' (White Haven).²⁴ The result demonstrated that the body sympathetic to Mr. Bird was greater in size than the mother church. Through a remarkable voting scheme to take over the assets of the First Church by the New Light majority, the General Assembly was made to see wisdom. So, in 1760 they created two legally separate churches with separate funding and thus separate autonomy. During this transition White Haven had deviated from its original founding principles by re-adopting the Half-way Covenant.²⁵ It is very likely that this Half-way adoption was a political manoeuvre to push the issue of the need for a new society with separate autonomy. The Half-way Covenant would have created a sense of sameness and provide an easy loyalty to Mr. Bird by younger families. Yet, it was a risky scheme that would cause problems in the future.

At the same time the White Haven Church was legally organized, Roger Sherman moved to New Haven in 1760 and became a member. Mr. Sherman, a statesman in

²⁴ Mr. Bird had come from First Church of Dunstable, NH. He was a New Light but could not bring together the two factions at his former church. John Wesley Churchill, *History of the First Church in Dunstable, NH and of Later Churches There* (Boston: Fort Hill Press, 1918), 22-23. Yet, his backstory would have endeared him to the White Haven Church. He had been expelled, like David Brainard, from Harvard for talking poorly about his pastor for failure to 'preach against sinners' and avoidance of the 'Doctrines of original sin, Election, Justification of Faith and Regeneration'. He even called him a 'dumb dog that cannot bark'. Despite expulsion, he was granted an A.M. for his persistent demand for justice. Samuel E. Morison, *Three Centuries of Harvard, 1636-1936* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press Harvard, 1964), 86.

²⁵ *Records of the White Haven Church*, August 6, 1760. The notation regarding the acceptance of the Half-way Covenant: 'The Church being meet to consider and determine what is duty concerning Children's being admitted to Baptism upon their Parents owning and consenting to the covenant which shall be agreed upon by this Church. Voted and determined by a great majority: that the Infants of such as own the Covenant (being civil and moral persons) shall be admitted to baptism. Test. Samuel Bird Pastor'. See Ferm, *Jonathan Edwards the Younger*, 73, n. 12.

his own right,²⁶ was instrumental in the process of calling Edwards Jr. eight years later. The symbolism of the son of Edwards taking the helm of the White Haven Church was not missed by a discontented minority who favoured their former pastor Mr. Bird. Edwards Jr. signalled the end to the Half-way Covenant. In 1768 Edwards Jr.'s uncle, James Pierpont, was still active in the White Haven Church along with about forty-three others who participated in the first split of 1742.²⁷ Despite the effort to come to an agreement over the call of Edwards Jr., a split, nevertheless, occurred within the first year of Edwards Jr.'s ministry. Before accepting a call in September 1768, the evidence suggests, that Edwards Jr. required the dissolution of the Half-way Covenant so he might settle a pastoral contract with them. Writing to his mentor, Joseph Bellamy, Edwards Jr. said,

I suppose Mr. Sherman has given you full information of what was done at our last society meeting. I had some thoughts of riding up to Bethlem [Bethlehem, CT] this week: but have concluded to defer it till next week. President *Daggett* and Mr. *Trumbull* are of opinion that the opposition, which has hitherto appeared is sufficient discouragement. The Half-way Covenant is now under consideration. They say there will be no great difficulty in the church. The danger is that the society will take it in dudgeon [a feeling of offense or deep resentment]—But time will well shew the event.²⁸

Yet, even with nine months of negotiations with the disaffected Old Lights, another church split was inevitable.²⁹

Considering the controversies of the 1740s involving his family, Edwards Jr.'s conduct at the White Haven Church in the late 1760s is particularly significant to the trajectory of his ministry. The thirty-year controversy in New Haven was fostered

²⁶ Mark David Hall, *Roger Sherman and the Creation of the American Republic* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013). Sherman and Edwards Jr. formed a very close friendship.

²⁷ Mark Valeri, *Law and Providence in Joseph Bellamy's New England: The Origins of the New Divinity Revolutionary America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994), 60.

²⁸ Emphasis original. Jonathan Edwards Jr., letter to Joseph Bellamy, November 31, 1768, *Jonathan Edwards Papers, Series V Edwards Family Correspondence, Jonathan Edwards 1745–1801 Outgoing Letters*, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library (Box 26, folder 1414).

²⁹ Among the three grievances submitted by the opposition was the absence of the Half-way Covenant. 'Miscellaneous Records of the Fair Haven Society', in *White Haven Church Records, Series 1*, New Haven Museum (MSS 9, Box 2, Folder A1).

by the elder Edwards and perpetuated by Joseph Bellamy. Therefore, to receive a recommendation from Bellamy, even an invitation to sit on the ordination council for Edwards Jr. was a bold and decisive move by the church's leadership to bring the church back to its founding purposes as a New Light congregation.³⁰ Edwards Jr.'s installation was the culmination of a process that had begun in the 1740s. This controversy was inherited by Edwards Jr.; indeed, this hereditary controversy instantly put him into the company of his father's former students. In those days New England was in convulsion over the implications of the covenant and individual conversion. These both had political as well as redemptive implications that factor into Edwards Jr.'s atonement thinking.

III. THE THEOLOGICAL DEBATES OF EDWARDS JR.'S TIME

In addition to the influence of the Great Awakening, major changes to Reformed theology began to occur in America during the eighteenth century. Furthermore, the world was becoming smaller through trans-Atlantic trade. Migration and new ideas threatened the sixteenth century puritan retreat in New England. On the one hand, Deism, which arose out of new philosophical-enlightenment principles, needed a response from the orthodox.³¹ Universalists, on the other hand, had found a foothold in Boston and needed to be checked also. In that his father engaged in a publication debate with Old Lights on their Arminian tendencies, Edwards Jr. followed in his father's footsteps, even extending the conversation to address Charles Chauncy's (1705–1787) universalist inclinations.³² These theological debates must be considered together with changes in public theology approaching the Revolutionary War.

³⁰ Bellamy had participated by helping the original split to organize and providing advice and recommendations for its new pastor in 1768. Frederic L. Fay, *Untitled* - material on the life, work, and letters of Rev. Joseph Bellamy, pastor of the Congregational Church at Bethlehem, Conn. for over 50 years; unpublished, 1940. Hartford Seminary Library - Archives, Doc. Box No. 435.

³¹ While Deism was part of the Enlightenment conversation both liberal and conservative theologians still retained a high regard for revelation as an authority. This dissertation will not deal with John Toland, Thomas Jefferson, Thomas Paine, or even, Joseph Priestly since both the Edwardseans and the Boston clergy rejected their claims about the Bible's use as an authority.

³² Jonathan Edwards Jr., *The Salvation of All Men Strictly Examined; and the Endless Punishment [...]* of Rev. Doctor Chauncy of Boston [...], 1790; reprint, 1-278, in AE1.

A. The Shift from a Social Covenant to an Individual Covenant

Mark Noll has claimed that ‘the foundation of American theology was European theology’.³³ This foundation was, for the most part, confessionally oriented in the Westminster Standards. New England Congregationalism welcomed Samuel Willard’s *Compleat Body of Divinity* (1726), which was a collection of two hundred and fifty lectures on the confession. This work was, not only a reference for New England churches, but also an authority. For example, when Edwards Jr. was questioned about his New Light teaching on regeneration in 1770, he appealed to the authority of Willard, saying that he was ‘an eminent divine of the last century, who lived in Boston’.³⁴ Willard lived during the seventeenth century (1640–1707), but aptly characterizes the puritan tradition established by his sixteenth century predecessors like John Cotton (1584–1652), Thomas Hooker (1586–1647), and Richard Mather (1596–1669).

A central fixture of puritanism was its understanding of a federal covenant as a social contract between a nation and God. This approach to society necessitated instruction about the covenant through a well-ordered public meetinghouse. Therefore, the success of puritanism required a strong relationship between the minister and the magistrate. Through the weekly convergence of the parish in the meetinghouse the implications of a corporate covenant with God were processed together.³⁵ To assist this partnership the Half-way Covenant was a compromise practice that attempted to retain a ministerial influence within society as subsequent generations could not claim personal ownership of the covenant by spiritual regeneration. Yet, it’s very practice betrayed the founding principles of evangelical

³³ Mark Noll, *America’s God: From Jonathan Edwards to Abraham Lincoln* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), 19.

³⁴ Jonathan Edwards Jr., ‘Volume 95. John 3.6, February 18, 1770’, *Jonathan Edwards Jr. Papers (Sermons)*, Hartford Seminary Library (Box 165, Folder 2728), 10-11.

³⁵ One example of processing the public covenant together just prior to the Great Awakening is found in Joseph Sewall’s sermon in which he exposts the process of seeking the Lord rightly to ‘not bring destruction upon them’. Joseph Sewall, *Nineveh’s Repentance and Deliverance [...]* (Boston: J. Draper, 1740), 6. Harry Stout’s *The New England Soul* effectively casts the social order in New England as a partnership between the civil magistrate and the minister through the Revolutionary era. Harry Stout, *The New England Soul: Preaching and Religious Culture in Colonial New England* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986), 13-31. See also, Noll, *America’s God*, 38-42.

puritanism and put society at great risk of divine judgment.³⁶ Concerned pastors began to agitate for reform.

This reform movement in Congregational churches over the Half-way Covenant caused polarization in two ways. First, the theology behind the revivalism was based upon an individual responsibility instead of the complacency of belonging to the collective community. Jonathan Edwards's emphasis on individual ownership of the covenant was, in many ways, a bridge between the old puritan ideals and a new generation that emphasized the need to personally own the covenant of grace.³⁷ This emphasis pressured people to self-evaluate and created an atmosphere conducive to revival. Stress upon regenerate church membership was not only a reform movement but a step towards republican concepts of individualism.³⁸

The meetinghouse would continue to be an important part of the social order in New England, but it was shifting towards republican individualism. The minister and magistrate continued to foster a bi-directional influence over each other. Their mutual expertise was necessary to understand the providential workings of God. Providence, which included famine, war, and disease, continued to be observed as evidence of the covenant even though second-generation Edwardseans began to reframe God's dealings. Mark Valeri described how this national covenant framework gradually dissipated with a new emphasis on universal moral law.³⁹ God's moral government gradually displaced federal nomenclature in popular discourse. Individuals needed to respond to God's moral law directly rather than simply own the community covenant. In other words, every member of society stood before God's bar of justice individually.

Second, this movement threatened the status quo. Theological camps developed to either protect the Standing Order or to supplant it. The New Lights threatened the prestige of the Old Lights, and the ensuing rivalry magnified the tenuous nature

³⁶ Jerald C. Brauer identifies four streams within English puritanism: nomism, evangelicalism, rationalism, and mysticism. Jerald C. Brauer, 'Types of Puritan Piety', *Church History* 56/1 (1987), 49. More recently Brian Crosby recognized the difficulty to create a singular definition of this English movement; he identifies a variety of competing interests for reform. Brauer's 'four streams' may be found in these competing reform interests. Brian H. Crosby, 'Toward a definition of 'Puritan' and 'Puritanism: a study in Puritan historiography', in *Churchman* 122, No. 4 (Winter 2008): 297-314.

³⁷ 'No. 2 Covenant of Grace', YE13:197-199.

³⁸ Noll, *America's God*, 53-72.

³⁹ Mark Valeri, 'The New Divinity and the American Revolution', *William and Mary Quarterly* 46, no. 4 (Oct. 1989): 744-45.

of free conscience in the Colonies. Specifically, the Connecticut General Assembly restricted the free exercise of itinerate ministry of 'radical' New Lights in 1742.⁴⁰ The antics of James Davenport exemplified the threat to the social covenant order. Yet, the General Assembly's heavy hand affected the free exercise of religion. New Lights like Edwards, Bellamy, and Samuel Finley who did circuit preaching in the early-1740s were affected.⁴¹ In other words, the Old Lights leveraged their powerful partnership with magistrates to limit the younger New Light's freedom of conscience. The New Light effort to overthrow the Half-way Covenant had the unintended effect to provoke the Old Lights to suppress individualism. But this in turn aroused dormant feelings for liberty of conscience. These concerns were expressed by Elisha Williams (1694-1755) in 1744 in his tract *The Essential Rights and Liberties of Protestants* (1744).⁴²

Williams, who had been a Rector of Yale when Edwards Sr. was a student, was concerned that restricting New Light itinerates violated Scripture, natural rights, the social contract, and even the Toleration Act of 1689. Williams appealed to John Locke's *Treatise of Government* to support his logic. He claimed that while people delegate power to a civil government, an individual still does not give up anymore 'natural liberty or power [...] than is necessary for the preservation of person and property'. In other words, the state cannot overrule the natural liberty of judging for themselves the nature of faith and how to practice it.⁴³ William's short treatise resonated with many New Englanders ready for self-governance. Ironically, the attempt to suppress the extremes of the Great Awakening, propelled New Englanders to consider not only their personal responsibility to the covenant of grace with God directly, but also their obligation to engage in republican governance as a social contract rather than a federal covenant with a singular ruler.

⁴⁰ Benjamin Trumbull, *A Complete History of Connecticut Civil and Ecclesiastical [...]*, Vol. 2 (New London, CT: H. D. Utley, 1898), 127-130.

⁴¹ Bellamy was prevented from coming to speak in New Haven by this law and Samuel Finley was physically removed from the State of Connecticut several times until they threatened a fine of one hundred pounds. Trumbull, *Complete History*, 141. See also, Dutton, *History of the North Church*, 43-51; Fay, *Untitled*, 8-10. In 1744 every faculty member of Harvard signed *The Testimony of the President, Professors, Tutors and Hebrew Instructor of Harvard College in Cambridge, against the Reverend Mr. George Whitefield, and his Conduct* (Boston: T. Fleet, 1774).

⁴² Elisha Williams, *The Essential Rights and Liberties of Protestants: A Seasonable Plea for The Liberty of Conscience, and The Right of Private Judgment, in Matters of Religion, Without any Controul [sic] from Human Authority [...]* (Boston: S. Kneeland and T. Green, 1744).

⁴³ Williams, *Essential Rights*, 7-8.

While the reform movement created polarization in the social order within the meetinghouse over liberty of conscience, it also proved to reorient covenant ownership towards individualism.⁴⁴ Yet, it also served to create unlikely bedfellows in the looming break with Britain in 1776. Mark Noll astutely saw the collapse of Edwards's ministry in Northampton in 1750 as the watershed moment in which New England began to break with the collective covenant in favour of an individual ownership of a covenant of grace.⁴⁵ In the same year, Jonathan Mayhew preached a memorial sermon in Boston titled *A Discourse concerning Unlimited Submission and Non-Resistance to the Higher Powers*.⁴⁶ Mayhew was an unlikely partner for the repressed New Light movement in New England; however, his published sermon was read by many during this period.⁴⁷

These republican ideas were read and discussed leading up to the French and Indian War (1754-1763). During these years, young Edwards Jr. experienced the war personally on the frontier of New York. After the loss of his parents during these war years, he matriculated into the College of New Jersey as the roots of republicanism were beginning to take hold.⁴⁸ The Intolerable Acts were issued just as Edwards Jr. was converted and began to take his faith and calling seriously. In 1765 the first of the Intolerable Acts was handed down as the 'Stamp Act'. Edwards Jr. began his ministry in New Haven just two years after the Stamp Act had been repealed in 1766. The conversation about a national and individual covenant, which began in the early days of the Awakening, continued into Edwards Jr.'s pastorate.

⁴⁴ Charles Taylor narrates how the sense of self was reordered in society from being a member in the great congregation to that of having individual religion. See Charles Taylor, *A Secular Age* (Harvard: University Press, 2007), 146; Charles Taylor, *Sources of the Self: The Making of the Modern Identity* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1989), 129-136.

⁴⁵ Noll, *America's God*, 44-48.

⁴⁶ Full title: *A Discourse concerning Unlimited Submission and Non-Resistance to the Higher Powers. With some Reflections on the Resistance made to King Charles I. And on the Anniversary of his Death: In which the Mysterious Doctrine of that Prince's Saintship and Martyrdom is Unriddled, January 30, 1749/50* (Boston: D. Fowle, 1750).

⁴⁷ According to John Adams who was a member of his church, this sermon was read by everyone. John Adams, *The Works of John Adams, Letters 1811-1825*, vol. 10 Indexes (Boston: Little, Brown, and Company, 1854), 288. Jonathan Edwards Jr. preached a similar sermon during the war years from the same text.

⁴⁸ Banks, *Forgotten Edwards*, 21-26.

B. Enlightenment Pressure to Articulate a Consistent System of Theology

The polarization that occurred during the Awakening, according to James W. Jones, was also the result of ‘two divergent lines of [theological] development [that] had been going on for almost a century before the first convert fell into fits of conversion on the floor of the Northampton meetinghouse’.⁴⁹ Indeed, ever since Ann Hutchinson’s disturbance to the social order, ministers like John Cotton (1585–1652) attempted to reconcile divine sovereignty and human responsibility, regeneration and faith, preparation and conversion.⁵⁰ Subsequent ministers, responding to each other, tried to solve these issues using different philosophical tools. For example, John Norton (1606–1663) who inherited Cotton’s pulpit prioritized the ontology of God over epistemology in *The Orthodox Evangelist*.⁵¹ Cotton prioritized sovereignty over human responsiveness through the efficient decrees of God. According to Jones this emphasis created opportunity in the next century for the universalism of Charles Chauncy. The divine will diminished the role of Christ and grounded the decrees of God in arbitrary perfections.⁵² Chauncy, in contrast to some of his predecessors, emphasized a benevolent God who intended *all* his creatures to be eternally happy.⁵³ Furthermore, he adapted preparationism as an Arminian footpath by which man’s moral capacities were cultivated *as the intellect took hold* of Christ.⁵⁴ Edwards Jr. would respond to these issues, and chiefly to the reconciliation of each perfection of God in ‘the divine constitution’.

⁴⁹ James W. Jones, *The Shattered Synthesis* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1973), ix. Jones’s work is divided between the seventeenth- and eighteenth-century puritans. Using much primary material, he argues convincingly that the issues debated by Edwards’s students were already a matter of theological debate. John Norton, Giles Firmin, Samuel Willard, Cotton Mather, Benjamin Colman, and Solomon Stoddard are compared in the seventeenth century. The debate between orthodoxy and a growing humanism finally gave way in the eighteenth century under Lemuel Briant, Ebenezer Gay, Jonathan Mayhew, and Charles Chauncy.

⁵⁰ Jones, *Shattered Synthesis*, 4-6.

⁵¹ John Norton, *The Orthodox Evangelist*, 1654; reprint, *A Library of American Puritan Writings: The Seventeenth Century*, Vol. 11, ed. Sacvan Bercovitch (New York: AMS Press, 1983), 2-3.

⁵² Jones, *Shattered Synthesis*, 26-31. Norton, *Orthodox Evangelist*, 223-26, 304.

⁵³ Charles Chauncy, *The Benevolence of the Deity [...]* (Boston: Powars & Willis, 1784), 36-37.

⁵⁴ Charles Chauncy, *Five Dissertations on the Scripture Account of the Fall* (London: C. Dilly, 1785), 33.; Charles Chauncy, ‘Sermon 3: The Nature of Faith [...], in *Twelve Sermons*, (Boston: D. & J. Kneeland, 1745), 83.

In the jump from Norton to Chauncy, there are points of connection. These occurred as reactions and refinements occurred in a long, inter-generational debate over God's sovereignty and man's responsibility. The debate, progressed through the minds of Giles Firmin (1614–1697), Samuel Willard, and Cotton Mather. Federalism was never in question, rather how a person owned the covenant. As each forefather reacted to their predecessor, a 'rational strain' began to develop. Harvard University was experiencing this rationalism, just as Jonathan Edwards began his ministry in Northampton. The rational strain significantly resulted in an augmented preparationism, moralism, and human participation in salvation. In addition, the influence of Isaac Newton (1642–1726/7) and John Locke (1632–1704) also required a response from the Boston clergy. Conrad Wright identified a shifting emphasis upon man's intellectual role in faith as a pivot was made to embrace the Enlightenment. The response, to use Wright's terminology, created a 'Supernatural Rationalism', that is, an attempt to harmonize two authorities. Deists claimed that divine revelation and reason were incompatible.⁵⁵ Nevertheless, the Harvard elites attempted to reconcile revelation, and reason would be the catalyst for future debate with the heirs of Edwards.

Far from being anti-intellectual, Edwards and his heirs believed they could reconcile aspects of the enlightenment with revelation. The heirs of Edwards would self-identify as Consistent Calvinists because they believed that their explanation of the atonement not only bridged the gap between revelation and reason but also harmonized God's perfections. Furthermore, the Edwardseans were considered conservative because they retained all the crucial elements of their reformed heritage whereas the Boston clergy shifted to embrace Arminian and eventually Universalist thinking. Liberals in the eighteenth century had a higher view of revelation than those in the late nineteenth century. They believed that truth itself was absolute; however, man was to use his intellect to determine the truth free from the oppression of constructed opinions.⁵⁶ Even though Charles Chauncy and Jonathan Mayhew held a high view of Scripture as an authority, they were considered to be progressive

⁵⁵ Wright, *The Liberal Christians*, 15-21.

⁵⁶ Mayhew, 'Right and Duty', 41-42. Constructed opinions were to be dislodged using the Cartesian method of radical doubt. 'They who set themselves to give precepts must of course regard themselves as possessed of greater skill than those to whom they prescribe; and if they err in the slightest particular, they subject themselves to censure'. Rene Descartes, *The Method, Meditations, and Philosophy of Descartes*, trans. John Vietch (London: M. Walter Dunne, 1901), 150-51.

because they prioritized the Arminian doctrines of free will and universal aspects of the atonement as they harmonized revelation with reason.

C. Arminian Humanism—Chauncy, Mayhew, and West

1) Charles Chauncy (1705–1787)

Rev. Charles Chauncy, the pastor of the Old South Church in Boston and great-grandson of President Charles Chauncy (1592–1672) of Harvard, was for many a ‘theological mystery’.⁵⁷ Edward M. Griffin proposed that Chauncy belonged to neither the New Light nor the Deist tribe, rather he was a traditionalist who valued a well-ordered society. In this respect, he applied himself to use revelation to work-out the problems of theology through ‘free inquiry’.⁵⁸ Capacity for free inquiry meant that mankind were reasonable beings. As such, man is affected through the ‘enlightened mind’. Yes, the affections played a role, but only to increase the powers of reason.⁵⁹

According to Chauncy, man was made with capacity for improvement as a free agent. Indeed, the bestowal upon man of a free will independent of necessity, ‘is one of the great wonders of God’.⁶⁰ Thus, pleasure ‘is within the reach of the capacity of all such to feel this self-approbation [...] with continual increasing degrees, in proportion to the degrees of virtue they discover in the good government of these various faculties, they are entrusted with the care of’.⁶¹ In this statement, it is evident that Chauncy had a positive view of human capacity and moral self-development. This positive view influenced the way in which he merged faith with works to make them virtually indistinguishable. Because, according to Chauncy, faith became a kind

⁵⁷ Jones, *The Shattered Synthesis*, 191.

⁵⁸ Edward M. Griffin, *Old Brick: Charles Chauncy of Boston, 1705-1787* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1980).

⁵⁹ Chauncy, *Seasonable Thoughts*, 324-27.

⁶⁰ Chauncy, *Benevolence*, 135.

⁶¹ Chauncy, *Benevolence*, 136.

of work in which every man was capable. Over time, his concept of faith became a matter of epistemology or the acquisition of knowledge.⁶²

2) Jonathan Mayhew (1720–1766)

Jonathan Mayhew was the descendent of the original patent owner of Martha's Vineyard, Massachusetts. His predecessors were effective evangelists to the Pokanoket people. Matriculation into Harvard put him into relationship with future leaders of the American Revolution and into conversation with Enlightenment thought.⁶³ Jonathan's first year at Harvard also introduced him to the preaching of George Whitefield in Harvard Yard. Mayhew experienced initial admiration for Whitefield, but whatever kind-heartedness he had towards him was gone by the time Whitefield preached his last sermon in the area.⁶⁴ In 1747 Mayhew took the pastorate of the West Church across the Charles River in 'New Boston' likely due to Charles Chauncy's influence.⁶⁵ Mayhew was not welcomed by the Boston ministerium, and this led Mayhew to adopt a persecution mindset. Mayhew preached against the tyranny of the Boston elite who prevented individual liberty to pursue 'the right and duty of private judgment'.⁶⁶ Mayhew, like his older colleague Charles Chauncy, strove to make revelation compatible with reason. For example, his Harvard M. A. thesis

⁶² Chauncy, 'Sermon 3', 82-83. See also, Jones, *Shattered Synthesis*, 182-84. Chauncy still considered the Spirit to have a role in salvation; however, the work of the Spirit was in response to man's faith after enlightenment of the mind. See Willem van Vlastuin, 'Faith and Feeling in the Theology of Jonathan Edwards', 203-220, in *The Global Edwards: Papers from the Jonathan Edwards Congress held in Melbourne, August 2015*, ed. Rhys S. Bezzant (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2017), 211-12.

⁶³ Charles W. Akers, *Called Unto Liberty: A Life of Jonathan Mayhew, 1720-1766* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1964), 23.

⁶⁴ 'As to Mr. Whitefield, when he was in town there were many persons that attended his preaching; but chiefly of the meanest sort, excepting those that heard him from a principle of curiosity—I heard the last Sermon he preached, which was a very low, confused, puerile, conceited, ill-natured, enthusiastic, etc. performance as ever I heard in my life'. Jonathan Mayhew, 'Letter to Experience Mayhew, October 1, 1747', *Mayhew Papers of the Bortman Americana Collection*, Collection No. 1612, Boston University (Box 1, File 23).

⁶⁵ Akers, *Called Unto Liberty*, 47-55.

⁶⁶ Jonathan Mayhew, 'The Right and Duty of Private Judgment Asserted', 41-64, in *Seven Sermons* (Boston: Rogers and Fowle, 1749).

argued the positive answer to the following question: 'Does reason correctly accord with faith?'⁶⁷

Consistent with this outlook, Mayhew advocated a common-sense approach to scriptural interpretation. In keeping with his categories of truth in contrast to opinion, he believed that God honoured valiant effort to find the truth and live honourably.⁶⁸ Like Chauncy, he focused on the benevolence of God to create a world so that man might be happy. This was 'the great end of his universal government, the good of his creatures and therein his own glory; for these are inseparably connected'.⁶⁹ With an optimistic view of benevolence, Mayhew's soteriology moved in a liberal direction. For example, in his sermon *Striving to Enter in at the Strait Gate*, written after the great fire in Boston, he encouraged perseverance in the use of means to obtain salvation.⁷⁰ While giving the impression of holding to the traditions of puritanism, he proposed a moral suasion view of Spirit conversion and even a freedom to resist.⁷¹ The optimistic view of humanity resonated with the Boston elite, but drew significant criticism from Jonathan Edwards's students.

Edwards Sr. began to recognize the growth and acceptance of these Arminian doctrines in Boston in the mid-1730s.⁷² To safeguard his congregation, he preached his two-part public lecture on justification by faith. This doctrine, he later emphasized, proved to ignite an awakening in his church.⁷³ Mayhew was indicative of this Arminian drift.⁷⁴ Mayhew argued, like Chauncy, that a moral government,

⁶⁷ Akers, *Called Unto Liberty*, 59.

⁶⁸ Jonathan Mayhew, 'Sermon 5: Of Salvation by Grace', 99-125, in *Sermons upon the following Subjects* (Boston: Richard Draper, 1755), 103-104.

⁶⁹ Jonathan Mayhew, *Two Sermons on the Nature, Extent and Perfection of the Divine Goodness* (Boston: D. and J. Kneeland, 1763), 77.

⁷⁰ Mayhew, *Striving to Enter in at the Strait Gate Explained and Inculcated; and the Connection of Salvation therewith, proved from the Holy Scriptures* (Boston: Draper, 1761), 23, 73.

⁷¹ Mayhew, *Striving to Enter*, 21-22.

⁷² 'Unpublished Letter of May 30, 1735 to Benjamin Coleman', in YE4:100.

⁷³ Jonathan Edwards Sr., 'Preface to Justification by Faith Alone' in *Sermons on Various Important Subjects* (London: Printed for the Booksellers, 1738), i-iv.

⁷⁴ '[T]hese doctrines at this day are much more prevalent than they were then [sixteen years ago, i.e., in 1734]: the progress they have made in the land, within this seven years, seems to have been vastly greater than at any time in the like space before: and they are still prevailing and creeping into almost all parts of the land [...]'. Jonathan Edwards, 'A Farewell Sermon Preached at the First Precinct in Northampton, After the People's Public Rejection of Their Minister [...] on June 22, 1750' YE25:486.

which did not permit a freedom to pursue one's happiness was absurd. Human inability seemed to be contrary to a benevolent God. To address these 'common sense' influences, Edwards wrote *Freedom of the Will* (1754).⁷⁵ However, when Edwards wrote *Freedom of the Will*, he chose to engage primarily with Thomas Chubb (1679–1747), Daniel Whitby (1638–1726), and Isaac Watts (1674–1748).⁷⁶ Watts is an interesting addition to the others; however, by adding him as an unnamed debate partner, Edwards brought the topic closer to New England's meetinghouses. Watts's pietistic influence was pervasive throughout New England⁷⁷ and therefore, this addition, implied that anyone might be susceptible to theological drift. James W. Jones keenly observed that 'the history of ideas rarely follows the neatly delineated lines of years and centuries'.⁷⁸ The jagged lines occurred through the death of Edwards in 1758. Just eight years later Mayhew himself would die an early death at the age of forty-six.

Because Jonathan Mayhew died young, he did not overlap with Jonathan Edwards Jr.'s pastorate in New Haven; however, Charles Chauncy did. In his later years, Chauncy's insipient universalism became more widely known and drew the attention of Edwards Jr. Yet, when his father left Northampton, Edwards prophetically alluded to the growing influence of the Arminian party in Boston. As a fulfilment of this prophecy, James Dana (1735–1812) gave the first response to Edwards's *Freedom of the Will* from the Arminian party in 1770.⁷⁹ Dana's relocation to New Haven's First Church in 1789 received a cool reception from Edwards Jr. Edwards Jr. participated in the installation council for Dana. At this public event he grilled Dana on the issue of the will, original sin, regeneration, illumination, and means of grace.⁸⁰

⁷⁵ 'Jonathan Edwards to John Erskine, November 23, 1752', in YE16:491.

⁷⁶ Paul Ramsey, 'Editor's Introduction', 1-128, in YE1:65-118.

⁷⁷ Marsden, *Jonathan Edwards*, 156.; Susan O'Brien, 'Eighteenth-Century Publishing Networks in the First Years of Transatlantic Evangelicalism', in *Evangelicalism: Comparative Studies of Popular Protestantism in North America, the British Isles, and Beyond, 1700-1900*, Mark Noll, et al., eds (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994), 38-57.

⁷⁸ Jones, *Shattered Synthesis*, 131.

⁷⁹ James Dana, *An Examination of the Late Reverend President Edwards's Enquiry on Freedom of the Will* (Boston: Kneeland, 1770).

⁸⁰ Ezra Stiles, *The Literary Diary of Ezra Stiles: January 1, 1782-May 6, 1795*, Vol. 3, ed. Franklin Bowditch Dexter (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1901), 363-64.

3) Samuel West (1738–1808)

Others among the Arminian party were preparing to respond to *Freedom of the Will*, like Samuel West, but with the national crisis for independence on the horizon, he postponed a response until 1793. West, pastor of the Hollis Street Church in Boston, publish a two-part response over two years.⁸¹ Edwards Jr. would refute West's *Essays on Liberty and Necessity* with his own *Dissertation Concerning Liberty and Necessity* (1797).⁸² The main issue debated therein was the linkage between motive and volition.⁸³ The secondary argument regarding God's moral governance with respect to sin and punishment was also addressed. This topic is relevant to Edwards Jr.'s atonement thinking wherein Edwards Jr. argued that a moral necessity to sin is not inconsistent with a necessity to punish sin. Therefore, it is no contradiction in moral governance to punish the sin which man is disposed to commit. In this sense, God's judgment upon mankind as consequence of original sin is just, and God's necessity to punish sinners is also just. Since God is the 'Great First Cause', the 'linkage' between motive and volition is present notwithstanding God's allowance of sin is passive rather than active.⁸⁴ While relevant to the atonement, by virtue of the freedom owing to God's sovereignty, this dissertation will not focus on West. The arguments of Universalism have a greater connection with the main of Edwards Jr.'s atonement thinking.

D. Universalism—Murray, Relly, and Chauncy

Chauncy hesitated to publish his ideas until after the war, due to several factors including a desire not to be associated with John Murray's anti-intellectualism. When John Murray came to America in 1770, he not only stirred up controversy with the orthodox, but also slowed down the progressive movement of Boston's liberal clergy.⁸⁵ Chauncy did share a similar universalist position with Murray, however, he

⁸¹ Samuel West, *Essays on Liberty and Necessity* (Boston: Samuel Hall, 1794).

⁸² AE1:295-466.

⁸³ West, *Essays on Liberty and Necessity, Second Part*, 4, 23.

⁸⁴ AE1:381, 444-46.

⁸⁵ During this period of caution, Chauncy used purposely vague theological terms. His friends even developed the codeword 'pudding' to hide his system of theology. When conversation drifted

did so for entirely different reasons. Chauncy was moving towards a unitarian-universalist position while adopting an optimistic Arminian view. John Murray, on the other hand, because he was introduced to universalism in England by James Rely (1722–1778) laid stress upon God’s predetermination.⁸⁶

Leading Murray to discover Rely in the early 1760s was a poorly-argued response to Rely’s *Union: or Treatise of the Consanguinity and Affinity between Christ and His Church* (1759). Since the pamphlet was so badly reasoned, it compelled Murray to investigate Rely’s position. He and his wife Eliza decided to go to Rely’s meetings when their regular pastor was away.⁸⁷ Having long had internal conflicts between an Arminian and Calvinist approach to salvation, Murray found himself stuck on the inconsistencies in a Calvinistic view of reprobation. On the other hand, the Arminian position on the atonement equally caused him difficulty.⁸⁸ The supposed inconsistencies were created by the adoption of a simplistic hermeneutic, which created doctrine from the bare words of Scripture suppressing the natural context.

After listening to Rely, they both walked away impressed and satisfied with this new method. Rely’s method, however, stripped away centuries of interpretation based upon *Analogia Scriptura*. For example, Rely’s sermon on Matthew 12:33⁸⁹ prioritized man’s depravity over the sanctifying influences of the Spirit in sinners and woodenly refused to allow for any good except in the tree of Christ. The context, however, clearly speaks of fruit production as evidence of the work of the Spirit in sinners. Yet, this rigid approach appealed to Murray who said that ‘it is the first consistent sermon I have ever heard’.⁹⁰ Returning home after this meeting, Murray picked up Rely’s *Union* and discovered new ways to conceptualize payment of debt

towards ideas like universalism, Chauncy might ask someone, ‘Doth he relish the pudding?’ Griffin, *Old Brick*, 127, 168-76.

⁸⁶ John Murray’s father was a Calvinist adherent in Ireland; however, his family became absorbed into the Methodist movement when John Wesley came to his community. In time, John Murray became attracted to George Whitefield’s preaching. John Murray, *The Life of Rev. John Murray, Preacher of Universal Salvation* (Boston: Universalist Publishing House, 1870), 26-28, 103-104.

⁸⁷ Murray, *Life*, 151-160.

⁸⁸ Murray, *Life*, 161.

⁸⁹ ‘Either make the tree good, and his fruit good; or else make the tree corrupt, and his fruit corrupt: for the tree is known by his fruit’. Matthew 12:33, King James Version.

⁹⁰ Murray, *Life*, 159. James Rely, *Union: or Treatise of the Consanguinity and Affinity between Christ and His Church*, 1759; reprint (New York: D. & G. Bruce, 1812). Rely begins his treatise stating that ‘The doctrine of *Union* between *Christ* and his *Church* renders the System of man’s redemption by his Blood, beautifully consistent, and worthy its glorious Author’. Rely, *Union*, 41.

by the atonement. Bolstered with a new confidence that inconsistency can be overcome, Murray clung to the positive side of election and dispensed with its negative side. Following Rely's example of interpretation, Murray found a universal application of the atonement in which 'everyone for whom Christ died must finally be saved'.⁹¹

After his wife died in 1770, Murray sailed to America to seek a new life. In America, Murray had a sensational call to ministry through a prophetic message conveyed to him by a benefactor. Preaching a universal reconciliation gospel, he brought encouragement to many who doubted their election. Speaking in a Baptist church in Philadelphia created a great stir, yet it provided even more opportunity to spread his unique version of the atonement. In Freehold, New Jersey, Murray met with William Tennent Jr. (1705–1777). In this meeting, Tennent questioned whether Murray was part of 'the true church'.⁹² In the autumn of 1772, Murray traversed as far as Newport, Rhode Island, taking him through New Haven where Jonathan Edwards Jr. pastored.⁹³ Through the next ten years universalism gained ground in New England. By 1782 some prominent members within Edwards Jr.'s own congregation had defected from church attendance having embraced this new teaching.⁹⁴ When Murray came again in 1784 to preach, Edwards Jr. responded with a series of sermons even publishing a series of objections to Murray's universalism.⁹⁵

Despite Chauncy's disdain for Murray's methodology, Murray nevertheless attempted to harmonize Scripture and reason. He even defended the integrity of the Scripture against the attack of Deists.⁹⁶ In this way, Murray might be considered

⁹¹ Murray, *Life*, 161.

⁹² Murray, *Life*, 234-36.

⁹³ Ezra Stiles confirms much of John Murray's account of coming to Newport even traveling with Samuel Hopkins from Preston, Connecticut. Stiles, *Literary Diary*, Vol. 3, 289-94. Murray, *Life*, 244-59. See also, Levi Hart, 'Letter Sent to Joseph Bellamy, October 3, 1772', *Joseph Bellamy Papers*, trans. Richard Webster, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia, 298-99.

⁹⁴ Ebenezer Beardselee (Beardsley) leveled accusations against Edwards Jr. for being too 'metaphysical' and engaged in 'perverse disputings [sic]'. David Austin, 'Committee Report on Enquiry of Several Brethren, August 20, 1789', *White Haven Church Records, Series 1*, New Haven Museum (MSS 9, Box 1, Folder U1). Beardsley was a successful medical doctor and druggist and from 1784-87 served as a city councilman of New Haven, CT.

⁹⁵ 'Brief Observations on the Doctrine of Universal Salvation, as lately Promulgated at New Haven', 1784, AE1:279-93.

⁹⁶ Russell E. Miller, *The Larger Hope: The First Century of the Universalist Church in America, 1770-1870* (Boston: Unitarian Universalist Association, 1979), 16-17.

progressive even though some of his arguments lacked the internal integrity Chauncy would prefer. Chauncy, in contrast to Murray, was part of the Arminian establishment in Boston. Murray, on the other hand, was allied with groups outside of Congregationalism like the Baptists, Quakers, and other dissenters.⁹⁷ Murray was also more of a Biblicist while Chauncy argued for universalism along philosophical lines. In Chauncy's anonymous publication, *The Mystery Hid from Ages and Generations, made manifest by the Gospel-Revelation: or The Salvation of All Men*, he broke with the great Westminster tradition that the whole world was created for God's own glory. In the very first line of the 'Preface', he claimed that God made mankind for happiness and 'finally fixes them in the everlasting enjoyment of it, notwithstanding the lapse of the one man Adam, and all the sin and misery that ever has been, or ever will be, consequent thereupon'.⁹⁸ This philosophical priority drives the exposition of every Scripture text that could be used to substantiate his claim. Furthermore, Chauncy's Arminian tendency to promote the means of grace as the functional pathway for moral growth corresponded to his expectation of benevolence after death. Both this optimistic outlook on man's ability and God's benevolence, when coupled with republican individualism, drove Edward's students to tighten up their atonement theory.

In the following sections this theological context will be put together with Edwards Jr.'s atonement thinking as it developed over his lifetime. Beginning with his earliest unpublished sermon under the watchful eye of Joseph Bellamy the seeds of his atonement thinking were planted. After a look at his early mentorship, his engagement with Universalists will be considered along with sermons he preached to fortify the doctrinal integrity of his flock. It was not until the mid-1780s that he began to publicly engage Murray, and then, Chauncy in 1790. Yet, through this engagement, a robust understanding of the atonement can be observed with traces of his father's theological heritage.

⁹⁷ David Robinson, *The Unitarians and the Universalists* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1985), 47-48.

⁹⁸ Charles Chauncy, *The Mystery hid from Ages and Generations, made manifest by the Gospel-Revelation: or The Salvation of All Men* (London: Charles Dilly, 1784), v.

IV. THE DEVELOPMENT OF EDWARDS JR.'S ATONEMENT THINKING

A. Mentorship in Bethlehem, CT with Bellamy

Edwards Jr. was mentored by both Samuel Hopkins and Joseph Bellamy; however, his lengthier time with Bellamy gave a clear shape to his early atonement thinking. After a winter with Hopkins, he travelled down to Bethlehem, Connecticut, for a rigorous internship with Bellamy through the fall of 1766. With Bellamy he prepared several sermons, which were preached and critiqued.⁹⁹ Sermon 4 is the second unpublished manuscript at our disposal. This sermon follows the guidelines for 'The Best Method for Preaching' modelled by Petrus van Mastricht.¹⁰⁰ It also provided insight into how the younger Edwards received Bellamy. Sermon 4 develops a framework for the atonement out of Romans 3:24.¹⁰¹

Edwards Jr. began by highlighting God's freeness to justify sinners in a way that is 'perfectly consistent' with his divine perfections and 'in the whole of his conduct, with his law, the rule of right'.¹⁰² Edwards Jr. built a tension into his sermon by acknowledging a common objection to penal substitution as an improper means to satisfy justice. He proposed a way forward despite this objection, saying that the way out of this gordian knot is 'without a strict observance of the law according to the letter of it'.¹⁰³ On the face, this appears not to resolve the tension, so the sermon

⁹⁹ Edwards Jr.'s earliest available sermon manuscript was completed in August 1766 under Joseph Bellamy's direction. After his licensure, he would preach it at Samuel Hopkin's church in Great Barrington, Massachusetts. In the early years of Edwards Jr.'s ministry, he labeled his sermons volumes, but then simplified them to a Number, Date, and Text. I will describe them as either sermons or lectures but cite them as he labels them. Jonathan Edwards Jr., 'Volume 3. August 1766, 2 Pet. 2.22', *Jonathan Edwards, Jr. Papers (Sermon)*, Hartford Seminary Library (Box 165, Folder 2725), 3.

¹⁰⁰ Van Mastricht advocated the selection of a concise sentence of Scripture best suited to develop a doctrine for one's listeners. After a careful exegesis of the text, it was developed into a clear doctrinal statement, then shown to be apologetically superior and universally applicable to the listener. Petrus van Mastricht, 'The Best Method of Preaching', 3-31, in *Theoretical-Practical Theology: Prolegomena*, Vol. 1., trans. by Todd M. Rester, ed. by Joel R. Beeke (Grand Rapids: Reformation Heritage Books, 2018). See also, 'The Nature of Edwards Jr.'s Sermon Manuscripts', in Banks, *Forgotten Edwards*, 149-52.

¹⁰¹ 'Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus'. Romans 3:24, King James Version.

¹⁰² Jonathan Edwards Jr., 'Volume 4. October 1766, Rom. 3.24', *Jonathan Edwards, Jr. Papers (Sermon)*, Hartford Seminary Library (Box 165, Folder 2725), 3.

¹⁰³ Edwards Jr., 'Volume 4', 3-4.

develops two ways atonement creates consistency between the law and his perfections.

First, the law is said to be a revelation of God's character which is 'righteous, just, holy, and upright, perfectly consistent'.¹⁰⁴ Because mankind is unable to come out from under the condemnation of the law, God had to act. Yet, there was no way to be 'consistent with the honour of his government or consistent with his glorious perfections' and 'communicate happiness to his lost creatures'. Without sending his Son 'to vindicate his character and make it appear in the eyes of the universe that he was indeed the God that he claimed to be, holy and upright, infinitely opposite to all sin', there was no other way.¹⁰⁵ In this concise explanation, Edwards Jr. alluded to other intelligent beings as 'eyes of the universe' who witness redemption. This anthropomorphism, whether understood by Edwards Jr. or not, is a connection to Edwards Sr.'s visual atonement thinking and speaks to the infinite wisdom of God on display to the angelic world. He went on to define key terms associated with justification before returning later to the mechanics of a redemption consistent with God's nature.

He led with *justification* first to show that God can redeem contrary to state of being. He emphasized the incongruity of expunging reality to show the logical appropriateness to release from punishment and treat a sinner 'in *the same manner as if* he had forever kept the law perfectly'. The incongruity of redemption contrary to reality is not a problem *in se* because God will provide reward to the unworthy sinner by grace alone.¹⁰⁶ To be justified *freely by his grace* meant that 'we are justified by the mere self-moving goodness and grace of God'.¹⁰⁷ *Redemption*, the last term defined, is described as a payment made for release, and may appear 'at first view somewhat inconsistent' with free grace.

Edwards proposed that a price paid for redemption and 'the nature of the satisfaction made' did not have to be at odds. This can resolve by recombination of substitution and satisfaction thinking. In other words, the nature of satisfaction occurs in the substitution. How? By taking the punishment of the sinner upon himself so that '*the righteousness of the law* might be fulfilled in us'. Edwards explained that

¹⁰⁴ Edwards Jr., 'Volume 4', 3.

¹⁰⁵ Edwards Jr., 'Volume 4', 10.

¹⁰⁶ Emphasis original. Edwards Jr., 'Volume 4', 5-6.

¹⁰⁷ Edwards Jr., 'Volume 4', 7-8.

if the righteousness of the law is fulfilled, then the law is kept up, and is fully executed, at least as to the spirit and design of it; and if God's law be fully executed, then the righteousness of God's character is maintained. Now [...] I think it appears the atonement of Christ, or the price paid by him to redeem sinners consists in his condemning sin, in vindicating his father's honour, and declaring his righteousness in general.¹⁰⁸

Edwards Jr. was saying that the negative act of punishment is, at the same time, a demonstration of a positive regard for God's own righteousness, purity, and holiness. There is an inverse relationship between the two. Since God is of such infinite dignity and honour anything less than what the law requires would be 'a trifling satisfaction'.¹⁰⁹ Thus, it is not a trifling satisfaction, but a demonstrable equivalency where the negative and positive requirements of the law become one. In this can be seen his father's emphasis upon the positive and negative goods of satisfaction.

This atonement thinking is a species of satisfaction theory; however, it is also substitutionary in its mechanism. According to Edwards Jr., Christ's death for sin is substitutionary but not in the traditional penal sense of an eye-for-an-eye distributive correspondence. Instead, the 'spirit of the law' is satisfied in a negative penal display of God's wrath towards sin and a vindication of his righteousness. Yet, at the same time, it does display positive righteousness, because it is no less a vicarious punishment inflicted upon the Son. Traditionally, penal atonement theory can be pitted against satisfaction theory, and the pecuniary element of debt repayment seems to suggest either a universal payment or none at all.¹¹⁰

The proper way to visualize the pecuniary language in Scripture, according to Edwards Jr., is not primarily about paying debt but in redeeming sinners. The price

¹⁰⁸ Edwards Jr., 'Volume 4', 24-25.

¹⁰⁹ Edwards Jr. uses the example of Haman, Esther, and King Ahasuerus to show how simple pardon without punishment is not enough to satisfy justice. If Haman had attempted 'a rape upon the queen', as was supposed, then it would be inappropriate to only accept his apology without his punishment. Edwards Jr., 'Sermon 4', 27-28.

¹¹⁰ Oliver Crisp, *Approaching the Atonement: The Reconciling Work of Christ* (Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity Press, 2020), 74-76, 105-109. See also, William Lane Craig, *Atonement and the Death of Christ: An Exegetical, Historical, and Philosophical Exploration* (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2020), 125-144, 211-214.

or mechanism of redemption is the Son of Man in which he is given for the purchase the elect. He wrote,

The apostle indeed says, *Ye are bought with a price* (1 Cor 6 & 7:23) and the Son of Man is said, *to give himself a ransom for many* (Mat. 20:23), *and to redeem us from the curse of the law* (Matt 20:23), and to redeem us from the curse of the law (Gal. 3:13), but here nothing is said about our debts being paid up. It is *YE, MANY, US*, that the price is paid for [...] also that it is perfectly consistent with free pardon and justification.¹¹¹

Redemption is not a right by virtue of debt repayment *per se* rather it is a gift bestowed. In this scheme, the father is satisfied, *and* man forgiven *because* of a union to Christ by faith. Yet, the emphasis on free grace is designed to combat 'wrong conceptions of the atonement, or of the nature of the price paid'.¹¹² Since this is a student sermon under Bellamy, is it possible that it may bear a similarity to Bellamy's thought and presentation? While Edwards Jr. can speak of satisfaction occurring through union, he does not seem to have the tools to explain why this is not an inconsistency. In the subsequent chapter on Bellamy, it will be noted in reflection that Bellamy's emphasis upon negative and positive aspects of atonement seem to be received by Edwards Jr. at this stage of his development.¹¹³ However, despite this reception, there seems to be some persistent inconsistency in his use of the pecuniary analogy. This inconsistency will find resolution in his later development and use of his father's manuscripts, as will be shown below.¹¹⁴

¹¹¹ Emphasis original. Edwards Jr., 'Volume 4', 32-33.

¹¹² Edwards Jr., 'Volume 4', 31.

¹¹³ See chapter four below in which Bellamy's atonement mechanism sees substitution as a restoration of 'the thing required' by the law. This occurs as a positive good as love for God and negative good as payment of penalty. This is corollary to how Maastricht viewed Christ as a bridge of union in the imputation of sin and the reward of the Spirit. See also, chapter six.

¹¹⁴ 'Agreement, arranging for deposit of Edwards manuscripts to Jonathan Edwards, signed by seven of his siblings, March 27, 1767', Jonathan Edwards Collection, Series 10, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library (Gen MSS 151, Box 37, Folder 1666).

B. The Early Years in New Haven

Between the time of his ordination in October 1766 and settlement in New Haven in January 1769, Edwards Jr. prepared sermons for pulpit supply and then preached them throughout New Jersey, Connecticut, and western Massachusetts. His first sermon in New Haven happened to be Sermon 4 on Romans 3:24, which we have already examined. A message on justification would have been ideal sermon for a candidate looking for a church pulpit to occupy. Once settled, it would be expected that he might return to these topics over time. And so, he did. The next Sabbath after his installation, he turned to Ephesians 2:5 as his text to speak of atonement.¹¹⁵

Ephesians 2:5 is a text that focuses upon grace. So, he wrote that every angle of the atonement, from eternity to subsequent execution, is brought into being based on 'mere sovereign grace'. Prior to the incarnation, grace is 'abundantly conspicuous in the covenant of redemption' and 'this proposal of the Father to the Son was entirely of mere sovereign grace'. Edwards Jr. saw the first cause of the covenant of redemption as 'the goodness of the divine nature and the gracious disposition of the divine mind'.¹¹⁶ Because the Son was not forced within Trinitarian relations to comply, the act of the Son to atone is an effective mechanism. In other words, there is an inclination in the Trinitarians subsistence to secure righteous atonement for the elect. This voluntarist emphasis is important in Edwards Jr.'s thinking, and one that will be returned to again.

There are two additional aspects that receive attention in this sermon. First, in the death of Christ free grace is said to be 'magnified'. This is the fourth way (of eight) free grace is seen in redemption, but the first three are less apparent to outside observers. These include the initiation of the covenant of redemption by the Father, the Son's voluntary response, and 'the electing love of God'.¹¹⁷ Later in the 'Improvement' section, he will more emphatically state 'magnification', saying,

If the grace of God exercised in the work of redemption is so great, so manifold, and so wondrous; how shall we sufficiently adore, praise, and

¹¹⁵ Jonathan Edwards Jr., 'Volume 39, Eph. 2.5, Jan. 15, 1769', *Jonathan Edwards, Jr. Papers (Sermon)*, Hartford Seminary Library (Box 165, Folder 2725).

¹¹⁶ Edwards Jr. develops eight pieces of evidence of 'mere grace' in the first sermon heading through the fifteenth page of written text. Edwards Jr., 'Volume 39', 6.

¹¹⁷ Edwards Jr., 'Volume 39', 10, 6-10.

magnify the name of the Lord? Such wondrous exertions of grace and mercy call for songs of praise, from all intelligences, even from those, who have no participation therein. They deserve the praise and adoration even of the angelic world, who have not been redeemed by the blood of Christ.¹¹⁸

Magnification is a variation upon ‘the eye of the universe’ motif in Sermon 4. He hoped to encourage his congregation to join with the angelic host to ‘magnify the name of the Lord’ in response to atonement’s visual display. This is a similar emphasis to that of his father in *A History of the Work of Redemption (HWR)*.

The second aspect worthy of attention also relates to *HWR*. Edwards Jr. described the voluntary work of the Son beginning in the humiliation i.e., incarnation just as his father had. Free grace, he said, is ‘magnified in the humiliation, life and death of our Lord Jesus Christ’. These are essential for a ‘foundation [...] laid for the honourable dispensation of pardon and mercy’. Otherwise, a dishonourable dispensation might otherwise occur. Why? Fiat pardon without due consideration for God’s own character *as revealed in the law* would be a faulty foundation because sin must be punished in the sinner or a substitute.

The honourable answer to the law is found in the twofold ‘obedience and suffering’ in the ‘humiliation’ i.e. the incarnation.¹¹⁹ Thus, the Son’s incarnation is the basis of honour. How? The incarnation comprised both his obedience and suffering throughout his life and death. In other words, the Son’s voluntary exposure to suffering through his obedience at incarnation was a singular work that is bi-directional. The voluntary humiliation is central to the effectiveness of atonement. Later that summer, he took time to explore this bi-directional work at the critical moments approaching the death upon the cross.

In June 1769, Edwards Jr. prepared a sermon on what his father called ‘the narrowest sense of redemption’ in which Christ exclaimed, ‘My soul is exceeding sorrowful even unto death’.¹²⁰ What stands out in this sermon is not merely the examination of the exact same period as his father did in *HWR*, but in the use of key phraseology. He wrote of the great sense of dread and the express willingness to die in this way:

¹¹⁸ Edwards Jr., ‘Volume 39’, 25.

¹¹⁹ Edwards Jr., ‘Volume 39’, 10.

¹²⁰ YE9:312-18. Jonathan Edwards Jr., ‘Volume 64. Mt. 26:38. June 31, 1769’, *Edwards Family Collection*, Princeton University Library (AM 8529, Box 1, Folder 10).

Another thing not improper to be mentioned while we speak of the sufferings of our Lord is that he undertook all these freely and voluntarily. When our Lord undertook these sufferings he had *a clear and perfect view* of all their exceeding weight and exquisite bitterness; so that he was not at all deceived in this matter; not at all imposed upon; but acted with his eyes perfectly open. Yet he shrunk not back from the arduous undertaking, but offered himself a willing sacrifice to divine justice.¹²¹

Had he picked up these insights from Bellamy, or had he spent time looking at his father's *HWR* manuscripts? It is difficult to be certain, but Edwards Jr.'s admiration of Locke's *Essay on Human Understanding* is definite. Also, he had received custody of his father's manuscripts two years earlier after his licence to preach. Of the two options, it is more likely Edwards Jr. had started to examine his father's writings for himself.¹²² Reference to a 'clear and perfect view' on its own might be deemed coincidence, but the reference to the 'voluntary' nature of atonement as a key point is too close to discount sourcing *HWR* and relevant *Miscellany* entries.¹²³

At the end of that same summer, Edwards Jr. also prepared a Thursday evening lecture on the pleasure taken by the Father in the Son and the Son for the Father. This pleasure is called 'perfect love and delight' that 'is always a perfect mutual retaliation of love between these divine and infinitely adorable persons'. Furthermore, the Father 'sees *every beauty and excellence in him*, which can possibly exist in any being'.¹²⁴ In this lecture, Edwards Jr. summed up the key components of Kyle Strobel's proposal that Edwards Sr. viewed the Trinitarian relations as *personal beatific-delight* found in *Discourse on the Trinity*.

