

THEOLOGICAL UNIVERSITY OF APELDOORN

---

“That Which They Can’t See:”

A Retrieval of Jonathan Edwards’ Homiletical Use of Imagination

ACADEMIC THESIS

FOR CONFERRAL OF THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR IN THEOLOGY

ON AUTHORISATION OF THE RECTOR PROF. DR. MAARTEN KATER,

TO BE DEFENDED IN PUBLIC, GOD WILLING,

ON THE TWENTY-SECOND OF JUNE, 2023

AT 15.30 HOURS

AT THE THEOLOGICAL UNIVERSITY, WILHELMINAPARK 4, APELDOORN

By

David Peter Van Brugge

Born August 18, 1978 in Kitchener, Ontario, Canada

SUPERVISOR: PROF. DR. MAARTEN KATER

---

CO-SUPERVISOR: PROF. DR. WILLEM VAN VLASTUIN

---

“That Which They Can’t See:”

A Retrieval of Jonathan Edwards’ Homiletical Use of Imagination



Figure 1. Rembrandt, *Mennonite Minister Anslo with His Wife* (1641)

*Fathers and mothers, husbands, wives, or children,  
Or the company of earthly friends, are but shadows;  
But the enjoyment of God is the substance.  
These are but scattered beams; but God is the sun.  
These are but streams; but God is the fountain.  
These are but drops; but God is the ocean.*

- Jonathan Edwards, “The True Christians Life,” *WJE*, 17:437-438



## Table of Contents

Dedication .....	.vii
Abbreviations .....	.viii
Figures .....	ix
Introduction .....	1
<b>PART I – The Context for Strengthening the Homiletical Use of Imagination</b>	
Chapter 1 – Understanding the Imagination and Its Implication for Practical Theology .....	29
Understandings of the Imagination	
Implications of Imagination for Practical Theology	
Imagination Defined	
Conclusion	
Chapter 2 – Imagination in Contemporary Homiletics .....	69
Imagination in Expository Homiletics	
Imagination in the New Homiletic	
Conclusion	
<b>PART II – The Possibility of Strengthening the Homiletical Use of Imagination</b>	
Chapter 3 – Jonathan Edwards and the Imagination .....	99
Edwards’ Understanding of the Imagination	
Edwards’ Use of the Imagination	
Considering Possible Influences on Edwards’ Imagination	
Edwards’ Potential Contribution to a Homiletical Use of Imagination	
Conclusion	
Chapter 4 – Jonathan Edwards’ Imagination as Reflective of a Puritan Baroque Imagination . . .	189
The Puritan Baroque Imagination	
Edwards’ Imagination as Reflective of a Puritan Baroque Imagination	
Further Support	
Conclusion	

Chapter 5 – Jonathan Edwards’ Homiletical Use of Imagination .....	247
Stockbridge Sermons	
Imagery	
Light	
Space	
Movement	
Affections	
Glorification	
Conclusion	
 PART III – The Benefit of Strengthening a Homiletical Use of Imagination	
 Chapter 6 – Retrieving Edwards .....	299
 Chapter 7 – Conclusions .....	317
 Appendices .....	323
A. “God’s Orchard,” Sermon #993	
B. “In the Image of God,” Sermon #998	
C. “Mortality of Mankind,” Sermon #1006	
D. “A Converted Man is Enlightened,” Sermon #1025	
E. “One God,” Sermon #1045	
F. “They That Mourn,” Sermon #1050	
G. “There is a God,” Sermon #1059	
H. “Thinking of their Ways,” Sermon #1113	
I. “Though Wickedness be Sweet,” Sermon #1118	
J. “Love the House of God,” Sermon #1175	
 Bibliography .....	351

## Dedication

*With appreciation for my parents,*

*whose bookshelves included Jonathan Edwards;*

*And with thankfulness for my wife,*

*whose love allows this wanderer to chase ideas while listening to hours of Bach;*

*And with commitment to my King who called me to the ministry,*

*whose servant I remain.*

## Abbreviations

In citing works in the footnotes, works frequently cited have been identified by the following abbreviations. Full citation information can be found in the bibliography.