The younger Edwards went on to describe the Father's pleasure in the Son as extending to his office as mediator. The office of mediator, according to Edwards Jr.,

¹²¹ Emphasis added. Edwards Jr., 'Volume 64', 16-17.

¹²² 'Agreement, arranging for deposit of Edwards manuscripts to Jonathan Edwards, signed by seven of his siblings, March 27, 1767', *Jonathan Edwards Collection, Series 10*, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library (Gen. MSS 151, Box 37, Folder 1666).

¹²³ 'No. 621. Christ's Agony in the Garden', in YE18:152-153. See also, 'No. 653. Wisdom of God in the Work of Redemption. Circumstances of Christ's Death' and 'No. 654. Mysteries of Religion. Absolute Decrees. Original Sin, etc'. in YE18:193-96.

¹²⁴ Emphasis original. Jonathan Edwards Jr., 'Volume 69. Lecture in New Haven. Aug. 1769', *Jonathan Edwards, Jr. Papers (Sermon)*, Hartford Seminary Library (Box 165, Folder 2727), 10.

was established ‘*from eternity*’ knowing that man would sin. And this office was established for the purpose of ‘mercy, so it became him to *maintain his sovereignty* in determining himself, the manner and way in which he would exercise it’.¹²⁵ As this lecture progressed, Edwards Jr. said that the infinite wisdom of God chose the Son for mediation because the Son’s humanity would be able ‘to have a *proper regard for both the parties*’.¹²⁶ Mediation, while an obvious aspect of atonement, might be overlooked by those who see Edwards Jr.’s view as a species of satisfaction or moral government only, not incorporating penal precision. Edwards Jr. was concerned for the integrity of the Son’s death and the centrality of the Son in the eternal and temporal covenant of grace. This is a similar concern as that of his father in *Discourse*, specifically, the *ad intra* and *ad extra* harmony of the whole.

With respect to ‘a proper regard’ for the Father as a ‘party’, Christ’s performance of his mediatorial office brought ‘support [to] his honour and dignity’. Obedience, he said, extended not only to the moral and ceremonial law, but also to ‘*his sufferings* [...] and especially his submitting to death was the chief and principal act of his obedience’.¹²⁷ Edwards Jr. did not use the same terminology as his father did in Miscellany No. 278, yet the request and agreement to be a substitutional sacrifice is nevertheless a singular law of similar weight to the moral or ceremonial law, i.e., a mediatorial law.¹²⁸ The obedience and suffering together are a bi-directional work designed to repair the injury to both parties. Before concluding this section on the mediatorial office of the Son, Edwards Jr. applied his own interpretation of his father’s atonement theory. Edwards Jr. wrote,

[The Father] is also entirely well pleased with the *manner* in which he went through his obedience and sufferings, and with the temper and disposition which he therein manifested. [...] And he is especially well pleased with his obedience and sufferings, as by these is abundantly manifested his exceeding great *regard to the honour and glory of his Father*, and to the support of his government. The Father is so well pleased with the obedience and sufferings of Christ that he *esteems them abundantly sufficient to make atonement* to his injured justice and abused authority: and thus he looks upon him as one who

¹²⁵ Emphasis original. Edwards Jr., ‘Volume 69’, 10-11.

¹²⁶ Emphasis original. Edwards Jr., ‘Volume 69’, 12-14.

¹²⁷ Emphasis original. Edwards Jr., ‘Volume 69’, 15-16.

¹²⁸ ‘No. 278. Righteousness of Christ’, YE13:377-79; YE9:332-343.

has completely and perfectly fulfilled the office and business of a mediator between God and man.¹²⁹

The weight of Christ's obedience to this singular mediatorial law is sufficiently equivalent to the moral and ceremonial laws. The pleasure of the Father for the Son and the Son for the Father also extends through the atonement so that it obtains. In other words, the 'honour and glory of his Father' is supported through the vindication of his government. Edwards Jr. seems to be adapting his thinking from what he had been taught by Bellamy, to what he is finding in his father's manuscripts, attempting to reconciling what he received. For example, he also stated in this lecture that as soon as man fell Christ took upon himself the office of mediator, just as his father had stated in *HWR*. Consider the following excerpt:

Immediately after mankind had fallen, Jesus Christ having undertaken the office of mediator [...] being constituted by the Father the *supreme head* over all things; he immediately *began to apply* the fruits of his mediation and atonement although the atonement had not yet been actually wrought out. And thus he hath been *ever since* carrying out the same great work of the application of his redemption to perishing sinners. The Father is well pleased with his Son's governance of the world for that end: with his disposal of all events in order to bring about *the final redemption of the elect*.¹³⁰

This is a clear development of his father's thoughts from 'Sermon Two' in *HWR* where 'the eternal Son of God clothed himself with his mediatorial character' as soon 'as man ever fell'.¹³¹ Edwards Sr. even said that 'Christ might have the care and government of it and order it agreeably to his design of redemption, but also in some respect the whole universe'.¹³² With statements like these scattered throughout *HWR*,

¹²⁹ Emphasis original. Edwards Jr., 'Volume 69', 16-17.

¹³⁰ Emphasis original. Edwards Jr., 'Volume 69', 17-18.

¹³¹ YE9:130.

¹³² YE9:131.

it is not hard to see how Edwards Jr. could connect the dots between redemption, government, and a method consistent with his attributes and divine constitution.¹³³

This is the last extant MSS where Edwards Jr. speaks of the atonement without a real need to address universalism because Murray had not yet arrived in America. Edwards Jr. never doubted that the atonement was a penal payment of a price, yet this would need more nuance as Murray's popularity grew and Arminianism spread. For example, Mayhew and Chauncy taught human compatibilism in salvation. Salvation was 'through faith' and not 'faith alone'. Their teaching implied that the atonement was not finished—man's works contributed to his justification. Penal substitution for justification made the Father to appear unmerciful and unwilling to forgive on mere repentance and reformation. This, though, implied that the atonement was insufficient on its own. Edwards Jr. argued that if the atonement was not total, then it is not at all.¹³⁴

Up to this point, Edwards Jr. preached 'an infinite atonement' bringing satisfaction by the bi-directional obedience and suffering of the Son. This secured a foundation for pardon by the singular mediatorial law-sacrifice, which was equivalent to the moral law man had broken. The price of redemption was paid by the Son voluntarily in its entirety for the elect. Edwards Jr. began to defend more positively that Christ 'in our room and stead' was necessary for the support of his government, too.¹³⁵ These governmental necessities did not mean that satisfaction was a non-penal substitution. Penal justice, however, found its equilibrium in the prior commitments of the mediatorial inclinations of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

In the spring of 1772, Edwards Jr.'s tone began to change becoming more 'jealous for the truth', encouraging his flock to have a 'careful regard lest [they become]

¹³³ In Sermon 86 on Romans 4:3 his doctrine states that 'the faith of all true believers is counted to them for righteousness' because any other atonement would be inconsistent with the divine attributes and constitution. Jonathan Edwards Jr., 'Volume 86, Rom. 4:3, Nov. 26, 1769', *Jonathan Edwards, Jr. Papers (Sermon)*, Hartford Seminary Library (Box 165, Folder 2728), 2, 13-14.

¹³⁴ Jonathan Edwards Jr., 'Volume 216, Rom. 5:8, March 22, 1772', *Jonathan Edwards, Jr. Papers (Sermon)*, Hartford Seminary Library (Box 166, Folder 2731), 2-3, 5. On moralism, see also, Jonathan Edwards Jr., 'Sermon 494, Gal. 2:19, Sept. 1, 1776', *Jonathan Edwards, Jr. Papers (Sermon)*, Hartford Seminary Library (Box 166, Folder 2737), 2-4.

¹³⁵ Jonathan Edwards Jr., 'Volume 117, Gal. 3:13, Aug. 5, 1770', *Jonathan Edwards, Jr. Papers (Sermon)*, Hartford Seminary Library (Box 165, Folder 2728), 2, 7-9.

corrupted'.¹³⁶ That summer, Murray made his first foray up to New England taking him through New Haven.

C. Engaging Murray and Chauncy

John Murray's preaching in New Haven drew Jonathan Edwards Jr. into greater prominence. In 1772 he was three years into his ministry at White Haven, twenty-seven years old, and newly married. Yet, by 1775 Edwards Jr.'s focus (along with everyone else) was shifting to the turbulence of war, but once there was a national peace, he returned to engage both Murray and Chauncy. In the summer of 1784, Murray returned to New Haven and prompted Edwards to preach a five-part series of sermons on the atonement.¹³⁷ Edwards Jr. hoped that universalism might be used for good, to awaken and strengthen weaker believers with truth.¹³⁸ The attempt to embrace the Enlightenment by Chauncy, on the other hand, meant that he needed to craft a system that consistently harmonized reason and revelation. Because Chauncy and Murray claimed that their respective systems were consistent, much of the younger Edwards's debate strategy was designed to show inconsistency. However, in the process of disarming his interlocutors, he appealed to one's good sense that universalism 'must be relinquished by all who mean to embrace a consistent system'.¹³⁹

His first task was to develop a working definition of atonement. The first draft occurred in Sermon 306 on Romans 5:11 'By whom we have now received the

¹³⁶ Edwards Jr., 'Volume 216', 6-7.

¹³⁷ Jonathan Edwards Jr., 'No. 861, The Sabbath after Murray first preached in New Haven, Rom. 5:12, July 25, 1784', *Jonathan Edwards, Jr. Papers (Sermon)*, Hartford Seminary Library (Box 168, Folder 2744); Jonathan Edwards Jr., 'No. 862, 1 Cor. 15:22, Aug. 1, 1784', *Jonathan Edwards, Jr. Papers (Sermon)*, Hartford Seminary Library (Box 168, Folder 2744); Jonathan Edwards Jr., 'No. 863, Eph. 2:8, Aug. 8, 1784', *Jonathan Edwards, Jr. Papers (Sermon)*, Hartford Seminary Library (Box 168, Folder 2744); Jonathan Edwards Jr., 'No. 865, Rom. 3:28, Aug. 15, 1784', *Jonathan Edwards, Jr. Papers (Sermon)*, Hartford Seminary Library (Box 168, Folder 2744); Jonathan Edwards Jr., 'No. 866, Mat. 26:39, Aug. 29, 1784', *Jonathan Edwards, Jr. Papers (Sermon)*, Hartford Seminary Library (Box 168, Folder 2744).

¹³⁸ 'Now an opportunity to instruct[; whereas,] if before preached on the subject [there would be] no attention. [Old attitudes were such that many would be] sorry when [they] heard the text [announced and] glad when [the sermon] ended. But [people] now wish for instruction [and] now [they] attend to every [word]'. Edwards Jr., 'No. 863', 1-2.

¹³⁹ AE1:442.

atonement'. Within this sermon he defined atonement as 'something done to retract or to take off the force of an evil action'. To this definition are illustrations from lesser to greater culminating in blood sacrifice for sin by Christ. Satisfaction occurs, he claimed, as sin is condemned and God justified, that is, honoured and vindicated.¹⁴⁰ This definition can be compared to that in *Thoughts on the Atonement*, which is more focused: 'By atonement, I mean something done or suffered, which, to the purpose of supporting the honour and dignity of the divine law and government, shall be equivalent to the punishment of the sinner according to the law'.¹⁴¹ The key development between the earlier draft is the use of moral government language, being distilled into the word *equivalent*. The use of the word *equivalent* highlights his concern for a *consistent* system of atonement that magnifies the divine constitution. So, how does Edwards Jr. incorporate elements which have been handed to him from Bellamy and his father? In the following will be seen that Edwards Jr. focused on the consistency of *ad intra* and *ad extra* operations.

1) Harmony and Balance are Essential in a Consistent System

According to Edwards Jr, universalism was inconsistent because it was based upon the 'most strict justice' without truly harmonizing grace. Murray's universalism claimed that Christ's atonement paid the *whole* debt releasing all from future torment. In Murray's version, God only inflicts hell upon the demonic host, sin itself, and those who died in the old dispensation. When Christ preached the gospel to them, he liberated them in his resurrection.¹⁴² Edwards Jr. contended that if the atonement separated sin from sinners, then Murray's 'most strict justice'¹⁴³ distorted sovereign grace into an obligation to sinners. This deduction reveals that Edwards Jr.'s atonement thinking rests upon the equivalency of justice and grace. To argue this point, he first isolated justice from grace. Justice would be violated, according to

¹⁴⁰ Jonathan Edwards Jr., 'Volume 306, Rom. 5:11, Aug. 1, 1773', *Jonathan Edwards, Jr. Papers (Sermon)*, Hartford Seminary Library (Box 166, Folder 2733), 2.

¹⁴¹ AE1:493.

¹⁴² Edwards Jr., 'Brief Observations', 279, 288. 'If [Murray is] so anxious to prove all men saved, [then] why not devils? [Are] they [not] capable of happiness!?' Jonathan Edwards Jr., 'No. 862', 9.

¹⁴³ In Sermon No. 863 on Eph. 2:8, Edwards Jr. exposes the problems of Murray's 'salvation of man according to the gospel is in the way of strict justice'. Edwards Jr., 'No. 863', 2-3

Edwards Jr., if any suffer retribution for sin *at all*.¹⁴⁴ To permit *any* punishment for sin in this lifetime, for example, would be to exact ‘a double payment’. By the same logic, then, to require obedience is also a double payment. Double payments, thus conceived, are unjust.¹⁴⁵ And furthermore, there is no grace because merit is merely what is due the sinner.

After establishing the injustice and gracelessness of double payment, Edwards Jr. proceeded to show that Christ’s atonement balances punishment and merit. The mediation of Christ, he showed, balanced punishment and merit in a way that also harmonizes justice with grace. The flow of his argument moves, as it were, upon a mathematical equation with the necessity of punishment on the left, to the mediation of Christ in the middle, and the merit of Christ’s obedience being on the right. Both the punishment and the merit find equilibrium in Christ (see figure 3.1).

$$\text{Punishment (A) = Christ (C) = Merit (B)}$$

$$\text{If, A = C and B = C, then A = B}$$

Figure 3.1 Equivalence of Punishment and Merit in Christ

On the surface, Edwards Jr.’s logic may appear to have potential flaws typical of syllogisms. As far as it goes, this is merely a deduction based upon the atonement made by Christ being sufficient. For all parties this was a safe assumption; however, only the Edwardsean articulation provided clarity on *how* the atonement could bring a consistency between the punishment and merit while preserving God’s grace in election without injustice in any way.

This logic agrees with his father’s understanding of God’s being and the Son’s mediation. In *Discourse on the Trinity*, Edwards Sr. used a similar logic to describe equivalence in the Trinity through the mediation of the Son that is excited on the

¹⁴⁴ In his 1784 series against Universalism, he likewise reasoned that if there are ‘tokens of divine displeasure’ like ‘calamities of life and temporal death’, then ‘Christ has not suffered the whole punishment of sin for all mankind’. Edwards Jr., ‘No. 861’, 1, 3.

¹⁴⁵ Edwards Jr., ‘Brief Observations’, 290. Also, Edwards Jr., ‘No. 863’, 6.

basis of natural inclination (see figure 3.2). In other words, there is a necessity in the generation of the Son but there is also an unconstrained delight to do so—an *excitement* that does not need coercion. It is His *natural inclination* to mediate *ad intra* as he does *ad extra*. After using Locke’s ideas of reflection to describe the Trinity, Edwards Sr. used mercantile terminology to describe the equality of the immanent Trinity in their relations.¹⁴⁶ This could be seen as a category fallacy however it is not a question of essence, but rather a question of mode of relation. The balanced equation in the atonement is rooted in God’s being as equal in essence and yet real relations.¹⁴⁷

Payment (A) = Christ (C) = Thing Purchase (B)

If, A = C and B = C, then A = B

Figure 3.2 Equivalence of Payment and ‘Thing Purchased’

manifests itself throughout creation economically. This realism *ad intra* creates a real atonement *ad extra*. In the atonement the twin elements of punishment and merit, which centre in Christ balance because they are essentially one on the basis of exchange. These twin aspects of penal atonement, according to Edwards Sr. in *HWR*, were said not to differ essentially, but only relatively.¹⁴⁸ Satisfaction by punishment obtains a positive reward that is equivalent to the sacrifice (Christ). This means that if one shifts the emphasis one way or the other, then distortion and inconsistency is created. That Edwards Jr. built his argument upon this essential unity after John Murray preached on New Haven Green in 1772 is significant because he was at that time transcribing his father’s Redemption Series Sermons for publication.

¹⁴⁶ See discussion above in chapter two.

¹⁴⁷ Petrus van Mastricht takes a unique approach to the balance essence and relations. To avoid tritheism or modalism he proposed using ‘two words conjoined’ by saying that they only differ ‘really-modally’ [*realiter modaliter*]. In other words, they differ ‘as one mode from another, not by reason only, but in reality’. TPT2:504.

¹⁴⁸ YE9:304.

Edwards Jr., like his father, argued that the internal logic of the Trinity carries over, that is, shines into the moral structure of creation. The divine constitution is magnified in the world. This is true of creation, but also, redemption. In this way, Edwards Jr.'s atonement thinking is thicker than a mere formula in which justice and grace must equal.¹⁴⁹ These are emanations of God's being. If merit and punishment have an essential equality, then there is a positive good derived from the negative aspect of punishment. This is also true in the Trinity. The mediatorial role of the Son might be thought to be negative, but it is a positive good because of the principle of 'payment-purchased thing'.

Just as Trinitarian relations retain an essential equality, so do those aspects of atonement which reflect the mediation of Christ in the world. For example, the Trinitarian equality of (a) the Son with (b) the Father consist of a bond of union, that is, (c) the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit can be thought of as a unifying positive good that exists between the two. In a parallel way (compare with figure 3.2 above), the equality between (a) punishment by its correspondence to (b) the merit in Christ's voluntary mediation produced a positive good for (c) the elect.

This model is also consistent with the harmonization of grace and justice (again compare with figure 3.2 above). (a) Grace and (b) justice find essential equality in the (c) divine constitution as one. In *Thoughts on the Atonement*, he argued that justice requires more than logical consistency with grace. Grace is not just equal to justice; grace is subsumed in divine justice. The universe requires a moral harmony—an inherent consistency—because the universe as a system reflects the glory of God's nature *en se*.¹⁵⁰ This development in Edwards Jr.'s thinking is drawn out of a deep reflection upon his father's thinking in *Discourse on the Trinity* and *HWR*. Furthermore, it is a step beyond his days of mentorship with Bellamy.

¹⁴⁹ See Mark Hamilton's use of Oliver Crisp's terminology to describe Edwards Jr.'s moral government view. Mark Hamilton, 'Editor's Introduction', 149, in *New England Dogmatics: A Systematic Collection of Questions and Answers in Divinity by Maltby Gelston, 1766-1865* (Eugene, OR: Pickwick, 2019), 21.

¹⁵⁰ His father claimed that without a just moral governance of the world, the outcome would be 'the utmost confusion, and to end in confusion—the evil happy, and the good miserable, the worst highest, and the best kept in subjection'. '897. Future State. Immortality of the soul', YE20:155.

2) What Does This Universal System Require to be Consistent?

A closer examination of Edwards Jr.'s argument also reveals an atonement theory increasingly focused on the positive good of punishment for the universe. In other words, penal suffering is a value rather than a liability in 'the kingdom of God'. For example, in *Thoughts on the Atonement*, he said that

The kingdom of God is the universe taken as a system; and the declarative glory of God is the highest perfection, good or prosperity of this system. If, therefore, the good of the universal system require no more, in order to pardon of the sinner, than his bare repentance and reformation, then the glory of God requires no more.¹⁵¹

Arminian universalists like Chauncy and Mayhew believed that the intellect only need be persuaded in order to enter the kingdom of heaven. In their atonement scheme, all God requires of man is 'bare repentance and reformation'. Edwards Jr. charges them, along with the Calvinistic universalists, with inconsistency.¹⁵² This inconsistency arises because a deeper question is not asked. The following test question is crucial: What does this universal system require to be consistent if 'the declarative glory of God is the highest perfection, good or prosperity of this system?'¹⁵³ Asked another way: Is there, then, any real necessity of Christ's death and atonement in this universal system if only 'bare repentance and reformation' is required? Edwards Jr. would say no.

The option advanced by Charles Chauncy was a universe *not* needing an atonement.¹⁵⁴ Punishment for sin, on its own, is not necessary to bring satisfaction

¹⁵¹ AE1:500. This exact line of thinking is expressed nearly word-for-word in an ordination sermon called *Christ Crucified*. AE2:282.

¹⁵² Edwards Jr. also has his sights on Enlightenment thinkers like Hume and Bolingbroke who deny 'any evidence of the moral perfections of God, or that he is a good being'. Likewise, he sees an inconsistency in their logic that 'bare repentance' is good enough. AE2:248.

¹⁵³ AE1:500.

¹⁵⁴ After summarizing the biblical arguments from the OT Scriptures, Edwards Jr. showed that the ancient sacrifices represented and prefigured the *reality* of Christ's atoning sacrifice. In other words, it was a real act whereas the OT sacrifices were nominal representations of the death of Christ. AE1:494.

because the end of punishment is to bring about repentance and reformation.¹⁵⁵ In other words, the end of punishment is not justice but repentance and reformation. 'The good or prosperity of this system' seeks to bring all people to repentance rather than to bring about a vindication for sin. Since this is the case, sin is not a *real* crime and deserves no *real* punishment. If either merit or punishment occurs in this system, then it would be an injustice.

The phrase 'the universe taken as a system' is similar to the way that Edwards Jr. characterized his father's structure of theology as had been shown in the prior chapter. By thinking of creation as a collective system declaring God's glory, Edwards Jr. like his father, asserted that atonement must serve a God glorifying purpose in the system. Yet, properly speaking, there is an ultimate end and a subordinate end. Chancey had, in Edwards Jr.'s thinking, had lost sight of the ultimate end of atonement to do proper honour to the majesty and glory of God's just and gracious nature.

This leads to an additional feature in which a penal sacrifice, whether substitutional or not, corresponds to the declarative function in the universe as a system. This meant that penal atonement is not just a doctrine grounded in Christ's act of substitution, it is also a metaphysical pillar *supporting* the universe. Stated negatively, penal atonement as satisfaction must be *real* so that the universe doesn't collapse under the need to satisfy divine justice. Yet, according to some, Edwards Jr.'s version is not a *real* account of the atonement.

Returning to the equation formula now is vital (see figure 3.3). Because divine justice accepts Christ's price of payment on behalf of the elect, they are qualitatively the same and not merely equivalent in value. This follows on the basis of an apparent appreciation of his father's sense of the internal operations as shown above in figure 3.2. Edwards Jr.'s test question revealed that consistency is required because justice is a perfection of God's being. Furthermore, a penal atonement of some kind is required to correspond to the divine nature so that pardon may truly be free and gracious *ad extra*.¹⁵⁶ To do, as Mayhew or Chauncy taught, would be to kick the legs out from under divine justice, and therefore, not be consistent with 'the declarative glory of God [as] the highest perfection, good or prosperity of this system'.¹⁵⁷

¹⁵⁵ Chauncy, *The Mystery*, 321-22.

¹⁵⁶ AE1:504.

¹⁵⁷ AE1:500.

Penal Atonement (A) = Christ (C) = Divine Justice (B)

If, A = C and B = C, then A = B

Figure 3.3 Equivalence of Penal Atonement and Divine Justice in the Son

Pardon by divine grace must be agreeable to God's just and divine nature. Agreement of these perfections must accord both internally and externally in the universe.

The logic of this argument is built upon Edwards Sr.'s theory of the visual world. First, the younger argued, like his father, from the basis of the collective system as shadow of God's glory. The system is a nominal declaration of his real perfections. Since justice is one of his perfections, there must be a consistency in the system with this divine perfection. While not using his father's term *natural inclination*, he is arguing that the method of satisfaction by penal substitute was *agreeable* with the divine nature.¹⁵⁸ The divine nature exists in mediation of the Son that is, according to Kyle Strobel, *personal beatific-delight*. This is reflected into the visual world as a means of knowing what the unseen God is like. Agreement between the universe and God's being must be real types and signs because it finds its orientation in the reality of God.

3) The Positive Good of Punishment in the Universe

In a three-part sermon series preached before the governor of Connecticut and other dignitaries in October 1785, Edwards Jr. increased his commitment to punishment as a positive good for the universe. Punishment serves to maintain the authority of divine law, but even more it serves to demonstrate the 'wisdom and

¹⁵⁸ Mutual satisfaction occurs in the *voluntary* act of the Son. The Son freely intervenes for sinners by taking upon himself their punishment. This satisfaction of divine justice secured the general good of the universe as it serves to satisfy 'not only to the divine nature of the Father, but equally to the divine nature of the Son'. This sense of equality is rooted in his father's *Discourse on the Trinity*. AE1:504.

goodness of God' to establish a system of 'rewards and punishments'.¹⁵⁹ By rooting punishment in the wisdom and goodness of God, Edwards Jr. drew upon his father's *Miscellanies* on this topic.¹⁶⁰ In an important passage, Edwards Sr. proposed the possibility that God is not obligated merely to justice to punish sin as much as an obligation to holiness and wisdom. He said, 'It would not be a prudent, decent and beautiful thing for a being of infinite glory and majesty, and the sovereign of the world, to let an infinite evil go unpunished.'¹⁶¹

Edwards Jr. picked up on justice being the manifestation of the wisdom of God when he defines justice. He carefully described 'general or public justice' as encompassing 'all moral goodness'.¹⁶² The other two kinds of justice—commutative and distributive—are subordinated to this highest expression of justice.¹⁶³ This means that whatever is right or just must be 'agreeable to the dictates of general benevolence', or aligned with 'the glory of God and the good of the universe.'¹⁶⁴ In other words, justice in its broadest and highest sense conforms to the nature of God and is observable in the universe. Both punishment and pardon manifest the wisdom of God in its harmonious out-working of God's being. This harmonious outworking entails the 'payment-thing purchased' principle discussed above as a kind of exchange that must also be just.

Neither the older nor the younger Edwards explicitly called this exchange commutative justice, yet it very well is. They had conceived God's internal relations

¹⁵⁹ 'Three Sermons on the Necessity of the Atonement, and its Consistency with Free Grace in Forgiveness', AE2:15.

¹⁶⁰ 'No. 525. Providence. Christian Religion', YE18:69-70.; 'No. 896. Being of God. God an Intelligent, Voluntary Being', YE20:154.

¹⁶¹ 'No. 306. Satisfaction', YE13:391. See also, Edwards Jr., 'No. 866', 2-3. Edwards Jr. says that following through with punishment is the basis of moral government *just as in governance of the material world*. If not consistent in the laws of nature, then it would be 'the ruin of his creatures'. Emphasis added. Edwards Jr., 'No. 866', 4.

¹⁶² AE2:32.

¹⁶³ Ralph Harpole claims that Edwards Jr. may not have originated the distinction between public, commutative, and distributive justice. He refers to Jonathan Maxy's sermon manuscript which references Philip Doddridge. Doddridge refers to public justice as *universal rectitude*. What is unique about Edwards Jr. is how he connects public justice as a reflection of God's being like his father. Harpole, 'The Development of the Doctrine of Atonement', 97-98, n1. Philip Doddridge, *Lectures on Pneumatology, Ethics, and Divinity*, 4th edition, ed. by Andrew Kippis, Vol. 1 (London: G.G., J. Robinson, R. Baldwin, et al, 1799), 303-304. In another sermon, Edwards Jr. equates God's moral perfections with rectitude. AE2:429.

¹⁶⁴ AE2:29.

as commutative justice. In other words, the formula of economic justice is woven into the Trinitarian relations and is displayed as a *public* kind of justice whereby people have a sense of what is right and what is wrong.¹⁶⁵ This is an innovation to theology proper because, for instance, Thomas Aquinas, had suggested that there is no ‘exchange or intercourse of business’ with God since he is in need of nothing, and is only concerned with distributive justice as a ruler.¹⁶⁶ While this is true in a narrow definition of commutative justice, yet the concept of commutative and distributive justice itself finds its origin *in* God’s nature. Edwards Jr. is advancing a way of thinking about justice that is *first* rooted in the being of God and then may be observed in the world *generally*. This he calls *general* or *public* justice.¹⁶⁷

Edwards Jr. proposed the following aphorism: ‘Wherever grace begins, justice ends; and wherever justice begins, grace ends’.¹⁶⁸ This means that in the broadest sense of justice, a grace of pardon must be subsumed into the support of God’s internal just nature of exchange—it must be beautiful, wise, and true. In Edwards Jr.’s thinking, justice is rooted in God’s being, and therefore, any release from punishment must agree with His internal logic of exchange.¹⁶⁹ Any other method of atonement that precludes punishment is a distortion of justice itself, and by necessity, grace also. Grace becomes distorted because grace and justice find equilibrium in God’s nature *and* in the atonement. Therefore, to deny that punishment is a positive good in the universe distorts our view of God.

Edwards Jr. emphasized how punishment is a positive good by the metaphysical link between God and the collective system. He said, God will ‘be just *to himself* and to the *universe*’.¹⁷⁰ Again, this is very similar to his father’s view of creation. The collective system was designed to be a *visual* declaration of God’s glory in a *public* way. This creates a fundamental need for consistency between the collective system and God’s being. The ‘payment and thing-purchased’ principle of commutative justice manifests within the Trinity as harmony and balance. This means that the logic of

¹⁶⁵ AE2:29.

¹⁶⁶ Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, I, q. 21, a. 1.

¹⁶⁷ AE2:29.

¹⁶⁸ AE2:30.

¹⁶⁹ The divine government shows that God is a ‘friend to virtue’ and ‘an enemy to vice’. These are both consistent with his moral perfections. Edwards Jr., ‘No. 866’, 4-5.

¹⁷⁰ AE2:33. See also, Edwards Jr., ‘Christ Crucified’, AE2:286-87. On the support and vindication of the truth of God, see Edwards Jr., ‘No. 866’, 5.

divine simplicity requires the harmony and balance of justice and grace as well. His Universalist opponents proposed that the *distributive* application of grace was the highest good. But this could not be. Edwards Jr. reasoned that if a *distributive* application of either justice or grace was the highest good, then it would create inconsistency between the *universe* and God *Himself* who according to his sovereign pleasure pardons sinners.¹⁷¹ In Edwards Jr.'s system of theology, like his father's, the future end of the collective system encompasses its distributive parts.

4) The Positive Good of Punishment is Satisfaction

In Edwards Jr.'s view he saw a complementary relationship between penal substitution and satisfaction in a context of *public* justice. The 'great gain which accrues to the universe by the death of Christ' is not an application of justice distributively but in the collective satisfaction of *public* justice.¹⁷² He said,

In the same sense *the law of God* is satisfied by the death of Christ; I mean as the divine glory and the general good, which are the great ends of the law, are secured. In this sense only is the atonement of Christ, properly called a *satisfaction*; God is satisfied, as by it his glory and the good of his system are secured and promoted.

Since Edwards Jr.'s opponents, like Chauncy and Murray, did not consider the connection between God's being and the display of God's glory in creation as a collective system, they instead focus on the distributive aspects of justice and grace. This emphasis on a lower-level application of justice causes distortion to the higher-level harmony and balance of God's being. In other words, benevolence (Chauncy) and goodness (Murray) must be properly placed within God's personal wisdom, justice, and grace.

Edwards Jr. on the other hand can give recognition to the harmony and balance of God's being, while at the same time was able to speak of sovereign grace and mercy to forgive sinners. In these three sermons, Edwards Jr. kept returning to public justice

¹⁷¹ AE1:34.

¹⁷² AE2:43, 47-48.

as a display of ‘that divine constitution which is wise and good’.¹⁷³ Far from being ‘arbitrary’, the divine constitution expresses itself as a *voluntary* arrangement by the Son to mediate for sinners. Yet, this did not require the Father to accept the proposal. Rather, the obligation arises out of ‘the wisdom and goodness of God’ to construct such a system whereby his sense of justice is satisfied and would create the circumstances where pardon would occur.¹⁷⁴ Substitution by the Son satisfies the public good and allows for the Father to be gracious to whom he will.¹⁷⁵

This means that Edwards Jr. did not see a penal substitution on a strictly distributive basis. Rather, he saw a penal substitution collectively which allowed for the forgiveness of individuals by grace distributively. In other words, someone like Paul may be relieved of punishment for his own sins, while on the other hand Judas may be punished for his sins. The positive good of punishment is the satisfaction of God’s law on a macrolevel which frees God on a microlevel to forgive those whom he will and punish those whom he will. By the late 1770s, to his own congregation, Edwards Jr. began to say that ‘Christ died effectually to save some’. In other words, ‘Christ’s atonement is necessarily sufficient for all’ as a foundation so that he might be ‘consistent’ in a universal offer to ‘all, whosoever will’.¹⁷⁶ Some systematic theologians might prefer to call this a hypothetical universalism. Below, in his theological mentorship, this charge will be discussed.

Again, the root of this thinking is drawn out of the ‘divine constitution’. There are hints along the way of finding this balance and harmony in the Trinitarian relationship. The harmony and balance of the Three must also be reflected into creation *publicly*. The sense of fair transaction and ‘rightness’ is rooted in the ‘payment-thing purchased’ principle received from his father. There is a sense of ‘rightness’ in the pardon of some criminals and a sense of ‘rightness’ in the execution of other criminals—this is not arbitrary, but agreeable to the mind of God. Wisdom

¹⁷³ AE2:51.

¹⁷⁴ AE2:51. In Sermon No. 651 Edwards Jr. shows that what Christ did was not perfectly like paying a debt rather it was taking away the obligation of punishment. If he had not made covenant of redemption, he could have refused to pardon the believer. This implies the wisdom of God in redemption. Jonathan Edwards Jr., ‘No. 651, Rom. 3:24, Jan. 23, 1780’, *Jonathan Edwards, Jr. Papers (Sermons)*, Hartford Seminary Library (Box 167, Folder No. 2740), 5-7.

¹⁷⁵ AE2:287.

¹⁷⁶ Jonathan Edwards Jr., ‘No. 586, 1 John 2:2, Nov. 22, 1778’, *Jonathan Edwards, Jr. Papers (Sermons)*, Hartford Seminary Library (Box 167, Folder No. 2739), 2-3.

and goodness serve to display the glory of God in creation collectively through its many distributive parts.

5) Summary of Atonement Thinking

The atonement, according to Edwards Jr., is a synthesis of the satisfaction and penal substitution models. Mark Hamilton is correct when he suggested that there are three possible models at work that hinge upon, to use Edwards Jr.'s term, equivalence of price.¹⁷⁷ Yet, Hamilton's claim that the moral law was designed to be the measure of the offence of sins is not correct. The law is the very expression of God's nature so offence against the law is maximally an offence against the very nature of God. Hamilton's assessment that this was 'the principal point of theological departure of the Edwardseans from their mentor'¹⁷⁸ is also wrong because a false dichotomy is created in which the followers of Edwards pit the law against God.

Edwards Jr.'s view of atonement is synthesis through equivalency, just as his father's instinct about the 'payment-thing purchased' principle helped him maintain the equivalency of all three persons of the Trinity. The 'divine constitution' expresses itself through law without any disjunction. To satisfy one is to satisfy the other, to propitiate one is to propitiate the other, and to be a substitute for one is to be a substitute for the other. Edwards Jr.'s last sermon, which deals with atonement at any length, brought all these elements together as one in his doctrine of reconciliation. The redemption by the blood of Christ, he says, 'refers immediately to the sacrifice of Christ [as] propitiatory [and] satisfactory, [that is] points out the substitution of Christ in our stead'. Edwards Jr. goes on to defend penal substitution by its voluntary nature.¹⁷⁹ This last bit is the mechanism of atonement. In other words, the turning of God's wrath away, which a quality voluntary substitution produced, is the mechanism by which satisfaction occurs. The 'payment-thing purchased' principle drives the atonement to equilibrium by the mediation of the Son.

¹⁷⁷ Hamilton's three are moral government, satisfaction, and penal substitution. Hamilton, 'Editor's Introduction', 24.

¹⁷⁸ Hamilton, 'Editor's Introduction', 18.

¹⁷⁹ Jonathan Edwards Jr., 'No. 1002, Col. 1:20, July 22, 1787', *Jonathan Edwards, Jr. Papers (Sermons)*, Hartford Seminary Library (Box 168, Folder 2746), 2-3.

In brief, the seeds of the ETA are here in the son's articulation. Following Edwards Jr. follows his father's sense that there is a need for consistency between the *ad intra* subsistence and *ad extra* acts of God seem to be its defining *structural* feature. This has the result that Edwards Jr. saw atonement to have an ultimate end in the glorification of God in the preservation of general justice, and a subordinate end in the redeeming the elect. In keeping with an Edwardsean vocabulary, the redemption of the elect is *implied* in the glorification of God's nature—they are really *one and the same thing*. Yet, the mechanism of this atonement is in the union made by Christ with the sinner by a voluntary willingness to exchange happiness for misery. Is this a real atonement? In the theological mentorship of Maltby Gelston, this question will find resolution in how Edwards Jr. processes the covenant of grace.

D. Atonement Thinking in Theological Mentorship

Edwards Sr. set a pattern for other pastors to mentor younger men in ministry. Edwards Jr. also mentored younger men with a Socratic method of question and answer.¹⁸⁰ It is difficult to be certain how broadly Edwards Jr.'s questions were used by other mentors,¹⁸¹ but today we have a copy in print which also includes answers and corrections.¹⁸² While each student of Edwards Jr. answered these questions in their own style and capacity, Gelston's copy appears to be corrected by Edwards Jr., and thus it can be considered a source for a reception of Edwards Jr.'s thinking.¹⁸³ Mark

¹⁸⁰ See also, Rhys S. Bezzant, *Edwards the Mentor* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2019). Some of Edwards Jr.'s students include Edward Dorr Griffin (1770–1837), Giles Cowles (1766–1835), Timothy Dwight (1754–1817), Samuel Austin (1760–1830), Samuel Nott (1754–1852), Eliphalet Nott (1773–1866), Jedidiah Morse (1761–1826), and Maltby Gelston (1766–1865).

¹⁸¹ Asahel Nettleton had a copy of the full list (three hundred and thirteen) although he was mentored by Bezaleel Pennio in Milford, Connecticut (CT) after his studies at Yale. It is possible that he became acquainted with the list through Pennio who had been mentored by John Smalley in New Britain, CT. Nettleton's copy also includes areas of required reading. Jonathan Edwards Jr., 'Theological Questions of Jonathan Edwards, D.D.', *Asahel Nettleton Papers*, Hartford Seminary Library (Box 179, Folder 2870). See also, Maltby A. Gelston, *Systematic Collection of Questions and Answers in Divinity*, Yale University Manuscript and Archives Division, Miscellaneous MSS Collection (MS 354, Series III. E-G, box 5, f. 499).

¹⁸² Robert L. Boss, Joshua R. Ferris, and S. Mark Hamilton, *New England Dogmatics: A Systematic Collection of Questions and Answers in Divinity by Maltby Gelston, 1766-1865* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2019).

¹⁸³ I have made this argument in my prior published research. Banks, *Forgotten Edwards*, 112-115.

Hamilton provided an in-depth analysis of the key questions related to atonement in his 'Editor's Introduction' of the Maltby Gelston manuscript. His essay, however, can be improved on with the findings of this dissertation. While this is a secondary piece, still there are direct quotations of the primary material in his 'Editor's Introduction'. For sake of simplicity, I will interact directly with Edwards Jr.'s thoughts embedded in Hamilton's essay.

1) Dispensation of Pardon through Atonement Suffering (Quest. Nos. 152-53)

Edwards Jr. (No. 152) asked his students, 'Why was a satisfaction or atonement necessary to the dispensation of pardon?' Satisfaction is said to support the law and the character of the lawgiver otherwise they both 'must fall equally into contempt'. This answer indicates that Edwards Jr. taught that the moral law was equivalent with God in the sense that it reveals the divine constitution. This, Hamilton points out. Yet, Hamilton overlooked that to satisfy one is to satisfy the other. When Gelston said that the 'infliction of the punishment [...] equivalent to the full demands of the law', Hamilton sees a non-penal substitution view. Yet, Edwards Jr. said that the mechanism of atonement was the suitable equivalence of the price paid for the thing purchased. In this case, the price paid was the infinite value of the Son. The Son is equivalent to the infinite punishment to be meted out by God. This is how Gelston replied to the next question (No. 153), 'Why was a satisfaction or atonement so great as that of Christ necessary to the dispensation of pardon?'¹⁸⁴ In other words, this is a reasonable conclusion since release from infinite punishment has occurred even though temporally, Christ did not suffer in exactly the same way. This is an answer from the negative.

2) The Essence of the Atonement is Voluntary Suffering (Quest. Nos. 154-55)

Hamilton jumped over question No. 154, though no fault of his own, as it was missing from the original manuscript at his disposal. Nevertheless, it is available in a

¹⁸⁴ Hamilton, 'Editor's Introduction', 39.

faithful transcription at Hartford Seminary Library.¹⁸⁵ Edwards Jr. had asked his students ‘In what consisted the essence of the atonement of Christ? In his obedience; or his sufferings; or in both?’ The acceptable answer was *in his sufferings*. ‘The idea of Christ’s atonement is, that it is something received, as a substitute of that punishment which was justly deserved’.¹⁸⁶ However, ‘his sufferings could never have been justly demanded without his consent; though he had assumed human nature’.¹⁸⁷

This voluntarism is key to the Edwardsean atonement theory as a distinctive. Indeed, a narrative approach to theology required a relational response to crisis. The crisis was created by the fall and the solution was provided by the heroic volunteerism of the Son. To suffer on behalf of those who had committed an infinite crime is a positive act by the Son on its own. The ‘active obedience of Christ’ on its own, though, was not the mechanism for atonement; rather, it was the voluntary sufferings to ‘support the honour of the divine law, and the moral government of God’.¹⁸⁸ Christ’s obedience was necessary to the extent that he might ‘still have made atonement for others’,¹⁸⁹ but it was not the mechanism *per se*. The voluntary suffering of the Son was the mechanism for atonement *and* emphasized by Edwards Sr. in his description of the narrowest sense of the work of redemption in *HWR* (see discussion above in chapter two).

If Hamilton had access to this prior question, he would likely have come closer to Edwards Jr.’s atonement thinking and clarity in Gelston’s remaining answers. To the following question, ‘In what sense did he satisfy divine justice by his sacrifice?’ (No. 155),¹⁹⁰ Edwards Jr. stepped in to give some correction to Gelston’s answer. Edwards was wanting Gelston to highlight general justice as corollary to divine justice.¹⁹¹ *General* justice is rooted in the divine ‘constitution and promises of God’,

¹⁸⁵ A transcript of this collection, which also includes the missing question (No. 154) from the Maltby MSS, is located at Hartford Seminary Library. Wesley Carl Ewert, *Jonathan Edwards the Younger: Theological Questions and Answers of Maltby Gelston*, Vol. 2 (PhD diss., Hartford Theological Seminary, 1953), 203-204.

¹⁸⁶ Ewert, *Edwards the Younger*, 2: 203.

¹⁸⁷ Ewert, *Edwards the Younger*, 2: 203.

¹⁸⁸ Ewert, *Edwards the Younger*, 2: 203.

¹⁸⁹ Ewert, *Edwards the Younger*, 2:204.

¹⁹⁰ Hamilton, ‘Editor’s Introduction’, 40.

¹⁹¹ Boss, *New England Dogmatics*, 159, n. 45.

which sees the Son's work as equivalent to what he requires.¹⁹² As argued above, general justice is rooted in the 'payment-thing purchased' equivalency. This equivalency informs the unity between justice and grace, between obedience and suffering, between punishment and satisfaction. The mediatorial role of the Son *ad intra* brings unity *ad extra*. Furthermore, it is a real sign predicated upon the real idea inherent in the way the Trinity subsists as *personal beatific-delight*. Since Hamilton missed this background consideration about general justice, he also missed the nuance intended in the next question.¹⁹³

3) Satisfaction of Divine Justice Permits Distributive Application (Quest. Nos. 156-58)

In the answer to the next question (No. 156) Hamilton noticed a reference to distributive justice but then focused on the '(sub)species of [...] retributive and remunerative justice'. These aspects of justice are tied to pecuniary considerations, which technically are not part of Edwards Jr.'s atonement thinking. By focusing on these subsets, he missed the significance of the answer to whether 'God was under an obligation of justice to provide an atonement for sinners?''¹⁹⁴ The answer that God is not under obligation is oriented in the three-fold sense of justice. Since God's internal sense of justice is satisfied, he can pardon a sinner out of pure goodness, mercy, and grace. These are distributive effects of a general justice being satisfied. This answer was designed to answer Murray and Chauncy who inconsistently applied 'strict, distributive justice' as a reason for universal salvation. Edwards Jr. saw the danger of an appeal to 'strict, distributive justice' because it put God in a box making him subservient to creation, thus destroying free grace. This Socratic method moves the student to conclude that God is not a mechanical law of nature but an infinitely wise Person. God is a person who devised a way to secure his own glory in the system he created while maintaining a freedom to love and redeem whom he will.

¹⁹² Hamilton, 'Editor's Introduction', 40.

¹⁹³ Again, Gelston misses an aspect intended in the answer desired that 'if God were under obligation from justice to provide an atonement, it would destroy free grace'. Boss, *New England Dogmatics*, 160, n. 46.

¹⁹⁴ Hamilton, 'Editor's Introduction', 41.

4) The Divine Person is a Person not an Atonement Machine (Nos. 157-58)

In answer to the following two questions (Nos. 157-58) reference is made twice to ‘a laid foundation’.¹⁹⁵ The foundation laid, is said, to refer to the work of the Mediator so that he might have freedom to reconcile in ‘a consistency with his law and moral government’.¹⁹⁶ Gelston revealed that Christ died not so much *for sins* but *for sinners* in a personal way, not a mechanical way. This foundation is critical because God can freely elect or not elect based on his sovereign wisdom alone, so he is not beholden to

a certain number of sins, as a man liquidates a debt of a certain fixed and determined sum of money. Strictly speaking, the atonement has extinguished neither the sins of the elect, nor of the non-elect. But it has laid a foundation, so that the punishment, due to the sins of those who are interested in it, may as completely be removed, as if they never had been guilty.¹⁹⁷

This is not exactly a hypothetical universalism; rather, it is more a product of a modified infralapsarianism. The foundation laid for atonement is first in the mediatorial role of the Son *before creation* in the eternal covenant of grace.

Hamilton has argued elsewhere that Edwards Sr.’s emphasis upon satisfaction is in alignment with supralapsarianism;¹⁹⁸ however, it is more closely aligned with Petrus van Mastricht’s modified infralapsarianism. In brief, this arrangement of decrees was structured to ‘manifest God’s glory of mercy on some indefinite persons capable of being created, and his punishing righteousness on others’.¹⁹⁹ According to Joel Beeke and Todd Rester,

¹⁹⁵ ‘No. 157 Does the appointment of a Mediator prove that God is already reconciled to men? No. 158 Did Christ redeem all men alike; elect and non-elect?’ Hamilton, ‘Editor’s Introduction’, 42-43.

¹⁹⁶ Hamilton, ‘Editor’s Introduction’, 42.

¹⁹⁷ Hamilton, ‘Editor’s Introduction’, 43.

¹⁹⁸ S. Mark Hamilton, ‘Jonathan Edwards on the Election of Christ’, 525-548 in *Neue Zeitschrift für Systematische Theologia und Religionsphilosophie*, 58, No. 4 (2016), 526-27, 548. Cf. Beeke and Rester, ‘Preface’, xxxiii, in TPT3.

¹⁹⁹ Joel Beeke and Todd Rester, ‘Preface’, in TPT3:xxxii.

Van Mastricht's first act of God, not of determining to manifest God's attributes and glory through the creation of men simply, nor of determining to manifest his glory of mercy and punishing righteousness on particular, creatable individuals, but only to manifest those things on two indefinite groups of creatable people, is his most distinctive act.²⁰⁰

In this system of thought creation is a system which has a chief end to display the glory of God's attributes generally as the first decree and not as supralapsarians which was the focus on the individual election and damnation. In other words, Mastricht elongated the covenant of grace by distinguishing predestination as prior to a decree to permit the fall and the election and reprobation as after this decree. The difference is a focus on redemption as having an ultimate end to magnify the perfections of God and a subordinate end to redeem the elect. Thus, the focus of the atonement as described by Edwards Jr.'s student is focused on the primary end of the first decree of predestination for the purpose of magnification of the perfections of God. This will be developed in chapter six of this dissertation.

Furthermore, this is analogous to what I have already argued above as the 'payment-thing purchased' principle. Christ was ready, then, as both older and younger Edwards said, to start his mediatorial role *at once* when mankind had fallen on the basis of his internal nature to be a merciful saviour. Thus, Christ entered creation prior to the incarnation as a Christophany to make sure his work progressed, and individuals respond to grace through faith. The Son took an active interest in the redemption of individuals in the temporal dispensations of grace.

5) Atonement Pays the Price for the Redemption of His People (Quest. Nos. 171-73)

In question No. 171 Edwards Jr. asked his students if or whether Christ's suffering was a positive act for the 'benefit of his people'. Gelston's answer seems, at first, ambiguous because he says, 'the object of his atonement was that [his people] might thus be released [from the punishment they deserve]', however, not as a debtor who had 'a discharge'.²⁰¹ Hamilton, though, does not see the significance of this

²⁰⁰ Joel Beeke and Todd Rester, 'Preface', in TPT3:xxxii.

²⁰¹ Hamilton, 'Editor's Introduction', 43-44.

nuance. Edwards Jr. described atonement as a price not a payment of debt (see above discussion on Sermon 4).²⁰² Because of this, Hamilton perceived ‘absorb[ing] the penalty for individuals’ to be missing when it is not. Rather, Edwards Jr. did not want to provide an opportunity for presumption due to a poor pecuniary analogy. In the following question (No. 172), Edwards clarified that suffering ‘instead of his people’ is the basis of atonement.²⁰³ In other words, the atonement is definite for the elect.

The answer to question No. 173 is like what Edwards Jr. looked for in question No. 156 regarding obligation to atone the unregenerate on strict justice. The answer sought here, though, concerns the elect. Gelston gave the right answer this time. The satisfaction of ‘general good or general justice’ by the atonement allows for a personal election not based upon a mechanical system of ‘strict distributive justice’. Edwards Jr. would agree with Hamilton’s conclusion that he is advocating a variant of penal substitution.²⁰⁴ As such, Christ paid the demand of the elect’s crime, which is the positive good to the universal system prior to the fall. It was a positive price rather than a liquidation of debt in a negative sense. The atonement positively ‘admit[s] of [the elect’s] salvation, and by virtue of God’s promise, on the ground of this, they have a right to expect it’.²⁰⁵

6) The Equivalence by which the Atonement is Consistent (Quest. Nos. 174-75)

The last two questions (Nos. 174-75) come full circle to the chief concern of Edwards Jr. The use of the word *equivalent* highlights his concern for a *consistent* system of atonement that magnifies the divine constitution which is excited to be love as the mediator that the Spirit might flourish *ad intra*. But ‘were the sufferings of Christ to the purpose of supporting the divine law equivalent to the endless torments of the sinner?’ Yes, and this because of the hypostatic union and ‘God’s

²⁰² Edwards Jr., ‘Volume 4’, 32-33.

²⁰³ No. 172 ‘Could he have made atonement, without suffering instead of his people?’ Hamilton, ‘Editor’s Introduction’, 44.

²⁰⁴ Hamilton ‘Editor’s Introduction’, 45-46.

²⁰⁵ Hamilton, ‘Editor’s Introduction’, 46.

actually accepting it as such. He would not accept of that which does not answer the demand of the law'.²⁰⁶ Suitable equivalence is seen by Hamilton to be problematic.²⁰⁷

In this case, Edwards Jr. made a departure from penal substitution as supralapsarian towards a modified infralapsarian position like Petrus van Mastricht.²⁰⁸ The emphasis upon equivalence was not problematic for Edwards Sr. or his Son. Why? Because the superior general justice rooted in the divine constitution which brought equality to the three also finds pleasure in the work of the Son *ad extra* for the elect by the gift of the Spirit. Equivalence, as I have already argued above, is found in *Discourse on the Trinity* and in Edwards Jr.'s response to Murray and Chauncy one can see how he received his father's thoughts on the Trinity with respect to mediation and purchase. Furthermore, this a function of how a real idea in God secures the substantial reality of atonement to which the method corresponds as a sign and shadow.

Indeed, the mere satisfaction of the law's demands by Christ on their own do not mean that the law is just. Rather, we know the law is just by the character of God himself. This, according to Edwards Jr., is the lynch pin. God is true therefore his law as an expression of his righteousness is just. This is the answer to the last question regarding moral ends of the atonement. Edwards Jr. asks if 'the sufferings and obedience of Christ prove the divine law to be a just law?' (No. 175). In this last question, Hamilton missed the point. Edwards Jr.'s student is not saying that 'Christ must do more than merely suffer by absorbing the penal consequences'.²⁰⁹ Rather, he is saying that this on its own is insufficient. The law must be grounded in the character of the lawgiver. God himself must be true so therefore what the law demands is just positively or negatively. Edwards Jr.'s position is deontological rather than occasional. This will also be evident in Petrus van Mastricht's position found in chapter six below.

²⁰⁶ Hamilton, 'Editor's Introduction', 46.

²⁰⁷ Hamilton, 'Editor's Introduction', 47.

²⁰⁸ This retrieval from Van Mastricht will be examined in chapter six below.

²⁰⁹ Hamilton, 'Editor's Introduction', 48.

V. A SUMMARY OF EDWARDS JR.'S ATONEMENT VIEW

The Enlightenment also turned the world into a cause-and-effect machine, though, detached from a personal deity. The desire for a consistent machine-like system drove thinkers like Chauncy and Mayhew to ground their theology in one perfection like benevolence or goodness. God, however, was a much more complex personality according to Edwards Jr. Additionally, the failure to account for all the perfections of the divine constitution reduced the scope of God's glory. Rather than ordering the world for his own glory, Chauncy's position put God under the obligation to secure his creature's happiness rather than his own. Redemption became inconsistently applied to creation by requiring God to secure happiness for all his creatures in eternity but not in history.

Furthermore, the Enlightenment removed God from the created world as a personal being with whom mankind has responsibility. Both Edwards sought to describe God's activity and atonement in personal terms. Edwards Jr.'s atonement thinking was commensurate with the public theology of his era. The societal shift to ownership of a personal covenant with God challenged federalism as a tool for political order. The federal covenant which gave order to society was beginning to give way. Ownership of the covenant of grace individually became a logical way to frame faith in the gospel. To this end, Edwards Jr.'s appropriation of an infralapsarian position was a definite accommodation and development of federalism.

Edwards Jr.'s view is a hybrid of theories that values the complexity of God's perfections while also regarding divine simplicity. Edwards Jr.'s thinking on the atonement is ultimately rooted in God as a personal being. The 'payment-thing purchased' principle is Edwards Sr.'s commercial view of justice was applied by Edwards Jr. to the 'moral law' of the universe. The commercial view of the trinitarian relations provided a general sense of justice in the world that is innate. This general justice is also reflected in redemption of the elect by the voluntary submission of Christ. to be united with the elect positively and negatively. Positively in loving union and negatively with respect to their guilt. Furthermore, application of atonement in this world comes to the elect positively and to the non-elect negatively since God himself has been satisfied.