- CWTM* Thomas Manton. *The Complete Works of Thomas Manton*. 22 vols. First published James Nisbet, 1870. Reprinted Edinburgh: Banner of Truth Trust, 2020.
- JEE* Harry Stout, ed. *The Jonathan Edwards Encyclopedia*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2017.
- OHB* John D. Lyons, ed. *The Oxford Handbook of the Baroque*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019.
- OHJE* Douglas A. Sweeney and Jan Stievermann, eds. *The Oxford Handbook of Jonathan Edwards*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2021.
- RHPI* Amy Kind, ed. *The Routledge Handbook of the Philosophy of Imagination*. New York: Routledge, 2017.
- WJE* *The Works of Jonathan Edwards*. Vols. 1-26. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1955-2006.
- WJEO* *The Works of Jonathan Edwards Online*. Vols. 27-73. Jonathan Edwards Center.
- WJF* John Flavel. *The Works of John Flavel*. 6 vols. First published W. Baynes and Son, 1820. Reprinted London: Banner of Truth Trust, 1968.



## Figures

1. Rembrandt van Rijn, *The Mennonite Minister Cornelis Claesz. Anslo in Conversation with His Wife, Altje* (1641). Public domain.
2. Achieving Exposition and Imagination
3. Dome of St. Stephen Walbrook, London, UK (1671-1687). Photo used through Creative Commons Attribution 2.0. <http://flickr.com/photos/duncan1/49195035756>
4. Francisco de Zurbarán, *Agnus Dei* (1640). Public domain.
5. Frontispiece for the New Testament, *Authorized Version* (1611). Public domain.
6. Henry Augustus Loop, after Joseph Badger *Jonathan Edwards, President* (1758). Used with permission from <http://artimage.princeton.edu/files/ProductionJpegs/PP12.jpg>; Elias Gottlob Haussmann, *Johann Sebastian Bach* (1746). Photo used through Creative Commons Attribution 2.0. <http://flickr.com/photos/22722296@N06/2187086138>



**“That Which They Can’t See:”  
A Retrieval of Jonathan Edwards’ Homiletical Use of Imagination**

In “Some Thoughts Concerning the Present Revival,” Jonathan Edwards (AD 1703-1758) painted a vibrant picture of the delights of spiritual sight:

The soul. . . has been as it were perfectly overwhelmed, and swallowed up with light and love and a sweet solace, rest and joy of soul, that was altogether unspeakable; and more than once continuing. . . in that clear and lively view or sense of the infinite beauty and amiableness of Christ's person, and the heavenly sweetness of his excellent and transcendent love; so that [the soul]. . . did as it were swim in the rays of Christ's love, like a little mote swimming in the beams of the sun, or streams of his light that come in at a window; and the heart was swallowed up in a kind of glow of Christ's love, coming down from Christ's heart in heaven.<sup>1</sup>

In part through that picture, Edwards defended the revivals and provided an apologetic for authentic spirituality against those who condemned the revivals as mere emotionalism. And it was personal: this was the portrait of a saint he knew well, his wife Sarah Pierpont (AD 1710-1758). Yet this eloquent description of spiritual sight was not just a defensive and subjective apologetic. It reflected Edwards’ pastoral appeal that people reading that treatise and hearing his sermons would value and desire such an affective faith.<sup>2</sup>

Similar delights can be seen in Rembrandt Harmenszoon Van Rijn’s (AD 1606-1669) depiction of the Mennonite minister Anslo and his wife (see Figure 1). While the husband Anslo

---

1. Jonathan Edwards, “Some Thoughts Concerning the Present Revival,” *WJE*, 4:332-340.

2. Ted A. Campbell, *The Religion of the Heart: A Study of European Religious Life in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries* (Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 1991), 2-3 suggests that such affective faith was indicative of wider movements of “religion of the heart,” which maintained that the natural separation from God “is overcome in affective (‘heartfelt’) experience.... The key element in their understanding of religious life, then, was their insistence that the ‘heart,’ denoting the will and affections (or ‘dispositions’), is the central point of contact between God and humankind.”

is teaching, and looks on admirably, it is his saintly wife who is full of light. Anslo reflects some of the light, but he is not the source of the light. Indeed, he is in the shadows. The source of the light is external, even as it shines on the Bible. Again, the portrait goes beyond symbolic depiction. As the poet Joost van den Vondel (AD 1587-1679) wrote of Rembrandt's portrait, *Wie Anslo zien wil, moet hem horen* (Who wants to see Anslo, must hear him).<sup>3</sup> Though primarily visual, the message is also an invitation to the verbal. Whether portrayed in ink or oil, Edwards' writing and Rembrandt's painting both reflect an imagination that promotes the concept of spiritual light and seeks affective acknowledgment.<sup>4</sup>