The penal substitution, to Edwards Jr., served to satisfy God's nature first, which he called general justice. It is satisfactory to God first because it accurately reflects his own being to 'the eyes of the universe'. This reflection is rooted in God's nature in a

number of ways. First, the atonement graphically displays the mediatorial love of the Son for the Father, which can be observed in the ‘payment-thing purchased’ principle applied to the elect. Second, the atonement displays the harmony and balance of the divine perfections of justice, holiness, and grace. Third, the atonement is an answer to a truthful threat of God to punish sinners. What he decrees he must follow through on. Fourth, the mechanism of this atonement was the voluntary mediation by the Son. If it were compulsory, then love and grace would be lost. Fifth, the atonement secures God’s sovereign right to be gracious without any external constraint. The vindication of God’s perfections as revealed in the law provided the way forward to forgive sinners that was consistent and compassionate.

The scientific philosophy of the Enlightenment removed the narrative of God’s work of redemption from all of life. *HWR* was intended to be a corrective. Edwards Sr. desired that theology would be explained narratively as a way to a devotional relationship with God in all of life. This desire seems to have been caught by Edwards Jr. The atonement was not simply the clearing up of balance sheets. Jesus did not merely die for sin but loved sinners. The impact of this approach can also be seen in a general offer of salvation to mixed congregations of listeners. A foundation was laid, and door of opportunity was open to respond to the gospel because God’s general justice was satisfied first. This served to communicate urgency to auditors. Individual response to the covenant of grace was a proposition that each sinner needed to consider rather than succumb to complacency in a corporate covenant mindset.

INTERLUDE

REFLECTION AND ANTICIPATION

At this point a pause for reflection is in order. Edwards Sr. and Edwards Jr. need to be compared. Edwards Sr.'s engagement with Enlightenment thinkers led him to develop a system of theology in contrast to their emphasis upon a mechanistic view of God, reducing God's complexity and glory. In contrast, Edwards Sr. emphasized God's glory as the ultimate end of creation of which atonement was a subordinate end. Atonement is a subsystem in creation designed to glorify the Trinity. Atonement does two things. First, it increases the glory of God, by secondly, securing the happiness of the elect. This glory increases as a display of God's internal glory as a real union occurs between the elect and God by the Holy Spirit. This union is facilitated by the exchange of punishment (misery) for reward (happiness). This is a function of divine grace which is predicated on the 'natural inclination' of *personal beatific-delight*. The just exchange in the death of Christ *ad extra* for the elect is a 'temporal effect' of that which is *ad intra*. Atonement is a real satisfaction for the elect because it finds a real correspondence in the internal glory of God.

Edwards Jr. tended to describe atonement as a satisfaction of the divine nature which provided an entry for the salvation of all who believe. A definite shift towards a form of moral government theory of the atonement had occurred. Edwards Jr. emphasized an atonement rooted in the nature of God. There seems to be an appreciation for his father's commercial framing of the internal relations to which he framed the need for the atonement to satisfy a general justice. This framing of the atonement tended to complement the shift from societal federalism towards more republican and individual ownership of the covenant of grace. A traditional, strict understanding of penal substitution tended to open up opportunity for attack from Universalists and Antinomians. Thus, Edwards Jr. struck back at these positions by a careful analysis of how a voluntary atonement preserved both justice generally and grace to save the elect specifically.

The shift to reframe atonement along moral governmental lines bears further investigation. Did Edwards Jr. anticipate his generational need, or did he receive and process other thinkers on the topic of atonement? He had access to his father's rich

trove of manuscripts. Did he study these in isolation from others or did he read them in conversation with prior mentorship he had received from Joseph Bellamy and continuous engagement with Samuel Hopkins? What role did Petrus van Mastricht have on the overall Edwardsean project? The second part of this research will provide answers to these questions and in the third part assess what set's Edwards Jr. apart from the thought of Bellamy and Hopkins as his own distinctive contribution on the atonement. In doing so, this research will address Edwards Amasa Park's 'missing' account of the younger Edwards's reception of the atonement.

PART 2

AN ANALYSIS OF
MENTORS'S ATONEMENT THINKING

CHAPTER 4

RECEIVING THE ATONEMENT THROUGH JOSEPH BELLAMY (1719-1790)

I. INTRODUCTION: ‘A MAP OF THE ROAD TO THAT HEAVENLY WORLD’.

Joseph Bellamy¹ was the first student to study under Jonathan Edwards Sr. and the first to publish a treatise.² Bellamy’s fame as a circuit riding evangelist during the Great Awakening of 1741-42 fuelled a sizeable subscription list when *True Religion Delineated* (hereafter, *TRD*) was published in 1750.³ *TRD* was affectionately called ‘my grandmother’s blue book’ in Harriet Beecher Stowe’s novel *Oldtown Folks* based on a fictional New England community. Stowe faithfully relates to her readers that this book was widely disseminated to ‘every good family of New England’.⁴ Bellamy’s popular book often stood on a shelf beside Jonathan Edwards’s *Religious Affections*.

¹ Bellamy’s biography may be found in Glenn Paul Anderson, ‘Joseph Bellamy (1719-1790): The Man and his Work’, PhD dissertation (Boston University, 1971) and Michael P. Anderson, ‘The Pope of Litchfield County: An Intellectual Biography of Joseph Bellamy, 1719-1790’, PhD dissertation (Claremont Graduate School, 1980). His biography is also integrated in Mark Valeri, *Law and Providence in Joseph Bellamy’s New England: The Origins of the New Divinity in Revolutionary America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994).

² See Kenneth P. Minkema, ‘Jonathan Edwards on Education and His Educational Legacy’, in *After Jonathan Edwards: The Courses of the New England Theology*, ed. Oliver D. Crisp and Douglas A. Sweeney, 31-50 (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012), 39.

³ Joseph Bellamy, *True Religion Delineated; or, Experimental Religion, As distinguished from Formality on the one Hand, and Enthusiasm on the other, set in a Scriptural and Rational Light* (Boston: Kneeland, 1750).

⁴ Harriet Beecher Stowe, *Oldtown Folks* (Boston: Houghton, Mifflin, and Company, 1888), 373-74. Stowe was a prolific American author in the mid-19th century whose works influenced the eventual abolition of slavery as an institution. Her husband, Calvin Ellis Stowe, was a professor at Andover Theological Seminary and colleague of Edwards Amasa Park who provided the sketch of the New England Theory of Atonement. Edwards Amasa Park, *The Atonement: Discourses and Treatises by*

Edwards Sr. not only wrote the foreword to *TRD*, but he also spent time nurturing Bellamy through the ancient practice of mentoring.⁵ Bellamy boarded with the Edwards family from 1736 to 1738, which proved to be a formative period due to a variety of factors. First, according to a personal confession of faith sent to his daughter Betsey, he experienced conversion in 1736 when he was seventeen.⁶ Prior to his conversion he had matriculated at Yale when he was twelve years old, and according to Mark Valeri, he had little contact with his family.⁷ This minimal contact with his father may well have been offset by Edwards. Mentorship was an important way by which young men were fitted for a responsible life.⁸ Providentially, Edwards Sr. provided a model to Bellamy in his youth so that one day he would also ‘act the part of a father’ to future young men, including Edwards Sr.’s own son Jonathan.⁹ The younger Edwards was orphaned at thirteen.¹⁰ Bellamy’s time with Edwards Sr.

Edwards, Smalley, Maxcy, Emmons, Griffin, Burge, and Weeks (Boston: Congregational Board of Publications, 1859). See also, Valeri, *Law and Providence*, 3-4.

⁵ See Rhys S. Bezzant’s exceptional introduction to the ancient practice of mentoring. Rhys S. Bezzant, *Edwards the Mentor* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2019), 13-20.; Jonathan Edwards Sr., ‘Preface’, i-viii, in *TRD*.

⁶ Tyron Edwards, ‘A Memoir of His Life and Character’, in *The Works of Joseph Bellamy, D.D.* ed. Tyron Edwards, vii-lxv (Boston: Doctrinal Book and Tract Society, 1853), xlvi.

⁷ Valeri, *Law and Providence*, 11.

⁸ Bezzant, *Edwards the Mentor*, 43-44. The term *Mentor* is derived from François Fénelon’s moral tale *Les Adventure de Télémaque*. The *Mentor* travels as a guide with the youthful Telemachus, son of Ulysses, is manifestation of Athena. The *Mentor* acts *en loco parentis* for Telemachus as his father Ulysses is fighting in the Trojan War. This term *Mentor* is used by Samuel Hopkins as a reference for Edwards Sr. in correspondence with Bellamy. Samuel Hopkins, ‘C141a. Samuel Hopkins to Joseph Bellamy, January 19, 1758’, in *Correspondence by, to, and about Edwards and His Family, The Works of Jonathan Edwards Online*, Vol. 32, ed. Jonathan Edwards Center (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2008).

⁹ Edwards Jr. picked up this term ‘*Mentor*’ and appropriately refer to his own father this way. For Jonathan Edwards Jr.’s use of the term ‘*Mentor*’ for his father, see Jonathan Edwards Jr., ‘Letter to Joseph Bellamy, May 5, 1769’, *Jonathan Edwards Papers, Series V. Edwards Family Correspondence, Jonathan Edwards 1745-1801, Outgoing Letters*, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library (GEN MSS 151, Box 26, Folder 1414).

¹⁰ Samuel Hopkins, ‘Letter to Bellamy, July 7, 1766’, in William Patten, *Reminiscences of the Late Rev. Samuel Hopkins, D.D. of New Port, RI [...]* (Providence, RI: I.H. Cady, 1843), 45-47.

was very productive. Surviving notebooks depict fruitful discussion on topics relevant to *TRD*.¹¹

The second factor which influenced Bellamy is circumstantial. When his internship began, the parish awakening that inspired *A Faithful Narrative* had just begun to cool.¹² During this period Edwards preached consistently on the mixed nature of the visible church.¹³ Two sermon series that stand out during this period are *True and False Christians* and *Charity and Its Fruits*.¹⁴ Bryan McCarthy highlights the significance of the waning awakening upon Edwards's preaching when he stated, 'Indeed, it would not be an exaggeration to say this was his *principal* concern [i.e., the distinction between true and false Christians] in that period between the awakenings'.¹⁵ That Joseph Bellamy's *TRD* covers similar themes indicates that his time with Edwards prepared him to write this treatise. Furthermore, Bellamy experienced a similar disappointment after the 1740–42 Great Awakening. When his itinerant preaching produced enthusiasm (i.e. what Bellamy judged to be fanaticism) and resistance from colonial government, Bellamy retreated to his own parish to contemplate the visible church.¹⁶

A third factor was Edwards Sr.'s own preparation for a forthcoming series on redemption (March–August 1739). This series would begin just a few months after

¹¹ Joseph Bellamy, 'Book of notes (23 pp.) possibly compiled by Bellamy while he was studying under Jonathan Edwards (ca. 1735- 1737)', trans. Andrew Schuman. *Miscellaneous Personal Papers Collection*, Yale University Library Special Collections (RG30, Series 1, Box 179). Citations from this document will correspond to the original MSS and not the PDF version of Schuman's transcript.

¹² 'A Faithful Narrative of the Surprising Work of God in the Conversion [...]', in YE4.

¹³ For a detailed list of sermons preached during this period see M.X. Lesser, 'Appendix B: Dated Sermons, January 1734–December 1738', 799-811, in Jonathan Edwards Sr., *Sermons and Discourses, 1734-1738*, *Works of Jonathan Edwards*, ed. M. X. Lesser (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1957-2008). Bryan McCarthy highlights a variety of texts, which also speak to the same theme. Bryan McCarthy, 'Introduction: Historical Context', in *True and False Christians*, 28-33.

¹⁴ Jonathan Edwards Sr., *True and False Christians (On the Parable of the Wise and Foolish Virgins)*, *Sermons by Jonathan Edwards on the Matthean Parables*, Vol. 1, ed. Kenneth P. Minkema, Adriaan C. Neele, and Bryan McCarthy (Eugene, OR: Cascade Books; The Jonathan Edwards Center at Yale University, 2012); 'Charity and Its Fruits', YE8:125-397; Matthew V. Everhard, *A Theology of Joy: Jonathan Edwards and Eternal Happiness in the Holy Trinity* (Middletown, DE: Jonathan Edwards Society Press, 2018).

¹⁵ Emphasis original. Bryan McCarthy, 'Introduction: Historical Context', in *True and False Christians*, 33.

¹⁶ Tyron Edwards, 'A Memoir of His Life and Character', xi, lxii-lxiii.

Bellamy's departure to Bethlehem, Connecticut in November 1738.¹⁷ Even though he was active in pulpit supply during that summer and fall in Worcester, Massachusetts, he would have been exposed to Edwards's thoughts on redemption through discussions with his mentor.¹⁸ For example, in August 1738 Edwards Sr. gave a mid-week lecture on one great end of redemption, which was later published as *Jesus Christ Gloriously Exalted Above All Evil in the Work of Redemption* (1765). In the second and third sections of this lecture there are prototype metaphors like Ezekiel's wheels,¹⁹ which were developed in greater detail in *HWR*.²⁰

Edwards concluded in *Christ Gloriously Exalted* that 'the work of redemption is the most glorious of all God's works that are made known to us. The glory of God most remarkably shines forth in it'.²¹ For mankind to understand God's being, it had to be revealed to finite man through providential unfolding of history. This unfolding was also a means for God himself to take pleasure in the view of his nature in creation. Bellamy also described the universe itself as a kind of theatre by which God's moral perfections might be viewed. 'The whole world was created for a stage', wrote Bellamy,

on which a variety of scenes were to be opened; in and by all which God designed to exhibit a most exact image of himself. For as God loves himself infinitely, for being what he is; so, he takes infinite Delight, in acting forth and expressing all his heart. He loves to see his nature and image shine in all his works, and to behold the whole world filled with his glory. And he

¹⁷ This Redemption Series was first edited by Edwards Jr. for publication in Scotland in 1774 as *A History of the Work of Redemption* (YE9).

¹⁸ In addition to the Trinity, Bellamy's student notebook includes his notes on atonement and satisfaction. Bellamy, 'Book of notes (23 pp.).

¹⁹ For instance, Edwards uses the chariot wheels of Ezekiel as a metaphor of Christ's atonement moving through the ages as he depicts the triumph of Christ over the works of Satan. Jonathan Edwards Sr., 'Jesus Christ Gloriously Exalted Above All Evil in the Work of Redemption', 213-17 in *The Works of Jonathan Edwards with a Memoir by Sereno E. Dwight*, Vol. 2, ed. Edward Hickman, 1834; reprint (Carlisle, PA: The Banner of Truth Trust, 1995), 215. See also YE9:517-18.

²⁰ 'The Revolutions of Providence compared to the Revolutions of a *wheel* to the Course of a River & the growing of a Tree'. *History of Redemption Book 1*, WJEO31.

²¹ Edwards Sr., 'Jesus Christ Gloriously Exalted', 216.

perfectly loves to have all his conduct (the whole of it taken together) an *exact* resemblance of himself.²²

Later in life, Bellamy counselled his daughter Betsey to purchase a copy of ‘Mr. Edwards’s *History of Redemption*, in which you have a map of the road to that [heavenly] world, and a glimpse of its glory’.²³

The last factor that indicates influence is Edwards’s living endorsement of Bellamy’s work. While Edwards was still living, Bellamy anchored his treatise in his mentor’s metaphysical presuppositions, saying that God created us for a greater end than mere existence. This greater end brings a unity to all the distributive parts of creation.²⁴ Yet, essential to both Edwards and Bellamy are God’s wise design for the universe as a system. In the opening sentences Bellamy stated:

We are designed, by *God* our maker, for an endless existence. In this present life we just enter upon being, and are in a state introducing to a never-ending duration in another world, where we are to be forever unspeakably happy, or miserable, according to our present conduct. This is designed for a state of probation; and that, for a state of rewards and punishments.²⁵

Since this is the case, his advice to readers was to

Labour after determinate ideas of God, and a sense of his infinite glory. This will spread a light over all the duties and doctrines of religion, and help you to understand the law and the gospel, and to pry into the mysteries, and discern the beauties, of the divine government. By much the greatest part of what I have written, besides shewing what *God* is, consists in but so many propositions deduced from the divine perfections. Begin here therefore, and learn what *God* is, and then what the moral Law is; and this will help you to

²² Emphasis Original. Bellamy, *TRD*, 20.

²³ Joseph Bellamy, ‘Letter to Mrs. Charles Sheldon, Aug. 1, 1783’, in Tryon Edwards, ‘A Memoir of His Life and Character’, xlii.

²⁴ See the second chapter of this dissertation.

²⁵ Bellamy, *TRD*, i.

understand what our ruin is, and what the way of our recovery by free grace through *Jesus Christ*.²⁶

While Bellamy's purpose was different than Edwards, *TRD* is complementary to Edwards's *HWR*. Bellamy proposed that God's being may be seen in both law and gospel. This, as well as Edwards's *HWR*, is like 'a map of the road' that leads to that place of 'unspeakable' happiness.

Both theologians recognized that everything God *does* or *says* reveals his nature. Whereas Edwards focused upon the acts of God in creation and redemption as a means to know God, Bellamy focused on God's nature as revealed in the law *leading* to the gospel. The introduction of the law into his virtue ethics has caused confusion for some like Paul Ramsey. Ramsey thought that this was a significant departure from Edwards.²⁷ Mark Valeri, picking up Ramsey's suspicion, suggested that this difference is accentuated by the historic Reformed tension between law and gospel.²⁸ Others, like Joseph Haroutunian, have even accused Edwards's successors of corrupting their mentor's legacy by a prioritizing of the moral law—most notably, in how they articulated the atonement.²⁹

Recently, however, Oliver D. Crisp has proposed a closer harmony between Edwards's and Bellamy's versions of the atonement. He proposed that Edwards was willing to endorse Bellamy's work because Bellamy's atonement scheme had a 'family resemblance'. Yet, this resemblance, said Crisp, provided 'different accounts of the mechanism by which atonement is made'.³⁰ Crisp has critiqued most atonement theory investigation in general for its lack of clarity on how the atonement is a 'mechanism' to relieve the burden of divine justice. But he proposed that:

²⁶ Bellamy, *TRD*, v.

²⁷ Paul Ramsey, 'Appendix One: Joseph Bellamy's Copy of the Charity Sermons Introduction', 643-50, in *YE8*:648-49.

²⁸ Valeri, *Law and Providence*, 66-67, 75, n62.

²⁹ Joseph Haroutunian, *Piety Versus Moralism: The Passing of the New England Theology from Edwards to Taylor* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1932). George A. Gordon, 'The Collapse of the New England Theology', in *Harvard Theological Review* 1 (April 1908): 127-28. See Douglas A. Sweeney for how the negative narrative was established prior to Haroutunian. Douglas A. Sweeney, 'Edwards and His Mantle: The Historiography of the New England Theology', in *New England Quarterly* 74.1 (1998), 97-119.

³⁰ Oliver D. Crisp, 'The Moral Government of God: Jonathan Edwards and Joseph Bellamy on the Atonement', 78-90, in *After Jonathan Edwards: The Courses of the New England Theology*, ed. by Oliver D. Crisp and Douglas A. Sweeney (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012), 89.

In formulating their account of the work of Christ, the theologians of the New Divinity may well have departed from the atonement theory expressed by Edwards, which seems to have been a species of penal substitution. But from one perspective, in developing their own position they did not deviate from Edwardsean theology as such. Rather, they fused certain elements within basically Edwardsean scheme, particularly emphasis on the moral government of God in creation, to forge a novel and robust account of the work of Christ.³¹

The aim of this chapter is to ‘follow up’ on Crisp’s claim that the New Divinity had ‘fused certain elements’ to create their own emphasis. Since Bellamy’s mentorship by Edwards provided him with a foundation, should there not be elements observable in his own treatise? What ‘elements’ did Bellamy ‘fuse’ together to produce his atonement thinking? In other words, what choices did Bellamy make that led to his articulation of atonement that others have called a governmental theory?

To answer these questions, this chapter will bring Bellamy into dialogue with the elder Edwards with a sensitivity to reception of his key philosophical and theological tools. For example, Bellamy asserted in a letter to Punderson Austin (1743–1773) that he and Edwards wrote their major works in response to popular British moral philosophers and Deists.³² This admission suggests that Bellamy believed his writing was in step with Edwards. In addition to *TRD*, Bellamy’s lesser-known works on the *Divinity of Christ* (1758) and *Essay on the Nature and Glory of the Gospel* (1762) will be mined for clarity on his atonement thinking. Once Bellamy’s system is outlined, Bellamy’s thinking will be brought into conversation with the younger Edwards’s thoughts on the atonement, which was established in the prior chapter. In this way, Bellamy’s role may be understood as a link in a chain of reception from Edwards Sr. to Edwards Jr.

³¹ Crisp, ‘The Moral Government of God’, 89-90. See also, Allen Guelzo, *Edwards on the Will: A Century of American Theological Debate* (Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 1989), 134-135.

³² Joseph Bellamy, ‘Letter to Punderson Austin, April 6, 1766’, in Tyron Edwards, ‘A Memoir of His Life and Character’, xxix-xxx.

II. FOUNDATIONS FOR BELLAMY'S ATONEMENT THINKING

Punderson Austin, a graduate of Yale was a ministerial intern with Joseph Bellamy after his graduation in the fall of 1762.³³ Austin filled the pulpit at White Haven in the summer months before Edwards Jr. arrived in mid-August 1768 for the standard candidate trial period.³⁴ After Austin's study with Bellamy, he corresponded occasionally with Bellamy on theological questions. For example, in the year following the release of *The Nature of True Virtue* (1765), Austin reached out to Bellamy for clarification on how 'to state the scheme clearly so that it shall not appear to have a shadow ... [and] difficulties'.³⁵ In response, Bellamy offered a syllogistic chain of propositions summarizing *True Virtue's* moral philosophy. Then he recommended that Austin engage the British moralists to properly situate Edwards's argumentation in *True Virtue* and *The End of Creation*.³⁶

The controversy, according to Bellamy, had led Edwards Sr. to author *The Nature of True Virtue* and *The End of Creation*. In brief, Edwards was engaging the Deist thesis that morality and happiness is found within creation as a closed system. The Enlightenment had turned creation into a pointless machine that simply existed for its own glory, its own vapid happiness. Avihu Zakai rightly points out that Edwards, in response to the Enlightenment, was addressing the pointlessness of the world, if it were merely a 'mechanism'.³⁷ In Miscellany No. tt., Edwards argued for a grand purpose in creation. When he argued that there is no such thing as a 'mechanism', he is not stating an absence of systems in creation, rather that no system exists without a purpose. Edwards said, 'if the highest end of every part of a clock is only

³³ Punderson Austin, son of Lieutenant David and Hannah Austin, of East Haven, in New Haven, Connecticut. His father was a deacon at the time of Jonathan Edwards Jr.'s pastorate at White Haven Church. Austin served as a Tutor at Yale and provided pulpit supply to area churches. Franklin B. Dexter, *Biographical Sketches of the Graduates of Yale College with Annals of the College History*, Vol. 2 (New York: Henry Holt and Co., 1896), 726-728. Punderson Austin, 'Letter sent to Joseph Bellamy, February 25, 1763', *Joseph Bellamy Letters*, Hartford International University Library (Box 188, Folder 2934).

³⁴ Punderson Austin, 'Letter sent to Joseph Bellamy, June 13, 1768', *Joseph Bellamy Letters*, Hartford International University Library (Box 188, Folder 2935).

³⁵ Punderson Austin, 'Letter sent to Joseph Bellamy, March 5, 1766', *Joseph Bellamy Letters*, Hartford International University Library (Box 190, Folder 2959).

³⁶ Bellamy, 'Letter to Punderson Austin', xxix.

³⁷ Zvihu Zakai, *Jonathan Edwards's Philosophy of History: The Reenchantment of the World in the Age of Enlightenment* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2003), 102.

mutually to assist the other parts in their motions, that clock is good for nothing at all'.³⁸ In the same way creation does not exist, except for a purpose. Embracing a Cartesian scepticism towards deity, Anthony Ashley Cooper, the Earl of Shaftesbury, who had been tutored by Locke, radicalized Lockean views. Locke had proposed that accurate human knowledge can only occur when subsystems exist interdependently within a larger system.³⁹ In brief, Shaftesbury said:

Now in this which we call the universe, whatever the perfection may be of any particular systems, or whatever single parts may have proportion, unity, or form within themselves [... are] but all apparently united, then is the whole a system complete, according to one simple, consistent, and uniform design.⁴⁰

Yet this, according to Shaftesbury, is as far as human knowledge can go. The whole order of the universe is as far as man can know, thus 'man may be virtuous, and by being so, is happy. His merit is reward; by virtue, he deserves, and in virtue only can meet his happiness as deserved'.⁴¹ So, the question is asked, what is the nature of true virtue? Where does it come from? Is it socially derived, or does it ultimately find its origin in a Creator?

In this reply to Austin, Bellamy provided a very tight presentation of his mentor's views co-mingled with key elements found in *TRD*. Since Austin sought a concise snapshot, Bellamy provided a list of ten propositions in a syllogistic chain. Those unfamiliar with syllogistic chains will be helped knowing that they are an arrangement of several syllogisms each of which infer a greater proposition. Bellamy's chain is composed of four syllogisms, which then, in turn distils down to a fifth and chief, singular proposition. The following four (plus one) propositions are arranged visually to see their relationships in figure 4.1.⁴² A chain like this was designed to be an impregnable fortress of reason.

The main syllogism is supported by these two syllogistic legs. But each leg is supported by a sub syllogism. For example, the first and fifth propositions form the first leg, that is, the episyllogism, and second, third, and fourth propositions form the

³⁸ 'tt. Devotion', in YE13:190.

³⁹ Locke, *Essay*, 4:6 § 11.

⁴⁰ Cooper, *Characteristics*, 63-64.

⁴¹ Cooper, *Characteristics*, 67.

⁴² Bellamy, 'Letter to Punderson Austin', xxix-xxxi.

second leg, that is, the prosyllogism. This is a necessary support to the other syllogism. Together, they form the minor premise of the overarching argument.

Within propositions 6-10 is found the major premise. This major premise consists of both a prosyllogism and episyllogism. Propositions six through eight is also an episyllogism which is supported by propositions 9-10 as the prosyllogism. In this way, propositions 6-10 serve to support the eighth proposition as the major premise, while propositions 1-5 support the fifth as the minor premise. Thus, the eighth and fifth proposition form the two legs of the main syllogism. These are emboldened in figure 4.1 below.

Together the minor premise (5) and the major premise (8) form the basis of *True Virtue* according to Bellamy; however, the unstated conclusion, which is derived from these two propositions is developed in Bellamy's *TRD*. Like Edwards Jr. who provided an interpretive summary of his father's doctrine of creation, Bellamy provided a summary of Edwards's moral philosophy. Before moving into Bellamy's atonement thinking, the reader must bear patiently with the development of this syllogistic chain. It is a necessary precursor to the understanding of Bellamy's atonement thinking which is based on the unstated conclusion derived from this chain.

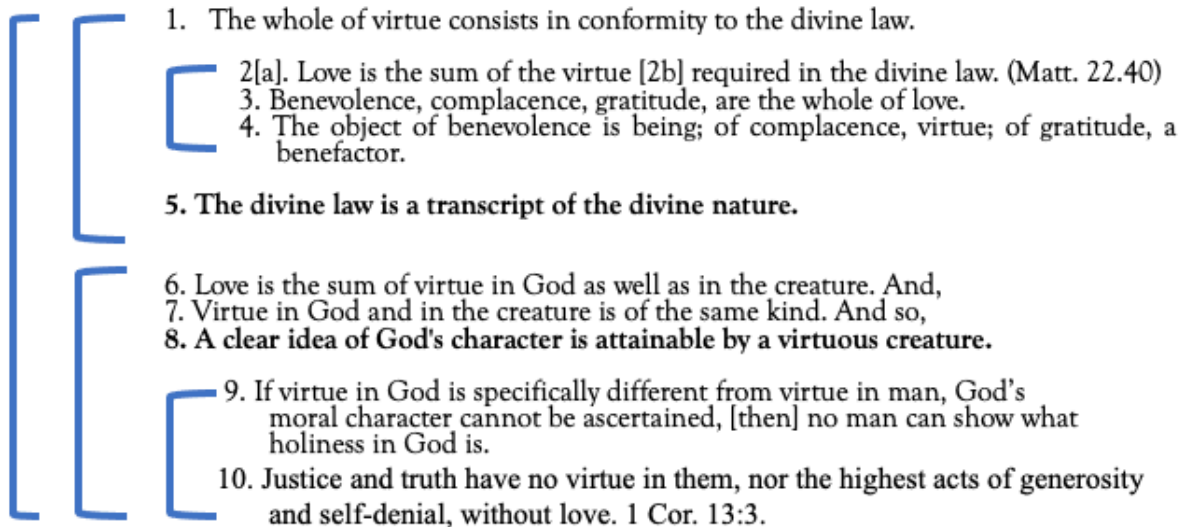


Figure 4.1 A Concise Representation of the Moral Theology of Edwards

A. 'The Divine Law is a Transcript of the Divine Nature' (1-5)

1) Prosyllogism 1, Love is True Virtue (2-4)

In proposition four, Edwards (according to Bellamy) defined benevolence, complacence, and gratitude as aspects of love. 'The object of benevolence is being; [the object] of complacence,⁴³ virtue; [the object] of gratitude, a benefactor'.⁴⁴ These definitions clarify the third proposition, which claims that these three 'are the whole of love'. Together propositions 3-4 form a minor premise that 'the whole of love' consists of 'benevolence, complacence, and gratitude' (A). The major premise states that 'love is the sum of the virtue' (B). The unstated conclusion of this prosyllogism is that (C) benevolence, complacence, and gratitude is the sum of virtue. Said another way, love is true virtue (see figure 4.2 below).⁴⁵ This conclusion supports the minor premise (1) of the episyllogism 1 (1, 5) because love/virtue is the requirement of the divine law (Matt. 22:40).

Benevolence
 Complacence (A) = Whole of Love (C) = Sum of Virtue (B)
 Gratitude
 If, A = C and B = C, then A = B

Figure 4.2 Love is True Virtue

⁴³ The 18th century use of the word "complacence" is used meaning that which is pleasing or pleasurable rather than how it is understood today as smugness or having an uncritical view of one's accomplishments.

⁴⁴ Bellamy, 'Letter to Punderson Austin', xxix.

⁴⁵ See sermons 1-3 in the *Charity and Its Fruits* Series. YE8.

2) Episylogism 1, The Law is a Transcript of Divine Nature (1, 5)

The first proposition is the minor premise in which most would agree that ‘the whole of virtue [A] consists in conformity to the divine law [C]’. This conformity requirement is consistent with Matthew 22:40 as noted in the second proposition. The major premise is found in the fifth proposition that claims, ‘the divine law [C] is a transcript of the divine nature [B]’. In these clauses the words ‘conformity’ and ‘transcript’ are synonyms for *equivalence* (see figure 4.3 below). This syllogistic pattern served Bellamy to build upon his mentor’s theory that an understanding of God may be grasped by finite beings. Edwards Sr. proposed that the works of God in the history of the work of redemption permit man to view God experientially and theologically. Bellamy did not supplant his mentor but rather added to this premise that law *and* gospel are another method mankind has ‘determinate ideas of God, and a sense of his infinite glory’.⁴⁶

Virtue (A) = Divine Law (C) = Divine Nature (B)

If, A = C and B = C, then A = B

Figure 4.3 The Law is a Transcript of the Divine Nature

B. ‘A clear idea of God’s character is attainable by a virtuous creature’ (6-10)

1) Episylogism 2, The Law Is a Means to ‘view’ God Through Virtue (6-8)

Edwards, according to Bellamy, asserted that if God calls his creatures to be holy as he is holy through conformity to the law, then love must be a virtue common to both. Building upon the prior chain of syllogisms, that had concluded love as equal to virtue, Edwards proposed that ‘love is the sum of virtue in God as well as in the creature’ (A). In other words, the love required to conformity with the divine nature

⁴⁶ Bellamy, TRD, v.

described in the law cannot be different. It must be the same. The major premise holds that 'Virtue in God and the creature is of the same kind' (B).⁴⁷ The conclusion follows that a 'clear idea of God's character is attainable by a virtuous creature' (C).

The choice to use 'clear idea' in the eighth proposition indicates Bellamy had understood Edwards's dialogue with Cartesian scepticism. Locke's grammar of human understanding was an essential tool by which to engage on epistemology and moral philosophy. Bellamy is showing in this syllogistic chain Edwards Sr. use of Locke's grammar. How does one visualize God who we cannot see?⁴⁸ This argument leads to the conclusion that when a sinner's virtue is in conformity with the divine law, then they may obtain a 'clear view' of the divine nature. Why? Because the sum of virtue is love as described in the divine law and love as a virtue is univocal as a communicable attribute of God (see figure 4.4 below).⁴⁹

True Virtue (A) = Idea of God (C) = Univocity (B)
If, A = C and B = C, then A = B

Figure 4.4 The Law Is a Means to 'view' God Through Virtue

2) Prosylogism 2, Virtue is Necessary for Knowing God (8-10)

Arguing from a negative, Bellamy stated that without love, justice and truth have no virtue in them. This is based upon his tenth proposition grounded in 1

⁴⁷ This would appear to be an invalid on the basis of the second premise which proposes that 'Virtue in God and the creature is of the same kind' (B). However, this is developed from Edwards's contention that the difference between God and man is a matter of circumstance. YE1:165.

⁴⁸ Locke, *Essay*, 2:29. Cf. Edwards Sr., *Discourse on the Trinity, Writings on the Trinity, Grace, and Faith, Works of Jonathan Edwards*, vol. 21, ed. Sang Hyun Lee (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1957-2008), 114-16.

⁴⁹ '7. Virtue in God and in the creature is the same kind'. Bellamy, 'Letter to Punderson Austin', xxix. Cf. 'There is no difference between their Love in Heaven, and our's [sic] here upon Earth, but only in Degree'. TRD, 15.

Corinthians 13:3.⁵⁰ If this minor premise is correct, then a creature who pursues justice and truth as described in the law *with love* had a capacity to ascertain ‘God’s moral character’.⁵¹ The major premise is in the ninth proposition. If there is a difference between virtue in man and virtue in God, then there can be no understanding of ‘God’s moral character’. Stated positively, this syllogism runs as follows: Love is necessary for justice and truth to be virtuous (A). Virtue in God and man is not specifically different (B). Therefore, a clear idea of God’s nature is attained when man is virtuous (C). Since Bellamy’s propositions are framed negatively the conclusion is a negative; however, if turned positively, the syllogism is identical to figure 4.4 above.

C. True Virtue (or True Religion) is by the Law through the Gospel

Propositions five and eight bring Edwards’s system to a focal point. These are emboldened above in figure 4.1. Specifically, if (A) ‘The Divine Law is a Transcript of the Divine Nature’ (1-5), and (B) ‘A Clear Idea of God’s character is attainable by a virtuous creature’ (6-10), then what should be concluded? While not answered directly by Bellamy in his letter to Austin, this conclusion *is the central thesis* which unifies the two discourses in *TRD*. If obtaining true virtue is the way we understand and sense God, then according to Bellamy, (C) ‘True Religion [or Virtue] consists in a conformity to the *Law* of God, and in a compliance with the *Gospel* of Christ’.⁵² This ought to answer the charge that Bellamy was introducing a legalistic Calvinism because the law was being used as a guide to lead sinners to know God by the gift of the Holy Spirit through the gospel.

⁵⁰ Bellamy, ‘Letter to Punderson Austin’, xxx.

⁵¹ Bellamy, ‘Letter to Punderson Austin’, xxix

⁵² Bellamy, *TRD*, 1.

D. Transcript(s) of the Divine Nature

The metaphor of a *transcript* was a significant tool in Edwards's metaphysical toolbox, adapted by Bellamy to his own purpose.⁵³ The minor premise that 'the divine law is a transcript of the divine nature' (A, see figure 4.1 above) occurs several times in the first discourse of *TRD*.⁵⁴ It is introduced after a demonstration that his mentor's Trinitarianism forms a foundation for knowing God *through* virtue or love.⁵⁵ This corresponds directly to the major premise expressed in his letter to Punderson Austin, namely that 'a Clear Idea of God's character is attainable by a virtuous creature' (B, see figure 4.1 above). Both premises (law and gospel) are rooted in Edwards Sr.'s Trinitarianism. Bellamy was keen to bring these premises out of Edwards's prior writings to emphasize the possibility for true religious practice through the law and gospel.

The transcript metaphor was first used by Edwards Sr. in Miscellany 94. Around November or December 1723, Edwards wrote down his first thoughts on the Trinity.⁵⁶ In this entry, he famously announced that 'I am not afraid to say twenty things about the Trinity which the Scripture never said'.⁵⁷ In regard to the Son of God and the Word of God, Edwards described both as a kind of transcript of the divine nature. On the one hand, the Word (or law) is said to be 'a copy' and on the other hand the Son is 'a perfect transcript:'

The Word of God, in its most proper meaning, is a transcript of the divine perfections. This Word is either the declared Word of God or the essential: the one is the copy of the divine perfections given to us, the other is the perfect transcript thereof in God's own mind. But the Perfect transcript of the perfections of God in the divine [mind] is the same with God's perfect

⁵³ This *transcript* metaphor was also known by David Brainerd in 1774. In a letter to his brother John, he refers to *Religious Affections* to assess one's own piety or lack thereof. Brainerd says, 'Now when men thus rejoice in the perfections of God, and in the infinite excellency of the 'way of salvation by Christ' (*Acts 16:17* and *1 Thessalonians 5:9*), and in the holy commands of God, which are a transcript of his holy nature, these joys are divine and spiritual'. YE7:497-98.

⁵⁴ Bellamy, *TRD*, 15, 66, 75.

⁵⁵ Bellamy, *TRD*, 3-15.

⁵⁶ Harry Stout, 'The 'Miscellanies' and Chronological Parallels', in YE13:91-109.

⁵⁷ YE13:257.

idea of his own perfections. But I need tell none, how the Son of God is called the Word of God.⁵⁸

By using the word *perfect*, he distinguished the personhood of the Son as *essential* and the written Word as verbal signs which represent the Son's essence. This differentiation is subtle but substantial from the standpoint of Locke's grammar, but if considered carefully, shows that Edwards was concerned with true knowledge of the divine essence.⁵⁹ Specifically, Edwards saw both displaying the divine perfections—both the Son of God incarnate and the prophetic word could be described as transcripts. Put another way, there is a communicative value of each to represent essence. For the purpose of knowing, the law is a 'mere transcript' because it is letter, while the Son is the 'perfect transcript' because he is existential. What joins the two is Spirit.

Edwards agreed with Bellamy that the law is a transcript of God's divine nature as signs of his holy nature; whereas the Son of God is a perfect transcript, that is, 'in God's own mind' or his *essential* holy nature.⁶⁰ This means that the divine law is holy, good, and just; however, it is not the *substance* of the Son as expressed in the account of his incarnation, crucifixion, and resurrection. In other words, Edwards Sr. was speaking of two kinds of divine transcript. So, when Edwards Sr. endorsed Bellamy's book, he could not have understood his student to be introducing legalism. Bellamy's focus upon the divine law was complementary to the Son by through the gift of the Holy Spirit provided to sinners by the 'perfect transcript' of the Son by the atonement.

E. Means by Which 'A Clear Idea of God's Character is Attainable'

Edwards's early Trinitarian thought (Miscellany 94) and his mature musings found in *Discourse on the Trinity* are just below the surface of TRD. The opening lines of Bellamy's first discourse (Part one) is derivative from Edwards's thinking about

⁵⁸ YE13:259-60.

⁵⁹ 'We make the Name stand for the real Essence, of which we have no *Idea* at all'. Locke is saying that while 'the *Name* occurs much easier, than the complex *Idea* itself' the effort to bring the two into conformity brings one closer to understanding truth. Locke, *Essay*, 4:5 § 4.

⁶⁰ YE13:259.

God as a singular essence that nevertheless exists in a *personal beatific-delight*. This *beatific-delight* is stimulated by the internal sight of one another within the Godhead.⁶¹ Thus, a beatific delight in God by finite creatures is required in the greatest commandment. Although proportionate to finite creatures, the command to love God is a call to pursue an affectionate, ectypal knowledge of God.⁶² In Edwards's preface to *TRD*, he noted the importance of a consistency between the practice of religion and 'a knowledge or belief' in 'the Being of God'.⁶³ To this end, Bellamy said that 'a spiritual sight of God, and a sense of his glory and beauty, begets love'.⁶⁴ In other words, true religion (or virtue) occurs when one has true affection for God on the basis of God's inherent amiableness.⁶⁵

Kyle Strobel observed that for Edwards, 'the triune God of beatific-delight is the self-revealing God of the gospel, revealing himself in his Son, his own understanding, sent so that the elect can truly know God by *seeing him*. Furthermore, since archetypal knowledge is affectionate knowledge - i.e., perfect sight and infinite delight - ectypal knowledge also functions in the register of affection, as God sends his Spirit so that the elect can truly know, not only understand, but incline their wills to the God of history'.⁶⁶ Bellamy similarly believed that this 'affectionate knowledge' is critical to have a right reception of the law as a transcript of God's nature. 'Love', said Bellamy,

⁶¹ Bellamy, *TRD*, 3.; Edwards Sr. writes, 'Tis often said that God is infinitely happy from all eternity in the view and enjoyment of himself, in the reflection and converse love of his own essence, that is, in the perfect idea he has of himself, infinitely perfect'. YE13:257; YE21:113.

⁶² Bellamy, *TRD*, 3. See Edwards Sr. as well. 'The Almighty's knowledge is not so different from ours, but that ours is the image of [it]. It is by an idea, as ours is, only his [is] infinitely perfect'. YE13:257.

⁶³ Edwards Sr., 'Preface', i-ii.

⁶⁴ Bellamy, *TRD*, 3.

⁶⁵ Bellamy sees an inconsistency in Samuel Johnson's *Ethices Elementa: The First Principles of Moral Philosophy* (1746). In his letter to Johnson, Bellamy suggests that the amiableness of God is a greater end on his own. He asks Johnson, 'Is God infinitely amiable in himself in being what he is? Am I under infinite obligation to love him antecedent to any selfish consideration? Or is God amiable only because he is happifying and I [am] obliged to love him merely from self-love [...] But, sir, what makes him infinitely happifying unless it be some infinite excellency, for which he deserves an infinite esteem, antecedent to any selfish consideration?' Joseph Bellamy, 'A Letter Sent to Samuel Johnson, D.D. April 17, 1747', *Joseph Bellamy Papers*, trans. Richard Webster, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia, 52.

⁶⁶ Kyle C. Strobel, *Jonathan Edwards's Theology: A Reinterpretation*. T&T Clark Studies in Systematic Theology 19, ed. by John Webster, Ian A. McFarland, and Ivor Davidson (New York: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2013), 16.

‘cannot be forced. Forced love is no love’.⁶⁷ In this respect, divine love is non-coerced or voluntary and pre-eminently expressed in the voluntary act of the Son to be an atoning sacrifice.

Bellamy emphasized how this affectionate knowledge of God serves to move the will to ‘love his law, which is the transcript of the divine nature’.⁶⁸ Bellamy argued first that God is amiable in his own nature, and second that without an affective turn within the human heart a clear sight and sense of God’s amiable nature is not possible. He illustrated this by the wicked in hell and the demonic host. These inhabitants of hell may have clarity of vision and feeling of what God is and yet hate him all the more.⁶⁹ In this respect, Bellamy recognized the necessity of the Holy Spirit to create new affections by the gospel (this will become the basis of the second discourse). Love that corresponds to the nature of God is that which ‘will effectually influence us to keep his commands’.⁷⁰

F. Summary of Foundational Elements

To use Crisp’s word, Bellamy has ‘fused’ together several concepts from his mentor to construct a foundation for his atonement thinking. Below will feature how Bellamy used his mentor’s Trinitarianism and Lockean grammar to express his view of the atonement. Thus, while Bellamy’s is not an independent system, nevertheless he took Edwards’s thoughts to their logical conclusion with respect to the law as a revelation of the nature of God. Provided that there is a spiritual capacity for love to God, sinners see God’s glory in the law. The Holy Spirit opens to the regenerate many avenues to rightly have ‘a clear sight and a realizing sense of his natural and moral perfections, as they are revealed in his works and in his word’.⁷¹ These two means of knowing God correspond to Edwards Sr.’s categories in *HWR*, namely, history (i.e., works or acts) and prophecy (i.e., word or speech).⁷²

⁶⁷ Bellamy, *TRD*, 4.

⁶⁸ Bellamy, *TRD*, 15.

⁶⁹ Bellamy, *TRD*, 5-7.

⁷⁰ Bellamy, *TRD*, 15.

⁷¹ Bellamy, *TRD*, 17.

⁷² In the tenth sermon of *HWR*, Edwards says that ‘there are two ways [...] by which the Work of Redemption is carried on: one is by history, and another is by prophecy’. *YE9*:242.

Ironically, by 1750 Bellamy was already articulating the major arguments of *A History of the Work of Redemption (HWR)* saying that creation, including the moral government, allows creatures ‘to see his inward disposition and discern the true nature of his moral perfections’.⁷³ In fact, God’s ‘all-seeing eye’, as Bellamy framed it, ‘views all his courts above, and sees under the whole Heavens, looks through the earth, and pierces all the dark caverns of hell’. This creation ‘stage’ is the place where the perfections of God are ‘designed to exhibit a most exact image of himself’.⁷⁴ Here, in concise format, is Edwards Sr.’s proposal to the trustees of the College of New Jersey to create ‘a body of divinity in an entire new method, being thrown into the form of an history, considering the affair of Christian theology, as the whole of it, in each part, stands in reference to the great work of redemption by Jesus Christ [...]’.⁷⁵

Again, midway through *TRD*, one can see how Bellamy received Edwards’s sensitivity to the difference between divine simplicity and the acts of God. For example, when Bellamy wrote that God ‘has *acted out* all his perfections so much to the life and *exhibited* such an exact image of himself. The works of creation and redemption, and all his conduct as a moral governor of the world, show just what a kind of being he is’.⁷⁶ Furthermore, Bellamy described the works of God in creation as ‘an *exact* resemblance of himself’ collectively as on a theatrical stage progressing through time in its distributive parts like scenes of a play opening and closing one after another. Bellamy says that God ‘takes infinite delight, in acting forth and expressing all his heart’.⁷⁷ Bellamy honours his mentor’s project by deepening the second method of revelation by the word. In *TRD*, Bellamy contended that the law reveals God’s nature within the context of word. In *HWR*, Edwards contended that the work of redemption reveals God’s nature within the context of God’s acts. Both views are complementary and find overlap in the application of redemption by the Holy Spirit through the gospel.

⁷³ Bellamy, *TRD*, 21.

⁷⁴ Bellamy, *TRD*, 20-21.

⁷⁵ YE16:727-28.

⁷⁶ Emphasis original. Bellamy, *TRD*, 100.

⁷⁷ Emphasis original. Bellamy, *TRD*, 20.

III. TOWARDS A BELLAMITE ATONEMENT THEORY

An atonement theory was not the central goal of Bellamy's *TRD*. Rather, his goal was to help his readers discover an affective knowledge of God through the law and gospel.⁷⁸ This being the case many who read Bellamy tend to view his position from the perspective of the Grotian MGT due to the emphasis upon a visual projection of God's nature into creation and redemption. Yet, this section will begin to line out the key elements of Bellamy's atonement thinking. In the analysis below Bellamy's thoughts will initially be compared with the historic satisfaction and penal theories before they are compared with Edwards Sr. The headings below have been assumed (although, somewhat adapted) from Oliver Crisp's summary of these theories found in *Participation and Atonement*.⁷⁹

A. God's Essential Justice Undergirds All that he Does

The Anselmian account of atonement was a well-established doctrinal tradition picked up by the Reformed tradition.⁸⁰ Even when reformed thinkers made contrastive departures into penal substitution, justice, as an essential perfection of God, was still considered a settled tenet in Bellamy's day.⁸¹ Furthermore, from the beginning of Bellamy's tutelage, he was taught that moral rectitude, or a sense of justice, is a perfection in God's nature that is communicable. Although man's moral nature was corrupted by the fall, mankind still has a natural capacity to serve the interest of God.⁸² Moral rectitude, that is God's essential justice, undergirds

⁷⁸ 'True religion consists in a conformity to the *Law* of God, and in a compliance with the *Gospel* of Christ'. Bellamy, *TRD*, 1-2.

⁷⁹ Oliver D. Crisp, *Participation and Atonement: An Analytical and Constructive Account* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2022), 97, 130-31.

⁸⁰ Katherine Sonderegger, 'Anselmian Atonement', 175-193, in *T&T Clark Companion to Atonement*, ed. Adam J. Johnson (New York: Bloomsbury, 2017), 175-177. Oliver D. Crisp, *Approaching the Atonement: The Reconciling Work of Christ* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2020), 62-64.

⁸¹ Anselm, *Cur Deus Homo*, 1.12.

⁸² 'The Image of God as man consists in the moral rectitude which was imprinted on his whole nature, making him in his manner and [...] it to refinable, and able to serve God'. Bellamy, 'Book of notes (23 pp.)', 15. Bellamy, *TRD*, 94-99.

Bellamy's argument that the law is a means by which we may know God affectionately. He asserted in *TRD* that 'by [God's] infinite understanding he is perfectly acquainted with right and wrong, with what is fit and what is unfit: And by the *moral rectitude* of his nature, he infinitely loves the one and hates the other, and is disposed to conduct accordingly'.⁸³ This was a critical point for Bellamy because an affective knowledge of God requires a consistency between God's divine perfections and any kind of self-revelation.

Essential justice will appear in providence, prophecy, law, gospel, or its distributive consequences because it is first resident in God's nature. In other words, right and wrong cannot simply exist because God declares it so. A sense of right and wrong must exist in God's nature *prior* to the handing down of law for it to be a mechanism for a loving response to God's nature. In other words, the coherence of the universe rises and falls upon a moral realism.⁸⁴ Furthermore, this moral realism is critical for an affective knowledge of God. God has 'an infinite love to right', explained Bellamy, by which 'he loves to act out his heart, and exhibit a true image of himself'.⁸⁵ If this is the end goal of the created world, then a true affective knowledge of God is attainable by a 'divinely enlightened' person.⁸⁶ While this is possible, nevertheless, when mankind rebels there must be a distributive expression of God's displeasure from God's just nature.

B. God's distributive justice is retributive and remunerative

Distributive justice is another characteristic of Anselm's atonement theory.⁸⁷ Yet, since Bellamy's purpose was not to establish an atonement theory *per se*, Bellamy's atonement thinking might be considered muddled. His pressing desire to show the

⁸³ Emphasis Added. Bellamy, *TRD*, 21.

⁸⁴ 'If we should suppose (as some do) that there is nothing right or wrong antecedent to a consideration of the positive will and law of God, the great Governour of the world; And that right and wrong result originally from his sovereign will and absolute authority entirely; then [...] the moral perfections of God are empty names without any signification at all'. Bellamy, *TRD*, 29-30, n1.

⁸⁵ Bellamy, *TRD*, 28-29.

⁸⁶ Bellamy, *TRD*, 29. Bellamy sees a difference between speculative knowledge and a sense of moral beauty. The first is rationally learned through the observation of God's works and word; the second is a product of the Spirit through the gospel. Bellamy, *TRD*, 18.

⁸⁷ Anselm, *Cur Deus Homo*, 1.12.

‘all comprehensive view’ of the world from God’s perspective—‘past, present, and to come’⁸⁸—led Bellamy to prioritize God’s moral rectitude by which God governs the world sequentially through dispensations of the covenant of grace. God’s essential justice is *prior* and affects how he calls his creatures to relate to him. Bellamy’s atonement thinking was deeply situated in this moral rectitude, which promised rewards and threatens damnation distributively.⁸⁹ These distributive expressions, while real, are temporal effects that expose God’s essential nature.

God’s distributive justice in its most simple form corresponds to punishment and reward. This infinite hatred of sin and love to right is seen maximally, or as Bellamy said, ‘in the greatest perfection, in the death of Jesus Christ, his only begotten Son’.⁹⁰ Yet, these perfections are, nevertheless, seen in the administration of the world as mankind responds favourably or unfavourably to the revelation of God’s moral rectitude in prophecy, law, and gospel.⁹¹ Due to the fact that God is an infinite friend to right, and an infinite enemy to wrong, his approach to mankind is contingent to human response to revelation. As mankind becomes aware of what God requires of them, they are responsible to respond. This is a kind of trial system that places mankind in a precarious position. A person must decide to love God or not. Reward or punishment is directly related to a sinner’s response to God as he reveals himself. God’s eyes, according to Bellamy, are upon us every moment as he ‘bids the world adore, love and obey him with all their hearts, because [...] it is infinitely fit and right’.⁹² This call to response and subsequent punishment or reward is a mechanism by which God’s just nature reveals itself distributively. The greatest expression of this, Bellamy claimed, is in the cross and will be discussed below.⁹³

⁸⁸ Bellamy, *TRD*, 17, 21.

⁸⁹ Bellamy, *TRD*, 27.

⁹⁰ Bellamy, *TRD*, 29.

⁹¹ ‘Now there are three ways by which these perfections are discovered to the children of men: by his works, by this Word, and by his Spirit’. Bellamy’s categories are inclusive of providence, prophecy, and gospel. Bellamy, *TRD*, 18.

⁹² Bellamy, *TRD*, 26-27.

⁹³ Bellamy, *TRD*, 32-33.

C. Sin is heinous; it denigrates God's honour

In Bellamy's own words, he said, 'sin is an infinite evil, and according to strict justice worthy of an infinite punishment; it is right and fit that he should do as he does, and therefore his conduct will forever appear infinitely glorious and beautiful in the eyes of all holy beings'.⁹⁴ In the Anselmian way of thinking, God's honour is tarnished when anyone refuses to render unto God his due by obedience to the law by their free will.⁹⁵ Typically, penal theorists see that satisfaction theory places God under the law.⁹⁶ Bellamy attempted to resolve the apparent conflict between a strict penal view, which sees sin as a direct offense against God, and that of God obligated to law satisfaction. Sin, according to Bellamy, is directed against God as an infinite evil; however, the offence is *mediated* by the law and its heinousness is *defined* by the law. In contrast, or perhaps complementary, to the traditional Anselmian view of sin, sin is still an attack against God's nature. How? Since the law is a transcript of the divine nature. Bellamy appeared to be offering a metaphysical buffer zone to pay recognition to his *immediate* and *impassable* nature. By the use of Locke's distinction between *nominal* and *essential* categories, Bellamy proposed that the law and gospel (language, signs, or names) were a method of God's pure act being to reveal himself in the universe. In this case by his response to sin directed at his majesty mediated by the law.

D. Satisfaction is an Existential Necessity for God

Penal substitution, strictly speaking, requires that Christ not only takes on the sin of fallen beings but also their guilt. This, as has been noted by Crisp *et al*, is an existential difficulty. For example, one can easily pay for someone's financial crimes, but they cannot take another's guilt for murder.⁹⁷ To deal with this difficulty some

⁹⁴ Bellamy, *TRD*, 33.

⁹⁵ Anselm, *Cur Deus Homo*, 1.11, 13.

⁹⁶ Stephen R. Holmes, 'Penal Substitution', 295-314, in *T&T Clark Companion to Atonement*, ed. Adam J. Johnson (New York: Bloomsbury, 2017), 296-97.