The recognition of an imagination that promotes spiritual light and affective response is not universal. Edwards himself wrestled with this, suggesting that unbelief and a rejection of the invisible rose, in part, from an over-dependence on the senses. He was concerned that people live "wholly about sensitive things, till what is sensible seems to be all to them. And that which is not the object of sense seems to be nothing; that which they can't see or feel don't seem real to them."<sup>5</sup> Today, preachers, like Edwards, are called to preach truths which may not seem real to others. Therefore, in practical theology, the question arises: how can one intelligently and authentically communicate the vibrant reality of invisible things? Since the priority of practical

---

3. The Dutch quoted in Simon Schama, *Rembrandt's Eyes* (New York: Penguin Books, 1999), 477. The English translation in Schama avoids the reference to sight.

4. Thijs Weststeijn, "The Sublime and the 'Beholder's Share': Junius, Rubens, Rembrandt," *Journal of Historians of Netherlandish Art* 8, no. 2 (Summer 2016): 9-11 describes how such a *teghenwoordigheydt* (presence) is a function of imagination and requires affective involvement of the audience.

5. Jonathan Edwards, "Practical Atheism: A sermon on Psalm 14:1," *WJE*, 17:52. This quote provides the title of this dissertation.

theology is to communicate the gospel as properly as possible,<sup>6</sup> what homiletical methods are appropriate?<sup>7</sup>

Such questions are important because the discipline of homiletics must not be denigrated to technique or method: the priority remains theological.<sup>8</sup> Even then, the priority of communicating the gospel clearly is not just a scholarly theological study; it is also a spiritual and personal practice.<sup>9</sup> But both theology and practice suggest, as does Immink, that gospel

---

6. Justin Ariel Bailey, *Reimagining Apologetics: The Beauty of Faith in a Secular Age* (Downers Grove: IVP Academic, 2020), 7; Christian Grethlein, *An Introduction to Practical Theology: History, Theory, and the Communication of the Gospel in the Present*, translated by Uwe Rasch (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2016), 59; Craig A. Loscalzo, *Apologetic Preaching: Proclaiming Christ to a Postmodern World* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2000), 24; William Greenough Thayer Shedd, *Homiletics and Pastoral Theology* (Birmingham, AB: Solid Ground Christian Books, 2013), 280. That this should balance proclamation of the gospel and human discourse, see F. Gerrit Immink, “Homiletics: The Current Debate,” in *International Journal of Practical Theology* 8, no. 1 (2004): 91.

7. Practical theology is a category of theological study; homiletics is the art of preaching from composition through delivery.

8. David Schnasa Jacobsen, “Introduction,” in *Homiletical Theology: Preaching as Doing Theology*, ed. by David Schnasa Jacobsen, Volume 1 of *The Promise of Homiletical Theology* (Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2015), 7-9. Jacobsen notes five intersections between homiletics and theology: the gospel as content and lens of preaching; the act of preaching; the means of grace in worship; theological content in sermons; and practical concerns of preaching as an extension of theology. This study would fall within the fifth area since it wrestles with how practices of imagination would form the preacher’s work. A theology of imagination is reflected in preaching. However, while this study seeks to strengthen ways imagination might be used in homiletical method, this study would not fall into the constructive nature of preaching “ever-new accents, perspectives, and articulations of good news” that Jacobsen sees as homiletical theology (page 14). See also Garrett Green, *Imagining God: Theology and the Religious Imagination* (New York: Harper & Row, 1989), 149; David Schnasa Jacobsen, “The Unfinished Task of Homiletical Theology,” in *Homiletical Theology: Preaching as Doing Theology*, ed. David Schnasa Jacobsen, Volume 1 of *The Promise of Homiletical Theology* (Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2015), 48; Nathan Wright, “The Eschatological Redemption of Human Speech: Towards a Biblical Theology of Christian Preaching,” *The Journal of the Evangelical Homiletics Society* 21, no. 1 (March 2021): 66.

9. See William Greenough Thayer Shedd, “The Characteristics and Importance of a Natural Rhetoric,” in *Literary Essays* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2000), 123-147.

proclamation and human discourse are intertwined.<sup>10</sup> How can homiletic choices promote that which is true and lovely?<sup>11</sup> How have others been creative, wise, and faithful ambassadors?<sup>12</sup> The answer suggested in this dissertation is based on the supposition that imagination may be a significant part of the answer. That premise can be supported by the suggestion of John McIntyre (AD 1916-2005) that imagination is suited to communicate revelation, as it can explain the unfamiliar in terms of the familiar, and use the language of this world to speak of an other-world, opening empirical observations to interpretations, all within the realm of faith that involves affection and volition.<sup>13</sup>

Some have considered the intersection of practical theology and imagination as an aesthetic practical theology. Aesthetic practical theology displays a merger of theology and

---

10. See Immink, "Homiletics," 91.

11. Samuel T. Logan, Jr., "The Phenomenology of Preaching," in *The Preacher and Preaching: Reviving the Art*, ed. Samuel T. Logan, Jr. (Phillipsburg: P & R Publishing, 1986), 130. See also Clive Staples Lewis, "Bluspels and Flalansferes: A Semantic Nightmare," in *Selected Literary Essays*, ed. Walter Hooper (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1969), 263.

12. See Charles L. Campbell and Johan H. Cilliers, *Preaching Fools: The Gospel as Rhetoric of Folly* (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2012).

13. John McIntyre, *Faith, Theology, and Imagination* (Edinburgh: The Handsel Press, 1987), 148-157.

theories of aesthetics in aesthetic methods and modes.<sup>14</sup> However, the aim of this project is not to adopt aesthetic methods in practical theology so much as to recover the “recognition and inclusion [of imagination] in the work and pedagogy” of homiletics.<sup>15</sup> The aim is to recover a strong understanding of the intersection of homiletics and imagination for the benefit of best practices in expository preaching today.

This pursuit of strengthening an understanding of the imagination as it relates to homiletics will be accomplished by asking this research question: “In what ways can a homiletical use of imagination be strengthened by a retrieval of Jonathan Edwards’ understanding of imagination as evidenced in the Puritan baroque characteristics of the Stockbridge Indian sermons (1751-1758)?” To develop an answer, the following sub-questions will be asked and answered. The opening question will be, What is the imagination and how does it relate to practical theology? That will lead to the next question, What is the current homiletical use of imagination and how might it benefit from retrieval? Those two questions set the stage for retrieving Edwards. And yet, since there is no simple summary document in which Edwards describes his understanding of imagination, the next question becomes, What was Jonathan Edwards’ understanding of imagination, and why was it that? This leads to, How can Edwards’

---

14. Richard Viladesau, *Theological Aesthetics: God in Imagination, Beauty, and Art* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 19. Sarah Covington and Kathryn Reklis, eds., *Protestant Aesthetics and the Arts*, Routledge Studies in Theology, Imagination, and the Arts (New York: Routledge, 2020), 14 seem to conflate Protestant aesthetics and a Protestant imagination. Richard Viladesau, *Theology and the Arts: Encountering God through Music, Art and Rhetoric* (New York: Paulist Press, 2000), 168-216 suggests a way of preaching aesthetically to overcome the distance between the tradition and the contemporary congregation through appealing to the hearer’s experiences.

15. Jonathan King, *The Beauty of the Lord: Theology as Aesthetics*, Studies in Historical and Systematic Theology (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2018), 1. King makes the distinction between recovery and reinvigoration of aesthetics in theology, and the methodological turn to aesthetics for biblical and systematic theology.

homiletical use of imagination be helpfully understood? Is it helpful to see in Edwards coherence with a Puritan baroque mindset? Is there evidence of such a Puritan baroque concept in the Stockbridge Indian sermons? This will culminate in the question of, What benefits can be drawn from a retrieval of Jonathan Edwards' homiletical use of imagination? This introduction will further describe the problem, the method, the rationale, and the goal of such a study.

## I.1 The Problem

The problem lurking behind this study concerns the necessity of a homiletical use of imagination in the *dispositio* of expository sermons.<sup>16</sup> To be clear, the problem to be addressed in this study is not imaginative content of expository sermons.<sup>17</sup> This study assumes that the

---

16. For this study, the homiletical use of imagination is focused on *dispositio* - the process of artfully arranging what one has to say (as distinguished from *inventio* - the content of what one will say, and *actio* or *pronuncio* - the delivery of that being said). For imagination as it relates to *inventio*, see Izaak J. de Hulster, "Imagination: A Hermeneutical Tool for the Study of the Hebrew Bible," *Biblical Interpretation* 18 (2010): 114-136.