⁹⁷ 'The ambiguity [in penal theory] has to do with whether Christ is actually punished, suffering my penalty for sin, or whether he merely takes upon himself the penal consequences of my sin. The

have suggested that in atonement, God ‘relaxes’ the demands of the law to permit a vicarious equivalent.⁹⁸ For instance, François Turretin appealed to God’s sovereignty to permit an equivalency to be sufficient since he is the one who establishes law.⁹⁹ Bellamy, however, did not see a relaxation of the law to any degree a real possibility. ‘For it cannot be abated’, Bellamy maintained, that ‘unless God cease to be what he is’.¹⁰⁰ To support his thesis, Bellamy returned to his major contention that the law is a transcript of the divine nature.¹⁰¹ This is due to justice’s rootedness in the divine nature and God does not legislate arbitrarily but out of necessity. The law reflects God’s nature, and thus all creation should love the Lord God on the pains of punishment for an abdication of this responsibility.

Bellamy also argued from the logic of God’s perfection of truth for the inexorable conclusion that should the law be repealed God’s being would collapse. In his second discourse, the abatement in any instance of his just dealing with sin would be an aberration based on truth. He said, ‘It is as contrary to his nature, to let sin go unpunished, as it is to lie; for his *justice* is as much himself, as his truth; and it is therefore equally impossible he should act contrary to either. Hence, this branch of the law of nature is *not capable of any repeal or abatement*’.¹⁰² This tight connection between the two highlights how reality must be consistently true for a proper oversight of the world. Truth is consistent and all representational forms of justice must align perfectly with the essential reality of God’s own being. In brief, this is a deontological argument as opposed to a consequentialist argument on the basis of a divine decree (which God might otherwise change).

difference is an important one [...]’. Oliver D. Crisp, *Approaching the Atonement: The Reconciling Work of Christ* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2020), 97, 109-111. This argument, according to Stephen R. Holmes was first proposed by Faustus Socinus. Holmes, ‘Penal Substitution’, 297-99.

⁹⁸ Technically, this is called acceptance and was advocated by Duns Scotus and Grotius. This was picked up by others like François Turretin. See Crisp, *Participation and Atonement*, 35-40, 135.

⁹⁹ See Holmes, ‘Penal Substitution’, 299.

¹⁰⁰ Bellamy, *TRD*, 64.

¹⁰¹ Bellamy, *TRD*, 66.

¹⁰² Emphasis original. Bellamy, *TRD*, 303-304.

E. Sin is an existential evil that is directed at God through law

In the penal theory of the atonement, sin is heinous because it is a direct attack upon God.¹⁰³ In *Approaching the Atonement*, Crisp identified the problem that this creates from the perspective of ‘placating a wrathful deity’ through propitiation. This has led some to talk of expiation of sin, which more technically means the expunging of human sin.¹⁰⁴ An additional problem (for some) has been the medieval era doctrine of the impassability of God. While this may be expressed strongly or weakly, impassability holds within it a tacit critique of immanence which at times is levelled against penal substitution.¹⁰⁵ In Anselm’s doctrine, sin is an attack against the honour of God indirectly because sin is mediated *through the law*.

Bellamy was much closer to Anselm’s way of thinking in this respect. Impassability requires an emotional distance with regard to sin’s attack on the one hand and in the promising of life on the other. Likewise, God’s response to sinners also occurred *through law*. Bellamy said that neither obedience or disobedience hurts God nor does him good.¹⁰⁶ However, what makes Bellamy’s thinking about sin unique is how a failure to love one’s neighbour is still an attack against God because it is *mediated* through law. Oliver Crisp described this approach as ‘a threshold account of the heinousness of sin’ for failure to conform to, or transgress, the moral law of God rather than being a direct affront based upon his elevated position as such.¹⁰⁷ Yet, it is more than a simple failure to conform, it is also an indirect attack upon God.

The law serves humanity as a gateway to know God’s essential nature in a mediated way. This was the central issue for Bellamy. Reconciliation is as much about cancelling sin’s punishment as it is reconciling the heart and mind of the elect towards God. Yet, in spite of this overriding concern, sin persists as a distinct reality defined by the law. The law also defines God as real. Because God and sin are real

¹⁰³ Crisp, *Participation and Atonement*, 135.

¹⁰⁴ Crisp, *Approaching the Atonement*, 98-100.

¹⁰⁵ Eric T. Yang and Stephen T. Davis, ‘Atonement and the Wrath of God’, 154-167, *Locating Atonement: Explorations in Constructive Dogmatics*, ed. Oliver D. Crisp and Fred Sanders (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2015), 156.

¹⁰⁶ Bellamy, *TRD*, 27. Cf. Anselm, *Cur Deus Homo* 1.15.

¹⁰⁷ Crisp, *Atonement and Participation*, 103.

and related inversely to the law, 'sin will always be an infinite evil, so long as, we are under infinite obligation to love God with all our hearts'.¹⁰⁸ The knowledge of good and evil is not just the name of the tree in Eden. Good and evil are inverse ways by which human beings know what God is like. His visceral reactions to evil display what he is like just as much as his most affectionate acts of love. Bellamy said that 'the works of creation and redemption, and all his conduct as moral Governour [sic] of the world, shew just what a kind of being he is'.¹⁰⁹

F. Sin persists in parallel contrast to God's nature

The persistence of sin into eternity is not a deeply developed aspect in *TRD*; however, Bellamy did introduce sin's persistence from the standpoint of our 'infinite obligation to love God with all our hearts and obey him in everything; which we shall always be, so long as God remains infinitely glorious and amiable, and this will be forever'.¹¹⁰ This led Bellamy to theorize that sin persists through time, too, but not as a Zoroastrian polarity. Sin is not eternal in the way that God is eternal. Rather, evil is an occasional reality that occurs upon a failure whether passively or actively to love God. This led Bellamy to follow Edwards in believing that sin will continue to be a reality in hell. God, said Bellamy, has an 'all-comprehending view' through heaven, earth, and hell where (with exception to heaven) he sees 'all the sin, misery, and confusion that over spread the whole earth [...] and look[s] through hell and see[s] all the rebellion and blasphemy and cunning devices of those infernal fiends'.¹¹¹ In this respect, when Christ's atonement occurs it does not cancel the future of sin.

G. The mechanism at the heart of Bellamy's atonement thinking

It bears repeating that Bellamy's primary goal is not to set out an ordered atonement theory; rather, he was presenting a scheme by which humanity may know

¹⁰⁸ Bellamy, *TRD*, 71.

¹⁰⁹ Bellamy, *TRD*, 100.

¹¹⁰ Bellamy, *TRD*, 71.

¹¹¹ Bellamy, *TRD*, 21. Edwards cites Charnock for this view which he develops in subsequent *Miscellanies* entries. '905. Hell Torments, Their Increase', in *YE20*:161, 163, 166, 167-89.

God affectionally—as God knows and loves himself. Since this is the case, Bellamy described two complementary ways in which God makes himself known—the law and the gospel. His first discourse focused primarily on how ‘the law is a divine transcript of the divine nature’ whereas his second discourse argued that ‘so also is the gospel [a transcript of the divine nature]’.¹¹² This distinction shows that Bellamy sees the atonement in Christ as having accomplished two goals.¹¹³ The secondary goal serves to support the primary—yet together they are a unitary whole. The primary end is reconciliation of the glory of God’s divine nature (law). The secondary end is the salvation of sinners (gospel). The atonement of Christ accomplishes both ends in one unified act. This is somewhat comparable to bicameral parliamentary government. As the lower house works for the people *specifically*, the upper house considers the *general* good for the whole nation. In a similar way, atonement is a bicameral unity bringing together the upper goal, the law *and* the lower goal, the gospel.

This differentiation is important to grasp because it allowed Bellamy to see justice wholistically from God’s point of view without the complications of penal substitution’s exacting retributive requirements *per se*. Specifically, Bellamy balanced the weight of the law on the one hand with redemption on the other. Christ is mediator who harmonizes the demands of both. These two aspects have a bicameral unity in Christ (see figure 4.5). Yet, Bellamy went beyond syllogism to describe the atonement as one act which fulfilled the original design of the law positively and negatively.

1) Atonement requires a substitute to restore ‘the thing required’ of the law

In the first discourse Bellamy wrote, ‘Christ came into the world and died to answer all the demands of the law’.¹¹⁴ This demand is both positive and negative. Positively, Bellamy recognized that the law is *equal to* as much as it is a copy of *the design of God’s nature*. Bellamy contended that there is a difference between the design of the law and ‘the thing required’ of the law. The ‘thing’ is love to God and the design is ‘with our whole hearts’.¹¹⁵ In other words, the design of the system requires

¹¹² Bellamy, *TRD*, 331.

¹¹³ Bellamy, *TRD*, 97-98.

¹¹⁴ Bellamy, *TRD*, 72.

¹¹⁵ Bellamy, *TRD*, 97-98.

love to God in each and every aspect of life. This difference can be seen in how Bellamy portrayed infinite capacity in God and man as finite image of God.

Law (A) = Christ (C) = Gospel (B)

If, A = C and B = C, then A = B

Figure 4.5 Demands of the gospel and law fulfilled in Christ

Mankind's capacity is finite due to constraint of time, matter, and energy, whereas God's capacity is infinite. The only difference between the two is *degree* or *scale*. The *shape* of love required of humanity is same. The shape of love is an all-consuming Trinitarian *beatific-delight*.¹¹⁶ This kind of love is potential in all of humanity yet on a smaller scale. God is worthy of an infinite degree of love, yet God does not require more than that which man's capacity as finite creatures made in his image can generate. Mankind has understanding and will just like God. In principle, this makes man capable of conformity to the design of the law.¹¹⁷ This means that Bellamy acknowledged that mankind is designed to engage God with love just as the law has the same design.

Both law and man are designed to complement each other but *sin* has corrupted man's nature so that man is out of alignment with the design of the law. Atonement by Christ serves to fulfil the design of the law with love to God for mankind. God the Son fills the design with 'the thing required' of the law—love to God. This will be argued in the second discourse. Christ stood 'in the room' of mankind with 'the thing required' of the law as 'a public person' like the first Adam. Christ acted in the same capacity but fulfilled 'the thing required' by his obedience.¹¹⁸ In this respect, Christ's atonement includes as a mechanism his obedience to fill out the law's design

¹¹⁶ Bellamy, *TRD*, 97.

¹¹⁷ Bellamy, *TRD*, 98-99.

¹¹⁸ Bellamy, *TRD*, 269-70, 278.

of the law by what ‘the thing required’, that is, love. This is the positive good of the atonement.

This can be illustrated by a deflated balloon. The pear shape design of a balloon cannot be seen unless it is inflated with air. But without air or insufficient air it does not fulfil its shape-design. When air is blown into the balloon, the presence of air pushes out the walls of the balloon so that it takes its intended shape as designed. A balloon filled with air is analogous to the law, which was designed to be filled with love. Love’s absence deflates the law. If, as Bellamy maintains, the law is a transcript of the glory of God, then it does not fulfil its original design to glorify God if man does not ‘fill’ the law with love to God. From an Anselmian perspective, this is not the same thing as supererogation.¹¹⁹ Christ’s love to God, according to Bellamy, is a mechanism to support the law (or to perfectly fulfil it) just as air supports the design of a balloon. This positive ‘filling full’ of the law’s design is a greater end generally than even the gospel’s own specific design to redeem the elect. Yet, there is a negative good which comes out of the atonement.

2) Atonement requires a substitute to bear punishment required by the law

Since the law has an irrevocable relationship to God, Bellamy claimed that the death of Christ is required of it. The consequential aspect of the law purchased ‘the honour of God’s holiness and justice, law and government, and opened the way for the sinner’s salvation’.¹²⁰ Although Bellamy said it is ‘to secure’ it, he was still describing a mechanism of atonement which moves towards equality by exchange. Christ’s redemption fulfilled the design of the law by taking the positive shape of its demand thus satisfying the love required. Again, Bellamy uses the word ‘secure’ instead of raw pecuniary language; however, the effect of taking the punishment required is nonetheless that of an exchange by which voluntary mediation takes ‘the shape’ required. To positively give shape to the law also required Christ to take upon himself the consequences of man’s sin as a negative good.

¹¹⁹ Supererogation is an over abundant production of virtue to overwhelm the scales of justice. See Crisp’s discussion of supererogation in the Anselm atonement scheme. Crisp, *Participation and Atonement*, 106-107.

¹²⁰ Bellamy, *TRD*, 72.

In his first discourse, Bellamy hinted that God's distributive justice 'is manifested in the greatest perfection, in the death of Jesus Christ, his only begotten Son'.¹²¹ Bellamy adapted the golden rule to the damnation of sinners for all of eternity. Some may resist the cross thinking that God is unjust because he is unwilling to suffer as mankind will suffer in eternity. Specifically, Bellamy claimed that 'God's own Son, his second self, was laid out upon the cross' as an *equivalent* punishment. This is due to Christ's 'infinitely greater dignity and worth' than all of creation 'put together'. In this way, God (or 'his second self') does 'exactly as he would be done by, when he damns sinners to all eternity'.¹²² A person of infinite dignity suffering the cruelty of the cross 'is equivalent to the eternal torments of finite creatures'.¹²³

The language of 'equivalency' sounds a lot like Moral Government Theory (MGT) and the restoration of God's honour by superabundant value sounds a lot like Anselm's Satisfaction Theory (SAT). In other words, the God-Man's prestige is more than enough to support the integrity of the law's demand by suffering ignominy.¹²⁴ According to Crisp, this is 'the mechanism at the heart of the satisfaction doctrine'.¹²⁵ Yet, Bellamy, on the other hand, saw the mechanism as bicameral, answering the ends of both the law and gospel. In his second discourse, Bellamy argued that 'the law insists upon [...] an infinite punishment; and the gospel says amen to it'.¹²⁶ Christ provided the infinite punishment required by the law— and this, however, has more similarity to penal substitution (PSA).

The act of Christ on the cross is therefore substitutional in a way that satisfies the distributive consequence of the law. This is carried out by essential nature of God the Son. Bellamy compared the law and gospel in this way:

The moral excellency of the moral law sufficiently evidences, that it is from God; it is so much like God, that it is evident that it is from God: So the moral excellency of the gospel sufficiently evidences that it is from God; it is

¹²¹ Bellamy, *TRD*, 29.

¹²² Bellamy, *TRD*, 32.

¹²³ Bellamy, *TRD*, 33.

¹²⁴ Anselm, *Cur Deus Homo*, 2.14.

¹²⁵ Crisp, *Approaching the Atonement*, 66-67.

¹²⁶ Bellamy, *TRD*, 331.

so much like him, that it is evident that it is from him; it is so much like him, that it is evident from him.¹²⁷

The parallelism in this paragraph shows how closely related the law and gospel are in his thinking as expressions of God's nature. Yet, there was still a metaphysical difference between the two in Bellamy's mind. He saw the law representing God's nature as an arrow hits the target, but the gospel is the target.¹²⁸ The gospel is so closely transcribed that it is *exactly* the same, that is co-existing as one. Using Locke's grammar of ideas, Bellamy said,

[The gospel] is his very image: therefore it is his offspring [that is, Christ]: it is a copy of his moral perfections, and they are the original. It is so much like God that it is perfectly to his mind, he is pleased with it, he delights to save sinners in this way. And if ever this gospel becomes the power of God to our salvation, it will make us like unto God, it will transform us into his image, and we shall be pleased with this way of salvation.¹²⁹

The Son of God is not merely a static transcript of the divine nature but 'original', that is, the substance. The temporal violation of the *original* nature of God by mankind requires eternal punishment as compensation. Yet, because the *original* nature of the Son willingly accepted temporal punishment for sin, his temporal act was equivalent to an eternity in hell. 'Sin is punished in the Son as mediator, standing in the room of the guilty'.¹³⁰ Bellamy said that while Christ's suffering is not an *exact* duration it is nevertheless an *exact* valuation because the Son is a transcript *par excellence* from eternity. Intrinsic value is the metric by which the mechanism of atonement occurs to advance the lower end of a particular redemption. The upper side of this bicameral atonement scheme is to magnify his essential nature generally.

¹²⁷ Bellamy, *TRD*, 332.

¹²⁸ '[Proportion] is an equality, or likeness of ratios; so that it is the equality that makes the proportion. Excellency therefore seems to consist in equality'. YE6:332.

¹²⁹ Bellamy, *TRD*, 332.

¹³⁰ Bellamy, *TRD*, 251-52.

3) The 'design' of atonement is to be general and particular

In Bellamy's view the atonement accomplished both ends in one unified act. The primary end is reconciliation of the glory of God's divine nature (law-justice). The secondary end is the salvation of sinners (gospel-mercy). The atonement is a bicameral unity bringing together the upper goal—the law—and the lower goal—the gospel. This is a nesting of ends much like that which is developed by Edwards in *The End of Creation*. Oliver Crisp missed this fine distinction in his essay on Bellamy's theory of atonement by concluding that Bellamy's atonement is 'merely a penal example, not a penal substitution'.¹³¹ Bellamy saw an inherent unity between the law and gospel that is realist rather than metaphorical. The death of Jesus is not just a way to project God's disdain for sin as an example, though, this is true. Jesus's death was primarily a real act that transverses eternity and time. Yet, the act of redemption in time was secondary to the primary goal to reconcile God's eternal nature. These are not at odds with one another but the one implied in the other.

Bellamy described these two goals or 'ends' as general and particular.¹³² The general end made it possible to effectively redeem the elect as a particular end. The use of the word *general* does not imply a lesser value. For Bellamy, this general end is the greater end for which Christ died, that is, to magnify God's divine nature by satisfaction. To this point, Bellamy said that the 'immediate end of Christ's death was to answer the ends of moral government, and so secure the honour of the moral Governour'.¹³³ This greater end makes the 'whole tenor of the gospel' to harmonize with those texts of Scripture that 'seem to speak of a universal redemption'. Yet, the particular end was clearly lesser in Bellamy's thinking when he said that 'God never designed to bring the non-elect to glory, when he gave his son to die for the world. He designed to declare himself reconcilable to them through Christ'.¹³⁴ Conversely, Bellamy saw a particular end for the elect that arises out of the satisfaction of God's divine nature.

Bellamy's reasoning is very much like that of his mentor in *The Ends for Which God Created the World*. Specifically,

¹³¹ Crisp, 'The Moral Government of God', 86, 86-88.

¹³² Bellamy, *TRD*, 349.

¹³³ Bellamy, *TRD*, 350.

¹³⁴ Bellamy, *TRD*, 356.

God's acting for himself, or making himself his last end, and his acting for their sake, are not to be set in opposition; or to be considered as the opposite parts of a disjunction: they are rather to be considered as coinciding one with the other, and implied one in the other. Yet, God is to be considered as first and original in his regard; and the creature is the object of God's regard consequentially and by implication.¹³⁵

Thus, if the satisfaction of God's divine nature is the greater end, then the particular redemption of the elect is not at odds with the greater end. Rather, they are supportive to one another, even 'coinciding with the other'. A failure to see that Bellamy regarded the union of law with gospel is to miss how Christ's union with sinners satisfies the law *by love* to God. Love to God is the bridge between the legal and gospel ends. In other words, the atonement has both a legal and gospel mechanism that coincide in each other. Love to God, that is, 'the thing required' by the law coincides in the gospel acts of Christ to redeem the elect.

IV. ELEMENTS BELLAMY FUSED TOGETHER FROM HIS MENTOR

At the end of 1773, James Caldwell (1734–1781),¹³⁶ a sometimes correspondent with Joseph Bellamy, sent a letter requesting help to sort out a local ministerial controversy.¹³⁷ Specifically, the issue relates to Edwards's supposed reception of George Berkeley's subjective idealism. Edwards has been thought of as holding a similar view to Berkeley; however, Norman Fiering has more recently proposed his immaterialism came more naturally from Henry More, Isaac Newton, or even Malebranche.¹³⁸ However, as argued above in chapter two, while Edwards viewed

¹³⁵ YE8:440-41.

¹³⁶ James Caldwell was a Presbyterian minister in Elizabethtown, New Jersey and patriot of the American Revolution. His biography is found in James McLachlan, *The Princetonians, 1748–1768: A Biographical Dictionary* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1976), 259-62.

¹³⁷ James Caldwell, 'A Letter Sent to Joseph Bellamy, Elizabethtown, Dec. 29, 1773', *Joseph Bellamy Papers*, trans. Richard Webster, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia, 303-305.

¹³⁸ See Thomas A. Schafer, 'Editor's Introduction', YE13:46-47. Also, Bomnaro, John J. Jonathan Edwards's Vision of Reality: The Relationship of God to the World, Redemption, History, and the Reprobate (Eugene, OR: Pickwick Books, 2012), 16 n59, 155-56.; Norman Fiering, *Jonathan Edwards's*

futurity of ideas as resident in God's being, they were nevertheless in a sense hypothetical while present with him. When generated by God into time these ideas serve to reveal God's nature to other minds in signs, representations, and types. In this way, Edwards was less Berkeleyan than Berkeley. Locke, as another source, recognized the potential that matter is a substance although it may not be possible to know for certain.¹³⁹ Bellamy encouraged James Caldwell to embrace a realist philosophy by his own example by saying, 'I am not a Berklean [Berkeleyan]'.¹⁴⁰ Yet, it would seem that Bellamy went beyond Edwards when he added that '[t]he existence of matter and mind, of external objects and internal biases is agreeable to the common sentiments of mankind and the language of Scripture'.¹⁴¹ This being said it is possible that Edwards permitted a realism based on the source of the ideas themselves in the mind of God as presented in chapter two above.¹⁴²

Bellamy's TRD develops, what Oliver Crisp described as a 'fusing together' of several key Edwardsean elements. Specifically, Bellamy picked up his mentor's theological project to connect the futurity of creation, revelation, and redemption with God's nature more directly and consistently. For example, Edwards proposed that futurity was itself indistinct 'from the perfect nature of the divine mind'.¹⁴³ This is an important maxim that is apparent in Bellamy's thoughts on the atonement. First, Bellamy, like Edwards, saw no conflict between God's infinite knowledge as futurity *outside* of time and those future states of being *in* time.¹⁴⁴ The mature expression of Edwards's position is found in *The End for Which God Created the World*. Edwards reasoned that in 'the most strict sense' God did not have a particular love

Moral Thought in its British Context (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1981), 14-16, 39-40.

¹³⁹ Locke, *Essay*, 2:23, §§ 3-5.

¹⁴⁰ Joseph Bellamy, 'A Letter Sent to Dr. Bellamy to Mr. Caldwell, Bethlehem, April 14, 1774', *Joseph Bellamy Papers*, trans. Richard Webster, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia, 309.

¹⁴¹ Bellamy, 'ALS to Mr. Caldwell', 308.

¹⁴² See also, Lianne D'Andrea-Winslow, 'A Great and Remarkable Analogy: Edwards's Use of Natural Typology in Communicating Divine Excellencies', 220-234, in *Regeneration, Revival, & Creation: Religious Experience and the Purposes of God in the Thought of Jonathan Edwards*, eds. Chris Chun and Kyle C. Strobel (Eugene, OR: Pickwick, 2020), 223.

¹⁴³ The equal but opposite conclusion is inferred by the Arminian whereas the Calvinist must conclude a connection between the two, if not, an indistinct union between the two. Volition and Act are really the same. YE1:394-95.

¹⁴⁴ 'Predestination', in WJEO27:5.1.

for that which did not yet exist.¹⁴⁵ However, broadly speaking, he does have a general love for himself that includes ‘the existence of the creature, even in intention and foresight’.¹⁴⁶ Rather than pitting these two senses against one another, Edwards said they are ‘coinciding one with the other, and implied one in the other’.¹⁴⁷ This means that God has a general love for those states of being that do not yet exist, because they are nevertheless ‘objects of this knowledge, or the thing known’.¹⁴⁸

This pattern of thinking is apparent in the way that Bellamy described the ‘design’ of atonement to be more generally concerned with the support of the glory of his own nature, while also having a particular concern for the elect. As argued above, Bellamy was adapting his mentor’s thinking about the orientation of futurity and applying it to atonement. In other words, because God is most glorified in the satisfaction of his own nature first, universalists and antinomians opponents of the true gospel cannot claim that the atonement is owed to them.¹⁴⁹

While Edwards’s writing pertained mainly to his debate with the Arminianism developing in Boston, his thought on this subject was applicable to universalists and antinomians who came after him. For example, in *Freedom of the Will*, Edwards described how the Arminian attempt to discount God’s decrees created ‘a fixed futurity from eternity’ that subjected God’s will to man’s free will. The Arminian argument that foreknowledge is ‘antecedent to any purposes or decrees’, in fact would lead to, according to Edwards, ‘a fixed futurity of the state of things’.¹⁵⁰ The Arminian also subjected ‘the will of the most High to the will of his creatures, and [brought] him into dependence upon them’.¹⁵¹ The claim that the atonement was owed to sinners was symptomatic of this Arminian understanding of futurity. Edwards, on the other hand, proposed that futurity was itself indistinct ‘from the

¹⁴⁵ Edwards will also use the same logic about evil. While sin is an evil, ‘yet the futurity of sin, or that sin should be future, is not an evil thing. Evil is an evil thing, and yet it may be a good thing that evil should be in the world’. WJEO27:5.1.

¹⁴⁶ YE8:438.

¹⁴⁷ YE8:440.

¹⁴⁸ YE8:441.

¹⁴⁹ Bellamy, *TRD*, 336.

¹⁵⁰ YE1:395.

¹⁵¹ YE1:395.

perfect nature of the divine mind'.¹⁵² In other words, Edwards saw no conflict between God's infinite knowledge as futurity *outside* of time and those future states of being *in* time. This was a very different proposal than that of his Arminian interlocutors. In a subsequent note in 'Controversies' Notebook, Edwards argues that there must be something that brings a state of futurity 'out of a state of mere possibility, into a state of futurity, and this must be God only'.¹⁵³ This predestinarian approach is rooted in divine simplicity and the outflow of his inviolably just and true nature. The connection between God's nature and creation and subsequent redemption required a consistency.

Further evidence for this conclusion is also found in Miscellany No. 779. *The Necessity of Satisfaction*. In this entry, Edwards argued for a union between futurity and God's being *via* the execution of justice in creation. The 'obligation on God in executing' does not pertain to the nature of the law itself, but rather from 'the omniscient God in threatening, consequent on the futurity of the execution'.¹⁵⁴ The 'inviolable connection between absolute [threatening] and execution' is consequent upon God's absolute nature. Thus, justice requires satisfaction.¹⁵⁵ In other words, God's omniscience knows this inviolable connection between execution and threatening of the law to be absolute. To state otherwise would be deceit. This 'inviolable connection' is itself a truth consequent upon God's being directly rather than to the law specifically. God's love for his perfection of truth requires an absolute consistency between his being and future states of being he foresees.¹⁵⁶ Edwards made

¹⁵² The equal but opposite conclusion is inferred by the Arminian whereas the Calvinist must conclude a connection between the two, if not, an indistinct union between the two. Volition and Act are really the same. YE1:394-95.

¹⁵³ 'Predestination', in WJEO27:5.1.

¹⁵⁴ 'No. 779. The Necessity of Satisfaction', in YE18:445.

¹⁵⁵ YE18:445. Future Edwardseans would talk about the collapse of God's moral government should he not 'fulfill every punctilio' that the law threatened. YE18:445.

¹⁵⁶ In this entry dedicated mostly to the mechanics of the atonement, Edwards provided additional insight into how future states of being 'coincide' in God's mind. He compared this coincidence to prophetic utterance. The absolute threats in the law are predictions about the future just as 'God in them foretells or declares what shall come to pass'. YE18:446. 'The foreknowledge of God will necessarily infer a decree, for God could not foreknow that they would be, unless he had decreed they should be, and that, because they would not be future, unless he had decreed they should be. If God from all eternity knew that such and such things were future, then they were future; then the proposition from all eternity was true, that such a thing, at such a time, should be [...] And therefore, I draw this consequence: That if there must be some reason of the futurity of the thing,

a very clear assertion that futurity is consistent with God's being, since he exists outside of time. His acts in time, reflect 'his mind, his knowledge' to others. In this way, whatever will be, even before it occurs, coincides with himself—especially the atonement. Bellamy appropriated his mentor's use of futurity to lay claim to an atonement that is primarily concerned with the satisfaction of 'the transcript of the divine nature'.¹⁵⁷

In summary, Bellamy provided a fresh articulation of his mentor's definition of futurity in conjunction with the atonement. Bellamy presents, what he believed to be, an atonement that is consistent with the ultimate end, that is, the satisfaction of the divine honour (glory of God) generally in the universe. Then, he shows that the subordinate end to redeem the elect is not inconsistent with this greater end. These are really the same thing. The mechanism of the atonement of Christ is bicameral. While addressing these dual aspects, Bellamy's atonement is nevertheless a unified whole that restores 'the thing required' of the law (love), while also bearing the punishment required by the law (damnation). With the greater end of atonement established, God is then free to exercise his sovereignty for an elect bride through the working of the Holy Spirit to excite a loving response to the gospel.

Furthermore, Bellamy's letter to Punderson Austin provides a helpful resource to understand *True Virtue* from Bellamy's perspective as a way to know God by the practice of true religion. True religion comes not by mere law observance alone but in the acquiring of virtue by the regenerative work of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit causes our virtue to fill out 'the thing required' by God in the law i.e., love to God. This brings a true knowledge of God through the experience of true virtue. Furthermore, the gift of the Spirit was purchased by Christ for the elect while at the same time bringing coherence to the universe. In this regard, Bellamy seemed to sense the general and particular working of grace in the application of redemption to communicate himself and to glorify himself in the filling of the universe.

or why the thing is future, this can be no other than God's decree; or, the truth of the proposition, 'Such a thing will be', has been determined by God'. WJEO27:5.1. To God, the process of telling others about the future is the same as telling people about the present or the past. Edwards then said: 'Things past, present, and future are all alike before God, all alike in his view; and when God declares to others what he sees himself, he is equally obliged to truth, whether the thing declared be past, present, or to come. And indeed, there is no need of the distinction between present truth, and future, in this case. [...] That *futurity* is now present with God when he threatens [punishment]—present in his mind, his knowledge'. Emphasis added. YE18:446-47.

¹⁵⁷ TRD, 15.

V. ELEMENTS EDWARDS JR. RETRIEVED FROM HIS FATHER THROUGH BELLAMY

Edwards Sr. related to Bellamy as mentor with *mimesis*, that is, learning through imitation. As Rhys Bezzant has pointed out, *mentor* was the affectionate nickname given by Joseph Bellamy and Samuel Hopkins to the elder Edwards.¹⁵⁸ So well-known was this relationship that, in one of the greatest of ironies, Edwards Jr. referred to his own father as *mentor* in correspondence with Bellamy.¹⁵⁹ Hopkins's biographer, Joseph Conforti said that 'when Hopkins sent Jonathan Edwards Jr. to study in Bethlehem, Connecticut, in 1766, he encouraged Bellamy to 'converse with him particularly about his personal religion and act the part of a father to him, in freely giving him your best counsel and advice'.¹⁶⁰

Generally speaking, Bellamy did just that.¹⁶¹ For example, there is evidence that Edwards Jr. took Bellamy's advice to Punderson Austin to 'enter thoroughly into' the arguments of the British moral philosophers and 'be at pains to understand the controversy'.¹⁶² Using the language of the day, Edwards Sr. had proposed a system in which a harmony of various smaller systems coincide in the greater system of the universe. Edwards Jr. demonstrated that he deeply understood this theological

¹⁵⁸ Bezzant, *Edwards the Mentor*, 1, 17.

¹⁵⁹ Edwards Jr., 'Letter to Joseph Bellamy, May 5, 1769'.

¹⁶⁰ Joseph A. Conforti, *Samuel Hopkins and The New Divinity Movement: Calvinism, the Congregational Ministry, and Reform in New England Between the Great Awakenings* (Grand Rapids: Christian University Press, 1981), 38.

¹⁶¹ Except in the area of pulpit candidacy! Again, ironically Bellamy acted in the opposite respect to the advice he gave to the younger Edwards. How? In 1754-55 a wealthy pulpit in New York City tried to call Bellamy from rural Connecticut; however, when he learned that there was a small division regarding his philosophy on the Half-way Covenant, he declined. So, it is somewhat surprising that contrary to his own practice, Bellamy encouraged Edwards Jr. to accept an even more volatile situation in New Haven on the very same issue. Edwards Jr. was unmarried and only twenty-three years old when he began preaching in 1768. Within nine months of his installation a major church split occurred (See chapter three above). Yet, in spite of this ill-fated recommendation to Edwards Jr., Bellamy was still an able mentor *theologically*.

¹⁶² Bellamy, 'Letter to Punderson Austin', xxxi. Francis Hutcheson, *A System of Moral Philosophy*, Vols. 1-2 (London: R & A. Foulis Printers, 1755); Anthony Ashley Cooper, *Characteristics of Men, Manners, Opinions, Times*, 1714; reprint, ed. John M. Robertson (London: Grand Richards, 1900); John Brown, *Essays on the Characteristics* (London: L. Davis and C. Reymers, 1764).

project when he claimed his father had answered ‘the ultimate end of the creation’ as the seeking his own glory *in* the happiness of his creatures. These ends are not at odds with each other but rather ‘one and the same thing. According to him, the declarative glory of God is the creation, taken, not distributively, but collectively, as a system raised to a high degree of happiness’.¹⁶³ Edwards Sr. designated the atonement as having a positive and negative good. Bellamy recognized this aspect of the atonement; however, he chose to emphasize the ends for which atonement was acted upon. This aspect of atonement, however, will be developed by Edwards Jr. once he became more settled into his own ministry.

While Edwards Jr. demonstrated his own sensitivity to his father’s project, he nevertheless showed a kind of receiving through Bellamy. During his early years, Edwards Jr. picked up the fine distinction of how the law can be used as a transcript of the divine nature.¹⁶⁴ He also mimicked Bellamy’s insistence that God’s nature is revealed to ‘the eyes of the universe’ by atonement. The angelic hosts witness God’s justice and grace.¹⁶⁵ Edwards Jr. also retrieved from Bellamy the mechanism for the atonement as ‘a price’ which satisfies ‘the spirit and design of [the law]’.¹⁶⁶ Bellamy saw Christ’s atonement as fulfilment of the law’s design as love to God. Man is incapable but God the Son fills the design with ‘the thing required’ of the law—love to God. Christ stands in the place of mankind with ‘the thing required’ of the law as ‘a’ like the first Adam. Christ acted in the same capacity but fulfilled ‘the thing required’ by his obedience.¹⁶⁷

From this standpoint, Edwards Jr. had Bellamy’s key talking points when he was ordained for ministry. However, as he began to absorb his father’s manuscripts in New Haven, he sought to orient himself more in a voluntarist-trinitarian explanation of the atonement. In particular, Edwards Jr. gradually shifted after his public lecture on June 31, 1769, to focus on the intra-trinitarian relations which set the pattern for atonement. From here, he analysed how Christ’s obedience and suffering worked together in a bi-directional way to affect atonement. The voluntary mediatorial inclinations within the Trinity brought honour and dignity to the Father, Son, and

¹⁶³ AE1:481.

¹⁶⁴ Jonathan Edwards Jr., ‘Volume 4. October 1766, Rom. 3.24’, *Jonathan Edwards, Jr. Papers (Sermons)*, Hartford Seminary Library (Box 165, Folder 2725), 3.

¹⁶⁵ Edwards Jr., ‘Volume 4’, 10.; Bellamy, *TRD*, 33.

¹⁶⁶ Edwards Jr., ‘Volume 4’, 24-25.

¹⁶⁷ Bellamy, *TRD*, 269-70, 278.

Holy Spirit as the Holy Spirit was 'the thing purchased'. This distinction paved the way for a more consistent account of atonement to pay the sinner's debt voluntarily without creating the kind of obligation that universalists and antinomians required.

Just as the trinitarian relations preserve an essential equality, so do those aspects of atonement which reflect the mediation of Christ in the world. In Edwards Jr.'s mature thought, he outpaced Bellamy by retrieving the *ad intra* commutative logic that exists within the Godhead prior to the act of atonement in time. This public justice, as he called it, is what the collective system of the universe was designed to show as God's essential glory. In the distributive application, God was still free to dispense either punishment or grace in smaller systems, epochs, or dispensations in the covenant of grace.

The public or general justice was, in some ways, a clarification of Edwards Sr.'s and Bellamy's thoughts on the dual mechanism in the atonement. Edwards Sr. was just beginning to articulate this dual aspect in the atonement as visual (nominal) and real (essence) before he died. However, Bellamy took this concept and adapted it. Bellamy's atonement scheme had a bicameral mechanism in law and gospel. Again, for Bellamy, the primary end of atonement was reconciliation of the glory of God's divine nature (law), and secondarily, the salvation of sinners (gospel). Edwards Jr. agreed with both his father and Bellamy but brought a greater clarity to the commutative justice that exists in the Godhead through the mediation of the Son to 'purchase the Holy Spirit'.

This Edwardsean talking point regarding trinitarian relations sets up the atonement to be a pecuniary transaction consistent with the divine nature. In other words, the formula of economic justice is woven into the Trinitarian relations and is displayed as a *public* kind of justice whereby people have a sense of what is right and what is wrong. This public or general justice, as Edwards Jr. described it, is understood by mankind intuitively because we are made in the image of God. This allowed Edwards Jr. to claim a consistency between particular redemption and a general satisfaction of the divine nature. Furthermore, the infinite purchase of the Spirit finds its finite correlation in the elect. Thus, Edwards Jr. was advancing a way of thinking about justice that was *first* rooted in the being of God and observable in the world *generally*. This he calls *general* or *public* justice.

CHAPTER 5

RECEIVING THE ATONEMENT THROUGH SAMUEL HOPKINS (1721–1803)

I. INTRODUCTION: THE CENTRAL PLANK OF THE HOPKINTONIAN SYSTEM

Samuel Hopkins (1721–1803) was only two years and seven months younger than Joseph Bellamy, yet eighteen years younger than the elder Jonathan Edwards.¹ Although Edwards was much older, he was not ashamed to request criticism from his younger friends. Both young men often travelled horseback discussing theology on their way to Edwards's house. When they arrived, for example, in Stockbridge on February 12, 1756, they had come 'to hear Mr. Edwards read a treatise upon *The Last End of God in the Creation of the World*'.² These three men were considered a triumvirate in the New Divinity movement because of their intellectual friendship.³

Indicative of their shared theological aims was their complementary writings. Bellamy's *True Religion* was published first in 1750, and it bore all the marks of Edwards's moral philosophy. Its title appeared to be a witty response to William Wollaston's *The Religion of Nature Delineated*.⁴ It was, rather, a blend of Edwards's

¹ The following resources are the most comprehensive sources for his life and character. Joseph A. Conforti, *Samuel Hopkins & The New Divinity Movement* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1981); John Ferguson, *Memoir of the Life and Character of Rev. Samuel Hopkins, D.D.* (Boston: Leonard W. Kimball, 1830); William Patten, *Reminiscences of the Late Rev. Samuel Hopkins, D.D.* (Providence, RI: Isaac H. Cady, 1843); Samuel Hopkins, *Sketches of the Life of the Late Rev. Samuel Hopkins, D.D.* (Hartford, CT: Hudson & Goodwin, 1805); Edwards A. Park, 'A Memoir of His Life and Character', 9-266, in *The Works of Samuel Hopkins, D.D.*, Vol. 1 (Boston: Doctrinal Tract and Book Society, 1854).

² Samuel Hopkins, *Diary 1754-56*, *Yale Divinity School Special Collections*, RG295.

³ Park, 'Memoir', 222.

⁴ Robert Riccaultoun, 'Letter Sent to John Erskine, n.d'. in Richard Webster, *A History of the Presbyterian Church in America, from its Origin until the Year 1760* (Philadelphia, 1857), 630.

Religious Affections (1745) and *True Virtue* (1765). Hopkins, on the other hand, was delayed in publishing *An Inquiry into the Nature of True Holiness* (hereafter, *True Holiness*) until 1774 for of a variety of factors.

Of the three, Hopkins is usually identified as having an eccentric strain.⁵ Hopkin's system, according to William Hart (1713–1784), was too 'laboured, [with] metaphysical reasonings, in imitation of the manner of the advocates for the errors of the day [i.e. deistic moral philosophy]'.⁶ Ironically, this was the concern that Scottish minister, Robert Riccaltoun (1691–1769) had for *True Religion*. In communication with John Erskine (1721–1803), he charged Bellamy (and, by extension, Edwards Sr., and Hopkins) to be modern divines who were so captured by 'the nature of things, moral fitness, the true taste or moral sense, [and] moral beauty' they were bypassing God's 'revelation of himself in Christ'.⁷ These contemporary critics better understood the Edwardsean project as engagement with Enlightenment moral philosophy of their day than do most scholars today.

Since this is the case, Edwards and his students are largely misinterpreted by otherwise smart systematic and analytical scholars today. Usually this is due to not taking into consideration the context in which they wrote. Yet, as I argued in the previous chapter, *True Religion* had a shared purpose as Edwards to skilfully layout a tableau of God's nature in the visual world. It was a pastoral counter to the moral philosophy arising out of the Enlightenment. Both Bellamy and Hopkins described the atonement using the modern epistemological categories and grammar; however, of the two, Hopkins more consistently applied moral philosophy to his understanding of the atonement.

Another kind of misunderstanding occurs when one stresses Hopkins's benevolence as the whole of his system. For example, Peter Jauhiainen proposed that Hopkins's 'universal or disinterested benevolence' was the 'centerpiece of his theology' and that Hopkins 'adjusted Calvinism to Enlightenment intellectual

⁵ William Hart contemptuously called his scheme Hopkintonianism. William Hart, *A Sermon of a new kind, never preached nor ever will be; containing a Collection of Doctrines belonging to the Hopkintonian Scheme of Orthodoxy; Or the Marrow of the most Modern Divinity* New Haven, CT: T. & S. Green, 1769.

⁶ Hart, *A Sermon of a new kind*, iii-iv.

⁷ Robert Riccaltoun, 'Letter Sent to John Erskine, n.d.' in Richard Webster, *A History of the Presbyterian Church in America, from its Origin until the Year 1760* (Philadelphia, 1857), 630.

discourse'.⁸ This is inaccurate because it misunderstands two subterranean themes in Hopkins's thinking. First, any improvements that he made are simply things that are implied in prior doctrine. For example, Hopkins wrote to Samuel Miller, one of his biographers, that the most unique part of his system was his insistence 'that the unregenerate under the greatest mental light and conviction of conscience and in all their external reformations and doings are more criminal and guilty than [if] they were in a state of ignorance and security; and do no duty'. This he concluded, however, was simply 'implied in the doctrine of *total depravity*' rather than being entirely new.⁹

Second, the emphasis upon benevolence is merely the belief, like Bellamy, that by the Holy Spirit man is able to fulfil the design of the law in the regenerate. Human psychology is made in the image of God and therefore has a capacity to reflect on ideas and chose those which will benefit the whole of creation. This is predicated on the belief that holiness, virtue, or love is not fundamentally different from that of God's communicable attributes. The chief difference is degree, and the language of 'implication' is that of the *End of Creation* in which a lesser is implied in the greater. To a large degree Hopkins's thinking is structured on the right ordering of loves.

Hopkins has also been described as a cold metaphysician, but his private communication with Miss Susanna Anthony of Newport, Rhode Island, demonstrates how hard he strove to apply benevolence pastorally. His sensitive nature pushed him to apply the Edwardsean moral philosophy to all of life. Others have described this as a discontinuity between Edwards and Hopkins;¹⁰ however, this

⁸ Peter Jauhiainen, 'Samuel Hopkins and Hopkinsianism', 107-117, in *After Jonathan Edwards: The Courses of the New England Theology*, ed. Oliver D. Crisp and Douglas A. Sweeney (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012), 107.

⁹ For his own part, he thought his writings were within the mainstream his Reformation predecessors like 'Calvin, van Mastricht, [Jacque] Saurin, [John] Preston, Manton, Owen, Goodwin, [William] Bates, Charnock, Baxter, The Assembly of Divines at Westminster, Ridley, Willard, [Thomas] Shepard, Hooker, Edwards and many others'. It is noteworthy that Hopkins instinctively lists Van Mastricht after Calvin and omits Francis Turretin. Samuel Hopkins, 'Letter Sent to Samuel Miller, January 23, 1801', *Samuel Miller Papers*, Princeton University Library (MSS C0277, Box 8, Folder 74).

¹⁰ See Stephen Post, 'Disinterested Benevolence: An American Debate over the Nature of Christian Love', 356-367, in *Journal of Religious Ethics* 14, No. 2 (Fall 1984); Tyler Sherron, 'Jonathan Edwards' Self-Love Theory: A Revision', 36-47, in *Jonathan Edwards Studies* 12, No. ½ (2022).

research will show that Hopkintonian developments are ‘implied in’ Edwards’s moral system of which the atonement is a central feature.

Towards the end of Hopkin’s life and ministry, he received gentle criticism from Andrew Fuller (1754–1815) and John Ryland Jr. (1753–1825). Fuller believed that Hopkins had harshly critiqued his friends. According to Hopkins, they had not been bold enough to challenge a popular evangelical author on the application of universal, disinterested benevolence.¹¹ Much of this Hopkins-Fuller correspondence is lost; however, a neglected draft intended for Fuller, but never sent due to his passing, explains his most misunderstood doctrine on ‘a willingness to be damned’.¹² This draft shows Hopkin’s use of Locke’s sensation grammar in conversation with Francis Hutcheson. This conversation can be supported by his correspondence from Roger Sherman of New Haven on the same topic.¹³ Yet, this draft letter indicates that the difference between God and man’s virtue is simply a matter of degree. This is an overlooked, but the central plank of the Edwardsean moral philosophy and is highly relevant to the Edwardsean atonement theory.

This chapter begins with the framework out of which Hopkins labored to develop his central plank. This framework is derived, however, by looking at the concerns Robert Riccaultoun about Bellamy. This may seem out of place; however, Riccaultoun’s concern for the Edwardsean dependence upon secular moral philosophy would have been better placed on Hopkins. Hopkins more consistently applied the popular moral philosophy of Edwards to his own system of thinking than Bellamy. Once this framework and central plank is made clear, a careful reading of his *System of Doctrines* may be compared with *True Holiness* so that the effective cause of the atonement might become evident. This will lead into how universal, disinterested benevolence as a material cause is applicable to Hopkins’s atonement thinking.

¹¹ Andrew Fuller, writing to Samuel Hopkins, recognized that the Calvinists in America seem to have ‘a greater degree of free inquiry than the Calvinists do on our side of the water’. Andrew Fuller, ‘Letter sent to Samuel Hopkins, March 17, 1798’, *Simon Gratz Autograph Collection 1343-1928, British Literary Miscellaneous*, Pennsylvania Historical Society (Case 11, Box 7, Folder 7); John Ryland Jr, ‘Letter sent to Samuel Hopkins, March 13, 1798’, *David McNeely Stauffer Collection*, Historical Society of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia (Volume 26, Pages 2024-280, File 2080).

¹² Edwards A. Park included a response to the question of ‘willing sin’ in his biographical introduction, however, in the absence of this letter. Park, ‘Memoir’, 224-26.

¹³ Roger Sherman and Samuel Hopkins, *Correspondence Between Roger Sherman and Samuel Hopkins*, ed. Andrew P. Peabody (Worcester, MA: Charles Hamilton, 1889).

The last element to be considered will be Hopkin's private correspondence with Miss Susana Anthony, Fuller-Ryland Jr., and Roger Sherman. These letters reveal his pastoral use of sensation grammar from moral philosophy. The central plank in the Edwardsean system rises and falls upon the nature of divine and human virtue. Hopkins will seek to find a pastoral use for this system in such a way that makes his articulation of the atonement somewhat different than either Edwards, Bellamy, or even the younger Edwards.

II. THE EDWARDSEAN FRAMEWORK AND THE HOPKINTONIAN CENTRAL PLANK

As noted above, taking the time to review Robert Riccaltoun's objections to Bellamy's *TRD* provides a transition to Hopkins's atonement thinking because he more consistently applied Edwards's moral philosophy to his system of theology than Bellamy. Yet, in 1760, a decade after Bellamy's *TRD* was published, Robert Riccaltoun warned John Erskine that 'modern philosophical divines' like Joseph Bellamy were so captured by 'the nature of things, moral fitness, the true taste or moral sense, [and] moral beauty' they were bypassing God's 'revelation of himself in Christ'.¹⁴ By saying this, Riccaltoun, a supporter of the Marrow Brethren in Scotland,¹⁵ asserted the *Marrow of Modern Divinity's* essential creed, which claimed that man knows neither himself nor God except in union with Christ.¹⁶ Riccaltoun's criticism brings to the foreground the ancient Scotus debate over univocity. The Edwardseans moved this historic debate closer to a conclusion by arguing that a true union between Creator and creatures is possible by the Spirit by the atoning work of Christ.

¹⁴ Robert Riccaltoun, 'Letter Sent to John Erskine, n.d.' in Richard Webster, *A History of the Presbyterian Church in America, from its Origin until the Year 1760* (Philadelphia, 1857), 630.

¹⁵ According to William Van Doodewaard Riccaltoun was likely not able to subscribe due to his lack of ordination at that time; however, he was nonetheless published contributions in support of the Marrow brethren. William Van Doodewaard, *The Marrow Controversy and Seceder Tradition*, in *Reformed Historical-Theological Studies*, eds. Joel R. Beeke and Jay T. Collier (Grand Rapids, MI: Reformation Heritage Books, 2011), 91.

¹⁶ See 'To the Reader', 40-42, in Edward Fischer, *The Marrow of Modern Divinity* (Glasgow: Christian Focus Publications, 2009).

The Marrow Brethren, however, had fought dearly for ‘the whole Christ’ and were concerned that the true gospel might not be lost in the next generation. In other words, the older men thought that the perfections of God, beauty, and the like were mediated in Christ alone. Modern moral philosophy, they charged, was removing the necessity of revelation. By the mid-eighteenth century, old assumptions about the source of moral virtue were indeed beginning to change. Descartes’s radical doubt was now being applied to revelation about morality. For example, the Third Earl of Shaftesbury (Anthony Cooper) claimed that a naturally received moral faculty could naturally choose right and wrong *apart from* a system which motivates based on eternal reward and punishment. A sense of beauty based upon a perception of proportionality, fitness, and a moral taste was sufficient.

Shaftesbury, who had been tutored by John Locke, radicalized Locke’s views on the use of his theory of sensation in how humans understand the world around them. Locke had proposed that understanding can occur only when particular things or systems exist interdependently within a larger system.¹⁷ Moral excellence and beauty, for example, may be discerned by comparison within the universal system along the lines of proportionate beauty and benevolence. Locke was reluctant to exclude God’s influence upon the universe; however, Shaftesbury was not as reluctant. Shaftesbury adapted Locke’s theory of understanding to morality when he said that

Now having recognized this uniform consistent fabric, and owned the universal system, we must of consequence acknowledge a universal mind, which no ingenious man can be tempted to disown, except through the imagination of disorder in the universe, its seat. [...] What is it then should so disturb our views of Nature, as to destroy that unity of design and order of a mind, which otherwise would be so apparent?¹⁸

To Shaftesbury, the universe demonstrates it is a moral system; however, man’s disorder tends to argue against a universal mind who regulates it. This means that if man has no capacity to perceive the infinite, then he must be satisfied to live within

¹⁷ Locke, *Essay*, 4:6 § 11.

¹⁸ Cooper, *Characteristics*, 66-67.

the confines of this universe.¹⁹ The whole order of the universe, according to Shaftesbury, is as far as man can know, thus ‘man may be virtuous, and by being so, is happy. His merit is reward; by virtue, he deserves [happiness], and in virtue only can meet his happiness as deserved’.²⁰ Therefore, divine revelation about vindictive or remunerative justice was *not needed* for man to have a proper sense of morality—instead they might simply ‘discover God through the moral nature of man’.²¹ While John Locke did not consider himself to be a deist, his epistemology lent itself to a new generation seeking to unshackle itself from revelation.

Bellamy, Edwards, and Hopkin’s central claim, on the other hand, was that Being in General (God’s essence) is knowable because virtue in man is not ‘specifically different’. Virtue, or as Hopkins put it, ‘holiness in God is not different in nature and kind from the holiness of creatures’.²² This feature appeared to be at variance with Reformed Orthodoxy, and this apparent departure made Riccaltoun nervous. Riccaltoun expressed to Erskine his concern as follows:

Instead of founding religion, or the love of God and our neighbor,—as God himself has done in his record,—on the love of God in Christ [...] he [Bellamy] runs out into metaphysical excursions to raise and establish a sort of idea about God and his essential, and what he calls his moral perfections [...] abstracted from, and previous to, any discoveries he has made of himself in Christ.²³

Riccaltoun’s concerns can be summarized as a preference for 1) an analogical approach to the language of being as opposed to univocity, 2) revelation of God in Christ rather than *a priori* arguments from nature. Was the Edwardsean method proposed a departure from Reformed Orthodoxy?

¹⁹ ‘For in an infinity of things thus relative, a mind which sees not infinitely can see nothing fully; and since each particular has relation to all in general, it can know no perfect or true relation of anything in a world not perfectly and fully known’. Cooper, *Characteristics*, 65.

²⁰ Cooper, *Characteristics*, 67.

²¹ Alfred Owen Aldridge, ‘Shaftesbury and the Deist Manifesto, 297-383’, in *American Philosophy Society* 41 (No. 2, 1951), 298.

²² Hopkins, *True Holiness*, in DT3:11.

²³ Riccaltoun, ‘Letter to John Erskine’, 630-31.

In *A Treatise on the General Plan of Revelation* (1771), Riccaltoun criticized moral divines like the Edwardseans who applied Francis Hutcheson and Shaftesbury moral philosophy to theology. Riccaltoun argued that ‘clear and distinct ideas’ about God are wholly unattainable. In other words, *analogia entis* as a philosophical tool, received from Reformed Orthodoxy, was a superior method than John Duns Scotus’s univocity.²⁴ In this respect, Riccaltoun’s criticism was consistent with the older Reformed tradition, and of note, Petrus van Mastricht, beloved by Edwards.

In *Theoretical-Practical Theology*, Van Mastricht specifically addressed John Duns Scotus’s univocity by distinguishing between description and definition of God’s being. *Description* by analogy was permitted by the Reformed but not *definition*.²⁵ Riccaltoun argued that ‘our conceptions of [spiritual and unseen things] are likewise formed’ using ‘descriptive language’ and ‘very natural analogy’. He was concerned that the majesty and mystery of God would be lost if the correspondence of God’s being is defined by man’s moral sense of virtue rather than by analogy.²⁶ In the preface to *True Holiness*, Hopkins identified the great difficulty of arriving at a precise definition of holiness in any ‘bodies of divinity’. Neither apophatic definitions nor aesthetic association with beauty or glory were ultimately helpful in the identification of God’s nature, he said.²⁷ According to Hopkins, these methods had been tried but found wanting of ‘a distinct and clear idea of it’.²⁸

In *True Religion* Bellamy attempted to deal with the law and gospel. It was, picking up his mentor’s term, a transcript of the divine nature.²⁹ While not as pervasively stated, this principle is also present in *True Holiness*.³⁰ Yet, was this use of revelation

²⁴ Robert Riccaltoun, ‘A Treatise on the General Plan of Revelation’, 1-196, in *The Works of the Late Reverend Mr. Robert Riccaltoun, Minister of the Gospel in Hobkirk*, Vol. 2 (Edinburgh: Murray and Cochran, 1772), 9. See Richard A. Muller, ‘Not Scotist: Understandings of Being, Univocity, and Analogy in Earl-modern Reformed Thought’, in *Reformation and Renaissance Review* 14, No. 2 (2012): 127-150.

²⁵ TPT2:79-80.

²⁶ Riccaltoun, ‘Plan of Revelation’, 31, 33-35..

²⁷ Hopkins, *True Holiness*, in DT3:5.

²⁸ Hopkins, *True Holiness*, in DT3:6.

²⁹ Bellamy, *True Religion*, 15, 66, 75.

³⁰ Hopkins, *True Holiness*, in DT3:36-37; ‘St. John says, ‘God is love:’ by which it is evident he means to express the whole of God’s moral character; and we have a good warrant to take his words in this sense from the divine law, which is a transcript of God’s moral character, and requires nothing but *love*’. Hopkins, *True Holiness*, DT3:40.

a *description* of God's nature or was it a *definition*? To answer this question requires a short digression.

By way of reminder, the transcript metaphor was first used by Edwards Sr. in Miscellany 94 around November or December 1723. In regard to the Son of God and the Word of God, Edwards described both as a kind of transcript of the divine nature. On the one hand, the Word (or law) is said to be 'a copy' and on the other hand the Son is 'a perfect transcript'.³¹ Edwards saw both the law and the acts of incarnate Son in the gospel as a display.

Thus, Edwards agreed with his students that the law is a transcript of God's divine nature *nominally*; whereas the Son of God is a perfect transcript, that is, 'in God's own mind' or *essential*.³² This means that the divine law is holy, good, and just; however, it is not the *substance* of the Son as expressed in the gospel. By the aid of the Holy Spirit, the 'perfect transcript' of the Son filled the law with the essence of God with his perfect life, that is, God's true moral sense, excellence, and beauty was seen in the life and works of Christ.

This has largely been argued in prior chapters. The purpose here is to show that Hopkins was focused upon sanctification in the Christian life. In other words, how does an individual appropriate the Holy Spirit to live out holiness and enjoy a deeper alignment with the law. He thought of it pastorally and practically because it

is that by which intelligent beings are united together in the highest, most perfect, and beautiful union. [...] There is no moral beauty or happiness among intelligent beings without harmony and union of heart. [...] It is the most excellent and perfect bond which intelligent beings are, by their own voluntary exertions, united and cemented together in the strongest and most happy manner.³³

The law describes the potential for this union as love, but the 'highest instance' of it is 'acted out and set forth to our view' in the atonement of Christ as described in the

³¹ Edwards, *End of Creation*, 259-60.

³² Edwards, *End of Creation*, 259.

³³ Hopkins, *True Holiness*, in DT3:10.

gospel.³⁴ Here, Hopkins explained how this knowing of God is attainable. Hopkins believed that there is a practical knowing of God in holiness because ‘holiness is essentially, in nature and kind, the same thing in all beings that are capable of it. Holiness in God is not different in nature and kind from the holiness of creatures’.³⁵ The minor premise in Hopkins’s work is that the ‘holiness of God is expressed in the law and in the gospel’.³⁶ In other words, Hopkins was not disputing either Edwards or Bellamy rather he was moving the Edwardsean moral philosophy into the parish and pew.

Hopkins is also more careful than Bellamy to avoid the appearance of departure from Reformed Orthodoxy. In his chapter on general principles related to holiness, he says that holiness in the Creator-creature relationship is ‘essentially the same, in nature and kind’. This is a more nuanced approach which gives recognition to the proportional difference between God’s infinite holiness and man’s finite holiness. This difference is largely due, he says, to the *circumstance* of the creature as a finite creature. The orientation of this virtue, that is love to God and neighbour, is provided by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit which sanctifies sinners over time so that the proportionate difference between Creator and creature becomes the only difference.³⁷

Returning now to the question of whether God may be known *definitionally* or *descriptively*. The Edwardsean moral philosophy claimed that a framework for knowing God *definitionally* existed in virtue. This made knowing God a *possibility*; however, for this ‘clear idea’ of God’s nature to be seen, regeneration by the Holy Spirit was required first. It is the Holy Spirit that gives a true taste and orientation for the moral excellence of God’s being. In *True Religion* Bellamy proposed that law and gospel are a unified means for mankind to know the ‘determinate ideas of God,

³⁴ Hopkins, *True Holiness*, in DT3:40.

³⁵ Hopkins, *True Holiness*, in DT3:11.

³⁶ Hopkins, *True Holiness*, in DT3:20.

³⁷ For example, some creatures that have never sinned, like angels have a different ‘manner of its [holiness] exercises’ than those being redeemed progressively by Christ. By this Hopkins is differentiating between forms of holiness in creatures and holiness which is ‘in its own nature, one simple, uncompounded thing’. In other words, there are three levels of proportionality. Holiness finds different circumstances with a degree of difference between that exercised by a sinful creature, a holy creature, and a holy God. Yet, holiness has the same quality while being expressed in a different degree. Since this is the case, union can occur by virtue of holiness being ‘essentially the same, in nature and kind’. Hopkins, *True Holiness*, in DT3:11.

and a sense of his infinite glory' experientially.³⁸ In this respect Bellamy emphasized how this affectionate knowledge of God serves to move the will to love the law, which is a transcript of the divine nature'.³⁹ Hopkins on the other hand attempted to make the knowledge of God more practically accessible by the nurture of a sensitivity to the Spirit.

Neither Bellamy, Hopkins, nor Edwards Sr. believed that knowing God could occur apart from the work of the Spirit. Thus, Bellamy's work complemented his mentor in the area of the law *leading to* gospel. Contrary to Riccaltoun's concern *True Religion* was not intended to be an end run around Reformed thinking, rather it was a demonstration of the consistency of God's perfections in all avenues of revelation whether it be nature, law, or gospel. Bellamy and Hopkins would have agreed with Riccaltoun on the nature of revelation; however, they would have claimed that a framework for knowing God also exists in nature.

Created with a finite capacity, mankind can still experience true virtue because God's virtue is not substantially dissimilar. As love for God and neighbor wells up within, a clear sense of God's virtuous being takes shape. In *True Holiness*, Hopkins concurred, saying that when 'the sum of all holiness in God and the creature must be of the same nature with that of which God is the object'.⁴⁰ This experiential knowledge is not at odds with the law either. As ectypal knowledge goes, it may be indescribable to others, yet it is nevertheless an absolute union with true virtue through the triune operations in the gospel. The formal principle in Hopkins's moral philosophy rests on the similarity of virtue between God and mankind. That which is the instrumental cause of union between the two is the Holy Spirit. Hopkins believed that a sensitivity to the universal system of benevolence could move one to greater degrees of sanctification and thus acts of benevolence. This moved Edwards's moral philosophy towards perfectionism.

Peter Jauhiainen proposed that Hopkins's 'universal or disinterested benevolence' was the 'centerpiece of his theology'. Yet, Hopkins is even more particular than Jauhiainen could imagine. In his zealousness to honour his mentor, he stressed not a 'universal or disinterested benevolence', but a 'universal,

³⁸ Bellamy, *True Religion*, v.

³⁹ Bellamy, *True Religion*, 15, 18.

⁴⁰ Hopkins, *True Holiness*, in DT3:45-46.

disinterested benevolence'.⁴¹ The universal aspect of his three-word catchphrase served as a reminder that one must orient the heart towards God and others. He argued that 'all true holiness consists in love, yet all love is not holiness'.⁴² Thus the Holy Spirit is the instrumental cause which supports humanity in a disinterested benevolence that gives deference to the universal system of creation. This idiosyncrasy is important because they flow into his understanding of the atonement.

III. THE IDIOSYNCRASY OF THE HOPKINTONIAN SYSTEM

In 1784 John Erskine claimed that 'President Edwards's works', along with Bellamy's, were beginning to be more read by the 'Baptists in Northampton and Leicestershire' along with clergy from the Church of England who were 'more serious and orthodox'. Of the two groups, he stated, the Baptists are 'not only zealous but judicious defenders of truth and seem to me very much to have formed themselves on President Edwards's books'.⁴³ From Scotland, Erskine facilitated the flow of books between New England and the British Isles.⁴⁴ This book distribution introduced Edwards's students to the 'Baptists' in Britain. For purposes of this dissertation, attention to a set of letters on the topic of disinterested benevolence is needed. In 1793 Hopkins wrote to John Ryland Jr. and received two letters in reply: one from Ryland Jr. and another from Andrew Fuller.

The occasion of Hopkins letter to Ryland was twofold. First, Ryland Jr. had sent Hopkins a copy of Scott's *Warrant and Nature of Faith in Christ* (1797; hereafter,

⁴¹ Jauhiainen, 'Samuel Hopkins', 107.

⁴² Hopkins, *True Holiness*, in DT3:15.

⁴³ John Erskine, 'Letter sent to Joseph Bellamy, March 3, 1784', *Joseph Bellamy Papers*, Vol. 1, trans. Richard Webster (Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia), 323.

⁴⁴ In these letters Erskine demonstrates great sympathy for the American position before the British Parliament. John Erskine, 'Letter sent to Joseph Bellamy, March 16, 1770', *Joseph Bellamy Letters*, Hartford International University (Box 188, Folder 2936, Item 81355); John Erskine, 'Letter sent to Joseph Bellamy, March 31, 1774', *Joseph Bellamy Letters*, Hartford International University (Box 188, Folder 2937, Item 81373); John Erskine, 'Letter sent to Joseph Bellamy, February 18, 1789', *Joseph Bellamy Papers*, Vol. 2, trans. Richard Webster (Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia), 45.

Warrant)⁴⁵ and secondly, Hopkins had just read Ryland's critique of Abraham Booth's *Glad Tidings* in the *Edinburgh Missionary Magazine*.⁴⁶ Hopkins took the opportunity to commend Ryland for his forthright critique and to chasten Scott. Scott, a minister in the Church of England, was reluctant to 'openly and expressly [...] mention and oppose him [Abraham Booth] and his book [*Glad Tidings*]'.⁴⁷ This seemed to be an instance of 'British Pride' to Hopkins, but likely something more problematic. So, Ryland Jr.'s review in the *Magazine* provided an opportunity for Hopkins to identify a *selfish* undercurrent running underneath the surface. Selfishness was the result of an improper orientation of love within God's universal system, that is, creation.

Beginning with Booth, Hopkins stated that regardless of Booth's personal 'heart and life', his 'theory of Christianity and religious exercises is wholly selfish'.⁴⁸ Hopkins then proceeded to enumerate several examples of this tendency. First, and foremost, Booth claimed that 'the law of God can never be loved by a person obnoxious to its condemning power'. There needs to be a resignation to God's sovereignty over his system. Then, Hopkins pitted Booth's prior work *Reign of Grace* against *Glad Tidings*. Booth is charged with inconsistency, because in *Reign of Grace*, he recognized that no prior holiness could exist to love the law as a precondition for salvation. On the other hand, in *Glad Tidings* Booth claimed sinners may have a poverty of spirit', that is a sensitivity to sin, prior to regeneration.⁴⁹

This, Hopkins asserted, is *prima facie* indication of a selfish scheme because Booth claimed that a self-preservationist motive was a legitimate response to the Gospel. According to the Edwardsean moral philosophy the law manifests the holiness of the divine nature. An unselfish love for God consists of a 'universal, disinterested benevolence' inclusive of a 'disinterested submission' (a non-preservationist motive)

⁴⁵ Thomas Scott, *Warrant and Nature of Faith in Christ*, 397-564, in *The Works of Thomas Scott* (1797), Vol. 1, ed. John Scott (London: Seeley and Son), 1823.

⁴⁶ Samuel Hopkins, 'Letter sent to John Ryland Jr, November 24, 1797', *North American Letters, D/JAA 2/10 3 Letters, 1756-1797*, in *Joseph Angus Autograph Collection*, New Regents College, Oxford. Hopkins mistakenly writes that the article was in the *Evangelical Magazine*; however, the article mentioned by Hopkins is 'Extensive Review of Abraham Booth's *Glad Tidings* to Perishing Sinners', *The Missionary Magazine*, Vol. 1, No. 2 (Jan 1797-May 1797), Edinburgh (Schaw and Pillans), 1797.

⁴⁷ Hopkins, 'Letter to John Ryland Jr'.

⁴⁸ Hopkins, 'Letter to John Ryland Jr'.

⁴⁹ Hopkins, 'Letter to John Ryland Jr'.

to God's absolute sovereignty.⁵⁰ In other words a sensitivity to the holiness of God to condemn a sinner to hell would engender a willingness to be damned if it was God's design for the good of the universe. Therefore, Hopkins saw a selfish scheme in Booth's presentation because of its self-preservationist tendency.

This critique of Booth and the attempt to implicate Thomas Scott drew a reply from Ryland and Fuller to protect the integrity of their Anglican friend. Their reply provides a set-up for a deeper understanding of three idiosyncrasies in Hopkin's system of thinking. These three areas (benevolence, sin, and submission) will be seen to be based upon the central plank in the Edwardsean moral philosophy described above of obtaining a clear sight of the nature of God by creatures.

A. Universal, Disinterested Benevolence

Hopkins referred Ryland Jr. to a paragraph in *Warrant's* introduction. In this paragraph, Scott indirectly identified the Edwardsean moral philosophy as causing potential confusion for average people.⁵¹ Scott illustrates potential confusion in two areas. The first is the apparent requirement to be willing to be damned should God desire it so that he might be most glorified in the creation of the universe. Hopkins ignored this charge, but addressed Scott's second illustration, which he considered to be a misstatement and misunderstanding of his 'universal, disinterested benevolence' doctrine.

Scott identified 'holy self-love' as the orientation of the heart towards God. While most would probably agree with Scott, Hopkins claimed that orientation is *not enough*. The object of one's affections is defined, not by the orientation, but by the *nature* of one's love (see above discussion on nature and kind). Therefore, Hopkins insisted that 'holy self-love' ceases to be holy if it operates outside of a disinterested

⁵⁰ These phrases refer to the Enlightenment focus upon subsystems finding definition within the larger system. Love for the universal system allows for the definition of the smaller acts of love relative to a love for ultimate end of the creation system, i.e., the glory of God. Within the universal system, some individuals may suffer for all eternity to bring about the glory of God. A 'disinterested submission' is a willingness to take great loss—even eternal loss—for the sake of the glory of God. See earlier discussion in chapter 4 regarding Shaftesbury's *Characteristics*.

⁵¹ Scott, *Warrant*, 401-403.

benevolence for the universality of God's being supremely. In other words, orientation of one's love is not of the same kind, nor is it of the same nature. God's love, as seen in Christ's atonement, is a willingness to be damned for the glory of God. It is resignation to the absolute sovereignty of God. Said another way, you may have a legal orientation of love towards God but be entirely selfish at the same time because you want self-preservation. By way of contrast Hopkins defined holy self-love, in *True Holiness*, as love 'for himself as part of the whole, which is implied in universal benevolence'.⁵² What is self-love according to Hopkins?

Hopkins isolated 'a general capacity to good, and aversion to evil' as *natural* self-love.⁵³ Self-preservation is natural. This is related to Frances Hutcheson's natural moral sense that reacts to external sensations which threaten the self. Specifically, Hutcheson adapted Locke's ideas of sensation and reflection towards moral philosophy. Disinterested benevolence occurs when a person chooses the good based upon a greater regard for the whole community. This benevolence was framed by the natural capacity of a person to like or dislike the sensations perceived.

In choosing to subsume that which appeals to self for the sake of others is a kind of moral sense. However, this moral sense, according to Hopkins, is influenced by a natural tendency to love self; on the other hand, Hutcheson believed that a *natural* self-love might be regulated by the will to choose what is most beneficial for society.⁵⁴ This movement of the will to choose the most beneficial for the whole, Hutcheson termed, benevolence. Hopkins, on the other hand, having a realistic view of original sin, included the word universal to protect benevolence from any hint of self-love which would seek its own benefit in the arrangement. Therefore, if God's glory in the universe—including your own damnation—is not the supreme object, then it is not true benevolence.

⁵² Hopkins, *True Holiness*, in DT3:23.

⁵³ Hopkins, *True Holiness*, in DT3:22.

⁵⁴ Francis Hutcheson, *An Essay on the Nature and Conduct of the Passions and Affections* (London: A. Ward, 1742), xi. Shaftesbury also addresses this but with much more artistry. For example, 'the beautifying', Shaftesbury claimed, 'not the beautified, is really the beautiful'. Molded metal or paint on a canvas is ultimately a product of a beautiful mind. Put another way, physical beauty on a pottery wheel is a two-fold beauty because not only is the object an exquisite piece of earthenware but also features craftsmanship. Thirdly, the artwork also reveals the beauty of the creative mind. These three aspects of beauty correspond to how moral beauty is perceived in the world. Ashley-Cooper, *Characteristics*, 131-33.

The moral sense theory described by Hutcheson is inherently optimistic while Hopkins's application of this faculty is much more pessimistic. Hopkins did not see any possibility that the human would naturally incline towards a 'disinterested submission' to the good of the universe. A more positive statement of this principle is universal, disinterested benevolence—anything else is self-interested love. For example, one might wish for a benefit of the whole because it is most beneficial for oneself. This is a calculated kind of 'benevolence' that is no better than an inordinate self-love that ignores everyone else. In his *System*, Hopkins says that

The least spark of self love, will interrupt this reasonable and moral order and harmony, and render him partial and interested in his affection, and so far detach him from the whole and make him set up a selfish, private interest of his own, in distinction from the rest, and in opposition to it. [...] But when the distinction is properly made, [...] will take all proper and sufficient care of every individual in the system, and will desire and seek the best interest and happiness of all, and the benevolent person himself, so far as is consistent with the greatest good of the whole.⁵⁵

Hopkins saw in Scott's *Warrant* a subtle opportunity for false religion to arise out of a self-preservationist motive. Hopkins does not disagree that this motive might be appropriate as secondary to the glory of God; however, holy self-love must be fixed on God's glory supremely.

Hopkins might come across to moderns as straining at a gnat; but the disagreement is mostly with Scott's analogy. In *Warrant*, Scott described the human heart as being disoriented, seeking to go in a deviant direction and be abusive of fellow creatures.⁵⁶ This tendency may be compared to something like a compass needle that needs recalibrated to strike true north. Hopkins is dissatisfied with this approach and desired Scott to discard this analogy for a superior Edwardsean analogy of a love that is 'implied in' another love. Thus, a better analogy might be wooden Russian 'nesting' dolls (see figure 5.1 below). In this analogy, the larger motive (love

⁵⁵ DT1:380.

⁵⁶ Scott, *Warrant*, 402.

for God) shapes lesser motives (self-love) with a consistency of pattern relative to the larger. Smaller dolls (or lesser ends) can fit into larger dolls (or greater ends).

About a decade prior to this correspondence with Ryland, Hopkins had received critique from Roger Sherman on how he articulated disinterested love. Sherman was not only a statesman in the founding era and early American republic, but also a member of Edwards Jr.'s church in New Haven, CT. According to Tyler Sherron, Sherman wanted to 'salvage' Hopkins's tendency to get 'lost in his own refinements and stipulations'. Specifically, in Sherron's view, Hopkins's perfectionistic tendency to define all self-love as sin moved him toward eudaemonism.⁵⁷ Sherman challenged Hopkins on the natural ability of the self.⁵⁸ With respect to self-love, Sherman stated that self-love was more a 'natural principle which exists in beings perfectly holy' as

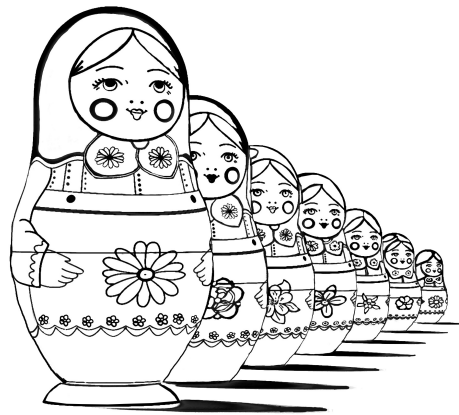


Figure 5.1 Nesting dolls as a concept for a secondary motive implied in the primary

⁵⁷ Sherron argued that Hopkins left Edwards's approbation of benevolent behavior as true self-love. Put another way, Hopkins collapsed his mentor's thinking into a bipolar motives either for the love of self or for the love of God. Tyler Paul Sherron, 'True Self-Love in Eighteenth-Century New England: A Case Study of Roger Sherman and the Edwardsean Theological Tradition', PhD Dissertation (University of Texas, Dallas, December 2022), 217, 216-220.

⁵⁸ Sherman and Hopkins, *Correspondence*.

much as in sinners.⁵⁹ This, he said, is predicated upon Edwards's *Original Sin*. Sherman referenced *Original Sin* to argue that a positive principle existed to superintend an 'original righteousness in man'.⁶⁰ This exchange allowed Hopkins to clarify his position saying that after the fall man's self-love is hopelessly corrupted. Hopkins wrote, 'Self-love cannot be a holy or right affection, or agree or consist with holy affection, because it does not desire or seek, or even discern that in which real good and happiness consists'.⁶¹

While it is perhaps true that Sherman was trying to redirect Hopkins as Sherron proposes, Hopkins is confident that he has not departed from Edwards Sr. Hopkins believes that regeneration affects one's perceptions so that one's 'natural' self-love can be properly guided to align with a preference for what's best for the glory of God in the universe—even if that means one's own demise, like that of Christ's wondrous love to the Father which permitted himself to be sacrificed. Hopkins goes so far as to conclude that one must love God as an enemy for there to be evidence of true benevolence. 'If we cannot be Christ's disciples unless we have a heart to love our enemies [...] then none are his disciples who have not a heart to love God, even though he is their enemy, and disposed to curse and destroy them, who cannot be unjust and injurious enemy'.⁶² In other words, this depravity can only be corrected by an infused spiritual principle to cause us to love God as our enemy who is disposed to damn us to hell apart from his mercy.

In summary, Hopkins emphasized the supremacy of the glory of God as the greatest end for which the universe exists. This is the 'universal' part of his moral theology. Nested into this end is an implied posture of good will towards every part of this created system. Yet, the natural capacity to choose the good is excessively influenced by original sin. To choose the good requires a gracious intervention. This principle is what lead Hopkins to critique Abraham Booth's *Glad Tidings* and Scott's

⁵⁹ Sherman, *Correspondence*, 8.

⁶⁰ Sherman's correspondence foreshadows the 'exercisers' and 'tasters' controversy in the next generation. Sherman proposed that 'The will and affections are the powers of agency, and the exercises of them are holy or sinful, according to the objects chosen or beloved, or according to their exercises agree or disagree with divine law'. Sherman, *Correspondence*, 24. Hopkins takes the alternative view. Hopkins, *Correspondence*, 15. Edwards A. Park saw that even though Hopkin's *System* seemed to make allowances for the 'exercise' scheme, he nevertheless was disposed to Edwards Sr.'s 'taste' scheme. See Park, 'Memoir', in *DT1*: 216-17.

⁶¹ Hopkins, *Correspondence*, 13, 16-17

⁶² Hopkins, *True Holiness*, in *DT3*:49.

Warrant. This emphasis upon this threefold term of universal, disinterested benevolence is a key feature of Hopkin's moral philosophy *and* an essential component for how he thinks about the atonement, which will soon be shown below. Suffice it for now, Hopkins concluded that 'in seeking the glory of God he [Christ] sought the salvation of men, and in seeking the glory of God, the one [atonement] being necessarily implied in the other [the glory of God]'.⁶³ Andrew Fuller responded to Hopkins as well seeking clarity on two other idiosyncrasies, sin and disinterested submission.

B. Sin, Through Divine Interposition, An Advantage to the Universe

In March 1798 Fuller went to Bristol to visit his friend Ryland Jr. During that visit Fuller read Hopkins's letter criticising Thomas Scott. Hopkins's strong critique prompted Fuller to add his own take on Booth. Booth was, in Fuller's opinion, an older man whose context needed consideration. Yet, Fuller warned Hopkins that

whenever an extraordinary man has been raised up, like President Edwards, and who has excelled in maintaining some particular doctrine, or in some one [of] science, or manner of reasoning, it is usual for his followers and admirers too much to confine their attention to that doctrinal science or manner of reasoning, as though all excellence was there concentrated. [...] Yet I must say it appears to me that some of your younger men possess a rage of imitating this metaphysical manner, till some of them become metaphysic-mad.⁶⁴

After this admonition, Fuller asked Hopkins for clarification on, what appeared to Fuller, as Hopkin's belief that God authored sin.⁶⁵ This question was derived from Hopkins's three sermons on *Sin, Through Divine Interposition, An Advantage to the*

⁶³ 'By the world, is not meant this earth, or things in the present state only; but the *whole universe* through all its duration'. Hopkins, *True Holiness*, in DT3:47.

⁶⁴ Fuller, 'Letter sent to Samuel Hopkins, March 17, 1798'.

⁶⁵ Fuller, 'Letter sent to Samuel Hopkins, March 17, 1798'.

Universe.⁶⁶ Fuller's difficulty in understanding Hopkins's position on sin was largely due to a lack of familiarity with the Edwardsean adaptation of the moral philosophy to address the rise of deism.⁶⁷ Even though Hopkins defined his terms, people unfamiliar with the debate with deism would not likely catch the significance of the word *universe* as a reference to describe the world as a closed system. In other words, sin was not a flaw in the system; rather, it is a feature that God saw as an advantage for the universe as a system.

This awareness would have assisted Andrew Fuller with Hopkins's writings. Hopkin's answer is preserved by Edwards A. Park.⁶⁸ Hopkins cited his *System* as a resource for further explanation. The existence of holiness and sin are 'infallibly connected' as equal and opposite in this universe. By decreeing one he decreed the other. This, claimed Hopkins, is part of the inscrutability of God's wisdom. 'And in this view God willed the existence of both, in the exercise of infinite wisdom and benevolence, even the same kind of benevolence which he requires of creatures in his holy law, and which is opposed by the sinner in every act of sin'.⁶⁹ The essence of Hopkin's argument is that God did decree the existence of sin within the universe so that there would be more happiness than if there were no sin.⁷⁰

The increase of this happiness is supported by the atonement in the redemption of the elect who will populate heaven. Furthermore, when Hopkins drafted *System*, he stressed the solidarity of mankind with Adam. Peter Jauhiainen correctly identifies a consistency in Hopkins's articulation of original sin with Edwards.⁷¹ In particular, Jauhiainen identifies Hopkins use of Edwards's root and branch metaphor to illustrate how Adam 'comprehends all mankind', and yet, there is still no substantial difference between original and actual sin.⁷² This is derived from Edwards's thinking about futurition. Consider the following two principles. First, while sin is an existential evil, 'yet the futurition of sin, or that sin should be future, is not an evil

⁶⁶ Hopkins, *Sin*, in DT2:493-546.

⁶⁷ *Sin, Through Divine Interposition, An Advantage to the Universe*, DT2: 506, footnote.

⁶⁸ Samuel Hopkins, 'Letter Sent to Andrew Fuller, October 12, 1798', in Park, 'Memoir', DT1: 224-226.

⁶⁹ *System*, DT1:140

⁷⁰ *Sin, Through Divine Interposition, An Advantage to the Universe*, DT2:510, 527-30.

⁷¹ Peter Jauhiainen, 'Moral Government and the Way of Salvation, Chapter 8', 281-319 in *unpublished draft on Hopkins received through email*, September 24, 2023, 283-84.

⁷² Jauhiainen, 'Moral Government', 284-85.

thing. Evil is an evil thing, and yet it may be a good thing that evil should be in the world'.⁷³ This means that there is an existential aspect to sin which does not implicate God in any way should he predetermine its existence.⁷⁴ God's ideas through time are parts that are implied in the whole. This includes the good he intends as well as the sin he permits.

With respect to Adam, he was the full sum of the human system even though there would be many future smaller parts yet to come. In other words, since Adam was the first man, the futurity of every sin and sinner operates within the system of Adam. As it were, all future offspring of Adam 'coincid[e] one with the other and [are] implied one in the other'.⁷⁵ This is a nesting of ends from its equal and opposite pattern of universal, disinterested benevolence. The nesting of ends in Adam the forefather of all sinners finds its equal and opposite redemption in the system of Christ. The great end of God's glory was preserved as the elect were 'implied' in the atonement. Their sanctification is also implied in the purchase of Holy Spirit. In this way the Holy Spirit applies the righteousness which was lost originally to the elect. As sinners orient their desires for God, they exhibit a universal, disinterested benevolence. The atonement is part of the process by which God reorders the universe after the shape of the Son's love which was willing to be damned if it would bring about the glory of God. This willingness is more properly called 'disinterested submission'.

C. 'Disinterested Submission' to the Glory of God

Fuller expected to receive a reply from Hopkins about his 'willingness to be damned' teaching: 'I have written an answer to Dr. Hopkins, in which I have defended that position [*contra* disinterested submission]. He is a mighty reasoner; but on this subject I feel my ground. Should he furnish a reply, the correspondence may hereafter be published'.⁷⁶ In 1803, just two months before his death, Hopkins

⁷³ WJEO27:5.1.

⁷⁴ 'Predestination', in WJEO27:5.1.

⁷⁵ YE8:440.

⁷⁶ Park, 'Memoir', in DT1: 227.

prepared a draft, which appears to align with Fuller's expectation. Whether Fuller ever saw this draft is uncertain.⁷⁷ Fuller had tried to persuade Hopkins that under 'a dispensation of mercy' it would be inappropriate to be willing to be damned when God desired man's repentance.⁷⁸ Hopkin's system can be simplified as submission of one's own end for the greater end of God's glory. This is clear when he uses the phrase 'implied in' to nest the lesser end of one's own salvation for the greater end of a 'cordial submission to the whole will of God'.⁷⁹

To this end Hopkins described two hypothetical persons which illustrate this principle. One surrenders to the 'promised mercy of God' and never doubts his salvation. The second is 'utterly opposed to being in his [God's] hands, to deal with him as he pleased'. In time, this second person 'finds a turn of mind'. His coming to faith occurs as he sees God's absolute sovereignty as 'excellent and glorious [...] just, right, and fit'. This submission, according to Hopkins, 'gives him a title to the promise of salvation'.⁸⁰ Why? Hopkins argued that a submission of the heart to God's will (either damnation or salvation) is an *evidence* of saving faith. This *evidence* is a perceptible exercise of the heart. It occurs either by 'intuition or by reflection'. In other words, when man's natural self-love is brought to have a 'clear and high exercises' in God's excellence in absolute sovereignty and *find complacence* in it, he can be sure of a genuine conversion.⁸¹

This discussion with Fuller provides further insight into Hopkin's thinking in three ways. First, it demonstrates how consistently Hopkins applied Locke's grammar to Hutcheson's moral sense theory. Second, this moral sense aligns with the formal principle of his system, which is an ability to have a true knowledge of God's holy being. Third, it demonstrates that Hopkins has a pastoral interest in the care of souls who struggle with the assurance of salvation. First, when talking about 'clear and high

⁷⁷ To my knowledge this letter has not been engaged with by any Hopkins scholar. Samuel Hopkins, 'Draft Letter to Andrew Fuller, October 18, 1803', 1-11, in *Samuel Hopkins Correspondence, 1766-1803*, Congregational Library and Archives, Boston (MS4865, Folder 1). Edwards A. Park preserved a transcript of a letter to John Ryland Jr. which references this letter as coming shortly. Hopkins apparently sent it to him first to read with instruction to pass it on to Andrew Fuller afterwards. Hopkins, *Letter to Dr. Ryland, of Northampton, England, in Reply [...]*, 752-58, in DT2:756.

⁷⁸ Park, 'Memoir', in DT1: 227.

⁷⁹ Hopkins, 'Draft Letter', 3.

⁸⁰ Hopkins, 'Draft Letter', 4.

⁸¹ Hopkins, 'Draft Letters', 4-5.

exercises', he is using Locke's grammar to describe the movement when one's moral sense expresses a deep love for God supremely. Prior to this experience, the idea of absolute sovereignty was at a minimum a confused idea, but when 'a turn of mind' occurs, it presents to the mind a clear idea of God's holy nature.⁸² When absolute sovereignty is viewed as 'fit', self-love becomes 'implied in' the greater end of God's glory. The exercise of the heart to submit becomes the *evidence*, which is a greater ground for assurance than mere trust in the 'promised mercy of God' Fuller was advocating. In summary, Hopkins identified a willingness to be damned as clear evidence of a self-love *implied in* a love for God's absolute sovereignty. This kind of love is supernatural and follows the paradigm of implied or nested of love (see figure 5.1 above). Hopkins was still processing regeneration by the Holy Spirit in Enlightenment categories.

In summary, Hopkins applied his mentor's principle of nested ends to every aspect of his theology. This was true with respect to universal, disinterested benevolence, original sin, and disinterested submission. The atonement was no different—along with the practical work of Holy Spirit in the heart of the elect. In other words, Christ's atonement functions in the same way. The voluntary willingness to be damned was the mechanism of the atonement, and this mediation also corresponds to the Trinitarian relations *ad intra*. Knowing God comes via the true application of virtue, love, or holiness by the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit. In Hopkin's system, the evidence of this virtue occurs in universal, disinterested benevolence. Hopkins's system is inherently perfectionistic. A willingness to be damned was not only the best expression of one's resignation to the sovereignty of God, but it also provided a kind of evidence that one was regenerated by the Holy Spirit.

⁸² Locke, *Essay*, 2:29. Garry J. Williams also notices this use of ideas as a 'further development' or innovation in atonement thinking, however, he does not connect it to Edwards's use of Locke or to *Discourse on the Trinity*. Garry J. Williams, 'Jonathan Edwards', 467-471, in *T&T Clark Companion to Atonement*, ed. Adam J. Johnson (New York: Bloomsbury, 2017), 470.

D. Impossible Suppositions, Assurance, and Atonement

Hopkins closed his letter to Fuller by addressing the practical matter of assurance. He wrote that the absence of doubt is no sure 'evidence of salvation'.⁸³ This claim addressed Fuller's proposal that in 'a dispensation of mercy' to do one's duty and desire salvation is praiseworthy. According to Hopkins, Fuller's proposition is a kind of impossible supposition. He asks, is it possible for someone to go their whole life and have no doubt whatsoever that they are among the elect? Hopkins responded by asking Fuller whether it is possible for someone not to want salvation for their whole existence so that God's glory might be seen?

These are impossible suppositions on either end of a spectrum. On the one hand someone is free of doubt indefinitely and on the other one refuses salvation indefinitely. Neither of these hypothetical situations correspond to reality. Hopkins is implying that they are both closer in understanding one another that Fuller supposes. Indeed, Fuller's proposal is hypothetical as much as he conjectures about Hopkins; furthermore, this is a subjective experience that has no bearing upon God's mercy or election. Yet, Hopkins proposed that his 'impossible supposition' of willingness to be damned *in a context of doubt* is nevertheless filled with significance, true virtue, and in the case of Christ, atoning value. To arrive at this conclusion, Hopkins considered two impossible suppositions. First, Paul is reflected upon, and then, Christ.

First, Hopkins quotes Paul's compassion for his people: 'I could wish that I was accursed from Christ for my brethren my kinsmen according to the flesh' (Romans 9:1). Hopkin's identifies two impossible suppositions in Paul's wish. First, in no way could Paul be accursed from Christ, and secondly, in no way could Paul's finite being satisfy God's just wrath so that Israel might be saved. This second is a 'much stronger expression of the same thing' because it is 'expresses in the most striking language St. Paul's benevolence to mankind, which he must and ought to exercise in loving his neighbours as himself'.⁸⁴ This is quite an impossible proposal from Paul, yet Paul's desire is exemplary. Hopkins then illustrates how Paul's desire is a smaller version of the greatest love found in Christ for his Father.

⁸³ Hopkins refers to the need for evidence in his correspondence with Roger Sherman. See also, Hopkins, *Correspondence*, 18.

⁸⁴ Hopkins, 'Draft Letter', 8-9.

Secondly, Christ's request of his Heavenly Father in the garden of Gethsemane: 'O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: Nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt'. He went on to say that 'it was impossible that he should not drink this cup, and he knew and declared this before and after his agony in the garden'.⁸⁵

Yet, to Hopkins, this sentiment was not hyperbole rather, it is filled with meaning. As he explained the meaning for a doubting believer, he also reveals a reception of the Edwardsean moral philosophy as it pertains to the atonement. Hopkin's begins,

And though when he spake these words his mind was more impressed with the dreadfulness of the cup then before him, than of the necessity of his drinking it; yet he did not believe it was possible it should pass from him; but it was by divine wisdom ordered that his mind should be in such a situation and so impressed as to express his feelings in this manner to show his sense of dreadfulness of the sufferings then before him, and his desire to escape them if it were possible that the ends for which he came into the world could be as well answered without his thus suffering.

In this explanation, Hopkins identified Locke's 'ideas of reflection' in terms of an 'impression'.⁸⁶ Then he applied Hutcheson's moral sense categories by speaking of 'his sense of dreadfulness'. This prompts a 'desire to escape' all of which are quite natural. Yet, in the garden, Christ exemplified true virtue, true religion, or true holiness in his willingness to sublimate natural desire for the good of the universe—that God's glory might be had, and sinners saved. This is the most disinterested benevolence of all loves—it is atoning.

Because Christ was without original sin, he is fully capable of engagement with his natural self-love capacity and subordinate it to the good of the universe (see his correspondence with Roger Sherman). This he described as a 'cheerful' response to his Father's will. Hopkin's continued:

⁸⁵ Hopkins, 'Draft Letter', 9.

⁸⁶ In correspondence with Roger Sherman, Hopkins said that a 'first act' of faith is not in itself sufficient evidence; rather, knowledge of one's faith comes 'only by reflecting on what he does, or has done'. Hopkins, *Correspondence*, 19.

But if it were not possible, he cheerfully resigned himself to the wise and holy will of his Father and was willing to drink the cup. But the example of Christ introduced chiefly to those that he made an impossible supposition when in the most trying circumstances. And may not his followers make an impossible supposition and say, 'If it be possible that I should fail of salvation and perish, and were this necessary in the best manner and highest degree to glorify God and the greatest glory and happiness of his kingdom and were therefore the will of God, Lord, not my will but thine be done?'

Hopkins is confident that if Christ's disinterested submission to the will of the Father is acceptable (that is, creating atonement), then it would be sure evidence of regeneration in any follower who follows his example. Furthermore, this would be sure *evidence* of Spirit indwelling because mankind still has the remnant of original sin whereas Christ had none.

In summary, Hopkin's letter provides insight into his most famous teaching, but more importantly, it demonstrates how he applied Edwards's dissertation on *True Virtue* to the atonement. According to Edwards A. Park, the main theme of *True Virtue* had developed in Edwards's 'college life; and had thus matured it during his forty years of study'.⁸⁷ While this is true, it is also self-evident that *True Virtue* was a philosophical text because it is absent Scriptural proofs so that it might be read by leading deists who rejected revelation. On the other hand, Hopkins's *True Holiness* was written for the church in response to William Hart's criticism of Edwards. So, the chief difference is the use of scriptural language and moral application to Christian living.⁸⁸ Christ's trials in the garden may not be part of *True Virtue*, however, it forms the centre of Edwards's *History of the Work of Redemption (HWR)*. In the sixteenth sermon of *HWR*, Edwards says that

Eminent virtue always shines brightest in the fire, pure gold shows its purity chiefly in the furnace. It was chiefly under those trials[. ...] Indeed everything

⁸⁷ Park, 'Memoir', in DT1: 218.

⁸⁸ For example, definition of virtue using Scriptural language, the greatest commandment, and loving enemy as oneself.

that Christ did to work out redemption for us appears mainly in the close of his life. Here mainly is his satisfaction for sin, and here chiefly lies his merit of eternal life for sinners, and here chiefly appears the brightness of his example that he hath set us to follow.⁸⁹

Edwards saw all the events from the betrayal to his resurrection ‘by which principally it was that he made satisfaction to the justice of God for the sins of men’.⁹⁰ Indeed, Joseph Bellamy also appealed to this crucial event in *True Religion*.⁹¹ It is not surprising that in this letter to Andrew Fuller that the garden trials of Christ would be looked to as an illustration of a disinterested submission which indicates true conversion by the Holy Spirit.

E. True Holiness Practically Expressed by Hopkins

Hopkins put the principles of *True Virtue* into ‘their practical workings’, wrote Edwards A. Park, and thus ‘he learned them by living them’ in over sixty years of study.⁹² An example of this is found in the protracted candidating process in Newport, Rhode Island. In correspondence with Miss Susanna Anthony, disinterested submission is projected by Hopkins as he was, at first, declined settlement.⁹³ As he continued writing over several months, Hopkins applied

⁸⁹ YE9:323-24.

⁹⁰ YE9:327. See Chapter 2 above on Edwards’s use of ideas of sensation in the Garden of Gethsemane to test the incarnate Son’s willingness to be damned for the good of the universe.

⁹¹ Appeal to Christ who suffered ‘in the garden and upon the cross’, see Bellamy, *TRD*, 398, 309-10, 322.

⁹² Park, ‘Memoir’, in DT1: 220.

⁹³ Susanna Anthony (1726–1791) was a single woman who lived with Mrs. Sarah Osborn (1714–1796). Together they led a ‘Praying Circle’ in Hopkin’s Rhode Island Church. These women were instrumental to influence the reluctant members of the church to finally vote in favor of calling Hopkins. Furthermore, they were active in the Newport abolitionist movement and education of enslaved men and women. Conforti, *Samuel Hopkins*, 102-106. Samuel Hopkins, *Memoirs of the Life of Mrs. Sarah Osborn, Who Died in Newport, on the Second Day of August 1796* Worcester, MA: Leonard Worcester, 1799).

universal, disinterested benevolence to 'the discovery of Christ' in one's conversation and in subsequent assurance as well as to manage his own disappointments.

When Hopkins applied to Newport, his first attempt was thwarted by Old Light opposition. Through the fall and winter of 1769, Hopkins preached on a probation status. In November, he wrote to Miss Anthony, his supporter, saying,

As to my unconquerable desire [to settle in Newport]: perhaps it is grounded entirely on low, mean, selfish principles. I have been constantly watching my heart with respect to this; and though I know there is much, very much, that is very wrong and shameful; yet I fondly hope that this *desire* is not wholly bottomed and wrong, sordid motives.

Hopkins is expressing that he must evaluate his motives to make sure that they are in alignment with the greater end of God's glory. A 'bottomed motive' is one that is focused on its own benefit so, it is necessary to give oneself wholly to the will of God. So, he shifted his conversation to God's glory in the universe by disinterested submission, saying,

If Christ were to send me to be a blessing to this church and congregation; and make me a faithful minister of him; O, how great the favour! How desirable the privilege! In this view, I say 'Lord, here am I, send me.' But if he says, 'I have no pleasure in thee': here I am, let him do what seemeth [to] him good. 'Lord send by the hand, by whom thou wilt.'⁹⁴

This example of resignation would also serve a pastoral purpose in his letter; however, Hopkins also knew that he was entirely indebted to Miss Anthony for the extension of time needed to get a better vote. So, he wrote in the same letter that he is 'under obligations, which I do not know how to discharge [...] or have no heart to fulfil. I shall never be inclined 'to give you per a check' [...] my only hope, in this respect is, that as you are not, I trust, on *the selfish plan*, you will be prompted to do good to one

⁹⁴ Samuel Hopkins, 'Letter to Susanna Anthony, November 25, 1769', *Eminent Theologians*, Gratz Collection, Pennsylvania Historical Society (Box 8, Case 23, Folder 5).

who is indeed evil and unthankful to a degree that cannot be expressed'.⁹⁵ While light-hearted, this last reference to 'the selfish plan' is however a reflection of his general approach to relationships. His goal is to live under a universal, disinterested benevolence.

The nature of their correspondence may feel out of place in a modern context at times;⁹⁶ however, it demonstrates a chaste benevolence, which is centred on a love for God supremely. In another letter, Hopkins expressed gratitude for kind expressions for his ministry. When he returned from being away, he shared how a simple word like, 'You are, dear sir, *more than ever* welcome here' meant so much to him. Having friends who were as earnest in their love for God and each other had made Hopkins to be filled with great joy. 'God has given me more, unspeakably more in the Christian friends I have found at Newport than if he had made me possessor of all the riches on earth'.⁹⁷ Hopkins was putting into practice his philosophy of Christian friendship grounded in the Trinitarian relations.⁹⁸

Before his settlement, Hopkins read part of Miss Anthony's diary. Hopkins was interested in reading her thoughts and memories during the period of her conversion. This was granted so that he might assess the exercises of her heart in reflection. This he called the 'discovery of Christ'. After reading her diary, he wrote, 'I believe your heart was made friendly to him in your early days even while you was a child; and see no [reason] why anything that relates to the time or moment of your conversion should give you a moments trouble'.⁹⁹ In conversation with Andrew Fuller on the subject of 'willingness to be damned', doubt and a need for evidence of the exercises of the heart was a feature of his system. The exercise of the heart as

⁹⁵ Hopkins, 'Anthony, November 25, 1769'.

⁹⁶ Sharing such intimate thoughts and emotions may appear to be scandalous. For example, in a 1770 letter, he says, 'What shall I say! Shall I attempt to tell you how high you rise in my view, what growing esteem and affection your friend feels, and what obligations he is laid under? This cannot be expressed, and if it could, perhaps it would not be proper'. Samuel Hopkins, 'Letter Sent to Susanna Anthony, April 2, 1770', *Eminent Theologians, Gratz Collection* (Case 8, Box 23, Folder 8).

⁹⁷ Samuel Hopkins, 'Letter Sent to Susanna Anthony, December 27, 1769', *Eminent Theologians, Gratz Collection* (Case 8, Box 23, Folder 5).

⁹⁸ Hopkins, *A Discourse on Christian Friendship* (1767), 627-700, in DT2:629.

⁹⁹ Samuel Hopkins, 'Letter Sent to Susanna Anthony, February 28, 1770', *Eminent Theologians, Gratz Collection*, Case 9, Box 23).

it reflects upon Christ is evidence of the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. Hopkins continued,

It is in the truth you see and are pleased with, and your exercises are agreeable to the word of truth, no matter when they first began, or what was the particular manner in which you was brought to this. Besides, what in these is a work of conviction and humiliation, which you have not had? And what can be said of a discovery of Christ and the actings of the soul towards him in the exercise affair which you do not tell of?¹⁰⁰

'In the truth', said Hopkins, Miss Anthony had gazed upon Christ, and her heart had reacted amiably towards him. This 'discovery of Christ' had occurred after the law had convicted her as a sinner. This *exercise* is the natural work of the Holy Spirit to bring conviction of sin and draw a sinner to the gospel. *Taste* for Christ is supplied so that an *exercise* might be observed as evidence. Hopkins affirmed, from his limited perspective, a confidence in her salvation, saying,

Surely if there is any such thing as a work of the law and gospel, you account of such a work. In one word you describe the very religion, which I think is agreeable to divine revelation; and which I knew is pleasing to my heart. And while I read my heart glowed in love to my friend, and melted, in some degree in thankfulness to God and the redeemer, and joy before him who hides *these things* from the wise and prudent, and reveals them unto babes.¹⁰¹

In this very intimate correspondence, Hopkins revealed that his understanding of conversion is tied to the 'discovery of Christ and the actings of the soul towards him'. This occurs in the meeting of the law and gospel upon the soul. The 'exercises' of the heart are simultaneous with a new taste, what Hopkins here calls 'discovery' of Christ. Hopkins is delineating for Miss Anthony the essence of the Edwardsean moral philosophy applied to conversion. There is a belief that a clear idea of God's

¹⁰⁰ Hopkins, 'Anthony, February 28, 1770'. In *System*, Hopkins describes innate ideas as a shortened timeframe between sensation and agreeableness to those ideas. Hopkins, *System*, in DT1:33.

¹⁰¹ Hopkins, 'Anthony, February 28, 1770'.

character is attainable by a virtuous creature through the work of the Spirit. Yet, the process of discovery occurs in cooperation with the natural processes of perception. This pastoral counsel offered to Susanna Anthony illustrates how the law and gospel, the exercises of the soul, and the discovery of Christ were understood. But there is also another aspect which is revealed. The realignment of one's natural self-love to the glory of God in the universe occurs by the regeneration of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit gives a taste from which the exercises of the heart can be discerned to be true or false virtue. The alignment of the heart to the absolute sovereignty of God in his universe is a discernible exercise that aligns with the act of Christ in the Garden of Gethsemane. The voluntary submission of Christ to the will of the Father to be punished for the good of the Universe is a redeeming benevolence. Thus, the atonement of Christ becomes the paradigm for the practical application of true religion, true virtue, or true holiness.

IV. TOWARDS A HOPKINTONIAN ATONEMENT THEORY

In Newport Hopkins busied himself with the implications of a universal, disinterested benevolence upon abolition until the Revolution brought his work to a halt. He and his church suffered greatly during the war.¹⁰² Yet, as the war began to wind down, he picked up his quill again to labour for the cessation of the slave trade and slavery in general. While toiling towards the end of slavery, he also completed the eleven-hundred-page *System of Doctrines* (1793; hereafter, *System*).

This project was first envisioned by Joseph Bellamy in 1756 as a catechism of 'two or three hundred questions [...] to assist young students in the study of divinity'. His reasoning was that 'Mr. Edwards's Books will be better understood' for 'at the present the learned do not understand him'. While a collaborative approach did not come to pass Hopkins's *System* filled this void, putting 'some points in a more familiar

¹⁰² 'Our meetinghouse has been turned into a barrack and hospital—the inside almost wholly ruined—the greater part of the windows broken or lost, and the bell carried off by the enemy. Our parsonage house is wholly destroyed. We by dispersion and deaths are equally diminished'. Samuel Hopkins, 'Letter to Church of Christ in Middleborough, Nov. 4, 1782', *First Church of Middleboro Records, 1702-1925*, The Congregational Library and Archive, Massachusetts, RG4970.

light'.¹⁰³ An examination of *System* will be compared, like Bellamy's atonement thinking, to the traditional satisfaction and penal systems. *System* will be supplemented with discussion Hopkins had with Levi Hart regarding Stephen West's *The Scripture Doctrine of the Atonement* just after it was published in 1785.¹⁰⁴

A. God's Essential Justice Undergirds All that he Does

God's essential justice is a key feature of the Anselmian account of the atonement and plays a key role in Hopkins's account, too. To get to God's essential justice, he defined what he meant by moral perfection, mutuality, and holiness. First, Hopkins identified excellence, beauty, and glory as God's *moral* perfections. Second, these moral perfections must mutually reside in one another due to divine simplicity. Without one or the other of God's moral perfections, that is, 'any rectitude, wisdom, and goodness of heart', God's nature would be 'infinitely dreadful'. This mutuality serves to highlight how God has an essential holiness that 'comprehends [is implied in] all that belongs to his moral character'.¹⁰⁵ Holiness, according to Hopkins, is 'comprehended [implied] in LOVE'.¹⁰⁶ In other words, the definition of God's essential holy nature is love. To be clear, love is not a *description*, but a *definition* of what holiness is *en se*. In *True Holiness* Hopkins was careful to say that holiness, 'is, in its own nature, one simple, uncompounded thing'. Love is pure act, even life itself.¹⁰⁷ Love in all its forms (benevolence, complacence, and gratitude) is an exercise of God's holy nature. Truth is indistinct from benevolence for truth is 'included in' love.¹⁰⁸

¹⁰³ Joseph Bellamy, 'Letter sent to Samuel Hopkins, Jan. 30, 1756', *Gratz Manuscript Collection*, Pennsylvania Historical Society in Philadelphia (Case 8, Box 21, Folder 25). In many respects, Edwards Jr. created this catechism envisioned by Bellamy. See *The Theological Questions of President Edwards, Senior, and Dr. Edwards, His Son* in YE39.

¹⁰⁴ Stephen West, *The Scripture of Atonement, Proposed to Careful Examination* (New Haven, CT: Meigs, Bowen, and Dana, 1785).

¹⁰⁵ DT1:41-42.

¹⁰⁶ Emphasis original. DT1:42. See the discussion of Edward's use of the term 'comprehend' and specifically how God is an 'all-comprehending being' in Joe Rigney, *Communicating God's Trinitarian Fullness: An Exposition of Jonathan Edwards' End for Which God Created the World* (Columbia, SC: Davenant Press, 2023), 91-92. Also, see YE2:255.

¹⁰⁷ Hopkins, *True Holiness*, in DT3:11.

¹⁰⁸ DT1:43.

Furthermore, justice is not distinct from love but is ‘included in it’. With these principles made clear, Hopkins stated that ‘justice or righteousness belongs to the moral character of God’.¹⁰⁹

Bellamy’s account of God’s justice is a much simpler presentation; however, it is couched in the language of moral philosophy. After showing how a sense of fitness or rectitude in God’s nature requires a consistency between God and creatures, he argued for the original end of creation to be an accurate reflection of his just nature. Hopkins, on the other hand, included more nuance. Justice, as it relates to God’s essence, has a general and a limited aspect. The general aspect should not be misconstrued as being of lesser value. Rather this aspect is of the highest order due to its correspondence to ‘the rectitude of God’s will, in opposition to all injustice or unrighteousness’.¹¹⁰

God’s original inclination of his nature is absolutely just *in se*. The ‘limited sense’ has to do with how God acts in specific cases with himself or mankind.¹¹¹ Although Hopkins does not use this term, it might be described as a justice which is relationally oriented. In this respect, Hopkins highlights how this relational aspect ‘belongs to God to vindicate his own rights, his name and character, and see that justice is done to himself. [...] and not to regard his own rights, and do justice to himself, would be infinitely unjust and wrong’.¹¹² This relational justice sets up a logical priority which serves to advance his own glory, while considering vindictive and remunerative justice for mankind. Jonathan Edwards Jr. wrote of this relational justice quite a while later and developed three categories of justice calling them general, distributive, and commutative forms of justice as God relates to creation.¹¹³

B. Sin is understood as proportional disregard for God through self-love

Anselm’s satisfaction theory described sin as the dishonouring of God’s dignity. In a failure to give what is due to God, therefore sin creates a moral deficit that

¹⁰⁹ DT1:45.

¹¹⁰ DT1:45.

¹¹¹ DT1:46.

¹¹² DT1:47.

¹¹³ In 1785, twelve years after *True Holiness* was published, Edwards Jr. provided a clear description of this justice. AE2: 29-30. See discussion above in chapter three.

requires an act of atonement.¹¹⁴ Sin is, as characterized by Katherine Sonderegger, ‘an intolerable burden’ in the Anselmian scheme.¹¹⁵ This is largely due to the immensity of God’s nature. This, Oliver D. Crisp portrayed as ‘a threshold account of the heinousness of sin’ in that it fails to produce the kind of regard for God which is necessary of created beings.¹¹⁶ How does Hopkin’s measure up?

In Hopkin’s *System*, sin is described as ‘every exertion of self-love’. Yet, it does not stop there; it is also ‘every degree of self-love’. Furthermore, ‘sin consists in self-love [...] in its own nature’.¹¹⁷ This means that sin is inversion and confusion of God’s glory in the universe. Sin exists in a kind of parallel contrast to the holiness of God; however, it’s real heinousness is in that it ‘pays a supreme and sole regard to an infinitely small and inconsiderable part [in the universe] of existence’. It is parallel from the standpoint of opposition to, but not in a trajectory of movement through time *per se*. Sin is an occasional reality and a threat to the holiness of God but only when it is manifested. It is truly heinous, but sin’s existence is contingent upon the existence of selfishness. ‘Self-love is the root of all pride, or, rather, is pride itself’.¹¹⁸

Hopkins did not permit any room for self-love.¹¹⁹ Because of this emphasis, he is often suspected of undermining *the self* in his mentor’s *True Virtue*, in which self-love is a natural principle, which was formed in mankind after the image of God. Self is, nevertheless, loved ‘as included in the general object of disinterested love [...] which necessarily includes a proper and proportionate love and regard to our own existence and interest, as implied in that of the whole’.¹²⁰ When self-love is not sublimated to God’s glory, it is wickedness; however, it is *proportionate*. Hopkins was a good student of his mentor’s *End of Creation* in which the universe is organized around a principle of proportionate regard to God’s own glory.¹²¹ In this framework, sin is a moral evil,

¹¹⁴ Anselm, *Cur Deus Homo* 1.11. cf. Crisp, *Participation and Atonement*, 102-103.