17. The understanding of what an expository sermon is, is itself wide-ranging and confusing. Hughes Oliphant Old, *The Reading and Preaching of the Scriptures in the Worship of the Christian Church*, 7 volume series (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998), 1:8-16 observes that the New Testament distinguishes between expository, evangelistic, catechetical, festal, and prophetic preaching, defining expository preaching as regular exposition of Scripture. See also Steven Tramel Gaines, "Redefining Preaching: A Beginning," *Res Rhetorica* 3, (2017): 34-36. Paul Borden, "Expository Preaching," in *Handbook of Contemporary Preaching*, ed. Michael Duduit (Nashville: B & H Academic, 1992), 64 describes expository sermons as those where the "idea, outline, applications, illustrations, and assertions" fit together, and reflect the context and intent of the biblical text. This would exclude some early church and Reformation sermons. James W. Cox, *Preaching: A Comprehensive Approach to the Design and Delivery of Sermons* (Eugene: Wipf & Stock, 1993), 151 suggests the only difference between expository sermons and all other types is that "expository sermons heavily emphasize the *explaining* of scripture." This could then include bible studies and lectures. For this study, an expository or expositional sermon is understood as described by Joel Beeke, *Reformed Preaching: Proclaiming God's Word from the Heart of the Preacher to the Heart of His People* (Wheaton: Crossway, 2018), 344 where it is stated that an expository sermon will "derive its message and main points from a passage of the Bible." See also David Martyn Lloyd-Jones, *Preaching and Preachers* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1971), 185-196.



Scriptures are God’s revelation and that the content of a sermon is biblical exposition. But within *dispositio* of expository sermons, how can the homiletical use of imagination be used?

There are challenges to answering that question. The intersection of imagination and homiletics for expository preachers for the twenty-first century remains underdeveloped. Past methods of homiletics have often been built around the modernist quest for order, stability, unity, and certainty through propositions highlighting reason, intellect, and the certainty of knowledge.<sup>18</sup> More recent methods see any expositional preaching as a cautious “marketing strategy to maintain the institution,” which generally results in safe, boring, and uninteresting preaching.<sup>19</sup> Those traditional methods are challenged by the plethora of possible information sources, the power and influence of the media, a cultural aversion to truth, and a lack of respect for the role of preaching.<sup>20</sup> These challenges are compounded by contemporary audiences who appreciate increased patterns of sensory, imaginative information and less rationalistic

---

18. Paul Scott Wilson, “Postmodernity and Preaching,” *Touchstone* 32, no. 1 (February 2014): 12. For examples see James M. Garretson, *Princeton and Preaching: Archibald Alexander and the Christian Ministry* (Edinburgh: Banner of Truth Trust, 2005), 141; Abraham Kuyper, *Calvinism: Six Stone Foundation Lectures* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1943), 11-12; Avery Dulles, *A History of Apologetics*, Theological Resources Series (New York: Corpus Publications, 1971), 202; William Dyrness, *Christian Apologetics in a World Community* (Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity Press, 1983), 74.

19. Loscalzo, *Apologetic Preaching*, 24.

20. J. Kent Edwards, *Deep Preaching: Creating Sermons that Go Beyond the Superficial* (Nashville: B & H Academic, 2009), 3-10; David Lose, *Preaching at the Crossroads: How the World – and our Preaching – Is Changing* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2013), 32.

information.<sup>21</sup> Many in these audiences have grown up in cultures that promote pluralism, pragmatism, pessimism, subjectivity of knowledge, moral vacuums, and religious inclusivism.<sup>22</sup> The simple meanings of tradition, scripture, reason, and experience have disappeared from academic, and often religious, discourse.<sup>23</sup>

Within this context, the challenge facing expository homiletics is how to maintain identity as “of the Bible.”<sup>24</sup> Radical orthodoxy has responded to the postmodern context by