¹¹⁵ Anselm, *Cur Deus Homo* 1.21. cf. Sonderegger, ‘Anselmian Atonement’, 179.

¹¹⁶ Crisp, *Participation and Atonement*, 103.

¹¹⁷ DT1:238.

¹¹⁸ DT1:239.

¹¹⁹ Hopkins believed that every ‘exertion of self-love is as really sin, as if it were exercised in a higher degree, and were not restrained and counteracted by opposite, disinterested love’. DT1:238.

¹²⁰ DT1:241.

¹²¹ Joe Rigney highlights this principle in his exposition of *End of Creation*; however, this is ultimately derived from the work of Walter Shultz. Rigney, *God’s Trinitarian Fulness*, 65. See also Walter Schultz, ‘Jonathan Edwards’s *End of Creation*: An Exposition and Defense’, *Journal of*

but it's not exactly parallel or tangential; rather, it is a species of proportionate disregard.

Proportionate regard is a measure for what is occurrent in the heart of man, either universal, disinterested benevolence or self-love. In other words, the heart of man responds to ideas about God in proportion to the degree of apprehension of his excellence, that is, how clear and distinct an idea he has of God.¹²² Excellence corresponds to decency and fitness, not only with respect to the inclination of God, but also creation's proportional regard for Him in return. For example, in the Garden of Eden, Hopkins observed that man's heart was tested with a simple law to see if man would esteem God's glory as greater than self. Would he exercise a love to God or self?

The exercise of the heart in the will and affections manifests what kind of sense man's heart has towards God. Hopkins wrote that 'it is with the heart, in the exercise of perfect love, that this law is obeyed; and the smallest contrariety to this love, in the exercises of the heart, or the least defect in the degree and strength of it, is a violation of this law'.¹²³ The least defect, in the Garden of Eden, was evident in 'the first motion in her mind disposing her to regard and believe the serpent, rather than God'. This 'least degree of inclination' was a sense of the heart or an 'apostasy' that was 'completed' by a 'full exertion of her will in open rebellion'.¹²⁴ To put in a way consistent with Hopkins, she ought to have exercised a universal, *disinterested* benevolence. This was the proper expression of love for finite beings, incapable of God's universal, *infinite* benevolence. Thus, disregard for God's law is wrong and criminal. With respect to Anselm's satisfaction theory, Hopkins does measure up from the standpoint of falling short of the glory of God. It is an indirect attack upon the glory of God by making oneself the object of the universe. This is not quite the same way Bellamy described sin.

Evangelical Theological Society 49, No. 2. (June 2006): 247-71; Walter Schultz, 'The Metaphysics of Jonathan Edwards's *End of Creation* (*Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 59, No. 2 (2016): 339-59.

¹²² YE18:459-61. See Jonathan Marko's discussion of this aspect. Marko, 'Edwards' Religious Epistemology', 166-68.

¹²³ DT1:197.

¹²⁴ DT1:207.

C. Sin is proportional disregard for God measured by the moral law

After reading *True Holiness*, Roger Sherman wrote to Hopkins seeking clarification on the problem that a proportionate scale creates without some objective measure. Hopkins, to this point in his published writings, had created but a subjective test that was too difficult to apply to Christian living. Proportional regard, apart from the objectivity of the law, had put Sherman 'at a loss for a scale by which to ascertain the proportion of love due to ourselves and others'.¹²⁵ Sherman's correspondence provided Hopkins a valuable critique so that he might clarify his thinking ahead of the publication of *System* in 1793.

It is true that in *System* Hopkins did not describe sin in the same sense as Bellamy. Sin, according to Bellamy, is directed against God as an infinite evil; however, the offence is *mediated* by the law and its heinousness is *defined* by the law. This pushback from Sherman prompted Hopkins to qualify proportional regard using the law as a measurement of degree. In other words, the law becomes a way to measure one's love for God through specific attitudes and actions. One may observe how the law entered Hopkin's thinking as it will relate to the atonement. The law is a way to measure proportion. He more helpfully wrote:

Nothing but that which has the nature of selfishness is sin; and this is, in its own nature, and in every degree, a transgression of the law of God, and contrary to true holiness. It is useful and important that we should have this scriptural idea of holiness and sin, as it will put us under advantage to know how far we ourselves are sinful, or what is sin in us, as well as to judge of the moral corruption of mankind.¹²⁶

The law defines sin in concrete terms, but in the end, all sin is an attempt to take away the happiness of God and 'introduce universal confusion and misery through the whole creation'.¹²⁷ To support this principle, Hopkins appealed to Deuteronomy 19:16-21 where the principle of motive to sin is the basis of punishment. Motive to

¹²⁵ Sherman writes that he had for a long time considered the moral law to be 'the measure of our love to our neighbor, and is therefore a principle distinct from general benevolence or love to others'. Sherman, 'Letter to Hopkins, June 28, 1790', 8.

¹²⁶ DT1:241.

¹²⁷ DT1:181.

kill a thousand people (even if it is unsuccessful) must be punished with impunity as if he had killed a thousand people.¹²⁸ Man's moral nature is so depraved that desire itself is sufficient grounds for infinite punishment.

In contrast to Bellamy, Hopkins used the law to measure proportionate disregard for the dignity of God or conversely proportionate regard. Bellamy, on the other hand, saw the law as a mechanism of mediation. These differences do not necessarily affect the outcome of their respective views of the atonement; however, Hopkins's approach adds another dimension to the conversation. Bellamy's approach is concerned about the properly nested ends of atonement. To this Hopkins adds proportionate regard as a regulative element.

D. Sin is heinous; it denigrates God's honour

Hopkins saw sin as 'the inclination and desire' to 'disappoint and dethrone' God and 'to spread rebellion through the universe'. This is illustrated in the rebellion of Satan and said to be the same in mankind.¹²⁹ This inclination is to wreck the universe by our own self-love is the foundation of sin's heinousness. 'Every transgression of God's law, or command', according to Hopkins, 'is a crime of such magnitude, that no punishment is adequate and answerable to it, so as to express the turpitude and ill desert of the sinner'.¹³⁰ The word *turpitude* is not used anymore in law; however, in Hopkins's day it referred to acts of baseness which would otherwise be owed to society in general. This provided Hopkins an avenue to demonstrate that hell is a necessary eternal consequence for sinners.

The second death is a demonstration of the heinousness of sin. Perishing forever is the opposite of living forever. Together, these fix the eternal consequences of sin as endless misery in opposition to endless happiness.¹³¹ The law threatens sinners proportionate to their desire to destroy God's universe. From an equal but opposite point of view to God's happiness, there are 'principle ends' of threatened punishment answered. These ends deter and define sin's heinousness, while

¹²⁸ DT1:180-81.

¹²⁹ DT1:242.

¹³⁰ DT1:180.

¹³¹ DT1:186.

defending the honour of God as it shows God's 'abhorrence of all moral evil'.¹³² Punishment is 'exactly proportioned to the evil of sin' as it runs in the opposite direction to God's holiness. In this way, the law becomes 'the standard of truth' by which the self is measured.¹³³ This will be a principle foundation for satisfaction.

E. God's distributive justice is implied in satisfaction by the Son of God

Peter Jauhiainen has observed that according to Hopkins, there is not a specific difference between original sin and actual sin because 'the world exists from moment to moment through continuous divine thought'. According to Douglas Sweeney, Hopkins saw the connection as occurring through divine fiat, whereas Edwards was proposing a continuous creationism.¹³⁴ Hopkins would have been more likely to have embraced continuous creation than a kind of divine fiat received from the likes of Thomas Hobbes. In reality, neither of these proposals, *per se*, is in keeping with the *End of Creation*, which assumed like the British moral philosophers that the universe is a larger system that contains many subsystems in relationship. This means that humanity is interconnected not just by a continuous creationism, but rather Adam and his descendants are taken as 'one whole'.

'Adam was considered', concluded Hopkins, 'and treated as comprehending all mankind. [...] they were all included and created in him as one whole which could not be separated'. In *System* Hopkins established himself in line with covenant federalism and explained by the prevailing moral philosophy of his day. Adam is 'the public and confederating head of the whole race of men'.¹³⁵ In subsequent pages, Hopkins drew upon Edwards's illustration of trees and plants of man's continuity

¹³² DT1:182-84.

¹³³ DT1:182.

¹³⁴ Jauhianen suggested that this distinction was received from Douglas Sweeney. Peter Jauhiainen, 'Chapter 8: Moral Government and the Way of Salvation', unpublished document, shared by email, 285, n8. Sweeney may have interpreted Hopkins's explanation of Romans 5:19 in this way. Hopkins wrote that 'by a fixed, divine constitution' all were made sinners. In other words, it had been predetermined that this would be the case like a natural law. What Hopkins says here, however, is more in line with design of the universe as a system, and mankind, specifically, as a subsystem that has uniform organic characteristics. DT1:214, 220-22.

¹³⁵ DT1:199.

with Adam's original sin.¹³⁶ Yet, the need for distributive justice rises and falls upon 'the strength of inclination and opposition to God's law' because God must be the highest proportionate regard in the universe.¹³⁷

Hopkins did not want to mischaracterize God's nature. *System* begins with a heavy emphasis upon the proportionate regard required of God's absolute, simple nature. In step with classic theism, and with that of Edwards's *End of Creation* (as noted above), Hopkins highlighted how God's just nature is sufficient in its benevolence. This love is disposed to oppose sin. In the words of his mentor, it is 'proper, and desirable, that infinite benevolence and goodness should be manifested and acted out in all instances where there is opportunity for it [assert and vindicate his own character]'.¹³⁸ The nature of God is sufficiently just (whether or not it is exercised). Yet, whenever or wherever sin is found outside of himself, the exercise of his justice is manifested as a vindication of his majestic nature.

Vindictive justice is 'the proper and necessary exercise of justice and righteousness'. Hopkins saw this not as oppositional to benevolence, but 'consistent with infinite benevolence'.¹³⁹ How? It is out of a love for Being in general that retributive justice is meted out. Hopkins's illustration of a judge who executes justice on behalf of a king shows that the judge operates in a realm where he represents his love for the king by punishing a criminal. They are both simultaneously expressions of benevolence. The proportionate regard for the king is such that actions carried out against a criminal (parts of the universe) manifest a proper regard within the realm (universe) for the king. In other words, benevolence to the king is *implied in* the execution of justice by the judge.

Because God's glory is the highest end in the universe, he must punish sin in a way that is commensurate with his own nature. His hatred of sin is contrastively equal to his love for holiness. He must punish as he himself is inflicted. This means that the punishment must be 'nothing short of infinite evil' inflicted upon the sinner.¹⁴⁰ The nineteenth century romantic theologian Horace Bushnell called Hopkins's view

¹³⁶ DT1:210-11. Cf. YE3:391, 405, 407, 413. I am indebted to Peter Janiainen for this observation.

¹³⁷ DT1:233-34.

¹³⁸ DT1:53.

¹³⁹ DT1:54.

¹⁴⁰ DT1:184.

an ‘abhorrence theory’ of the atonement;¹⁴¹ however, he insightfully claimed that ‘it will be found accordingly, if the language of these who take up this abhorrence theory is carefully watched, that they have a latent reference back always to Christ, as being in some penal condition, without which our sin is no way concerned with his suffering, or his suffering with it’.¹⁴²

To this point, Hopkins’s has framed his system as proportionate regard or disregard for God’s glory punishable by just consequences. There is a nominal aspect to this arrangement in the world. There is a display of what cannot be otherwise seen. God’s essential nature cannot be properly visualized apart from signs and pictures. Thus, Hopkins will assert that ‘the work of redemption is infinitely the greatest instance and display of divine benevolence’.¹⁴³ Hopkins is focused upon visualizing what is not visible. The essential nature of infinite benevolence. To save criminal sinners is ‘the strongest exercise, and gives the brightest display of divine, infinite benevolence or goodness’.¹⁴⁴

Like Edwards’s *Discourse on the Trinity*, Hopkins says that Christ purchases the Holy Spirit for mankind. While he does not use the language of the ideal world, Hopkins did describe the atonement as ‘the highest instance of the exercise of the love of God’. The object of the Father’s love finds an ‘equal to its self, and is acted out and displayed to the highest degree’.¹⁴⁵ Again, channelling Edwards Sr., Hopkins

¹⁴¹ ‘Our New England teachers, for nearly a century past, have commonly taken a form of representation that has not as yet obtained general currency, anywhere else. Pressed by the difficulty of any scheme that supposes a literal satisfaction of God’s justice, or the release of the guilty obtained by the penal suffering of the innocent – because it so profoundly shocks the most immovable, and most nearly innate convictions of our moral nature – also by the new-sprung inference of universal salvation that inevitably follows; *viz.*, that, if Christ has borne the punishment of the world, no principle of justice in God will allow him to inflict that punishment again upon the transgressors themselves – pressed by these difficulties they began to conceive that Christ, in his cross, maintained the righteousness of God without punishment by what was expressed, to the same effect as in punishment, of God’s abhorrence to sin’. Horace Bushnell, *The Vicarious Sacrifice, Grounded in Principles of Universal Obligation* (New York: Scribner & Co, 1866), 365.

¹⁴² Bushnell, *The Vicarious Sacrifice*, 369. It is significant that Bushnell ‘accuses’ Edwards Jr. of having a penal frame of reference in his atonement thinking. See also Bushnell, *The Vicarious Sacrifice*, 370-71.

¹⁴³ DT1:251.

¹⁴⁴ DT1:252.

¹⁴⁵ DT1:256.

refers to the work of redemption as the greatest and most glorious of all the works of God.¹⁴⁶

In summary, Hopkins's description of distributive justice, while measured by the law, is regulated by the proportionate regard due to God. Put another way, the distributive nature of a precise justice by law provides the necessary measurement for failure to practice universal, disinterested benevolence; however, precise justice also has a qualitative depth defined by God's essence as motive to act. This corresponds to man's depraved nature which precedes depraved acts. Both the qualitative and distributive aspects nest into one another. The punishment for specific crimes are defined by the law but the depth of wickedness is shown in the infinite qualitative value of Jesus, the Son of God. Each sin is implied in the infinite quality of the one punished. Thus, penal substitution is not to be seen in competition with satisfaction, but rather to be seen as implied in satisfaction.

F. Satisfaction by a Penal Substitution is an Existential Necessity for God.

Hopkins's thinking uniquely blends together the classical elements of the satisfaction and penal approaches to atonement. In the process, he made two moves which seems to resolve common criticism of penal atonement. First, Stephen Holmes's claims that strict penal substitution tends to make God subject to the law.¹⁴⁷ To resolve this tendency Hopkins contended that the law of God is 'an unalterable expression of [God's] heart, or moral character and perfection'.¹⁴⁸ If this is the case, then, God is not subject to the law but rather the law is what God is. As such, the consequences of the law's violation must be satisfied in accordance with 'the truth of God'.¹⁴⁹ Thus, penal substitution is a necessary satisfaction in line with God's 'rectoral justice'.¹⁵⁰ Anselm's necessity for satisfaction, then, 'turns on the nature of God' making penal substitution 'an expression of God's purposes for creation'.¹⁵¹

¹⁴⁶ DT1:259.

¹⁴⁷ Stephen R. Holmes, 'Penal Substitution', 295-314 in *T&T Clark Companion to Atonement*, ed. Adam J. Johnson (New York: Bloomsbury, 2017).

¹⁴⁸ DT1:321.

¹⁴⁹ DT1:321.

¹⁵⁰ DT1:322.

¹⁵¹ Holmes, 'Penal Substitution', 297.

Stephen Holmes offers a second critique of a strict penal substitution view that is strikingly similar to that of Hopkins. The end of strict penal substitution is to remove guilt and ‘seems to fail to teach this [Luther’s] doctrine of imputation’.¹⁵² The chief end of the atonement in Hopkins’s view, on the other hand, is to ‘maintain and honour’ God’s law which is an expression of his nature.¹⁵³ Satisfaction takes on vicarious necessity for a price. Therefore, Christ’s life was the price paid, and this was done as ‘a negative good’¹⁵⁴ in a way that is ‘equivalent’ to the punishment required of the law. Hopkins wrote that the ‘one important and necessary part of the work of the Redeemer was to make atonement for their sins, by suffering in his own person the penalty or curse of the law’.¹⁵⁵ This ‘negative good’ does not impute the righteousness of Christ *per se*, rather imputation takes place through union with Christ. This union occurs through faith.¹⁵⁶

In addressing Holmes’s concern another is created by the vocabulary of ‘equivalency’. This gives a valid perception that the Edwardseans espoused MGT and does not practically guarantee the salvation of the elect. For example, Hopkins, Bellamy, and for that matter, Edwards himself described the satisfaction of God’s nature as a door which is now opened. Hopkins writes that the ‘the mighty bar and obstacle in the way of showing any favor to man’ was removed by the atonement.¹⁵⁷ But notice, first, that the orientation of this door swings open at God’s direction and election. Furthermore, if the satisfaction of God’s nature is the chief end in Hopkins’s atonement thinking, then there is the appearance that it simply a general atonement presentation. Yet, Hopkins, like Bellamy, saw a nesting of ends in the atonement like every other area.

In the Edwardsean moral philosophy, consistency between the chief end and any subordinate end is required. First, if not for the chief end of satisfaction, the subordinate end of ‘the pardoning and saving of sinners’ would not occur.¹⁵⁸ Towards the end of *True Holiness* Hopkins stated that our limited perspective gives the impression of a divided end; however, the satisfaction made by Christ was ‘one

¹⁵² Holmes, ‘Penal Substitution’, 301.

¹⁵³ DT1:321-23.

¹⁵⁴ DT1:253.

¹⁵⁵ ‘There is no truth in the Bible more clearly and abundantly revealed than this’. DT1:324.

¹⁵⁶ DT1:466.

¹⁵⁷ DT1:322. Bellamy, *True Religion*, 288, 337. YE9:333.

¹⁵⁸ DT1:322-23.

undivided interest'. To seek the glory of God in the restoration of his honour was by no means inconsistent with seeking the salvation of the elect. They are really the same action—the lesser end is nested within the greater end of the glory and happiness of God. Furthermore, the infinite benevolence of God's nature can now be understood by finite creatures as opposition to self-love. Christ showed this by his willingness to be damned for the good of the universe.¹⁵⁹

Second, the death of Christ answers 'God's disposition to inflict the curse'.¹⁶⁰ This is an opposite by equal end of satisfaction. In a private letter to Levi Hart in 1786, just after Stephen West's *Essay on the Atonement* was published, Hopkins articulated this opposite, yet parallel, chief end. To his friend, and Joseph Bellamy's son-in-law, he wrote:

We are looking for those ends which it was designed to answer, which would not have been answered had he not died, were any of the human race saved [or not]. Were no sinner to be saved, the death of Christ would have answered no end. If the curse had fallen on *every sinner* the justice of God in punishing, and his disposition to punish would have been manifest. But if any sinners escape punishment, it is necessary that this should be consistent with a proper and full manifestation of their desert of punishment; and of God's disposition to manifest the curse. A manifestation of both of those was made in the death of Christ; but more especially of the latter.¹⁶¹

Hopkins is arguing that the atonement has to have an end whether or not sinners are saved or not. In other words, there is a penal end for the justice of God whether or not a *substitution* is in view. God has a disposition to punish sin. Given either option to spare some sinners or none at all, substitution answers both ends by nesting them in Christ's punishment. Hopkins would argue that this is a greater guarantee of the salvation of the elect than a mere penal atonement for the elect only.

¹⁵⁹ DT3:46-47.

¹⁶⁰ Samuel Hopkins, 'Letter Sent to Levi Hart, February 10, 1786', *Eminent Theologians, Gratz Autograph Collection*, Pennsylvania Historical Society (Case 8, Box 23).

¹⁶¹ Hopkins, 'Letter Sent to Levi Hart, February 10, 1786'.

G. The mechanism at the heart of Hopkins's atonement thinking

Universal, disinterested benevolence is the structure by which Hopkins organized his understanding theology. It is no surprise that the mechanism of atonement is found in the greatest expression of proportionate regard for the glory of God. This is Hopkins's main addition to Bellamy's *True Religion*. If *True Religion* emphasized the logical nesting of ends to create a unitary whole, *i.e.*, the reconciliation of the God's glorious nature (law) with the salvation of sinners (gospel), then *System* deepens this with a restoration of proportionate regard by the purchase of the Holy Spirit.

1) Atonement requires a substitute to restore 'the thing required' of the law

The thing required of the law is love to God; however, self-love is a violation of it. The absence of disinterested benevolence is defined by the law. Violation of the law requires a punishment commensurate to what is required. If no substitute is found to suffer for sins, then the sinner is required to suffer for law violation. In this respect, Hopkins is very much in line with traditional penal substitution theory. 'Eternal destruction of the sinner' is required of the law in compensation for a disregard for God, which by definition is infinite.¹⁶² This means that the sufferings of Christ are 'the only ground or means of the sinner's reconciliation to God'.¹⁶³ Earlier in *System*, the argument for the union of divine and human in Christ is grounded in Anselm's satisfaction theory.¹⁶⁴

2) Atonement requires a substitute to bear punishment required by the law

There is a very similar logic by which satisfaction and penal substitution relate to one another in Hopkin's thinking. One is necessarily implied in the other. Satisfaction is required in God's nature, but the nature of this satisfaction is relative to the penal requirements of the law. In other words, penal substitution is implied in satisfaction. Hopkins acknowledged that the penal orientation of Scripture

¹⁶² DT3:328.

¹⁶³ DT1:328.

¹⁶⁴ DT1:312.

indicates a payment structure. He states that deliverance from the curse does ‘consist wholly in his suffering unto death for their sins [...] which the law threatens’ but this is done in accordance with ‘all the purposes of moral government’. So, the specific sins for which Christ died ‘implies the whole’.¹⁶⁵

The standard objection to vicarious penal atonement centres on the injustice of the innocent suffering for the guilty. In response to this objection, Hopkins told a story of a husband who takes the punishment for his wife. While in a literal sense this substitution appears to be a violation of strict justice, Hopkins answered that mankind has an internal sense that drives us to concede an intrinsic beauty in this kind of exchange. The beauty is found in the benevolence. Hopkins used this story to argue that if man’s moral sense accepts the husband’s voluntary suffering as a satisfaction of justice, then how much more would God who ‘voluntarily took the place of sinners’ in the person of Jesus Christ be satisfactory.¹⁶⁶

Yet, those who continue to press for a ‘real’ justice by requiring the exact kind of pain, Hopkins argued that ‘the circumstance of the punishment of sin’ is what is required to satisfy and ‘not the essence of it’.¹⁶⁷ Again, this way of thinking comes through proportional regard. Christ’s nature is of such quality that he is worth the whole penalty however its duration. To support this argument, Hopkins added that the hypostatic union enabled his human nature to support ‘an unspeakable greater degree of pain than any mere creature’.¹⁶⁸ While the circumstance of his suffering is different than what others will suffer; nevertheless, Christ’s suffering is in response to the same law but with maximal satisfaction due to his infinite capacity.

3) The ‘design’ of atonement is to be general and particular

Like Bellamy, Hopkins oriented the application of the atonement within John 3:16. The difference between the federal headship of the first and second Adams lies in the scope of election. Hopkins clearly stated that Adam’s fall bound all humanity in sin, and he notes that union through faith in the second Adam is the constituting

¹⁶⁵ DT1:328.

¹⁶⁶ DT1:330-31.

¹⁶⁷ DT1:331.

¹⁶⁸ DT1:332.

difference. 'None but *believers* are to be saved by the Redeemer.'¹⁶⁹ Hopkins asserts that

The Redeemer has made an atonement sufficient to expiate for the sins of the whole world, and, in this sense has tasted death for every man, has taken away the sin of the world, has given himself a ransom for all, and is the propitiation for the sins of the whole world, so that *whosoever* believeth in him may be saved, and God can now be just, and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus.¹⁷⁰

Hopkins and Bellamy have been accused of creating a moral government theory of atonement (MGT), which is not in keeping with a classic reformed atonement view. Hopkins's view of the atonement ought to be interpreted in light of the nested ends of the atonement and be considered a mosaic or mixture of these views.

In subsequent paragraphs, he demonstrated the same principle of the lesser ends implied in greater ends. For instance, union with Christ has to contributing aspects which find their end in union. First, regeneration by the Spirit is the greater part of union while the response of faith is the lesser.¹⁷¹ Hopkins accentuated this relationship saying:

Therefore, a saving belief of the truth of the gospel supposes and implies right exercises of heart, in tasting and relishing moral beauty, and embracing it as good and excellent, and thus embracing Christ and the gospel implies all that light, conviction, and assurance of the truth, which is essential to saving faith; and both these, or rather, *all this*, is really but one and the same whole. The gospel is all of a *moral* nature; by it is exhibited the plan of the moral government of God, or his moral, spiritual kingdom, to its best advantage, in the clearest and most striking light. In *this* is the greatest and most clear manifestation of the Deity; and it comprises the sum of all the moral beauty

¹⁶⁹ DT1:364.

¹⁷⁰ DT1:365.

¹⁷¹ DT1:367, 426.

and excellence that is to be seen by created intelligences, in the whole universe.¹⁷²

The ends appear to be sequential; however, this is simply due to the limitations of our time-based nature. The atonement in time is the greatest display of God's infinite benevolent nature from eternity. In this, Hopkins also incorporated his mentor's sense that the world is a stage upon which the work of redemption exhibits the majestic nature of the Trinity.¹⁷³ The structure of Hopkins's atonement thinking is highly influenced by proportional regard (*True Virtue*) and the logical nesting of ends (*End of Creation*).

V. KEY ELEMENTS HOPKINS RETRIEVED FROM HIS MENTOR

A. Virtue in atonement is only a difference of degree and manner

Hopkins's emphasis upon universal, disinterested benevolence is central to his thinking; however, it comes out of his Mentor's engagement with Enlightenment moral philosophy. That Edwards is the source of this vision is more apparent when considering the careful distinction, he makes in *System* between the second adjective *disinterested* when describing man's duty and that of God's nature. For God's nature, Hopkins used the adjective *infinite*, but with man's benevolence he describes it as universal. This careful distinction emphasizes God's infinite Trinitarian nature outside of creation and man's finite nature within it. Man's virtuous benevolence is beholden to the good of the whole, whereas the benevolence inherent within God's nature is not beholden to creation thus infinite. This is a difference of degree.

In *Discourse on the Trinity*, Edwards acknowledged that creatures have a similar nature to God, yet it is nevertheless dissimilar to ours in 'degree and manner'.¹⁷⁴

¹⁷² DT1:426-27.

¹⁷³ 'The blessed Trinity, in the one God, may be considered as a most exalted, happy, and glorious society, or family, uniting in the plan of divine operations, especially in accomplishing the work of redemption, which really comprehends all things, and is the grand design and end of all'. DT1:357.

¹⁷⁴ YE21:113.

When Hopkins described justice as a perfection, which is comprehended in God's infinite benevolence he sought to show how Christ's disinterested submission corresponded to the satisfaction of his justice as a supreme act of benevolence. Benevolence 'still appears to comprehend [includes] all moral rectitude and excellence; and justice or righteousness in the divine Being is nothing but *universal, infinite benevolence*, considered with relation to particular objects, and as acted out in particular circumstances'.¹⁷⁵

B. Application of *HWR* and moral philosophy to personal piety

The statement above contains two important points related to God's nature which are sourced from Edwards Sr. First, Hopkins consistently applied Edwards's moral philosophy, saying that the finite world is a system made up of 'particular objects' and 'particular circumstances' relative to its Creator. This universe is finely tuned to reveal God's immense nature as he *acts* with benevolence and justice in a finite world. So, in the unravelling of time, the way finite man can apprehend divine simplicity is by 'particular circumstances' like the cross. With respect to justice, Hopkins is consistent when he speaks of justice having a general and limited aspect. The general aspect refers to his simplicity while limited aspect to specific acts or 'particular circumstances'. The atonement made by Christ is of a similar design. The atonement has particular implication for the elect and for the divine nature generally. Like Bellamy, Hopkins sees the general aspect as not of lesser value but greater in which the 'lesser' circumstance of the elect is 'implied' in it.

Second, by differentiating between *disinterested* and *infinite*, Hopkins followed Edwards in describing God's voluntary *inclination* towards benevolence. Justice is not an obligation placed upon him from without; rather, it is simply a description of his infinite, yet, simple nature to be gracious.¹⁷⁶ Hopkins, like Edwards, said that 'the moral perfections of God, or the divine holiness, consists in one most simple, pure, uncompounded, unchangeable act; though, to accommodate it to our imperfect way

¹⁷⁵ DT1:48. See also, DT1:82-83.

¹⁷⁶ YE8:422.

of conceiving, it is divided into parts, and a number of attributes, and called by different names'.¹⁷⁷ Thus, along with wisdom, love, and truth, justice is God.¹⁷⁸

Before closing this comparative analysis, attention must be given to Hopkins's borrowed language of proportionate regard. Proportionate regard is a kind of ascent of the heart to that which is excellent. This is language lifted out of Edwards's engagement with the British moral philosophers. For example, the phrase, 'moral fitness', describes the view of an idea in which proportionality and moral excellence is observed. Man has a tendency within to assent to 'moral fitness'. Shaftesbury had observed that even a child is drawn to the simplest of geometric shapes such as a sphere, a cylinder, or an obelisk and attributed this to 'an inward eye' that sets apart well-formed objects from deformed ones. Similarly, men judge actions to be either moral or immoral. Man's natural inclination, Shaftesbury concluded, is towards a moral excellence.¹⁷⁹ Francis Hutcheson also observed that man has 'a natural sense of immediate excellence' which extends to morality.¹⁸⁰

God's inclination is in the same direction only to an infinite degree. Universal, *infinite* benevolence is a moral excellence that is proper, desirable, amiable, and the very definition of decency. In short, the atonement by Christ is beautifully fit in God's eyes because it corresponds to the harmony within the Trinity. Joe Rigney, for example, highlighted how in *End of Creation* there are a 'cluster of terms to talk about *fitness*: proper/propriety, desirable, amiable, decent/decency'.¹⁸¹ These terms as being derivative of Edwards's thoughts on the *economic* Trinity. Yet, Rigney seems to miss that this language is part of the vernacular of Moral Philosophy.¹⁸² And furthermore, redemption by Son was a *method* defined in the Covenant of Redemption which corresponded to the 'natural inclination' of their eternal subsistence.¹⁸³

¹⁷⁷ DT1:54-55.

¹⁷⁸ YE8:425.

¹⁷⁹ Ashley-Cooper, *Characteristics*, 137-38.

¹⁸⁰ Francis Hutcheson, *A System of Moral Philosophy*, Vol. 1 (Glasgow, UK: R. & A. Foulis, 1740), 58-59.

¹⁸¹ Emphasis original. Rigney, *God's Trinitarian Fullness*, 55. Cf. 26-33.

¹⁸² Rigney is aware that Edwards's interlocutors are Shaftesbury, Hutcheson, and Turnbull but does not see the unique application of the moral grammar of the day to God's infinite nature. Rigney, *God's Trinitarian Fullness*, 37.

¹⁸³ Edwards wrote that, 'God's determination to glorify and communicate himself is the *natural* [read: voluntary] *inclination*, which is logically 'prior' to the decision of a specific 'method'. YE20:432.

In other words, there is a profound beauty in the atonement, which brings satisfaction to God—it finds agreement with his nature.¹⁸⁴ Edwards wrote that these two aspects, *method* and *inclination*, are ‘diverse’ from one another and should not be seen as the same. Yet, the *method* of redemption is ‘agreeable [read: harmonious] to the order of their subsisting’. Indeed, this ordering is voluntary, fit and decent, even pleasurable and beautiful.¹⁸⁵ This inclination towards a proportional regard is hardwired into the nature of the Creator and creatures. Hopkins skilfully picks up his mentor’s emphasis upon as proportionate regard and applies it to sin and the restoration of the universe by the atonement. The key difference between Edwards and Hopkins rests in how each viewed the capacity of the self to exercise proportional regard for the glory of God in the universe. Hopkins would say that there cannot be any proportionate regard. In *True Virtue* Edwards claimed that the self has some natural capacity; whereas Hopkins would preface natural capacity as merely hypothetical due to original sin which pervades the whole human race. On the other hand, his signature doctrine of ‘a willingness to be damned’ like the Savior shows a greater degree of consistency with Edwards Sr. than the other two readers. Hopkins derived this from a close reading of *HWR*, which led to a careful application of ideas of sensation, proportionate regard, and degree to not only the atonement, but personal piety.

VI. KEY ELEMENTS EDWARDS JR. RETRIEVED FROM HIS FATHER THROUGH HOPKINS

Outside of the brief mentoring Edwards Jr. had with Hopkins over the winter of 1765-66, it does not appear that Hopkins mentored anyone in his home. This does not mean he was uninterested in mentoring. For instance, an argument could be made that his unstable and impoverished ministry kept him from hosting young men. Furthermore, the numerous letters written to Levi Hart (1738–1808) would

¹⁸⁴ YE20:432. The *method*, says Edwards, reveals ‘from the nature of things [...] being plainly deduced’ actions that are ‘agreeable to the order of their subsisting’. YE20:433.

¹⁸⁵ YE20:431.

indicate interest in the next generation of ministers.¹⁸⁶ In time, both Edwards Jr. and Levi Hart were brought into Hopkins's circle. For example, Edwards Jr. was asked to provide feedback on *System* as well, however, Hopkins did not receive his feedback until after its publication.¹⁸⁷ Edwards Jr.'s feedback also demonstrates a kind of reception from Edwards Sr. in contrast to Hopkins. Indeed, it demonstrates that Edwards Jr. understood his father's theology inside and out.¹⁸⁸

A. Framework of the Edwardsean Theology

Edwards Jr. also corrected a couple of Hopkins's propositions on the decrees of God. Edwards Jr. did not believe that these were necessarily deviations *per se* from his father's *End of Creation*, they are simply oversights.¹⁸⁹ Yet, with respect to how Edwards Jr. received his father's system, his critique demonstrated that he sensed God's decrees and acts as having one end through the consistent application of the futurition of ideas. Specifically, Edwards Jr. pushed Hopkins to reconsider statements that make God himself appear to be the only end of his decrees and works. Hopkins, according to Edwards Jr., failed to highlight that 'to make himself his end, and to make the happiness of the creation his end, is perfectly one and the same'.¹⁹⁰ Edwards Jr. pushed Hopkins on this point because he sensed that Hopkins made too much of this distinction in the practical application of his system. In other

¹⁸⁶ Levi Hart was Joseph Bellamy's son-in-law. The Pennsylvania Historical Society *Gratz Autograph Collection* has approximately fifty letters dating from 1785-1801.

¹⁸⁷ Edwards A. Park recorded that Levi Hart was the first to evaluate *System* and then Stephen West. Park, 'Memoir', 204. Hopkins wrote on the top of Edwards Jr.'s letter of critique to save for a second edition; however, it is unclear if these recommendations were considered at all. Jonathan Edwards Jr., 'Letter to Samuel Hopkins, October 29, 1793', *Park Family Papers Collection*, Sterling Memorial Library, Yale University (MS 384, Box 10, Folder 120).

¹⁸⁸ Edwards Jr.'s letter indicates that he was not afraid to critique his father's writings. For example, he expressed a reservation with his father's assumption that inherent goodness of the doctrines contained in the Scriptures prove their inspiration *just because* they find agreement with true virtue. He wrote: 'I do not believe what President Edwards has written on this subject, in his *Treatise on Religious Affections*'. Edwards Jr., 'Letter to Samuel Hopkins, October 29, 1793'.

¹⁸⁹ Numbers 7 and 10. 'Letter to Samuel Hopkins, October 29, 1793'.

¹⁹⁰ 'Letter to Samuel Hopkins, October 29, 1793'.

words, he believed Hopkins to be too perfectionistic and not permitting a natural self-love to exist whatsoever.

Edwards Jr. also pushed Hopkins to refine his language so that it might better reflect his father's improvements made to theology. In this criticism, Edwards Jr. demonstrated a remarkable internal consistency. Yet, his critique of Hopkins does not imply disagreement with Edwards Sr. For example, compare Edwards Jr. to Hopkins on futurition and the decrees of God:

Mr. Edwards was the first, who clearly showed, that both these [*happiness of creatures and the declarative glory of the Creator*] were the ultimate end of the creation, that they are only one end, and that they are really one and the same thing. According to him, the declarative glory is the creation, taken, not distributively [*sic*], but collectively, as a system raised to a high degree of happiness. The creation, thus raised and preserved, is the *declarative* glory of God. In other words, it is the exhibition of his *essential* glory.¹⁹¹

Hopkins said that 'God makes himself his ends in his decrees and works [...] this exhibition, display, or manifestation is in divine revelation called *the glory of God*; and is there abundantly represented as the supreme end of all God's designs and works'.¹⁹² The display of God's glory in creation is consistent with God's essential glory. Coupled with Edwards Jr.'s proviso that both ends are 'one and the same thing' Hopkins's account of futurition did agree with how he characterized his father's theology.

B. Futurition, Original sin, and atonement

With regard to original sin, Edwards Jr. is uncomfortable with the collapse of future sinners with Adam's sin. 'Dr. Hopkins considers Adam's sin as the sin of all mankind, and supposes that his posterity were considered by God as sinners in

¹⁹¹ Emphasis original. AE1:481.

¹⁹² DT1:72.

consequence of Adam's sin [...] But they are not really sinners, before they are guilty of personal sins'.¹⁹³ Edwards Jr. believed that Hopkins was missing a key element in the Edwardsean doctrine of futurition in regard to sin. Edwards used futurition to explain how God could be just while decreeing sin. He wrote in his journal on predestination that while sin is an evil, 'yet the futurition of sin, or that sin should be future, is not an evil thing. Evil is an evil thing, and yet it may be a good thing that evil should be in the world'.¹⁹⁴ This difference between Hopkins and Edwards Jr. is likely attributed to Hopkin's heavy use of universal, disinterested benevolence as his paradigm for theological and pastoral guidance. Edwards Jr. is much more focused on how the nuances of the triune operations plays out in the atonement as exchange and equality. It is in this area that Edwards Jr. demonstrates a strong pivot towards Van Maastricht's emphasis upon the payment of actual guilt by the Mediator and thus affects his view of non-imputation of sin. This will be considered in the next chapter.

C. Hopkintonian Perfectionism and Edwardsean Realism

Edwards Jr., in contrast to Hopkins, asserted his father's understanding of the natural self and sought to prevent the inclusion of his Hopkin's disinterested submission emphasis known as 'a willingness to be damned'. Thus, Edwards Jr. critiqued Hopkins's perfectionist tendencies. He specifically cites his father's definition of self-love as different from that which Hopkins was advancing. Edwards Sr. regarded a natural self-love even in sinners as innocent. In particular, Edwards Jr. was just as uncomfortable as Roger Sherman was with Hopkins's altruistic reframing of moral philosophy.¹⁹⁵

¹⁹³ Edwards Jr. also critiques Hopkins on the 'consent' of future sinners to sins of the past. This is due to Hopkins affinity for the system of sinners of which Adam is its head. 'Letter to Samuel Hopkins, October 29, 1793'.

¹⁹⁴ WJEO27:5.1.

¹⁹⁵ See Nos. 16-17 in Edwards Jr.'s critique. In addition, Edwards Jr. suggested that Hopkins might not include material on disinterested submission. His appeal to Hopkins consisted in terms of benevolence—that is, inclusion might hurt sales for the publisher, i.e. not be a universal, disinterested benevolent act. In other words, it would be better not publishing it for the greater good of the whole

This distinction is helpful to recognize because it serves to show that Edwards Jr.'s frame of reference is more closely aligned to his father on key points necessary for interpreting the atonement, that is, the Trinitarian operations and the atonement in time as properly understood by futurity from eternity. Pastorally, Hopkin's strong concern for the proportionate regard for the glory of God had unintentionally diminished a proper degree of self-love. This tended to overstress the altruistic element in the application of benevolence arising out of the atonement. The infinite perfection of the Son to love sacrificially is only possible in humanity by the Spirit; however, man's capacity is not infinite. Even the regenerated man needs to be reconstituted for the kind of capacity observed in the Garden of Gethsemane by the Son. In other words, he was the unique God-Man. As it is, a natural self-love can be adequately harmonized in a Godward direction by the Spirit on this side of eternity.

Edwardsean movement. 'Letter to Samuel Hopkins, October 29, 1793'. See also, Tyler Sherron, 'Chapter 7: Third Instantiation—The Sherman-Hopkins Debate of 1790', 207-234 in *True Self-Love in Eighteenth-Century New England: A Case Study of Roger Sherman and The Edwardsean Theological Tradition*, PhD diss. (University of Texas, 2022).

CHAPTER 6

RECEIVING THE ATONEMENT THROUGH PETRUS VAN MASTRICHT (1630–1706)

I. INTRODUCTION: A RECOVERY OF DUTCH REFORMED ORTHODOXY

Once the universities stopped requiring Latin in the early American Republic, works by post-reformation theologians began to slip away from use. Union College in Schenectady, NY was the first American institution to modernize its curriculum by eliminating instruction in Latin at the same time elevating the physical sciences and engineering.¹ Some, but not all Reformed theologians, continued to have a voice into the nineteenth century.² Yet, others like, Petrus van Mastricht are only now being resurrected.³ Reason for the loss of Mastricht's biography and thought goes beyond mere linguistic atrophy. With the rise of the Age of Reason, Van Mastricht began to be perceived as outmoded because of an adherence to a geocentric view of cosmology.⁴ On top of this, *Theoretico-practica Theologia* (hereafter, *TPT*) is a work that,

¹ 'Union College was the first to break away from the strict and beaten classical course, and to place scientific instruction on a plane of equal dignity'. In time French permitted to be substituted for Greek. George Alexander, *et al*, *Union College, 1795-1895 [...] a sketch of its history* (New York: De Vinne Press, 1897), 63-64.

² While Neele does not give a specific reason why Van Mastricht is overlooked, Adriaan Neele provides a list of others who have received more attention: William Ames, Gisbertus Voetius, Johannes Cocceius, Wilhelmus à Brakel, Simon Oomius, Theodore Undereyck, and Herman Witsius. Neele, *Mastricht: Method and Piety*, 2.

³ For biography see Adriaan Neele, *Petrus van Mastricht (1630-1706) Reformed Orthodoxy: Method and Piety* (Leiden, The Netherlands: Brill, 2009); Adriaan C. Neele, 'Petrus van Mastricht (1630-1706): Life and Work', xxvi-lxiii, in *TPT*1; Willem van Asselt, 'Van Mastricht, Petrus van', *Biografisch lexicon voor de geschiedenis van het Nederlands protestantisme* (Kampen: Kok, 2001), 5:360-363; Aza Goudriaan, 'Van Mastricht, Petrus van', 687-688 in *The Dictionary of Seventeenth and Eighteenth-Century Dutch Philosophers*, Vol. 2, ed. Wiep van Bunge, et al. (Bristol: Thoemmes, 2003).

⁴ Joel R. Beeke and Todd M. Rester, 'Preface', xxvii-xlvi, in *TPT*3.

according to Ryan M. McGraw, follows the general pattern of the scholastic disputation. Gradually, the Reformed tradition made a departure from scholastic methods.⁵ This was the second step away. A third step occurred when the Age of Reason gave way to the transcendentalism of German Romanticism in the early nineteenth century. By the time English universities were modernizing curriculum, the old debates with Cartesians, of which Van Mastricht was engaged, had been left far behind.⁶

Still, among the Reformed world today, the English are waiting expectantly for each newly translated volume by Todd Rester from the 1699 Latin being dripped out slowly.⁷ This two-volume Latin set was used by Jonathan Edwards. In spite of Edwards Sr. strong recommendation of Van Mastricht, very little reception study has ensued. This is surprising since there is evidence that Edwards began to model his *HWR* after Van Mastricht's eighth book within *TPT*. Indeed, Gerald McDermott observed that 'we have better evidence of the possibility of Dutch influence on Edwards's eschatology. [...] Mastricht's view on the dispensation of the covenant of grace section [*de dispensation foederis gratiae*] teaches a progressive view of history which the covenant of grace is 'renewed and widened' through time, though not without waxing and waning'.⁸ Furthermore, Adriaan Neele has pointed out that Edwards was processing the implications of Van Mastricht's thought on Trinitarianism, modified infralapsarianism, and covenantal thought in his *Miscellanies*.⁹

⁵ Ryan M. McGraw, 'Petrus van Mastricht and Reformed Orthodoxy', 19-36, in *Petrus van Mastricht (1630-1706): Text, Context, and Interpretation*, ed. Adriaan C. Neele (Gottingen, The Netherlands: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2020), 27.

⁶ 'When German Idealism took over the place that Scottish Realism [modified Lockean psychological empiricism] had once filled as the reigning philosophy of the colleges and universities in this county, the disappearance of the older rationalism was almost as complete as the extinction of the passenger pigeon'. Conrad Wright, *The Liberal Christians: Essays on American Unitarian History* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1970), 20, 34-40.

⁷ *Theoretico-practica Theologia*, Vols. 1-2 (Utrecht: Gerardum Muntendam, 1699). At the time of this dissertation only four volumes had been translated into English by Reformation Heritage Books, Grand Rapids, MI.

⁸ Gerald R. McDermott, *One Holy and Happy Society: The Public Theology of Jonathan Edwards* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1992), 79. Adriaan C. Neele, *Mastricht: Method and Piety*, 12-13. See Neele, where he argues that Edwards's Narrative Theology was not necessarily new but a growing trend arising out of the covenant of grace Adriaan C. Neele, *Before Jonathan Edwards: Sources of New England Theology* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2019), 186ff.

⁹ Neele, *Mastricht: Method and Piety*, 319.

Despite the perception of similarity between Van Mastricht and Edwards, there are subtle differences. For instance, Edwards was unapologetic in his use of new philosophical grammar whereas Van Mastricht went to great length to show he had not departed from the approved analogical methodology. This is in contradistinction to Scotus's theories of univocity which purported to define God's essence by that of finite creatures.¹⁰ Van Mastricht, like Gisbertus Voetius (1589–1676)—his predecessor at Utrecht—was somewhat uncomfortable integrating aspects from a variety of philosophical starting points, yet chose to engage apologetically with them.¹¹ This fact has led some to suspect that, like the Edwardseans, Van Mastricht was caught in a philosophical shift 'towards subjectivity'. Elco van Berg argued that in Van Mastricht's debate with the Cartesians, Van Mastricht may have been influenced. Specifically, she indicated that he may have shifted to a 'more psychological treatment of human faculties', as the intellect and will form knowledge by the interaction with external stimuli.¹² This subtle adjustment, at a minimum, no doubt encouraged Edwards Sr. to boldly appropriate new theories of sensation applied to moral philosophy by Francis Hutcheson and others, which are found in *True Virtue*.

Petrus van Mastricht has been described as 'one of the most outspoken reformed opponents of Cartesian thought in the seventeenth century'.¹³ This is largely due to his engagement with early adopters of Cartesian philosophy in The Netherlands through his elenctic work *Novitatum Cartesianum gangraena* (1677).¹⁴ The threat of Rene Descartes's (1596–1650) new philosophy accenting radical doubt led to intense debate over the role of faith and reason for nearly two centuries until rationalism

¹⁰ Van Mastricht is concerned not to succeed ground to Scotus; however, he will grant that 'there are attributes of which some vestiges are observed by analogy in creatures'. TPT2:125.

¹¹ Goudriaan, *Reformed Orthodoxy and Philosophy*, 54. According to Yoshiyuki Kato, Mastricht 'emphasized the importance of sense perceptions and substantial forms in the process of attaining philosophical knowledge' yet recognized the inability to have a clear and distinct idea of 'God and the universe'. Yoshiyuki Kato, *Deus sive Natura: The Dutch Controversy over the Radical Concept of God, 1660- 1690*, PhD dissertation (Princeton Theological Seminary: Princeton, NJ, 2013), 195.

¹² Elco van Berg, 'Petrus van Mastricht and the External and Internal Call: Cartesian Influence of Reformed Thinking?' 55-70, ed. Adriaan C. Neele (Gottingen, The Netherlands: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht: 2020), 56, 70.

¹³ Berg, 'Mastricht and the External and Internal Call', 57. Neele, *Before Jonathan Edwards*, 32.

¹⁴ Petrus van Mastricht, *Novitatum Cartesianum gangraena, Nobiliores plerasque Corporis Theologici Partes arrodens et exedens, seu Theologia Cartesiana detecta* (Amsterdam: Jansson, 1677). This volume is referenced frequently throughout his systematic work *Theoretico-practica Theologia*.

collapsed into nineteenth century romanticism. As is the case, to carry on debate, one needs to use the language of one's opponents or seek a common vocabulary and grammar. Van Mastricht's eclectic approach may have been a model for Edwards's own eclecticism, which is most notably seen in his moral philosophy.¹⁵ Aza Goudriaan has argued convincingly that Van Mastricht did pick up the Ramist methodology to critique the new philosophy's obsession for a 'clear and distinct perception' (*clara et distincta perceptio*).¹⁶

As radical doubt's antonym, this catchphrase typified the entire Cartesian movement. Yet, the pursuit of 'clear and distinct ideas' was carried into the era of Locke and the British Moral Philosophers, becoming known in the early nineteenth century as Scottish Realism. The British moral philosophers sought certainty in moral knowledge, yet in a way that created a divorce between supernatural revelation and human experience. As was noted in the previous chapter, the Edwardseans were under great suspicion by Robert Riccaltoun because, like Van Mastricht, they had begun to adopt the philosophical language of the day. The Edwardseans went one step further in their dialogue by trying to harmonize natural and supernatural revelation.

¹⁵ Van Mastricht followed in Voetius's pattern of using philosophy as a handmaid to theology. 'It would be more secure to take the middle position: theology is not, according to its forms (so to speak), one habit [Aristotle's intellectual habits in *Nicomachean Ethics*] to the exclusion of the others, but rather, according to its eminence, theology is all of the habits [Aristotle, Ramus, et al], since it possesses the perfections of them all'. TPT1:104-105. Thus, he may be considered to have adopted a 'Christian Aristotelianism' to analyze causality. This was blended with the Ramist preference for definition and distinction. Goudriaan, *Reformed Orthodoxy and Philosophy*, 32. On the Reformed Orthodoxy's preference for 'Christian Aristotelianism, see Richard Muller, 'Reformation, Orthodoxy, 'Christian Aristotelianism', and the Eclecticism of Early Modern Philosophy', in *Nederlands Archief voor Kerkgeschiedenis* 81 (2001): 306-325.

¹⁶ Descartes proposed four steps towards certainty and the 'first was never to accept anything for true which I did not clearly know to be such; that is to say, carefully to avoid precipitancy and prejudice, and to comprise nothing more in my judgment than what was presented to my mind so clearly and distinctly [*clara et distincta*] as to exclude all ground of doubt'. Rene Descartes, *The Method, Meditations, and Philosophy of Descartes*, trans. John Vietch (London: M. Walter Dunne, 1901), 161. Aza Goudriaan, *Reformed Orthodoxy and Philosophy, 1625-1750: Gisbertus Voetius, Petrus van Mastricht, and Anthonius Driessen* (Leiden: Brill, 2006), 54. Mastricht, *Gangraena*, 167, 172-73: '*Quandoquidem perceptio axiomatica non est nisi iudicium aximaticum seu noeticum, ut Ramaei loquuntur ...*' Petrus Ramus was a precursor to Cartesianism in that it displaced Aristotelian metaphysics making Cartesianism more readily accepted through his empirical approach. Aza Goudrian, 'Theology and Philosophy', 27-63, in *A Companion to Reformed Orthodoxy*, ed. Herman J. Selderhuis (Leiden, The Netherlands: Brill, 2013), 41-43.

These shifts in epistemology might appear irrelevant in the reception of Van Mastricht's atonement thinking; however, Van Mastricht's methodology provided a framework for the Edwardsean atonement thinking. Van Mastricht's determined adherence to divine simplicity forced him to analyse the relationship between God's being on the one hand and creation and its subsequent redemption on the other. These, he proposed, are a further revelation of God's essence.¹⁷ Likewise Edwards saw how God's work in creation and redemption could lead to a true understanding of God's essence.

In many ways, Edwards moved Van Mastricht's arguments to their logical end. Van Mastricht would insist that this is, at most, an analogical understanding; however, Edwards would argue for the possibility of a univocal and realist knowledge of God via the Spirit. The purchase of Spirit and its subsequent bestowal to the elect assists them to know God. This chapter will define Van Mastricht's atonement thinking, first, by highlighting those structural elements, which were incorporated into the Edwardsean theological project. After a survey of key elements in Van Mastricht's theological system, a focus on Van Mastricht's atonement thinking will arise out of the eighteenth chapter in *TPT*, 'The Mediator's Redemption Itself' (*De Ipsa Mediatoris Redemptione*), will be considered in conversation with the Edwardseans.

II. MOVEMENTS IN VAN MASTRICHT'S THEOLOGY RELEVANT TO EDWARDS

A. *Vivendi Deo: Intellectus et Voluntas*

Following with the Ramist concern that theology be practical, Van Mastricht began *TPT* in the same stream of thought. Peter Ramus (1516–1572) taught that true theology led to one living well. Van Mastricht did not deviate from Ramus, let alone William Perkins (1558–1602) or William Ames (1576–1633), when he defined

¹⁷ Yoshiyuki Kato points out that Van 'Mastricht argues more precisely that while the divine essence remains incomprehensible to the human reason, it can be *perceived* through its attributes, substance, and actions'. Kato, '*Deus sive Natura*', 243.

theology as *doctrina deo vivendi per Christum*.¹⁸ Living well to God was an exercise consistent with the chief end of man to glorify God for it brings ‘perfect blessedness’ (*perfecta beatitudine*) to mankind. Van Mastricht claimed that there is a nesting together of these ends, ‘if we live for God’ (*si vivamus Deo*).¹⁹ According to Jonathan Edwards Jr., his father was the first to settle this great question. This did not mean that the elder Edwards was the first to think about this problem, but the first to give a conclusive argument showing that ‘they are only one end [...] really one and the same thing’.²⁰ The metaphysical consistency of how these ends nesting together as one was provided for in *End of Creation*. While his was a rational argument towards metaphysical consistency, Van Mastricht’s argument, on the other hand, was one of moral consistency.

In pursuit of moral consistency, Van Mastricht entertained questions about the possibility that ‘some might act for the sake of his own salvation as if that were his highest end’. Van Mastricht indicated that the pursuit of our salvation and the glory of God ‘do not differ so much in their substance as in our reason’. If there is a difference in our reason for pursuing the glory of God, then it is possible for one to be mercenary or selfish; however, union and communion with God occur when God is ‘our highest good and ultimate end’.²¹ The orientation of the self in relationship to God’s glory would be a disputed matter between Hopkins and his fellow Edwardseans; however, in his day, Van Mastricht believed that theology is about spiritual formation of the intellect and the will—the will being ‘the *principium* that commands all spiritual actions’.²² Van Mastricht was less interested in training the self as much as training the faculties of intellect and will. Hopkins, on the other hand, was interested in training of the self to glorify God by its orientation toward God in all things.²³

¹⁸ TPL1:12. McGraw, ‘Mastricht and Reformed Orthodox’, 27.

¹⁹ TPL1:13.

²⁰ ‘Mr. Edwards was the first, who clearly showed, that both these [*happiness of creatures and the declarative glory of the Creator*] were the ultimate end of the creation, that they are only one end, and that they are really one and the same thing’. AE1:481.

²¹ TPT1:103.

²² ‘Theological precepts should be occupied, namely, first, the forming of the intellect [...] the forming of the will, or heart, [...] skill in theology is the habit of the whole person’. TPT1:104

²³ See Hopkin’s correspondence with Susanna Anthony in the previous chapter.

That the will, as *principium*, marshals man's faculties to love God and neighbor is one of the more obvious aspects in Edwards's *corpus*.²⁴ Less obvious, however, but of equal importance was Edwards's interest in the experiential knowledge of God through virtue. While *True Virtue* described how one might acquire the knowledge of true virtue (God's nature) through natural theology, Edwards's other works demonstrated that knowing God in the fullest sense can only occur by regeneration.²⁵ Edwards's cumulative, and life-long, writing project yielded a multi-layered response to the deist belief that virtue was obtainable without revelation. Edwards argued that natural theology could only bring one so far in knowing God. To go the rest of the way the Holy Spirit must actively fill the heart and mind. On this question Van Mastricht is like Edwards. For example, Van Mastricht would claim that 'natural theology is partly in the will, which is inclined to the good, understood as such, which, as experience declares, not even savages themselves reject'.²⁶ The missing piece for a true knowing is the gift of the Holy Spirit to influence the will to close with Christ.²⁷

With respect to how the faculties of man—will and intellect—relate, Van Mastricht is less precise than Edwards; however, he is not wholly different. In answering the question of whether faith consists in 'only the assent of the intellect', he proposed that 'among the British' most think of saving faith as residing in the will alone. He suggested a *via media* in which

saving faith consists neither in the intellect alone nor in the will alone, but in the whole spiritual life of a person—indeed radically in the intellect, but formally in the will and operatively in the remaining faculties of the soul. This seems, at least to me, the most careful way of thinking, principally for this reason, that faith is the first act of spiritual life that informs all human faculties'²⁸

²⁴ YE1 and *True Virtue* in YE8.

²⁵ *Religious Affections* in YE2.

²⁶ TPT1:77-78.

²⁷ '[H]abitual theology, or the skill of living for God, which arises from the precepts, depends upon divine faith, and so therefore must also be taught or revealed by God'. TPT1:100. Richard Muller identifies *cognitio affectiva* as 'of paramount importance to the scholastic definition of faith as *cognitio*'. Richard Muller, *Dictionary of Latin and Greek Theological Terms: Drawn Principally from Protestant Scholastic Theology* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1985).

²⁸ TPT2:14-15 cf. TPT2:7.

In subsequent chapters on regeneration and providence, Van Mastricht revealed that saving faith is a premiere revelation coming directly from God by the Holy Spirit by regeneration.²⁹ Van Mastricht conceded that ‘there are [communicable or common] attributes of which some vestige is observed by analogy in the creatures’;³⁰ however, Edwards more confidently asserted that the moral faculty in man is also a means to know God as much as the natural world.³¹ Yet, to choose to live for God, Van Mastricht contended, ‘we need to know God [*cognitio Dei*] and his works [*operum eius*].’³² Van Mastricht believed that the intellect needed to be informed chiefly through Scripture but is assisted through creation and redemption, i.e. the gift of the Spirit. Edwards agreed and advanced this thesis in *HWR* arguing that God’s nature can be observed in time by acts and prophetic utterances as observed in chapter 2 above.

B. Essentia: Simplicitate Dei et Attributis Dei

In book two, *De Fide in Deum Triunum*, Van Mastricht lays out several classic arguments for the existence of God as a starting point to discuss knowing the essence of God. God’s essence is imperceptible; however, his works in the world provide a means to know him ‘partly by his names and partly by his attributes’.³³ The teleological argument, or as it is more often called, the argument from fine-tuning, may have caught Edwards’s attention. Van Mastricht, however, calls it an argument ‘from the governance of the world’. In this heading, Van Mastricht described the universe as consisting in unity by its distributive parts as gears in a clock. This led

²⁹ TPT3:331; ‘*Quantum ad rem, regeneration nobis, nihil aliud est, quam illa Spiritus sancti operatio physica, qua hominibus [...] vitae spiritualis actum primum concert*’. TPL2:660a

³⁰ TPT2:125. Van Mastricht described how God’s attributes through creation were a particular way of knowing God during the era of the patriarchs. God’s trinitarian nature was also revealed to Adam along with the divine image placed into man in the form of rectitude derived from original righteousness. TPL2:871.

³¹ See Bellamy’s syllogistic summary of *True Virtue* located in Chapter 4. Virtue in mankind is not essentially different than God’s perfections.

³² TPT1:105; TPL1:15.

³³ TPT2:73. This is further developed in chapters devoted to the names of God and his attributes. Cf. TPT2:95-494.

him to rejoice, like Edwards, in the beauty that this harmony presents to the mind. Van Mastricht wrote, 'And will you then assert that this most pleasant and constant unity and harmony of parts of this world [...] exist without a certain most wise, omnipotent, and omnipresent builder and maker (Heb. 11:10)?'³⁴ Edwards is not far from Van Mastricht, indeed, it could be argued that he added depth to Van Mastricht's theorems as colour to an ink sketch.³⁵ Indeed, God's essence can be known from the world he has created by reflecting upon its distributive parts as they relate to its unity.

Essence was defined by Van Mastricht in the formal sense. It is a *substratum* by which the 'attributes, as it were, make complete'.³⁶ The essence itself (the whatness) cannot properly be known; however, by joining together the positive properties 'from our vision and from the effects that it produces' we have a concept of God's essence.³⁷ This he says is not properly a 'clear and distinct perception' according to Cartesians, yet it is sufficient to establish that God has an essence as much as we understand the sun to have an essence.³⁸

This imperceptibility is a twofold problem for theology. On the one hand Cartesian doubt may not permit mankind to know the 'whatness' of God's essence, absolutely. On the other hand, God's independence truly prevents mankind from defining him based on human terminology. This second issue, addressed by Van Mastricht, amounts to a denial of Scotus's claim for a univocity as a 'genus that is appropriate for God and creatures'.³⁹ Reformed reaction to Scotus had created a resistance to defining God's attributes that in a real way was like the radical doubt of the Cartesians. This resistance is referred to in Hopkin's *True Holiness* when he said

³⁴ TPT2:48-49 cf. 'Providence. God's Moral Government of the World. [...]'. YE20:95-106. Under this heading, Edwards also discusses how man's governance of the world through law argues for a general Lawgiver as does Van Mastricht in TPT2:50.

³⁵ On the clock, Edwards writes that 'the world was made that the parts of it might be mutually useful to each other; that is, that the world was made to have all the parts of it nicely hanging together, and sweetly harmonizing and corresponding [...] if the highest end of every part of a clock is only mutually to assist the other parts in their motions, that clock is good for nothing at all; the clock in general is altogether useless, however every part is useful to turn round the other parts. So, however useful all the parts of the world are to each other'. YE13:189-90.

³⁶ TPT2:77.

³⁷ TPT2:78.

³⁸ TPT2:78.

³⁹ TPT2:79.

that divines have paid little attention to the ‘whatness’ of holiness. Instead, Hopkins asserted, there has been debate over definitions and ‘the importance of clear and distinct ideas of it’.⁴⁰ In short, knowing God was the basis of this debate. Put another way, this is a question about the relationship between natural and revealed theology.

Sebastian Rehnman recognized that Edwards was arguing for a measure of certainty that virtue can bring to creatures a real knowing God. Rehnman pointed out a bold, new distinction made by Edwards. In categorizing the attributes of God, Edwards ‘infers a central distinction between the natural and moral attributes of God’ in *Religious Affections*, this in contrast to Van Mastricht and Turretin. These revered theologians distinguished between attributes which are known analogically (communicable) or by negation (noncommunicable).⁴¹ Rehnman attempted to locate Edwards’s inspiration for his categorization, however, the closest Rehnman came to a source is Samuel Clarke. Yet this derived parallelism is not exactly clear even to Rehnman.⁴²

Rehnman is correct, however, to argue that Edwards was developing a natural theology based on moral philosophy.⁴³ Indeed, He quotes Edwards at length about the difference in circumstance between God and man as the chief difference in man’s virtue. Edwards wrote:

I call it circumstantial, because it lies only in the difference of moral inducements they are capable of being influenced by, arising from the difference of circumstances. A ruler acting in that capacity only, is not capable of being influenced by a moral law, and its sanctions of threatenings and promises, rewards and punishments, as the subject is; though both may be influenced by a knowledge of moral good and evil.⁴⁴

⁴⁰ *True Holiness* in DT3:6.

⁴¹ YE2:255. Sebastian Rehnman, ‘Is the Distinction between Natural and Moral Attributes Good? Jonathan Edwards on Divine Attributes’, 57-78, in *History of Philosophy Quarterly* 27, No. 1 (Jan 2010): 58.

⁴² This is inconclusive because Clarke makes different distinctions between moral and natural than Edwards. Rehnman, ‘Jonathan Edwards on Divine Attributes’, 59.

⁴³ [Edwards] proceeds, thus, from natural and moral being in general to human being and human attributes as derivative of divine attributes in particular’. Rehnman, ‘Jonathan Edwards on Divine Attributes’, 61.

⁴⁴ YE1:165. Cf. Rehnman, ‘Jonathan Edwards on Divine Attributes’, 61-62.

By looking for a direct source for these terms, Rehnman missed the more natural source of Van Mastricht. Edwards was developing Van Mastricht's observation that there is a difference between God and man's natures along the lines of proportion. Van Mastricht observed that despite 'the infinite distance apart from the creatures, nevertheless there are attributes of which some vestiges are observed by analogy in the creatures'.⁴⁵ While affected by original sin, there is also the infinite distance.

Distance is a proportional category that creates a different circumstance for moral agents. *Circumstance* is an Edwardsean reframing of Van Mastricht's category of *infinite distance*. For example, a moral attribute like holiness may be known by mankind since there is no difference except for 'circumstance', that is, 'distance'. Hopkins also supported this conclusion by explaining Edwards's circumstance as *degree*, which is synonymous with *proportion*:

Holiness is essentially, in nature and kind, the same thing in all beings that are capable of it. Holiness in God is not different in nature and kind from the holiness of creatures. God's holiness differs from the holiness of creatures in degree, and in circumstances, or in mode and form, agreeably to the infinite degree of his excellence, and the different manner and circumstances in which he exists, but is of the same nature, and so essentially the same thing in both.⁴⁶

Hopkins referred to 'the infinite degree of [God's] excellence' in a way that is consistent with Van Mastricht's concern for a proportional distinction to avoid Scotus's univocity.⁴⁷ According to the Edwardseans, though, Van Mastricht's distinction is a distinction without a difference. In other words, creatures have a natural framework to know God because they are made in his image. While Van Mastricht refused to designate any aspect of man's virtue as univocal, he freely used this term with respect to God's spirituality and simplicity. 'God is Spirit from himself and is called Spirit univocally'.⁴⁸ Simplicity means that God is indivisible even when

⁴⁵ TPT2:125.

⁴⁶ *True Holiness*, in DT3:11.

⁴⁷ See also YE2:256.

⁴⁸ TPT2:143.

his perfections are analyzed. God is ‘omnimodal’ simplicity as Van Mastricht uniquely put it.⁴⁹

Van Mastricht contended that the names and attributes of God ‘assist in the knowledge of God’.⁵⁰ In his exegesis of Exodus 33:18-23, Van Mastricht proposed that ‘in some way’ God’s ‘glorious attributes’ may be made known to us. Van Mastricht inductively argued that God’s essence (face) may not be seen, whereas his attributes (‘posterior parts’) can be known. ‘God’s essence [is] *a posteriori*, [and yet] are in the glorious name in some way made known to us’. Yet, glory, goodness, righteousness, and mercy are ‘one and the same on the part of God’ because God is a simplicity.⁵¹ Specifically, ‘all the attributes together in God are nothing but one certain most simple and most pure act, his very essence, and his infinite perfection’.⁵² The Edwardseans capitalized on this aspect of God’s simplicity when discussing the attributes of God as they relate to atonement.⁵³

Simplicity, argued Van Mastricht, is what governs the decrees of God. The thing decreed differs from the one who decrees ‘but not in the act of decreeing’.⁵⁴ This speaks to the end of the decree, that is, the intent and motive bears within it a consistency with God’s nature yet the subordinate end itself is distinct from God’s being. This distinction with consistency identified by Van Mastricht was picked up by Edwards when he argued that the covenant of redemption was a method agreed upon by the Trinity consistent with their natural inclination.⁵⁵ The decree and method by which to redeem the world agrees with the Trinitarian simple subsistence. It is not insignificant that Van Mastricht identified mercy and retributive justice as

⁴⁹ TPT2:148.

⁵⁰ TPT2:110.

⁵¹ TPT2:114.

⁵² TPT2:117.

⁵³ Edwards Jr. appealed to this aspect of unity in his atonement sermons. See discussion above in Chapter 2. Also, Edwards Jr., ‘Wherever grace begins, justice ends; and wherever justice begins, grace ends’. AE2:30.

⁵⁴ TPT2:146.

⁵⁵ ‘We must conceive of God’s natural inclination [i.e., voluntary subordination] as being exercised before wisdom is set to work to find out a particular, excellent method to gratify that natural inclination’. Edwards Sr., ‘1062. *Economy of the Trinity and Covenant of Redemption*’, 430-443, in YE20:432.

finding a difference only as they relate to an external object.⁵⁶ On both points, a development of Van Mastricht can be seen in Edwards as will be shown below.

C. *Decretis Dei: Praedestinatione et Providentia*

Joseph Bellamy had borrowed several books from Edwards for an extended time. Writing to Bellamy in 1748/9, Edwards requested Van Mastricht's *TPT* to be returned along with Turretin. He had need of them for a new work 'on the Arminian Controversies'.⁵⁷ At about that time, Edwards had also received a set of books from John Erskine in Scotland. Among them was John Taylor's *The Scripture-Doctrine of Original Sin*,⁵⁸ which would be his main interlocutor for *Original Sin* and *Freedom of the Will*. *Freedom of the Will* was a volume that benefited from *TPT* being returned. Yet, there is a general familiarity with Van Mastricht's *TPT* that is observable in the overall Edwardsean *corpus* specifically relating to the decrees of God. Van Mastricht's system is very consistent. For example, in his later application of God's decrees to predestination and providence, he had already prepared a foundation for them in his prior theorems on simplicity. Van Mastricht provided Edwards with tools to think about God's essence in relationship to creation, and ultimately, for how atonement works in the universe with the Son of God as Mediator.

Within Reformed scholasticism God's simplicity governs not only God's attributes but also his decrees. Along these lines Van Mastricht was careful, first, to nuance God's decrees in coordination with divine simplicity. God's decrees are relative to his eternity, which is relative to created time. Van Mastricht proved to be a help to Edwards on how God's eternity coexists with time. The ancients, said Van Mastricht, used a circle whose centre 'coexists unmoved with all the moving points on its circumference' to represent God's eternity in relationship to past, present, and future. Van Mastricht suggested an alternative image of a river. A person beside the river can only see the present water whereas God is able 'with his eye' to take in the past, present, and future water because of his vantage point. The flow of time does not affect God's eternity even though he coexists with all types of time.⁵⁹

⁵⁶ TPT2:146.

⁵⁷ YE16:266.

⁵⁸ YE16:245-250, 257-65.

⁵⁹ TPT2:218.

This exact analogy is developed by Edwards in *HWR* to describe ‘God’s work of providence as it is with his work of creation’. Edwards concluded that it ‘tis but one work’ because God’s work is just one due to divine simplicity. The simple idea of creation is pure act while the outflow is ‘so many different parts of one work of providence’. Adapting Van Mastricht’s river analogy, Edwards claimed, that ‘providence may not unfairly be compared to a large and long river, having innumerable branches beginning in different regions [...] The different streams of this river are ready to look like mere jumble and confusion to us because of the limitedness of our sight, whereby we can’t see from one branch to another and can’t see the whole at once, so as to see how all are united in one’.⁶⁰ The fluidity of God’s works in creation flow as a multiplicity of acts—yet they are one. This interplay between simplicity and his works carries over into God’s faculty of intellect in Van Mastricht’s theology.

This makes the distance between thought and act nil. ‘God’s intellect is its act, as it were, knowledge, and its perfection, wisdom’.⁶¹ This is not mere equivocation, rather, the attributes of God cannot be seen as parts of God or of each other. Thus, the attributes of God have an essential univocity. This is a key feature of divine simplicity. According to Van Mastricht, simplicity is a key difference between God and man. Borrowing heavily from William Ames, he articulated that ideas in man occur through impression whereas in God ideas only occur as expression.⁶² In this respect he followed Ames by laying claim to God’s essence as technically being the subsistence of ‘a single idea only’; however, ‘insofar as there exist plural ideas in God, they are as it were connected among themselves and also mutually dependent upon each other’.⁶³

Van Mastricht developed this Amesian deduction spreading them out metaphysically as having a kind of logical order. Ames recognized that there is a certain order of ‘former and latter’.⁶⁴ Van Mastricht developed this more concretely

⁶⁰ YE9:519-20.

⁶¹ TPT2:251.

⁶² TPT2:257-58 cf. William Ames, *Marrow of Sacred Divinity* (London: Edwards Griffin, 1639), 24-26.

⁶³ TPT2:258.

⁶⁴ ‘Ideas as they are many, so some of them are *Connexa* knit together among themselves, and depend one upon another: whence also a certain order ariseth of former and latter’. Ames, *Marrow*, 25.

by adding that these ideas of ‘former or latter’ are ‘observ[ed] as predestination and providence’ by creatures.⁶⁵ By doing so, Van Mastricht opened the door for Edwards to propose a theological treatise on *A History of the Work of Redemption*, which documents the eternity of God’s mind by way of providence in the space of time. What occurs in time is evidence of God’s eternal ‘predestinating’ wisdom. Providence, according to Edwards, is the outworking of ‘the divine idea’ in creation, and specifically, redemption. Edwards is not far from Van Mastricht who declared God’s ‘essential wisdom is chiefly occupied and concerned with [...] especially in the marvellous work of redemption through the Son by the Holy Spirit’.⁶⁶

Since God’s ideas are an expression of his nature and do not require acquiring knowledge through impression and analysis, they are intuited knowledge.⁶⁷ God, according to Van Mastricht, through this simple essence ‘foreknows a thing as if it were present: he foreknows certainly and infallibly’.⁶⁸ In other words, there cannot be a conjectural knowledge with God—it all must be true. This is built upon two preceding claims that 1) ‘no event can have any futurity except through the decree from eternity, and this decree is most perfectly known to God’ and 2) ‘the immutability of God foreknows immutably, and thus also infallibly’.⁶⁹ God’s knowledge, which reflects his essence, has two kinds of knowledge: simple and visionary.⁷⁰

Of the two, Philip J. Fisk rightly identified the second as *futurition*. ‘Futurition (*futuritio*)’, according to Fisk, ‘refers to a state of affairs that exists outside of time, that is it is *ad aeterno*. But when speaking of a future (*futurum*) state of affairs, there is a temporal time indexation when it comes to pass. The event is born, as it were, in

⁶⁵ TPT2:258.

⁶⁶ TPT2:262.

⁶⁷ TPT2:265. cf. Edwards who wrote: ‘The immediate object of the mind’s intuition is the idea always, and the soul receives nothing but ideas; but God’s intuition on himself, without doubt, is immediate. But ‘tis certain it cannot be, except his idea be his essence; for his idea is the immediate object of his intuition. An absolutely perfect idea of a thing is the very thing, for it wants nothing that is in the thing, substance nor anything else’. ‘No. 94 Trinity’ in YE13:258.

⁶⁸ TPT2:267.

⁶⁹ TPT2:266.

⁷⁰ TPT2:261.

time (*in tempore nascitur*).⁷¹ Van Mastricht, and the Orthodox Reformed, contended that nothing which will be ‘indexed’ into time is independent of God’s essence and nature else it would be divine. Thus, the ideas which are yet to be are derived from Gods nature and must be consistent with his nature.⁷²

Edwards developed this inseparable connection between essence and act in his ‘*Controversies*’ *Notebook* under the topic of predestination. Edwards wrote:

‘The foreknowledge of God will necessarily infer a decree, for God could not foreknow that they would be, unless he had decreed they should be, and that, because they would not be future, unless he had decreed they should be. If God from all eternity knew that such and such things were future, then they were future; then the proposition from all eternity was true, that such a thing, at such a time, should be [...] And therefore, I draw this consequence: That if there must be some reason of the futurity of the thing, or why the thing is future, this can be no other than God's decree; or, the truth of the proposition, ‘Such a thing will be’, has been determined by God.’⁷³

In short, the ideas of God informed by his nature must be consistent. This is predicated on God’s perfection of truthfulness.⁷⁴

In *Freedom*, Edwards described how the Arminian attempt to discount God’s decrees created ‘a fixed futurity from eternity’ that subjected God’s will to man’s free will. The Arminian argument that foreknowledge is ‘antecedent to any purposes or decrees’, in fact would lead to, according to Edwards, ‘a fixed futurity of the state of things’.⁷⁵ In other words, an Arminian seeking to flee from the logic of decrees proposed that God has a simple foreknowledge, which is the limit of his omniscience. Futurity in the hands of an Arminian caused God to be inferior and subservient

⁷¹ Philip J. Fisk, ‘Petrus van Mastricht and Freedom of the Will’, 111-127 in *Petrus van Mastricht (1630-1706): Text, Context, and Interpretation*, ed. Adriaan C. Neele (Gottingen, NL: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2020), 116, 122.

⁷² TPT2:315. Cf. TPT3:5.

⁷³ WJEO27:5.1.

⁷⁴ So Van Mastricht: ‘Just as the will, by its own nature, aims at the good as such, insofar as it is nothing but a rational appetite for the good as known, so the intellect is only true logically when it perceives in accord with its object, so also the expression of the intellect is only true ethically when it accords with the perception of the intellect’. TPT2:279.

⁷⁵ YE1:395.

to ‘a fixed futurition from time’. In other words, the successive events that happen are fixed retroactively from the future into the past. The Arminian inadvertently subjected ‘the will of the most High to the will of his creatures, and [brought] him into dependence upon them’.⁷⁶ Edwards, on the other hand, proposed that futurition was itself indistinct ‘from the perfect nature of the divine mind’.⁷⁷ In other words, Edwards saw no conflict between God’s infinite knowledge as futurition *outside* of time and those future states of being *in* time. This was a very different proposal than that of his Arminian interlocuters. The Arminian saw God as within time as though he was bound to it.

This is most clearly seen in Edwards’s use of futurition as a construct to develop a revealed theology of God’s essence through a recounting of the works of God in time.⁷⁸ This will also have an influence upon how he talks about the atonement. God’s works reveal something essential about God’s nature when he predestined atonement from eternity. The providence of God carries God’s idea of atonement to fruition. Van Mastricht was concerned to guard the simplicity and immanence of God’s ideas from the ideas decreed. Yet, he seems to have at least provided Edwards a template for how the decrees of God preserve the glory of God in eternity while accomplishing his purposes in time. Specifically, a definite decree is made up of 1) an end, 2) means, and 3) an intention. These are also part of what constitutes predestination in so far as it relates to creatures specifically.⁷⁹ These three are nevertheless one and find their origin in God’s knowledge as a fixed futurition from eternity.⁸⁰

On a technical level, *End of Creation* provided the metaphysical continuity between God’s simplicity and the acts of God in creation. Edwards reasoned that in ‘the most strict sense’ God did not have a particular love for that which did not yet

⁷⁶ YE1:395.

⁷⁷ The equal but opposite conclusion is inferred by the Arminian whereas the Calvinist must conclude a connection between the two, if not, an indistinct union between the two. Volition and Act are really the same. YE1:394-95.

⁷⁸ See John S. Banks, ‘Fururition: A Tool to Construct a Theology of God’, 1-18, in *The Jonathan Edwards Miscellanies Companion*, Vol. 3, ed. Robert L. Boss (Fort Worth, TX: JESociety Press, 2023).

⁷⁹ TPT3:9, 31-32.

⁸⁰ ‘Predestination’, in YE27:5.1.

exist;⁸¹ however, broadly speaking, he does have a general love for himself which includes ‘the existence of the creature, even in intention and foresight’.⁸² Rather than pitting these two senses against one another, Edwards said they are ‘coinciding one with the other, and implied one in the other’.⁸³ This means that God has a general love for those states of being that do not yet exist, because they are nevertheless ‘objects of this knowledge, or the thing known’.⁸⁴ Fixed futuration, according to Edwards, is implied in God’s love for being in general. Yet, this is a development from Van Mastricht’s description of God’s decrees. In other words, God’s decrees have a specific end in view. God proposed a means to accomplish this end and has the power to see it through to its end. This power to carry out the decrees is properly identified as providence. Providence is what causes God’s decrees to be carried out as a chain of continuity through time. The *Cause* of the future thing decreed can, to a greater or lesser extent, be seen by thoughtful observers.

The acts which the decrees of God produce are ‘different from God’,⁸⁵ yet the act of decreeing itself is ‘the same as the essence’.⁸⁶ In *TPT*, for example, the decrees of God are described as having both ultimate and subordinate ends. Divine simplicity requires such in relation to creation and redemption. This can lead to an atonement view that has an epistemological original end in eternity with a subordinate redemptive end in time. This balancing act, noted by Joel Beeke and Todd Rester highlight, may have led to Van Mastricht’s unique emphasis on a modified infralapsarianism. Van Mastricht wrote in *TPT* that ‘the supreme goal of reprobation is to manifest God’s avenging justice in the just punishment of the sinner; however,

⁸¹ Edwards will also use the same logic about evil. While sin is an evil, ‘yet the futuration of sin, or that sin should be future, is not an evil thing. Evil is an evil thing, and yet it may be a good thing that evil should be in the world’. YE27:5.1. This is also borrowed from Van Mastricht. ‘So the decree is indeed the cause of the futurity of sin, yet not of the sin itself, which admits as its cause the free choice of the one sinning’. TPT3:9.

⁸² YE8:438.

⁸³ YE8:440.

⁸⁴ YE8:441.

⁸⁵ TPT3:5, 14.

⁸⁶ TPT3:14.

by no means is the goal the destruction of the creature'. This subordination introduces means to reveal God's justice and mercy.⁸⁷

This infralapsarian approach coupled with Edwards's epistemology likely made subsequent Edwardseans sound like the Dutch lawyer Hugo Grotius rather than the Reformed John Owen the Oxford theologian. More will be said about this jurist tendency below. For now, it is important to see how *End of Creation* was critical for the development of the redemption narrative of the Mediator in *HWR*. More will also be said below about the pivotal role the Mediator plays in mediating the essential nature of God to mankind in time.⁸⁸

Before moving into Van Mastricht's atonement thinking, we must consider two final aspects significant to the thinking of Edwards Sr. on the Trinity and the covenants. Again, these are broad structural supports, which can affect the way atonement is described. Furthermore, since Van Mastricht was held up as a model and was prone to eclecticism, then future Edwardseans would have found freedom to develop their own positions out of *TPT*. For example, Edwards's controversial doctrine of eternal subordination of the Son may have been a development of Van Mastricht's 'rational complacency' which directs God's decrees from eternity. While voluntary, they arise from eternity as tendency (that is, inclination) towards the decreed end.⁸⁹ This is nothing less than the Covenant of Redemption made by the Trinity in eternity.

D. Trinitate: Mediator et Foederis Gratiae

Taking as his chief text to develop the doctrine of the Trinity, Van Mastricht led with 2 Corinthians 13:14. That he chose this over other potential texts reveals that he intended to emphasize the economic relations of the Trinity rather than their order of subsistence. He said as much in his textual exegesis. According to Van Mastricht, because the Son is not *before* the Father in subsistence, the inversion of

⁸⁷ Beeke and Rester, 'Preface', xxxiii, in *TPT3*; *TPT3*:25-29; Van Mastricht lays out the logical order of the original ends of creation and redemption which inform the ultimate and subordinate ends along a modified infralapsarian model. *TPT3*:36-37.

⁸⁸ Mediator is Van Mastricht's preferred title for Christ and occurs throughout *TPT*. The first instance occurs in the second book *De Fide in Deum Triunum*. It is pervasive throughout and specifically in book five on each major heading: *De Mediatoris Descensu*.

⁸⁹ *TPT3*:16.

the two found in 2 Cor. 13:14, 'signified the equality of the persons' in the ordering of the 'execution' of redemption.⁹⁰ The issue of equality in the face of economic relations is difficult to articulate with words. Thus, Van Mastricht described these relations as *realiter modaliter* (really-modally).⁹¹ He recognized that joining two words together was awkward but felt he had no other choice lest he descend into Sabellianism. Some choose not to use extrabiblical language, whereas Van Mastricht and Edwards do.⁹² This effort to identify the equality and the economic relations is related to his emphasis upon the mediatorial relation of the Son as will be seen below.

Yet, in *Discourse on the Trinity*, Edwards concurred with Van Mastricht that equality must be maintained in the order of the Trinity's subsistence; however, this equality is developed using economic language. Famously he refers to the Holy Spirit as 'the thing purchased'. Edwards postulated that 'the thing purchased was as much as to be the price; [since] the price, and the thing bought with that price, are equal'.⁹³ While this deduction is clearly framed in an economic way like Van Mastricht, it is nevertheless a development. Furthermore, it is important to note that in human transactions negotiation on a price is subjectively equivocal; however, in God's economy, the transaction is objectively univocal.

This emphasis was developed by Edwards Jr. in his atonement thinking, as shown in chapter two above, as a kind Trinitarian justice of exchange. Hopkins, on the other hand, developed his thinking about the atonement along the lines of moral philosophy as demonstrated in chapter five above. Bellamy, on the other hand, moved towards a covenantal framework with the center being the Mediator as seen in chapter four. The Mediator features prominently in Van Mastricht's and Edwards's Trinitarianism; however, each of the second generation of Edwardseans adapted these insights in their own way. Of the three, Edwards Jr. seems to have captured the Trinitarian implications of the atonement better than the others.

Adriaan Neele has noted how Edwards, in *Miscellany No. 482*, had only established a heading derived from Van Mastricht on the Trinitarian operations as

⁹⁰ TPT2:497.

⁹¹ More research needs to be done to understand whether this way of talking about the intratrinitarianism led Edwards to frame the relations in a way that Strobel would describe it as *personal beatific-delight*. Strobel calls the move 'the denouement of Edwards's trinitarian narrative is his use of perichoresis, and it is the only at this point that the document as a whole can be understood'. Strobel, *Jonathan Edwards's Theology*, 39.

⁹² TPT2:504; TPL1:238a. cf. 'No. 94 Trinity', in YE13:256.

⁹³ YE21:137-38.

family. Van Mastricht's described how they relate to one another in a kind of 'household's fellowship' (*in huius familiae*).⁹⁴ In his analysis Neele suggested, through this approach, Van Mastricht 'portrays the covenant of grace in a two-fold way—a *pactum salutis* and temporal covenant of grace. The former is a prototype of the latter, an ectype'.⁹⁵ Neele is correct in his assessment of Van Mastricht; however, he does not show how Edwards incorporated these aspects into his thinking about God's simplicity from eternity nor his intention to redeem the elect in time. Edwards was beginning to think about how to frame the redemptive acts of God in time as discussed above. While his notes are brief, these gestures towards a relational union with the elect reveal a highly developed covenant thought in which the nature of God in his eternal decrees can be seen in the covenant made with the elect in time.

Van Mastricht argued that the contract made between the Father and Son is

'contracted through the characteristic properties in such a way that three persons are constituted, so also the will, which coincides with the essence, is as it were contracted in the same manner, so that to each person belongs, with the essence, his own will. This same thing is more clearly evident than the noonday sun in the internal operations of God, *ad intra*, as much in the reciprocal essential operations, by which for example, the Father knows the Son, and loves him, and the Son in turn the Father, as in the personal operations, by which the Father generates the Son, the Son proceeds through generation from the Father, and so forth'.⁹⁶

Van Mastricht made a strong case that the covenant of redemption is simply an extension of the *ad intra* operations of God from eternity into time. This being the basis of his two-fold covenant. Upon this observation, Edwards had gone a step further by arguing that the ectypal covenant of redemption in eternity is simply the 'natural inclination' of the Trinity expressed in time.⁹⁷ This 'inclination', according

⁹⁴ TPT2:505; TPL1:238b cf. 'No. 482 Concerning the Economy of the Persons of the Trinity and the Church's Communion with God. See Van Mastricht, Lib. II, cap. 24, § 11'. YE13:524.

⁹⁵ Neele, *Mastricht: Method and Piety*, 319. Neele mislabels Mastricht on the two-fold covenant as Book V, Head 1, § vii; it is rather one section prior, that is, § vi.

⁹⁶ TPT4:14-15.

⁹⁷ YE13:432.

to Van Mastricht, is perceptible as ‘rational complacency’.⁹⁸ In *Discourse on the Trinity*, Edwards characterized this complacency as the Son’s mediation *ad intra*.⁹⁹ In other words the tendency of the Son towards mediation *ad intra* flows out like the rays of the sun.¹⁰⁰ The Son’s mediation in redemption *ad extra* is but an expression of his nature *ad intra*.

With respect to the expression of God’s nature in time, Edwards identified Van Mastricht as a source on the question of when predestination occurs.¹⁰¹ As discussed above, the modified infralapsarianism advocated by Van Mastricht provided an elongation of the process by which *the means* of God’s self-revelation might be observed in time. God is both merciful and just. Therefore, ‘man was created’, wrote Van Mastricht, ‘for the glory of God, because his creation was a proper means of it; and everything else that is decreed concerning man is in intention after this end [...] that God might glorify himself this way, by manifesting his mercy and his just wrath’.¹⁰² In his book on the dispensations of grace, Van Mastricht also charted the development of the covenant by looking at the expansion of revelation through time. In the first chapter, at regular intervals, he stopped to consider what theological knowledge has accumulated.¹⁰³ Indeed, Van Mastricht improved what would otherwise be a traditional retelling of the biblical narrative highlighting the systematic implications, types, and symbols which point to the Mediator. For example, Van Mastricht described Isaac as a form (figure) of the Son of the Father, only begotten from the woman, dearly loved, innocent, compliant unto death.¹⁰⁴

This emphasis in Van Mastricht is picked up by Edwards and is observable in *HWR*. Edwards examines the acts of the Mediator through time as evidence of God’s nature in eternity. As beautiful as this knowledge is, it is still limited with respect to knowing God in an archetypal way. As an essential corollary to knowing God’s

⁹⁸ TPT3:16.

⁹⁹ See discussion in chapter 2. YE21:114, 116-117, 134-37.

¹⁰⁰ Van Mastricht uses the rays of the sun to illustrate how they coexist not in order of time but by virtue of its essence. TPT3:16.

¹⁰¹ YE13:383-84. Neele misidentifies the location of this reference as found on YE13:293. Neele, *Mastricht: Method and Piety*, 319.

¹⁰² YE13:383-84.

¹⁰³ TPL2:871-72, 884. Van Mastricht also paused to look at what could be learned in nature that can be doctrine which leads one to live to God (*nisi doctrina et artificium vivendi Deo*). TPL2:885.

¹⁰⁴ TPL2:886.

essence, creatures must be provided the gift of the Spirit for true knowing by true virtue. Thus, in the Edwardsean project, time provides the ‘elongation’ to examine God’s essence, which divine simplicity prevents. Indeed, Van Mastricht also affirmed that the *temporal covenant* of grace was not designed to be ‘all at once [...] but by degrees through various times, intervals, distances [...] periods, epochs, revolutions, broadening out’.¹⁰⁵ Edwards picked this dispensational image up and sought to show

[N]ot only what Christ the mediator has done, but also what the Father and the Holy Ghost have done as united or confederated in this design of redeeming sinful men; or in one word, all that is wrought in execution of the eternal covenant of redemption. This is what I called the Work of Redemption in the doctrine, for ‘tis all but one work, one design. The various dispensations and works that belong to it are but the several parts of one scheme. ‘Tis but one design that is done to which all the offices of Christ do directly tend, and in which all the persons of the Trinity do conspire and all the various dispensations that belong to it are united, as the several wheels in one machine, to answer one end and produce one effect.¹⁰⁶

This machine with the revolutions of its wheels, like Van Mastricht’s river with its many tributaries, was a means to ‘answer one end and produce one effect’. Edwards observed in Van Mastricht a reluctance to describe the consent of the Trinity as a covenant of redemption *per se*.¹⁰⁷ Thus, *Miscellany No. 1062* provided the rationale for moving the *Pactum Salutis* towards method and inclination as part of God’s essence.¹⁰⁸ This, Edwards took from Van Mastricht who took from Ames (see discussion above).

¹⁰⁵ ‘*Quod ergo Deus, foedus gratiae in Christo, non simul et semel promulgare, nec uno eodemque modo voluerit dispensare [...] sed gradatim, per varia tempora, intervalla, distantias, quibus convenienter, plenius et planius innotesceret mundo mysterium hujus foederis, scil. per tot periodos, epochs, curricula, dilatatum, ut diximus*’. TPL2:891 (Lib. 8, Cap. 1, § 40).

¹⁰⁶ YE9:117-118.

¹⁰⁷ Van Mastricht describes this as consent among equals. TPT4:18.

¹⁰⁸ Many have critiqued this theological covenant as ‘omitting a role for the Holy Spirit’. However, Laurence O’Donnell shows how this is not the case with respect to Owen. Owen shows that there is expectation of the promise of the Spirit in the service of mediation by the Son. See, Laurence R. O’Donnell III, ‘The Holy Spirit’s Role in John Owen’s ‘Covenant of the Mediator’ Formulation: A Case Study in Reformed Orthodox Formulations of the *Pactum Salutis*’, *Puritan Reformed Journal* 4,

Furthermore, Van Mastricht's twofold concept of covenant, i.e., from eternity flowing into time, was designed to be one thing with ultimate and subordinate ends, that is the glorification of God as the greater and the salvation of the elect as the lesser. Thus, Edwards reclassified Van Mastricht's eternal covenant as method, which he said agrees with the 'natural inclination' of God's essence.¹⁰⁹ The temporal effect of this covenant is therefore observable throughout time—chiefly in the Mediator.¹¹⁰ Van Mastricht wrote, 'Christ is called the power and wisdom of God (1 Cor. 1:24). For what more profound wisdom can be thought of than that by which the highest justice is reconciled with the highest mercy, by which the very Son of God is substituted for the sinner, and so forth.'¹¹¹

This substitution is the climax of Trinitarian revelation through the Mediator in the history of the world. The use of sacred and secular history to curate the account of redemption, according to Aza Goudriaan, 'was not a common practice of Reformed systematic theologians at the time'. Thus, the addition of Van Mastricht's eighth book (*De Dispensatione Foederis Gratiae*) in *TPT* was novel.¹¹² While an

No. 1 (2012): 91-115. Edwards by contrast magnifies the person of the Spirit in the *Pactum Salutis* in *Miscellany No. 1062*. YE20:440-43.

¹⁰⁹ 'This order [or] economy of the persons of the Trinity with respect to their actions ad extra is to be conceived of as prior to the covenant of redemption, as we must conceive of God's determination to glory and communicate himself as prior to the method that his wisdom pitches upon as tending best to effect this. [...] [W]e must look on the particular method that shall be chosen [...] immediately owing to the natural disposition of the divine nature [...] We must conceive of God's natural inclination as being exercised before wisdom is set to work to find out a particular, excellent method to gratify that natural inclination'. YE20:432.

¹¹⁰ '[this] work is carried on from the fall of man to the end of the world'. YE9:118.

¹¹¹ *TPT*4:49.

¹¹² Goudriaan, *Reformed Orthodoxy and Philosophy*, 215. Willem van Vlastuin has characterized this movement in Reformed Orthodoxy as a reaction to the rising Arminian emphasis on unlimited atonement. Thus, there was a development of a three-fold covenant (i.e., a covenant of works, grace, and redemption), which characterizes Edwards's thinking. Yet, many scholars like Van Vlastuin miss Edwards's use of moral philosophy to justify this augmentation. It would be better to describe Edwards's as holding to a two-fold covenant of grace with the eternal covenant as pure act and the temporal as act. The pure act consists of inclination (mediation) and method (substitution). As such, Edwards is saying that the 'natural inclination' of the Trinity is towards mediation by substitution. Van Vlastuin believes that this approach makes salvation to be 'rooted in [...] the will of the three persons of the Trinity' but 'not in the essence of God'. Yet, while there is a will to choose substitution, this choice, according to Edwards, is rooted in essence. Thus, mediation is essential for Trinitarian relations and for the salvation of the elect. Willem van Vlastuin, 'Federalism and Reformed Scholasticism: Jonathan Edwards's doctrine of the covenant in its reformed context', 183-198, in D.

uncommon practice it nevertheless captured Edwards's imagination inspiring his own emphasis upon the work of the Mediator in the progress of history beginning with the fall just as had Van Mastricht. To both theologians the atonement was revelatory as much it was salvific, the Mediator being the hinge between eternal and the temporal, the infinite and the finite, the Trinity and the church.¹¹³

E. Summary of Key Movements in Van Mastricht's Theology

Locke had observed in *Essay on Human Understanding* that meaning is created when particulars are brought together for comparison. Universe is a word-picture, he said, which speaks to the bringing together of particulars to create a complex idea.¹¹⁴ This 'bringing into one idea' is not just a turn of a phrase, but the process by which meaning is created. God was, to Edwards, knowable because the circumstances by which he relates to the universe was that of a sovereign creator and ruler. His moral nature was not wholly different from mankind except for his circumstantial distance and relation to us in the universe. This development of Van Mastricht leads to a profound understanding of God's purposes in the world, which may be known to image bearers through their sense of virtue in the world.

'Edwards's dominating vision', wrote Gerald R. McDermott in the foreword to Rob Boss's *Thunder God, Wonder God*, 'was of a communicating God. His [Edwards's] God, who I would suggest is the God of the Bible, is a God who is continuously communicating his truth, goodness, and beauty through the near-infinite particularities of the world. In other words, God is constantly speaking'.¹¹⁵ This observation is not uniquely Lockean or Edwardsean *per se*. Argument from design is as old as Aquinas and Aristotle even though it is recited by Van Mastricht.¹¹⁶ Still, Van Mastricht began to lay the infrastructure for knowing God in the natural world

Sweeney and J. Sieverman (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Jonathan Edwards Online* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2021), 185, 191.

¹¹³ 'In this way a mediator is necessary, not just any sort, but one that is [...] fitting, that is, squarely in the middle, as much with respect to his person, as the Son between the Father and the Holy Spirit, as with respect to his natures, as the θεάνθρωπος, God-man, between God and man'. TPT4:59.

¹¹⁴ Locke, *Essay*, 2:24, § 3.

¹¹⁵ Gerald R. McDermott, 'Foreword', i-v, in Robert Boss, *Thunder God, Wonder God: Exploring the Emblematic Vision of Jonathan Edwards* (Fort Worth, TX: Jonathan Edwards Society Press, 2023), ii.

¹¹⁶ TPT2:48-49.

by claiming that God's works in the world provide a means to know him 'partly by his names and partly by his attributes'.¹¹⁷ The parts that we do see can be taken together as a whole to form an understanding of God. While Van Mastricht saw an infinite distance, Edwards claimed that this was simply a proportional issue created by circumstance. Thus, from lesser to greater a conceptual framework could be formed out of the archetypal of God about God himself.

This framework of unity and parts is apparent in Van Mastricht's theological project. He carefully balanced the attributes with divine simplicity. This is not merely a mathematical or logical deduction but a holistic approach to theology. When he speaks of the acts of God, they are but reflections of his divine simplicity. Predestination corresponds to his nature as an inclination to manifest both perfections of justice and mercy. The means by which he glorifies himself through his perfections occurs in redemptive history. The holistic approach made Van Mastricht's theological system a practical way to observe the works of God in history. Specifically, the temporal covenant of grace mediated the eternal covenant of grace. Van Mastricht contended that 'we need to know God [*cognitio Dei*] and his works [*operum eius*]' so we might choose to live for God.¹¹⁸ Yet, even Van Mastricht knew that there is a limited ability to know God apart from regeneration; however, there is a framework for knowing him found in sinners. Edwards deepened Van Mastricht's metaphors and strengthened his arguments with the philosophical tools available in his day.

III. TOWARDS VAN MASTRICHT'S ATONEMENT THEORY

In the previous two chapters (4-5) each theologian's atonement thinking was developed using the categories provided by Oliver D. Crisp with some minor adjustments. This chapter will generally follow the same pattern; however, it will provide a comparative analysis to that of Edwards primarily rather than Anselm. Since Van Mastricht's writing is much more systematic than the Edwardseans (except for Hopkins), most of his atonement thinking is found in his chapter titled 'The Mediator's Redemption Itself' (*TPT* 1.5.18). Before turning to the systematic

¹¹⁷ *TPT*2:73. This is further developed in chapters devoted to the names of God and his attributes. Cf. *TPT*2:95-494.

¹¹⁸ *TPT*1:105; *TPL*1:15.

categories relevant to the atonement, Van Mastricht's reason for which he consistently used the word *Mediator* to describe the Son must be considered.

Van Mastricht's fifth book *De Redemptione Christi* focused exclusively on Christ as mediator. Just prior to his taking the professorship at Utrecht, Van Mastricht's predecessors debated how the atonement assisted in the forgiveness of the sins of OT saints. Picking up Voetius's argument for the *expromissio* of Christ from eternity, Van Mastricht faithfully argued the centrality of Christ's absolute surety arising out of the *pactum salutis* against Cocceius's *fidejussio*. This led to a sense that the Mediator's forgiveness was granted absolutely from eternity although it was still necessary for an atonement to occur in time. From the vantagepoint of eternity Old Testament saints were forgiven *ipso facto*.¹¹⁹ This perspective led Van Mastricht to describe the work of redemption as having a technical center in the covenant of grace, but also a larger field of vision visible through the dispensations of grace.¹²⁰

The Mediator has a threefold office by which he executes his role as the center: 'In this way a mediator is necessary, not just any sort, but one that is [...] fitting, that is, squarely in the middle, as much with respect to his person, as the Son between the Father and the Holy Spirit, as with respect to his natures, as the θεάνθρωπος, God-man, between God and man'.¹²¹ The humiliation and exaltation of Christ was the priestly center while 'the prophetic function of the Mediator [...] was] as much under the Old Testament as under the New'.¹²² In his kingly office he sees the dispensations of grace to its completion.¹²³

¹¹⁹ TPT4:34-37. See discussion in Willem J. van Asselt, 'Expromissio or Fideiussio? A Seventeenth-Century Theological Debate Between Voetians and Coccejans About the Nature of Christ's Suretyship in Salvation History', 37-57, in *Commemorative Issue: Johannes Cocceius (1603-1669)–Jonathan Edwards (1703-1758)*, *Mid-America Journal of Theology* 14 (2003).

¹²⁰ Van Mastricht devotes nearly the whole apologetic section of the first chapter of the eighth book *The Dispensations of Grace* to deal with Cocceius's view of the covenant of grace. TPL2:887-91. Van Mastricht argued that grace was still preached through the Sinai covenant even though, like the Noahic covenant, it was a restatement of the covenant of works from the beginning (2.8.18-19). See TPTL:896. Rehman discusses how Van Mastricht saw the covenant of grace as operative in the Old Testament along with the covenant of works as law and gospel. See Sebastian Rehman, 'Is The Narrative of Redemptive History Trichotomous or Dichotomous? A Problem for Federal Theology', *Nederlands archief voor kerkgeschiedenis* 80, No. 3 (2000): 296-308.

¹²¹ TPT4:59.

¹²² TPT4:185.

¹²³ 'Insofar as it is that function of the mediatorial office by which he administers and governs with authority and power all things which regard the salvation of his own'. TPT4:242.

While Van Mastricht has a chapter for each of these offices, he nevertheless leaves them narratively undeveloped until the eighth book. For example, regarding the kingly role, Van Mastricht developed this feature in connection to the covenant made with David. A covenant has its own form (*forma*) with internal and external aspects. Specifically, this covenant would not unfold absolutely (*immediata*) as one reality, but by mediation (*mediata* lit. in the middle), it would fill out (*complementum*) over time. Gradually, this covenant with its promises would arise through his seed, but in part through David, Solomon, and finally in the Messiah himself.¹²⁴ This agrees with his twofold covenant of grace which is eternally settled within the divine subsistence and is developed through the unraveling of time in its many parts. Van Mastricht's use of unity and parts, as seen in the Davidic covenant, is a tool to develop his theological framework.¹²⁵ This technique also assists in the articulation of his atonement thinking, which we will come to shortly.

Furthermore, the use of the word *mediata* indicates his sensitivity to the work of the Mediator through the Old Testament dispensation until the time of the incarnation. In the decline of the Davidic dynasty, Van Mastricht also noticed that the covenant of grace was being renovated from the beginning and was mediated by the prophets leading to the greater Prophet to come. The mode of the covenant of grace was not offered absolutely (*immediate*) through the covenant of works in the days of Adam, Noah, nor Israel at Sinai, but through the prophets, grace was mediated (*mediata*). In this Van Mastricht made an important move by saying that the two covenants coalesce spiritually through the Messiah.¹²⁶ While these narrative elements will have been developed later in *TPT*, they do provide important context for how Van Mastricht will promote the essence of God. The eternal covenant of grace is seen and satisfied as the Son stands 'in the middle' for the guilt of mankind. The atonement will provide a good look into the nature and perfections of the Trinity.

The *part* within the *whole* is also a metaphysical tool used by Van Mastricht to explain the atonement which brings satisfaction. This is also seen in how he talked

¹²⁴ TPL2:910.

¹²⁵ Just as Van Mastricht sees the Sinai and Noahic covenants as renewal of the covenant of works, so he identifies the covenant made with David as a renewal of the covenant of grace. *Deus per Nathanem Prophetam, cum eo foedus illud gratiae renovavit, quod jam explicuimus*. TPL2:910b. Another renovation of the covenant of grace occurs, according to Van Mastricht, during the Babylonian captivity as the New Covenant prophecy of Jeremiah and Ezekiel (2.8.35). TPL2:919-20.

¹²⁶ TPL2:920b-21a.

about the difference between the Old and New Testaments. They are not altogether different in their essential qualities (*essentialis*). Rather, it is simply a difference in circumstances (*circumstantialis*). The *dispensational* parts find their place now in the whole.¹²⁷ This is a nesting of ends (subordinate and ultimate), while not explicitly stated by Van Mastricht, is picked up by Edwards and his students. Indeed, the very first lines of *TPT* promote an atonement view in which personal happiness as an end is nested into the ultimate end of God's glory. The atonement occurs in creation so that 'God indeed might receive his own glory, but in God and his glory, we might receive perfect blessedness'.¹²⁸ This nesting of ends is very much Van Mastricht's governing principle. Yet, the mechanism which secures this glory for God and the happiness of mankind occurs 'squarely in the Mediator' who brings a harmony to the whole.

A. God's Essential Justice and Mercy are supported by his Truthfulness

In his chapter on the 'Mediator as a High Priest' (*TPT* 1.5.6), Van Mastricht identified four reasons why a mediating priest is necessary for humanity. First, 'injury against [...] the infinite majesty of God [...] demands the vengeance of death'.¹²⁹ Although the offense was created against the Father alone the 'eternal covenant of grace was constituted', secondly, so that a mediatorial priest might satisfy the injury.¹³⁰ This injury is as much relational as it is judicial. Out of this offense is a dilemma, or as Van Mastricht put it, 'a friendly conflict of avenging justice [...] with mercy' resulting in 'the most amiable conspiracy'. The one perfection 'demands punishment' while the other 'demands the preservation of the sinner'. To these two perfections Van Mastricht added God's truthfulness, which requires the execution of his threatening of punishment for injury. The tension, which exists between the divine perfections of justice and mercy, is 'satisfied through the Son, as the priest

¹²⁷ TPL2:943. Up to this point all the prior expressions of covenant are *mediate*. Van Mastricht makes the move to say that now that Christ has come the covenant is *immediate*. *Cum immediate a Christo, viva voce annunciate Euangelium Marc 1.14 tum mediate per suos ministros, Prophetas, Apostolas, Euangelistas, perque universum ministerium N.T.* TPL2:944-45.

¹²⁸ TPT1:99.

¹²⁹ TPT4:213.

¹³⁰ TPT4:203.

who offers himself for the guilt of the sinner, from which Christ is named the wisdom and power of God'.¹³¹

The addition of truth as a third perfection involved with satisfaction is not simply a passing detail,¹³² but one which gave shape to Van Mastricht's atonement thinking and is picked up by the Edwardseans who read his theology. Truthfulness was a prominent feature in New Divinity. They were eventually called 'Consistent Calvinists' because of it. In Edwards's *Miscellany No. 779 The Necessity of Satisfaction*, Edwards identified truth as a substratum of God's decrees. The 'obligation on God in executing' does not pertain to the nature of the law itself, but rather from 'the omniscient God in threatening, consequent on the futurity of the execution'.¹³³ In other words, the truthfulness and trustworthiness of God is at stake in the atonement or in the execution of justice. The 'inviolable connection between absolute [threatening] and execution' is consequent upon God's absolute nature. Thus, justice requires satisfaction on the basis that God is truth.¹³⁴ Bellamy also argued that if there were any abatement of punishment for sin so as 'to let sin go unpunished' it would be 'as it is to lie; for his *justice* is as much himself, as his *truth*'.¹³⁵ Hopkins would write that as such, the consequences of the law's violation must be satisfied in accordance with 'the truth of God'.¹³⁶ Edwards Jr. also emphasized how punishment is a positive good in the universe by the same metaphysical link between truth and justice. He said, God will 'be just *to himself* and to the *universe*' because he cannot lie to himself.¹³⁷

¹³¹ TPT4:213.

¹³² 'God's avenging justice demanded an eternal condemnation from the sinner [...], and to its help came his immovable truthfulness, pronouncing upon the sinner death and every kind of evil as a punishment; on the other hand, grace and mercy contended for the preservation of the sinner'. TPT4:227. See also, TPT4:407, 432.

¹³³ 'No. 779. The Necessity of Satisfaction', in YE18:445.

¹³⁴ YE18:445. Future Edwardseans would talk about the collapse of God's moral government should he not 'fulfill every punctilio' that the law threatened. YE18:445.

¹³⁵ Emphasis original. Bellamy, TRD, 303-304.

¹³⁶ DT1:321.

¹³⁷ AE2:33. See also, Edwards Jr., 'Christ Crucified', AE2:286-87. On the support and vindication of the truth of God, see Edwards Jr., 'No. 866', 5.

B. Privation, ‘The Middle Thing’, and the Consequence of Sin

Sin is lawlessness. Lawlessness is ‘something discordant with the law, not just anyone’s law, but the law of the Lawgiver who is able to save and to destroy’. Van Mastricht claimed that sin is neither something ‘positive or real’ nor is it ‘something purely negative’. Rather ‘nothing remains except that [sin] be said to be something privative, or the absence of some moral good when it ought to be present’.¹³⁸ Van Mastricht went on to describe the threefold consequence of sin as disgrace, guilt, and punishment.¹³⁹ According to Guus Labooy, Van Mastricht purposely structured these consequences in such a way that the ‘middle term’ guilt might be transferable to others.¹⁴⁰ Thus, he subdivided guilt into *reatus potentialis* and the second as *reatus actualis*. The former is inseparable from sin; the latter is separable from the sinner. Labooy argued that Van Mastricht cannot really subdivide guilt so as to make it transferable to others because guilt cannot be separated from sin. In Labooy’s view, Owen makes a better case for a relational or ‘representative deservedness’.¹⁴¹ Labooy’s insight is helpful, but he overlooked the context of this discussion as related to ‘divine law’ since sin is also lawlessness, and *reatus actualis* occurs upon judgment by the law.

Van Mastricht attempted to provide a rational explanation for the relationship between fault caused by privation and punishment required to amend the privation. Each of these consequences of sin are relative to divine law which is ultimately the expression of the divine essence. A better explanation of Van Mastricht’s purposes for creating a *via media* between fault and punishment is that of atonement by a mediator. Guilt is ‘a certain middle thing’ that is relative to both and yet one.¹⁴² Van Mastricht’s metaphysic permits a Venn Diagram (see figure 6.1) in which the overlapping elements create a ‘trinity’ in ‘this middle thing’ which occurs in relation to the divine law. Sin’s metaphysical properties, however, only become apparent in relationship to the divine law, which is the expression of the divine nature. In other

¹³⁸ TPT3:448.

¹³⁹ TPT3:449-450.

¹⁴⁰ Guus Labooy, ‘The Coherence of Equivocal Penal Substitution: Modern and Scholastic Voices’, 227-241, in *International Journal for Philosophy of Religion* 86 (March 2019). <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11153-019-09709-y>

¹⁴¹ Labooy, ‘Coherence of Equivocal Penal Substitution’, 238.

¹⁴² TPT3:450.

words, this guilt dilemma is more visible in relationship to God. The ‘middle thing’ is a *locus* that a mediator can interpose himself, that is, relationally, ‘in the middle’.¹⁴³ Thus the Mediator took upon himself ‘the middle thing’ so as to be a suitable offering to God ‘equivalent to their guilt’ to satisfy his divine nature, i.e., the law.¹⁴⁴ This equivalence will be explicated below in relation to divine simplicity.

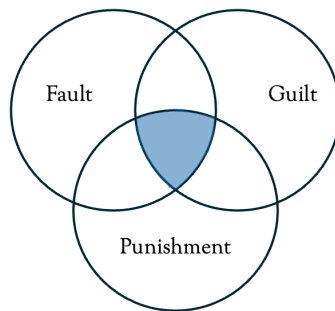


Figure 6.1 ‘The middle thing’ in Consequence of Sin

For now, it is sufficient to recognize Van Mastricht’s metaphysic of sin’s consequences as fitting to his system and observe how the Edwardseans responded to it. In *Original Sin* Edwards made the case that the greatest merit that man is capable to obtain to is limited by his finite nature. This being the case, man’s obligation is not as great as his failure to obey. Man’s failure to obey creates an infinite consequence.¹⁴⁵ This is a classic Anselm account of sin, or as Oliver Crisp put it, a ‘threshold account of the heinousness of sin’.¹⁴⁶ In this respect, Edwards and Van Mastricht repeated the classic elements of Anselm’s atonement thinking. Man is in an infinite moral deficit in his relation to ‘the great Lawgiver’.¹⁴⁷ Sin is heinous because it is understood to be a lawless attack against God’s infinite honour.

¹⁴³ TPT4:227.

¹⁴⁴ TPT4:592.

¹⁴⁵ YE3:130.

¹⁴⁶ Oliver D. Crisp, *Participation and Atonement: An Analytical and Constructive Account* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2022), 103.

¹⁴⁷ YE3:131.

C. God's distributive justice is retributive and remunerative

Van Mastricht saw a dual aspect in punishment. Punishment for sin, he said, is adjudicated 'partly by virtue of the divine law' and 'partly from the nature and demerit of sin itself'.¹⁴⁸ Since sin is a privation of good, the inflicted retributive justice is inversely meted out 'to the merit of sin'. In other words, it explains the degree of privation of the good owed to God. Retributive justice, then, is a direct reflection of the violated relationship between God and mankind. Nothing short of eternal death is just penalty for 'the violation of the infinite majesty'.¹⁴⁹ Man's sin incurs such guilt that it cannot just be swept aside. Anything less than the Son of God as mediator would be considered 'mere acceptilation' and not just or true.¹⁵⁰

This could also be stated in a positive respect, too. Typically, the positive effects of punishment are overlooked. The just punishment of sin contributes to harmony and beauty in the universe to answer the privation. In this respect Edwards Sr. also observed an argument from fine-tuning that 'justice requires that sin be punished, because sin deserves punishment'. In other words, there is a law of distributive justice which is self-evident. Sin excites within the universe something to find an appropriate punishment to answer it. Edwards said that there is as a 'meetness or suitableness' to this relationship, which 'excites so great abhorrence and indignation, that 'tis requisite that there should be punishment answerable to this abhorrence and indignation, that is fitly excited by it'.¹⁵¹

Edwards Jr., arguing along similar lines, wrote that the negative act of punishment is, at the same time, a demonstration of a positive regard for God's own righteousness, purity, and holiness. There is an inverse relationship between the two. Since God is of such infinite dignity and honour anything less than what the law requires would be 'a trifling satisfaction'.¹⁵² Thus, it is not a trifling satisfaction, but

¹⁴⁸ TPT3:523-524.

¹⁴⁹ TPT3:529. See note 9 for discussion on *ex infinitae majestatis violation* which was a capital crime worthy of death for betraying one's nation or sovereign.

¹⁵⁰ TPT4:590, 596. Acceptilation refers to God's acceptance of something of lesser value in compensation for sin. See Oliver Crisp's discussion in Crisp, *Participation and Atonement*, 35-57.

¹⁵¹ YE18:434.

¹⁵² Edwards Jr. used the example of Haman, Esther, and King Ahasuerus to show how simple pardon without punishment is not enough to satisfy justice. If Haman had attempted 'a rape upon the queen', as was supposed, then it would be inappropriate to only accept his apology without his punishment. Edwards Jr., 'Sermon 4', 27-28.

a demonstrable equivalency where the negative and positive requirements of the law become harmoniously one. These rational arguments for harmony of debt to punishment lead to a consideration of satisfaction by way of a suitable substitute.

D. Satisfaction by a Penal Substitution is an Existential Necessity for God

With respect to God himself ‘in the business of redemption’ who ‘delivers on account of a satisfaction-making compensation’ (*compensationem satisfactoriam*), Van Mastricht designated him not as the wounded party *per se* or as absolute lord (*dominus*) but as a ruler (*rector*). This was a fairly common approach among Reformed theologians in response to Socinianism.¹⁵³ Others might abdicate responsibility, so went the logic, but a ruler (*rector*) ‘is responsible to inflict punishments, and to free from punishments, and to free from punishment someone whom he could punish rigorously, to guard law and justice, as justice personified, and that for the benefit of the whole’.¹⁵⁴ With respect to satisfaction of the law’s demand either the sinner or a substitute may pay the punishment for their guilt; however, this redemption requires ‘the payment of the just price’.¹⁵⁵

Edwards proposed that God is dispositional in his opposition to sin making satisfaction necessary. The glory of God is not only displayed in the disposition of love but also in its equal and opposite movement to take vengeance against sin.¹⁵⁶ Thus, in the atonement, there is a display of power in God’s hatred of sin providing an inverse view of the infinite ‘greatness, excellency, and majesty of God’s being’.¹⁵⁷ Like Van Mastricht, Edwards described God as the ‘supreme regulator or Rector’. For example, Edwards wrote that as the ‘supreme regulator or Rector of the universality of things, the orderer [*sic*] of things relating to the whole compass of existence’, God must be faithful to carry out this merited punishment in accordance

¹⁵³ See Gert van den Brink’s discussion of Hugo Grotius in which he highlights the distinction between *rector* and *dominus*. Gert van den Brink, ‘Hugo Grotius’, 523-525 in *T&T Clark Companion to Atonement*, ed. Adam J. Johnson (New York: Bloomsbury, 2017), 524.

¹⁵⁴ TPT4:589; TPL1:613. See Edwards on God as Ruler-Rector of his moral government. YE20:481; YE21:344; YE24:597; YE25:149.

¹⁵⁵ TPT4:588.

¹⁵⁶ YE18:437-39.

¹⁵⁷ YE18:439.

with the moral laws within creation. A good and faithful execution of punishment brings stability to the world but also provides a relative measure of the worth of God. Indeed, this is a proportional measure seen by ‘the degree of the danger of [...] those terrible consequences’ to the rebellion against the honor of an infinitely holy Ruler.

There is a sacredness to the natural laws of balance and proportionality which govern Edwards’s thinking about restitution.¹⁵⁸ The movement of the scales are a kind of disjunction that requires movement of either side to obtain equilibrium.

So much evidence of the most perfect exactness of proportion, harmony, equity and beauty in the mechanical laws of nature, and other methods of providence which belong to the course of nature, by which God shows his regard to harmony, fitness, and beauty in what he does as the governor of the natural world, may strongly argue that he will maintain the most strict and perfect justice in proportion and fitness in what he does as the governor of the moral world.¹⁵⁹

To Edwards, these laws of logic are sacred and provide a window into the mind of God. In God’s system of created beings, every aspect and individual part were designed to coexist ‘in the most proportionate, reasonable and beautiful manner, everything [...] weighed in an even balance’.¹⁶⁰

Speaking by the same metaphor of rector, Edwards added depth to Van Mastricht’s metaphor using natural law. Like Edwards, Van Mastricht saw satisfaction as a necessity since God rules the universe by the virtue of the law which expresses his nature. This law-nature must be rectified. For both theologians satisfaction was not optional. God’s nature and his relation to creation through law required a substitution for satisfaction—sinners could not create this satisfaction for their own salvation.

¹⁵⁸ YE18:444.

¹⁵⁹ YE23:118.

¹⁶⁰ Edwards Sr., *The ‘Miscellanies’ 1153-1360*, 132.

E. The mechanism at the heart of Van Mastricht's atonement thinking

Van Mastricht defined *redemption* as occurring when 'the Mediator, having been substituted for his own, by paying the price delivered them from slavery into spiritual freedom'.¹⁶¹ In this definition are three key elements: (1) a mediator, (2) substitute, and (3) a just price. Each of these elements are essential for redemption so that God's 'immutable truthfulness' might be maintained.¹⁶² Again, Van Mastricht is careful to identify God's truthfulness as regulative to his mercy and justice. This qualifies the price to not merely be adequate but, in reality, to atone justly for the sinner's *guilt*. Since a mediator will be substituted to undergo the punishment for sin's guilt, it should be asked what kind of punishment will be accepted by the just ruler? First, to qualify as a mediator between God and man, the mediator must be 'free from all his own guilt'.¹⁶³ This is simply to qualify for to be an actual substitution so that the mediator does not have to first atone for himself.

Van Mastricht, and subsequently the younger Edwards, emphasized that his personal active obedience does not enter into the price *per se* rather it is a prequalification.¹⁶⁴ Second, there is an agreement to be a substitute. In the case of man's redemption, the Mediator had already accepted this role as *expromissor*¹⁶⁵ in the *pactum salutis*. The Mediator must procure the ransom 'in time'.¹⁶⁶ Thirdly, the price must be just. To be clear, Van Mastricht identified redemption's price not in Christ's essential righteousness which 'is more correctly described as the righteousness of the person [*justitia persona*] than the righteousness of merit [*justitia meriti*]'. To assuage man's guilt atonement is a 'procured righteousness' arising out of

¹⁶¹ TPT4:588.

¹⁶² TPT4:587, 590.

¹⁶³ TPT4:592.

¹⁶⁴ TPT4:593-94. Edwards Sr. recognized in *HWR* the awkwardness of distinction, said, 'Indeed most words that are used in this affair are used ambiguously'. YE9:304. Edwards Jr. attempted to take that ambiguity away: 'Again; we may infer from the preceding doctrine, that the atonement of Christ does not consist essentially in his active or positive obedience. By atonement I mean that which, as a substitute for the punishment threatened in the law, supports the authority of that law, and the dignity of the divine government. [...] I venture to say further, That the atonement of Christ not only did not consist essentially in his active obedience, but that his active obedience was no part of his atonement properly so called, nor essential to it'. AE2:40-41.

¹⁶⁵ TPT4:590.

¹⁶⁶ 'However, it is constantly declared by the Scriptures that the ransom was offered to him in time, in all those passages which we already brought forward in the preceding sections'. TPT4:593.

the impetrated grace of a vicarious atonement.¹⁶⁷ This redemption price is both an active and passive righteousness with respect to the guilt *required by the law*. This is a twin virtue which, according to Van Mastricht, arises out of the punishment and must not be divided. In other words, ‘satisfaction and merit do not differ in substance’.¹⁶⁸ Van Mastricht contends:

This twofold righteousness, passive and active, must by no means be divided in the one making satisfaction, because both are necessary for us for participation in redemption, and both are required for the compensation of the injury inflicted upon God, which is not taken away more fittingly in any other way by suffering penalties and by offering obedience to the law; indeed if you should divide them, you would do injury to both, depriving them both of the dignity of making satisfaction, or of meriting. [...] Especially because in the matter before us, satisfaction and merit do not differ in substance, whereas he who by satisfaction is delivered from the guilt of eternal condemnation, at the same time, to him is restored the right of eternal life; rather, they differ only in reasoning, for that twofold righteousness, insofar as it concerns God, is called satisfaction; insofar as it concerns man, it is called merit.¹⁶⁹

Edwards Sr. does not cite Van Mastricht; however, it is indisputable that he had lifted this out of *TPT* and inserted it pivotally at the end of the fourteenth sermon of *HWR*. Just before he narrates the actual events of the garden, cross, burial, and resurrection, Edwards takes time to describe how the ‘satisfaction of Christ is to free us from misery, and the merit of Christ is to purchase happiness for us’.¹⁷⁰ Edwards elaborates:

The word purchase as it is used with respect to the purchase of Christ is taken either more strictly or more largely. It is oftentimes used more strictly to signify only the merit of Christ, and sometimes more largely to signify both his satisfaction and merit. Indeed most of the words that are used in this

¹⁶⁷ TPT4:594. TPL1:615.

¹⁶⁸ TPT4:595.

¹⁶⁹ TPT4:954-95.

¹⁷⁰ YE9:304.

affair are used ambiguously. Thus sometimes divines use the word merit in this affair for the whole price that Christ offered, both satisfactory and also positively meritorious. And so the word satisfaction is sometimes used, not only for his propitiation but for his meritorious obedience. For in some sense not only suffering the penalty but positively obeying is needful to satisfy the law.⁷ The reason of this ambiguity of terms seems to be that satisfaction and merit don't differ so much really as relatively. They both consist in paying a valuable price, a price of infinite value. But only that price as it respects a debt to be payed [*sic*] is called satisfaction, and as it respects a positive good to be obtained is called merit.

The differences between paying a debt and making a positive purchase differ more relatively than they do essentially. He that lays down a price to pay a debt, he does in some sense make a purchase, he purchases liberty from that obligation. And he that lays down a price to purchase a positive good does, as it [were], make satisfaction. He satisfies the conditional demands of him to whom he pays it.¹⁷¹

In this context Edwards's use of 'purchase' also corresponds to how he speaks of the *intra* Trinitarian mediation of the Son by analogy. On an infinite degree this purchase of happiness is the Holy Spirit as the telos of the immanent relations. The *exchange* results in the happiness of the Trinity as an ultimate end *ad intra* and the 'purchase' of the elect as a subordinate end *ad extra*. Yet, they are both one and the same thing. In the development of Van Mastricht's atonement thinking one last idea remains to be considered, that is, whether 'the thing required' of the law is properly restored.

F. Atonement requires a substitute to restore 'the thing required' of the law

Van Mastricht recognized that debts and payments are 'less proper' as an analogy. In actuality, God releases sinners from 'the guilt of sins' in exchange for faith in the Son's vicarious punishment. The sinner's guilt cannot be removed by mere pardon for pardon conflicts with 'the truthfulness of the Ruler [...] and with the public good'.¹⁷² To alleviate the burden of guilt a ruler is looking for 'the thing required' as

¹⁷¹ YE9:304.

¹⁷² TPT4:591.

satisfaction. According to Gert van den Brink, Owen was highly critical of Reformed theologians who accepted Grotius's distinction between a satisfaction which is *idem*, that is, *the same* as the obligation, and that which is *tandundem*, that is, *equivalent*. Some, like Van Mastricht, followed part way with Grotius yet rejected Grotius's consequentialist meaning in MGT. A consequentialist path entailed the potential of changing the terms of covenant violation.¹⁷³ The entrance into this argument was on the basis of civic (in actuality, cosmic) liability. Thus, in Van Mastricht's definition of 'the thing required' of the law was deontological, that is, the ruler was duty-bound to ensure that 'the thing required' of the law agreed with the nature of the law. This would seem to create a problem, Van Mastricht suggested, because Christ did not 'undergo all penalties both bodily and spiritual' in all its 'inordinate corollaries'.¹⁷⁴ For Van Mastricht 'the thing required' of the law is that 'certain middle thing between fault and punishment', that is, guilt in its twofold aspect of potential and actual.¹⁷⁵

Again, Van Mastricht was willing to permit a metaphysical nuance on guilt as 'a middle thing', which is 'denominated equally with respect to both [the fault of the sinner and punishment required of the law]'.¹⁷⁶ Owen, according to Guus Labooy, forcefully rejected Van Mastricht's legal notion of guilt in favor of a 'relational quality'. Labooy's choice of terms might cause some confusion in how Van Mastricht thinks of the atonement. As opposed to Van Mastricht, Owen thought of the atonement as relational in its *substitution* for a sinner. Mastricht, however, saw the substitution as indirect through legal satisfaction of man's personal guilt.¹⁷⁷ Labooy's observation bears up with van den Brink's observation of the difference between Owen and Van Mastricht on atonement with respect to how guilt is resolved. Yet neither analyst recognized why Van Mastricht appealed to 'a certain middle thing'.

The answer is found in Van Mastricht's consistent reference to the Mediator as the one who 'is squarely in the middle'.¹⁷⁸ The middle One stands in for the middle thing (see figure 6.2). Given Van Mastricht's allowance for a metaphysical distinction and union with guilt, and guilt touches both the sinner and the law. The Middle

¹⁷³ Van den Brink, 'Hugo Grotius', 524.

¹⁷⁴ TPT4:591.

¹⁷⁵ TPT3:450.

¹⁷⁶ TPT3:450.

¹⁷⁷ Labooy, 'Coherence of Equivocal Penal Substitution', 36-37.

¹⁷⁸ TPT3:59.

One suffers in a way that is equivalent to the demand of the law, thus his suffering would touch both the law and the sinner. This framework embraces a qualitative and not a quantitative equivalence by which ‘the thing required’ of the law might be satisfied. How? The Middle One has an infinite quality which absorbs the quantitative punishment required. Thus, Van Mastricht argued that Christ’s satisfaction by a penal substitution as ‘the middle thing’ was *tandundem* and not *idem*. Therefore, the satisfaction and merit as one thing ‘was exactly equivalent to the guilt of all those to be redeemed, such that the rigor of his justice God could neither demand nor receive more from the Mediator’.¹⁷⁹

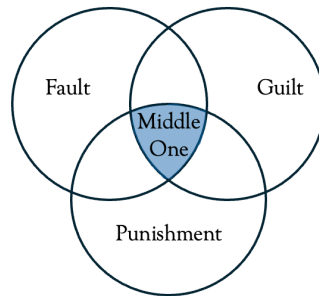


Figure 6.2 ‘The Middle One’ in place of ‘The Middle Thing’

Edwards seized upon Van Mastricht’s concept of ‘the middle thing’ in *HWR* as a way to talk about atonement. Edwards wrote, for example, that ‘the price Christ laid down does two things: it pays our debt and so it satisfies by its intrinsic value and agreement between the Father and Son; it procures a title for us to happiness and so it merits. The satisfaction of Christ is to free us from misery, and the merit of Christ is to purchase happiness for us’.¹⁸⁰ Edwards recognized, first, that Christ’s atonement freed mankind from the consequence of sin, which he called misery. In this case, Edwards is using misery *generally* to refer to ‘man’s guilt and that infinite demerit there is in sin’.¹⁸¹ Edwards also described this guilt as ‘the judicial fruits of sin’.¹⁸² By

¹⁷⁹ TPT4:595.

¹⁸⁰ YE9:304.

¹⁸¹ YE9:123.

¹⁸² YE9:305.

calling guilt a ‘judicial fruit’, Edwards demonstrated a sensitivity to Mastricht’s use of guilt as a middle thing *for legal purposes*, i.e., ‘the judicial fruit’. This move led Edwards away from a purely relational approach to the sinner on the basis of an *idem* penal substitution. Instead, he accepted Van Mastricht’s conclusion that the satisfaction is *tandundem* agreeable to the eternal covenant of grace. The suffering of the Son was an ‘intrinsic value’ suitable to free us from misery.¹⁸³ The other side of misery is happiness. The merit arising from Christ’s suffering produced a ‘right to good’.¹⁸⁴ To put the matter simply, quality and quantity are both sides of the same coin—satisfaction and merit being only different ‘relatively’ and not ‘essentially’.¹⁸⁵

G. Summary of Van Mastricht’s Atonement Thinking

Van Mastricht was operating within the context of his predecessor’s debate with Cocceius over the nature of the covenant of redemption. Furthermore, his mediating approach to the lapsarian controversies allowed him to emphasize how the atonement serves to reveal God’s divine perfections in time—specifically justice, mercy, and truthfulness. Bridging time and eternity, the Mediator as God-Man not only satisfies the time-bound requirements of the law but also those eternal attributes of God’s essence. God did not merely let sinners off the hook but in actuality (truthfully) purchased their redemption—justice and mercy working together. Atonement is an existential necessity; however, it is a deontological requirement rather than a consequentialist one—in other words, God’s justice and mercy must be satisfied in response to his nature and not his decrees.

The ultimate end of atonement answers the glory of God, and its subordinate end is the redemption of the elect. The process by which the elect is purchased is by exchange and union. Exchange occurs through an equivalent satisfaction by virtue of union with man by the imputation of guilt. Imputation, though, occurs relationally by union and not by fiat declaration. When the Mediator takes the punishment for the sinner’s guilt, he touches the potential and actual guilt. The potential is resident in the sinner and the actual is that which is answerable to the

¹⁸³ ‘They both [satisfaction and merit] consist in paying a valuable price, a price of infinite value’. YE9:304.

¹⁸⁴ TPT4:598.

¹⁸⁵ YE9:304.

law. Because the ‘Middle One’ is of sufficient value to ‘the thing required’ by the law, a metaphysical union is created with the sinner that is both exacting and a real atonement.

IV. EDWARDS JR.’S RETRIEVAL FROM HIS FATHER THROUGH VAN MASTRICHT

A. Owning the Covenant of Grace

Edwards Jr. demonstrated a sensitivity to his Father’s theological project in the use of his father’s preferred Dutch theologian—Petrus van Mastricht. The sensitive use of Van Mastricht is seen in several ways. First, Edwards Jr. appropriated Van Mastricht’s thinking on the covenant of grace. Indeed, Edwards Sr. was influential among the New England Reformed with respect to his emphasis on a personal ownership of the covenant of grace in the current dispensation. This emphasis can be traced back to the disputes among the Dutch over the *pactum salutis* and its redemptive application, and all its attending lapsarian options. Van Mastricht also sided with Voetius’s preference for a dual aspect in the covenant of grace. This preference for an eternal and temporal duality in the covenant of grace lent itself to his modified infralapsarianism.

Regarding individual election from man’s perspective, this duality provided a degree of ambiguity and opportunity for Edwards’s students to call their listeners to respond to the gospel immediately.¹⁸⁶ The adoption of the infralapsarian ‘general decree’ to predestinate preserved God’s independence from creation from eternity and permitted Edwards Sr. to call for repentance. The shift from a supralapsarianism to infralapsarianism had a significant impact on pastoral theology. For example, if the decree to damn individuals arose before man fell into sin, it would seem to prevent people from responding to the gospel out of fearful presumption. Furthermore, a supralapsarianism encouraged a passive preparationism. When the

¹⁸⁶ Richard Mouw cites Karl Barth as observing that the tendency in Reformed theology to locate the decree of providence as prior to election led to a loss of capacity to ‘resist the Enlightenment at the beginning of the 18th Century, since within it the seed of theological Enlightenment and its own dissolution’. Richard J. Mouw, ‘Another Look at the Infra/Supralapsarian Debate’, in *Calvin Theological Journal* 35, No. 1 (2000): 144-45.

shift to an infralapsarian position began to take place in New England, it produced significant opposition because it challenged the authority of the Standing Order and the social covenant if people could confidently claim ownership of the covenant.

In this regard, Edwards Jr. was no different in his outlook than his father. Specifically, he picked up his father's fascination with the eternal covenant of grace as perceptible by 'the eye[s] of the universe'.¹⁸⁷ Edwards Jr. highlighted the voluntary nature of the covenant of grace as inclination of the Trinitarian subsistence in his sermon on Ephesians 2:5 (discussed above in chapter 2).¹⁸⁸ The voluntaristic tendency in the Trinitarian relations magnified itself in redemption as free grace. These impulses were retrieved from his father by way of Van Mastricht. Van Mastricht's modified infralapsarianism permitted the justice and mercy of God to be observed in the temporal covenant of grace.

B. A Middle One Atonement Model

A second sensitive use of Van Mastricht is relative to the 'Middle One' who stands in the place of the 'Middle Thing'. While Edwards Sr. has been credited with an elevation of the Holy Spirit by 'the thing purchased', this purchase is facilitated by 'the middle One' by the Trinitarian inclination manifest in the eternal covenant of grace. Towards the temporal expression of the covenant of grace, the followers of Edwards Sr., particularly Hopkins and Bellamy, focused on 'the thing required' of the law. The law is the expression of the hidden nature of God. For Hopkins the thing required by the law is disinterested love to God. Bellamy, on the other hand, saw 'the thing required' as obedience. Admittedly, both love and holiness are variations on a similar theme. Edwards Jr., on the other hand, considered the intra-Trinitarian relations as the paradigm by which one understands the mechanism of the atonement. The 'payment-thing purchased' principle received from his father is anchored in the 'Middle One' who pays for the 'Middle Thing'. In the case of Trinitarian relations this is the positive mediation whereas in atonement it is a negative mediation.

¹⁸⁷ Jonathan Edwards Jr., 'Volume 4. October 1766, Rom. 3.24', *Jonathan Edwards, Jr. Papers (Sermon)*, Hartford Seminary Library (Box 165, Folder 2725), 10.

¹⁸⁸ Jonathan Edwards Jr., 'Volume 39, Eph. 2.5, Jan. 15, 1769', *Jonathan Edwards, Jr. Papers (Sermon)*, Hartford Seminary Library (Box 165, Folder 2725).

C. The Remedy for Law's Deficit Apart from Imputation.

A third sensitive use of Van Mastricht occurs in Edwards Jr.'s appreciation of the consequences of sin having not just a legal but a personal guilt. The followers of Owen would not countenance the metaphysical partition of guilt as did Van Mastricht into personal and legal guilt. As argued above, Edwards Sr. adopted the same metaphysical scheme regarding how one's personal guilt finds atonement. He did this by appealing to union with the sinner so that Christ might acquire their legal guilt. Union with Christ by faith provides a real atonement while allowing the 'eyes of the universe' to gaze upon another level by which God-man union atones. Edwards Jr. advanced his father's proposal for union with sinners by his vicarious punishment to the point that he *refused* to accept imputation according to Owen's declarative model; rather, he moved with Van Mastricht's middle approach, which lent itself to union of guilt upon the Mediator.¹⁸⁹ Edwards Jr. followed a close reading of Van Mastricht on the consequence of sin consisting in fault, guilt, and punishment. He even distinguished between personal guilt and actual guilt. Yet, imputation, in Edwards Jr.'s view consists 'wholly in the treatment [*via* union], not in opinion or judgment'.¹⁹⁰ By standing in the place of the sinner's punishment Christ fulfilled 'the thing required' of the law, i.e., the righteous deficit which punishment remedies. In short, Edwards Jr. appropriates the Middle One who stands in the place of the Middle thing, i.e., the punishment required for guilt. This atones for the sinner's fault. This leads to a sensitivity in relationship to the sinner himself.

D. *Tandem* vs. *Idem*

The fourth sensitive use of Van Mastricht was his consistent application of equivalency. *Idem* was how Edwards Jr. processed the divine nature in their intra-trinitarian relations. The equivalence is the outcome of the mediation of the Son which secures the purchase of the Holy Spirit. This formula, derived from his father's *Discourse on the Trinity*, moves with Van Mastricht's equivalence. The satisfaction required to purchase the elect is equivalent through Christ since the Mediator is both satisfaction and merit. The exchange is made by the Son taking the sinner's place of

¹⁸⁹ 'Christ Our Righteousness', in AE2:270-72.

¹⁹⁰ AE2:272. This may be where the future New England Theology of Yale found its footing.

punishment. This is a meritorious act; however, this on its own is not what atones. In Edwards Jr.'s atonement thinking, like his father, it is the mediation which brings satisfaction. It is of equal (*tandundum*) quality in the sight of the Father if not the same (*idem*) quantitative punishment because they are both sides of the same (*idem*) coin.

E. Atonement Unity Through Ultimate and Subordinate Ends

The fifth sensitive use of Van Mastricht is something shared by all receivers of Edwards. The awareness that the ultimate end of atonement must be consistent with any subordinate ends. This is derived from a sensitivity to the relationship of systems in the universe. Since all systems in the universe serve to glorify God each part of the universe, even its moral governance will serve this greater end. Understanding is derived from the analysis of parts within the whole. This is also true of the moral universe in which atonement reveals God's nature. Through time God's just and merciful nature is revealed in a way that is consistent with himself. In short, God must be true to himself. If he threatens to punish sins, he must devise a method of atonement that agrees with his just, merciful, and *true* nature. This is done by the middle One standing in place of the middle thing required by the transcript of his nature, i.e., the law.

V. CONCLUSION: A NEW ENGLAND ADAPTATION

Between the Great Awakening and the New Republic in New England, Van Mastricht's *TPT* became a significant resource to combat the effects of radical skepticism. His early engagement with Cartesianism, Cocceius, Socinius, and Arminians provided help for ministers of the gospel to have a clear theological system as a backstop.¹⁹¹ The Edwardseans skillfully adapted Van Mastricht to address the universalism arising from Boston and antinomianism from the Continent. Van

¹⁹¹ See Brandon J. Crawford, 'Petrus van Mastricht's *A Treatise on Regeneration: An Old World Voice for a New World Controversy*', 161-190, in *Petrus van Mastricht (1630-1706): Text, Context, and Interpretation*, ed. Adriaan C. Neele (Gottengen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht Verlage, 2020). Petrus van Mastricht, *A Treatise on Regeneration* (New Haven: Thomas and Samuel Green, 1770). Translator unknown.

Mastricht was well-suited for this purpose with his sensitive application of divine simplicity and a dual covenant of grace by which to frame the atonement narratively. He provided a paradigm for engagement with second and third Enlightenment thinkers. Furthermore, his reverence for revelation provided Edwardseans confidence to develop a natural theology of revelation that encompassed creation and redemption by the atonement of Christ.

PART 3
AN ASSESSMENT OF
EDWARDS JR.'S ATONEMENT VIEW

CHAPTER 7

CONCLUSION: EDWARDS AND THE EDWARDSEANS

Ever since Edwards Amasa Park first published his collection of New Divinity authors on the Atonement, his genetic presentation has been followed. As evidenced by his own testimony, he had developed a progeny of ideas that flowed through Hopkins towards the Andover School of which he was president. This was in response to argumentation with Princeton over the proper reception of Edwards's theological heritage—especially, the atonement. As shown in the introductory chapter, Park's work has been used by many as the basis for understanding this reception to the neglect of Edwards Jr., whose own mentees flow in the direction of Yale Divinity through Timothy Dwight. In short, the reception of Edwards Sr.'s atonement thinking through Edwards Jr. has been largely overlooked. Thus, this dissertation began with the following research question:

How did Edwards Jr. receive and process Edwards's thoughts on atonement as transmitted to him by the reception of Bellamy, Hopkins, and Van Mastricht?

To answer this question both Edwards Sr. and Jr.'s writings were examined giving preference to his son's interpretation of his father's system. This interpretive preference was deemed to be useful for a couple of reasons. First, Edwards Jr. had received his father's manuscripts early in his ministerial career and transcribed them in preparation for the publication of *HWR*. Second, Edwards Jr. heeded his father's advice to closely consider the theology of Van Mastricht. Third, Edwards Jr. had a more direct engagement with both the Calvinist and Arminian universalists. His engagement with them in print on the atonement was greater than either Bellamy or Hopkins. This fact alone demonstrated a corollary need for a new examination of

Edwards Jr.'s historical context in which his theology took shape followed by a careful reading of primary manuscripts, which include his unpublished and published sermons and mentoring work with subsequent students.

By leading with Edwards Jr.'s interpretation of his father's system a clear and distinct answer to the following sub-question formed:

How did Edwards express his thoughts on the atonement? (chapter 2)

Edwards Sr.'s atonement program is best understood within the context of the epistemological debate within the eighteenth-century started by Rene Descartes in the seventeenth century.¹ Edwards developed his thinking on the atonement along three complementary lines of thinking which can be observed out of *End of Creation*, *True Virtue*, and *A History of the Work of Redemption*.

Frist, Edwards chose to use the language of Deism which proposed that meaning only occurs within a closed system. Edwards Jr. identified his father's system of theology as aligning with rationalist observation that meaning occurs within a universe of systems. As such, creation (and redemption) is a showcase in time of God's timeless divine simplicity. The metaphysical category of futurition helped Edwards to bridge the divide between divine simplicity which predestines the futurity of the whole universe from which the distributive parts serve to display his mercy to the elect and justice to punish the reprobate. The atonement figures into epistemology as a way to observe God's just and merciful nature, which has a general and particular end in view. The ends nest together as 'an exhibition of his *essential* glory'.² *End of Creation* is his most refined thinking on this point; however, it dovetails into *True Virtue* as a way of knowing God through moral philosophy.

In the rational era of Enlightenment thought, *True Virtue* corresponded to the second generation of thought after in which Shaftesbury and Hutcheson prevailed. Locke's ideas of reflection show up in *Discourse on the Trinity* in which, as defined by Kyle Strobel, *personal beatific-delight* occurs. This reflective nature emanates and

¹ To a large degree, Edwards was engaged in the development of Calvin's famous dictum: "We cannot have a clear and complete knowledge of God unless it is accompanied by a corresponding knowledge of ourselves" (*Institutes* 1:15 § 1). Subsequent Enlightenment thinkers rightly understood that this thesis must be disproved in order to liberate mankind. Descartes's doubt over clear and distinct ideas was used by others to debate Calvin's thesis in relation to the need for revelation.

² Emphasis original. AE1:481.

remanates as a mechanism of just exchange through payment of Son and purchase of the Holy Spirit. This is a mediatorial work *ad intra*. The mediatorial work *ad extra* extends the glory of God to the elect by the Holy Spirit through the atonement. Edwards's work in the area of moral philosophy brings about a personal account of the atonement's application by the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit provides a taste for the exercise of true virtue. This work left open the door to the possibility of knowing God's nature by the Holy Spirit.

A History of the Work of Redemption, on the other hand, incorporated both of these aspects in its historical account of the atonement. It was a hybrid of historical and theological articulation of the work of redemption through time with the atonement at its centre. From a theological perspective this work corresponds to the Reformed doctrine of the covenant of grace with its progressive dispensational governance. When Edwards arrived upon his description of the events in the Garden of Gethsemane, he showed how the Son exercised true virtue by a willing mediation such as that which exists in Trinitarian relation as love. This willingness to die for the glory of God in the universe generally was the mechanism for the atonement of the guilt of the elect specifically. It was both a negative and positive work which answered the law's demand by providing satisfaction through the infinite *quality* of his voluntary penal sacrifice. The negative and positive work are said to be two sides of one coin—specifically, merit to happiness and satisfaction to guilt by misery. The mediator willing accepts the guilt and touches both the legal and relational aspects of the sinner and God by a vicarious punishment. This is a *tandundem* atonement based on the merit and satisfaction as *idem*.

Edwards's expansive mind was putting these pieces together when he was taken out of the world prematurely in 1758. Yet, for Edwards, the atonement is the epicentre by which God's nature is known, and the elect is redeemed. The atonement is both an act in time and predestined from eternity predicated upon his Trinitarian inclination. Thus, it has been challenging for future readers of Edwards to grasp his intention; however, what is clear is Edwards Sr.'s atonement thinking, which is closer to Van Mastricht than it is to Grotius, even though it does not correspond to Owen's stricter penal theory. This becomes even more clear in the development of his atonement thinking by Edwards Jr. To whom we now turn in the reconsideration of the following second sub-question:

How did Edwards Jr. express his thoughts on the atonement? (Chapter 3)

When John Murray the universalist arrived in America in 1770, Murray had recently struck upon a consistent doctrine of penal atonement which, for him, satisfied the concerns he had with Calvinism. On the other hand, the Arminian position on the atonement equally caused him difficulty—specifically the appearance of ‘the universality of the atonement’.³ From his Calvinistic heritage, steeped in PSA, his confidence that ‘every one for whom Christ died must finally be saved’ was used by James Rely to convince him that *since the debt had been paid* then ‘all men must finally be saved’.⁴

This led, according to Edwards Jr., to a more nuanced articulation of the atonement by President Edwards’s followers so as to say that it ‘does not consist in the payment of a debt, properly so called’.⁵ Anselm’s satisfaction theory, which withstood nearly five centuries, was becoming problematic in New England due to its pecuniary language. PSA as articulated by Turretin and Owen was insufficient as an explanation for how the worked itself out in the covenant of grace with God directly. Furthermore, the traditional PSA pecuniary terminology inherited from SAT had been made to appear vulnerable owing, in large part, to Enlightenment thinkers who desired consistency in the application of the atonement. Anselm’s burden to discharge debt now put God ‘in man’s debt’, if the mechanism of atonement was on a PSA model.

Edwards Jr. described the root of this problem in his *Remarks* saying that ‘if the sinner’s *debt* be paid, how does it appear that there is any *pardon* or *grace* in his deliverance?’⁶ In other words, atonement is not of grace according to this analogy; rather, it is simply a sinner’s due. Universalists like John Murray were saying that ‘the atonement was the cause of salvation’.⁷ Universalists like John Murray asserted that Christ had suffered all punishment due to mankind.⁸ This pecuniary language led these groups to conclude that salvation was a philosophical necessity.

³ Murray, *Life*, 161.

⁴ Murray, *Life*, 161, 154.

⁵ ‘Remarks’, in AE1:486.

⁶ ‘Remarks’, in AE1:486.

⁷ William Breitenbach, *New Divinity Theology and the Ideas of Moral Accountability*, PhD Diss. (New Haven, CT: Yale University, 1978), 140.

⁸ John Murray, *Letters, and Sketches of Sermons*, Vol. 3 (Boston: Joshua Belcher, 1813), 359-60.

Leading up to John Murray's arrival in 1770, Edwards Jr. had just been working through his father's manuscripts. In his early doctrinal development as a newly installed pastor in New Haven, he ruminated on *Discourse on the Trinity* as well as the *History of Redemption Sermons*. These resources helped him to prepare sermons in the spring of 1769 on the atonement and the intra-Trinitarian relations, which incline towards free grace and not obligation.⁹ In Edwards Jr.'s sermon on the grace of God, he highlighted the key components of Kyle Strobel's proposal that Edwards Sr. viewed the Trinitarian relations as *personal beatific-delight* found in *Discourse on the Trinity*.¹⁰

Yet, most importantly, in this sermon, Edwards Jr. established the atonement on the basis of his role as Mediator from eternity.¹¹ This was an essential feature necessary to combat universalism. Edwards Jr. was concerned for the integrity of the Son's death and the centrality of the Son in the eternal and temporal covenant of grace. This concern was handed down to him by his father through Van Mastricht.¹² The temporal covenant as futuration of God's decrees is predicated upon the eternal covenant. This, however, is simply method whereas inclination is understood on the mediatorial role of the Son from eternity. This emphasis was developed by Edwards Jr., as shown in chapter two above, as a kind of Trinitarian justice of exchange. As for his willingness to embrace *tandundem* language to express the nature of the atonement, it is well within the scope of his father's adaptation of Van Mastricht's merit-satisfaction as sameness. This is relative to the atonement having an ultimate and subordinate end *i.e.*, the glorification of God's perfections in redemption and the redemption of the elect. In the discovery of Bellamy's thinking, on which the third sub-question is based, Edwards Jr.'s position becomes clearer.

⁹ Jonathan Edwards Jr, 'Volume 64. Mt. 26:38. June 31, 1769', *Edwards Family Collection*, Princeton University Library (AM 8529, Box 1, Folder 10); Jonathan Edwards Jr., 'Volume 69. Lecture in New Haven. Aug. 1769', *Jonathan Edwards, Jr. Papers (Sermon)*, Hartford Seminary Library (Box 165, Folder 2727).

¹⁰ Emphasis original. Jonathan Edwards Jr., 'Volume 69. Lecture in New Haven. Aug. 1769', *Jonathan Edwards, Jr. Papers (Sermon)*, Hartford Seminary Library (Box 165, Folder 2727).

¹¹ The office of mediator, according to Edwards Jr., was established 'from eternity' knowing that man would sin. And this office was established for the purpose of 'mercy, so it became him to *maintain his sovereignty* in determining himself, the manner and way in which he would exercise it'. Edwards Jr., 'Volume 69', 10-11.

¹² Edwards Jr., 'Volume 69', 12-14.

How did Edwards Jr. process Edwards's thoughts on the atonement through Bellamy?
(Chapter 4)

Bellamy's primary goal was not to set out an ordered atonement theory; rather, he was presenting a scheme by which *humanity may know God affectionally*—as God knows and loves himself. Using modern categories this would be called Spiritual Formation. Yet, Bellamy tried to articulate his thoughts on the atonement through traditional nomenclature of law and gospel. Thus, the atonement in Christ accomplished two goals. The primary end is reconciliation of the glory of God's divine nature (law). The secondary end is the salvation of sinners (gospel). The atonement of Christ accomplishes both ends in one unified act.

The structure for his thinking was derived out of engagement with Edwards's philosophical approach found in *True Virtue, End of Creation*, and to a lesser degree, *A History of the Work of Redemption*. The eternal and temporal covenant of grace which are the backbone of *HWR* are present but find less direct correlation in *True Religion* because the covenant relates to historical theology rather than spiritual formation. When Bellamy dealt with the more technical questions about the mechanism of the atonement, he followed his mentor by describing the penal substitution as having both a positive and negative good in relationship to the law.

These 'goods' are legal arguments that appear to have a Grotian origin in debate with Socinus; however, they follow more directly with how Van Mastricht adapted them in which Christ's obedience (merit) fulfills the design of the law so that the negative good arising from punishment (satisfaction) might atone specifically for the elect. Edwards Sr. was just beginning to articulate this dual aspect as the twin mechanism of the atonement as merit and satisfaction before he died. Edwards Jr. is famous for this three-fold presentation of justice which includes a commutative, distributive, and public or general justice. The public or general justice was, in some ways, a clarification of Edwards Sr.'s and Bellamy's thoughts on the dual mechanism derivative from Van Mastricht. The atonement filled the law's demand positively and negatively for the good of the universe with the elect as implied within this end.

Again, for Bellamy, the primary end of atonement was reconciliation of the glory of the divine nature (law), and secondarily, the salvation of sinners (gospel). Edwards Jr. agreed with both his father and Bellamy but brought a greater clarity to the commutative justice that exists in the Godhead through the mediation of the Son to purchase the Holy Spirit. This public or general justice, as Edwards Jr. described it,

is understood by mankind intuitively because we are made in the image of God. This allowed Edwards Jr. to claim a consistency between particular redemption and a general satisfaction arising out of the divine nature. Yet Bellamy's atonement thinking was derived out of the twofold aspect of the covenant of grace. While not an obvious point in Bellamy's system, the Mediator, however, acts as bridge between the origin of the atonement and its implementation while at the same time carrying out its ultimate and subordinate ends for the glory of God.

In the chronological study of Edwards Jr.'s pulpit manuscripts, Bellamy's influence can be seen in his early years; however, over time he began to shift away from the influences of Bellamy and orient his atonement thinking in a voluntarist-Trinitarian explanation of the atonement. The more simplified presentation in his earliest sermon's designed under Bellamy's watchful eye described the atonement as 'a price' which satisfies 'the spirit and design of [the law]'.¹³ The mediatorial inclination to love within the Trinity is the honour and dignity to the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. This is seen visibly in the atonement as the Holy Spirit was 'the thing purchased'.

The answer to the fourth sub-question reveals that Edwards Jr. was trying to position himself in a centrist trajectory of his father's atonement thinking in contrast to Bellamy and Hopkins. Edwards Jr. in his atonement thinking, as shown above, as a kind of Trinitarian justice in which exchange is a prominent feature. Hopkins, on the other hand, crafted his thinking about the atonement along the lines of moral philosophy which seeks to find the ideal proportionate regard within the universe.

How did Edwards Jr. process Edwards's thoughts on the atonement through Hopkins?
(Chapter 5)

Hopkins, more so than Bellamy, focused on bringing a sense of unity to the universe in its various subsystems. Hopkins was very sensitive to the end goal of creation to bring about the glory of God through the principle of 'universal, disinterested benevolence'. His sensitivity to the moral philosophical tools of his Mentor is clear. To get to this conclusion, as argued above, Hopkins theology focused on the relationship between the universe of subsystems. This has been noted by Hopkins scholar Peter Jauhiainen with respect to his doctrine of original sin;

¹³ Edwards Jr., 'Volume 4', 24-25.

however, this dissertation has shown that the function of original sin which ‘comprehends all mankind’ is also a feature in Hopkins’s atonement thinking. Hopkins, though, works from the opposite direction in the establishment of a universal righteousness which saves the elect on the basis of the elect being ‘comprehended’ in the atonement. This feature in his thinking is entirely consistent with Edwards Sr., Bellamy, and Edwards Jr. on the atonement in general.

Yet, Hopkins deviated in his effort to bring a strict consistency in the application of the atonement to spiritual formation. While the atonement is part of the process by which God reorders the universe, he does so, according to Hopkins, along the shape of the Son’s infinite disinterested benevolence, which was willing to be damned if it would bring about the glory of God. This willingness is more properly called ‘infinite, disinterested submission’ or in the case of finite humanity, ‘universal, disinterested benevolence’ because their acts of love occur within the system of the universe and cannot properly be called infinite. This focus on a proper orientation of one’s love led Hopkins to take a perfectionistic view of self-love. Edwards Sr. would have agreed in principle with his student; however, he had a more generous account of self-love, which can be properly oriented towards God in a way that it finds a complacency (i.e., a derived happiness in the glory of God).

In this respect, Edwards Jr. took a position in step with his father’s vision of moral philosophy and was not timid to share his opposition to his former mentor’s deviation from a natural self-love that is innocent. By pushing back on Hopkin’s position of a willingness to be damned, he positioned himself as having a better sense of his father’s theological project. Edwards Jr. understood and approved of his father’s system, in that he saw God’s decrees and acts as having one end through the consistent application of the futurition of ideas. Practically speaking, this is a clear and distinct reception of his father’s tension of union with its many distributive parts within the universe as a system whether *ad intra* or *ad extra*.

*How did Edwards Jr. process Edwards’s thoughts on the atonement through Van
Mastricht? (Chapter 6)*

The subtle infralapsarianism that appears in Edwards Sr. finds its origin in Van Mastricht along with a Ramist method of theological explanation within a Voetian model of a dual covenant of grace. The bridge between eternal and temporal provided an easy way to differentiate and harmonize divine simplicity with the

perfections of God as expressed in creation. Thus, the atonement served, in Van Mastricht's view, to be a revelation of God's divine perfections in time—specifically justice, mercy, and truthfulness *and* a realist atonement for the elect. The Son, as Mediator from eternity provides a very clear and distinct idea about the triune God to timebound intelligent beings. Thus, bridging time and eternity, the Mediator as God-Man not only satisfies the time-bound requirements of the law, but also those eternal attributes of God's essence. God did not merely let sinners off the hook but in actuality (truthfully) purchased their redemption—justice and mercy working together. Atonement is an existential necessity; however, it is a deontological requirement rather than a consequentialist one—in other words, God's justice and mercy must be satisfied in response to his nature and not his decrees. This is in the end the result of his modified infralapsarianism.

Edwards Jr. demonstrated a high degree of sensitivity to his father's theological project derived from his preferred Dutch theologian—Petrus van Mastricht. The sensitive use of Van Mastricht is seen in several ways as noted in the above chapter; however, the key element drawn from his father through a consultation with Van Mastricht is his understanding of Christ's union with sinner as the mechanism for atonement. This concept has within it, multiple aspects, which includes imputation by union, the 'Middle One' *ad intra* and *ad extra*, as well as *tendendum* as *idem*. While Edwards Jr. subscribed to the ultimate and subordinate ends of the atonement, it was a point which received less attention in his writing in its own merits; however, it was the foundation by which he addressed the necessity of a 'Middle One' who took upon himself the punishment necessary to honor the truthfulness of God's vindictive justice.

How do Edwards Jr.'s thoughts on the atonement compare with Edwards Sr.? (Chapter 7)

Van Mastricht provides a window into Edwards Sr.'s atonement thinking that is much needed in analytic and systematic theology. In short, Edwards Sr. had found in Van Mastricht a reformed voice to engage the Arminianism in Boston whose understanding of futurity of ideas made God dependent upon creation. Edwards Sr. reversed the direction of dependence so that the ultimate end included subordinate ends, thus preserving divine simplicity in relationship to predestination and providence. In a similar manner, his atonement thinking flowed in the same

direction, giving preference to the ultimate end of his internal satisfaction followed by the subordinate end of the elect's redemption.

Thus, Edwards had a robust theological vision received from Dutch Reformed Orthodoxy. This would be properly identified as the chief progeny of Edwards's atonement thinking; however, he was also writing to stop the spread of Deism and its anti-revelation and anti-supernatural tendencies. If Van Mastricht's infralapsarian focused atonement theory emphasizing union is the core, then the subsequent layers of Edwards's thinking find exposure in his engagement with the British moral philosophers. These philosophers claimed that morality might be learned by proportionate regard, aptitude for beauty, and degree within relationships of systems within the universal. It is in these subsequent layers of engagement, in which most modern readers run into much confusion. To borrow a Lockean concept, Edwards's philosophical grammar creates for modern readers a 'confused idea' since he is so eclectic.¹⁴ On top of this, each student of Edwards seemed to think he understood the best presentation of Edwards's theological project than the other. This led to some polarization within their complementary systems.

To a large degree, Edwards Jr. was attempting, in his own writing, to mediate the moral philosophical project of Hopkins on the one hand and Bellamy's engagement with the larger epistemological project of Edwards Sr. on the other. As noted in chapter four, Bellamy spoke very highly of his mentor's *HWR*, telling his daughter that in it can be found 'a map of the road to that [heavenly] world'.¹⁵ This larger framework animated Bellamy and his atonement thinking must be understood within it. Thus, Bellamy's atonement thinking in *TRD* was written within this vision of knowing God through the law and gospel. Bellamy had received from Edwards Sr. that the nature of God is communicated through the complementary ends of law and gospel. In Edwards Jr.'s early mentorship under Bellamy, he had learned that ends of the law and gospel dovetail together producing a negative (punishment-payment) and positive good (restoration of law-love to God) in the universe.

Hopkins, on the other hand, had received Edwards's thinking on atonement within context of moral philosophy specifically. This had the unintended consequence of creating a very narrow articulation of Edwards Sr.'s system. As shown above in chapter five, Edwards Jr. believed that Hopkins had gone much further than

¹⁴ Locke, *Essay*, 2:29 § 11.

¹⁵ Joseph Bellamy, 'Letter to Mrs. Charles Sheldon, Aug. 1, 1783', in Tryon Edwards, 'A Memoir of His Life and Character', xlii.

his father had intended in orientating sanctification in the framework of ‘infinite, disinterested benevolence’. While Edwards Jr. had no problem with ‘universal, disinterested benevolence’, as such, he realized that a reexamination of his father’s trinitarian relations was in order. Thus, it could be said that Hopkins had embarked on a very narrow aspect of his father’s system, whereas, Bellamy had pursued the larger aspect of knowing God. Edwards Amasa Park was correct in his observation that ‘[t]hey are not in entire agreement among themselves’.¹⁶

Since Edwards Jr. came after these two older students, it would be reasonable to conclude that he would have received a version of his father’s atonement thinking directly from them; however, since Edwards Jr. inherited his father’s manuscripts and a love for Van Mastricht, a return to the revered Dutch theologian was needed to accurately understand how Edwards Jr. received his father’s atonement thinking. Indeed, as I have argued above in chapter two and six, the elder Edwards’s thinking was anchored more in the Trinitarian relations of the eternal covenant of grace as a just exchange by mediation preserving equality. Furthermore, his intention was to show how this exchange played out in the temporal covenant in *HWR* as union with the elect.

While Edwards Jr. recognized his father’s intention, he also recognized that the only way to be faithful to his father’s vision was to prioritize the inescapable tensions introduced by Van Mastricht. These include how knowledge is formed within a system by the whole and its parts, mediation of the ‘Middle One’ for the ‘Middle thing’, Trinitarian exchange of the Son for the Spirit bringing a just equality, and imputation by union with the sinner’s guilt, rather than by mere decree. In this respect, Edwards Jr. was most consistent with his father’s vision of the atonement by focusing upon the general justice as an outflow of Trinitarian *beatific-delight*. This is a commutative justice which is the basis of atonement for the elect. Edwards Jr.’s work on the atonement provided a framework for the future generations of Edwardseans to own the covenant of grace immediately—that is, respond to the gospel offer with repentance and faith. Why? Because atonement was justly brokered so that the elect might respond on the basis of faith alone by grace alone.

As noted by Edwards Amasa Park, in his ‘Introductory Essay’ titled ‘The Rise of the Edwardsean Theory of the Atonement’, the direction of mentorship which

¹⁶ Edwards Amasa Park, ‘The Rise of the Edwardsean Theory of the Atonement: An Introductory Essay’, ix-lxxx, in *The Atonement: Discourses and Treatises by Edwards, Smalley, Maxcy, Emmons, Griffin, Burge, and Weeks* (Boston: Congregational Board of Publications, 1859), x.

flowed down from Edwards Sr. into the great New England tradition consists of multiple streams; however, Park's 'missing' chain of custody, which passed through Edwards Jr, because of this dissertation, has finally found its explanation.¹⁷ Yet, there is more work to be done.

Timothy Dwight (1752–1817), who was also Edwards Jr.'s nephew was directly mentored by him while he was still at the White Haven pulpit in New Haven, CT. Dwight went on to be the first president of Yale Divinity School and prepared hundreds of ministers who supplied pulpits to the new and westward expanding nation. By the 1830's the Edwardsean mentorship model was on to its fourth and fifth generation of ministers as a new and greater awakening began to spread throughout America. The second Great Awakening preacher Asahel Nettleton (1873–1844), for example, owned a transcript of the very theological questions used by Edwards Jr. in the training of students.¹⁸ Furthermore, Second Great Awakening preachers more consistently, than prior generations, spoke about the covenant of grace as having a key entry-point, which was opened by the atonement of Christ so that one could respond to the grace of God immediately. This key entry-point, pioneered by Edwards Sr., was entered by many thousands during the early nineteenth century whether they understood the reception history or not. Yet, as important as the mentorship of Edwards Jr. was, the most important direction in mentorship occurred during Edwards Jr.'s quiet reflection upon the manuscripts inherited from his father and the volumes of Petrus van Mastricht's *Theoretico-Practica Theologia*.

¹⁷ See figure 3 in chapter one above in which Park's mentorship map leads through Bellamy and Hopkins towards Andover Seminary. Figure 2 in chapter one highlights the gap in the custody of Edwards's manuscripts of which Edwards Jr. eventually took ownership.

¹⁸ Jonathan Edwards Jr., 'Theological Questions of Jonathan Edwards, D.D', *Asahel Nettleton Papers*, Hartford Seminary Library (Box 179, Folder 2870). See also, Maltby A. Gelston, *Systematic Collection of Questions and Answers in Divinity*, Yale University Manuscript and Archives Division, Miscellaneous MSS Collection (MS 354, Series III. E-G, box 5, f. 499).

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