---

21. Authors who have suggested such thoughts include David G. Buttrick, “Speaking between Times: Homiletics in a Postmodern World,” in *Theology and the Interhuman: Essays in Honor of Edward Farley*, ed. Edward Farley and Robert R. Williams (Valley Forge, PA: Trinity Press International, 1995): 156; Craig A. Loscalzo, “Apologizing for God: Apologetic Preaching to a Postmodern World,” *Review & Expositor*, 93 no. 3 (Summer 1996): 405-418; Alister McGrath, *Mere Apologetics: How to Help Seekers and Skeptics Find Faith* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2012): 27-40, 90-93; Holly Ordway, *Apologetics and the Christian Imagination: an Integrated Approach to Defending the Faith* (Steubenville, OH: Emmaus Road, 2017): 1-20; John Stott, *Between Two Worlds: The Challenge of Preaching Today* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1982), 50-91; Thomas H. Troeger, “Imaginative Theology: the Shape of Post-modern Homiletics,” *Homiletic*, 13 no. 1 (1988): 28-32; Wilson, “Postmodernity and Preaching,” 12-20. Myron Bradley Penner, *The End of Apologetics: Christian Witness in a Postmodern Context* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2013), 6, 72 takes this so far as to say that current apologetic arguments are survivals of classical Christianity that have lost their meaning and relevance and that Christians should not approve of, or use, traditional apologetics.

22. This list is summarized from R. Larry Overstreet, *Persuasive Preaching: A Biblical and Practical Guide to the Effective Use of Persuasion* (Wooster, OH: Weaver Book Company, 2014), 17-19. See also R. Albert Mohler, Jr., *He is Not Silent: Preaching in a Postmodern World* (Chicago: Moody Press, 2008), 115-132.

23. Immink, “Homiletics,” 89-90. See also John S. McClure, *Other-wise Preaching: A Postmodern Ethic for Homiletics* (St. Louis: Chalice Press, 2001).

24. H. David Schuringa, “The Vitality of Reformed Preaching,” *Calvin Theological Journal* 30, no. 1 (Apr. 1995): 191; Paul Scott Wilson, *Preaching as Poetry: Beauty, Goodness, and Truth in Every Sermon*, The Artistry of Preaching Series (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2014), 16.

retrieving the value of theology and rhetoric,<sup>25</sup> and yet hesitates about maintaining an identity as “of the Bible.” And yet within Reformed practical theology, it may be understood that the truth of the Word of God, historic Reformed theology, the need of communities, and the experiences of people can and do overlap. But does imagination have any role in this?

There have been at least four doctoral dissertations addressing the intersection of imagination and homiletics. Barnabas Kim addresses imagination in both expository hermeneutics and homiletics, looking to biblical authors for insight in how to improve a homiletical use of imagination.<sup>26</sup> Similarly, Jeremy Painter’s study focuses on applying the homiletical use of imagination in Scripture.<sup>27</sup> Kathrine Bruce’s work is less concerned with expository preaching, and explores the connections between imagination, preaching, and personality.<sup>28</sup> Peter Henry’s dissertation theorizes a role for imagination in preaching based on

---

25. John Milbank, *Theology and Social Theory: Beyond Secular Reason*, second edition (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2006), 437. See also Andrew R. Van’t Land, “The Rhetorical Roots of Radical Orthodoxy: Augustinian Oratory and Ontology in Milbank’s Theopo(e/li)tics,” MA thesis, Institute for Christian Studies (2013): 69-74. It should be noted that Milbank wants to separate the analogical imagination from its Augustinian and Thomistic roots; see Denis Donoghue, “The Analogical Imagination: After ‘Christ and Apollo,’” *Religion & Literature* 32, no. 3 (Autumn 2000): 19. The result of removing analogy from its historic roots allows a pluralistic mixing of things; see William F. Lynch, *Christ and Apollo: The Dimensions of the Literary Imagination* (Belmont, NC: Wiseblood Books, 2021).

26. Barnabas Youn Soo Kim, “The Use of Imagination for Expository Hermeneutics and Homiletics,” PhD dissertation (Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2014), 14.

27. Jeremy Painter, “Made for Other Worlds: The Preacher and the Imagination,” DMin dissertation (Regent University, 2020).

28. Kathrine Sarah Bruce, “The Vital Importance of the Imagination in the Contemporary Preaching Event,” PhD dissertation (Durham University, 2013). Immink, “Homiletics,” 98-99 also notes that this personality driven approach is seen in Hans van de Geest, *Presence in the Pulpit*, trans. Douglas W. Stott (Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1981).

non-theological disciplines, seeing a relationship with experience and epistemology.<sup>29</sup>

There is therefore a lack of scholarly attention on the helpful role of imagination within practical theology and expositional homiletics. That is not to say there is no other literature. Dermot A. Lane has contributed a helpful contextual article regarding general theology, showing that any rehabilitation of imagination will require the co-existence of reason and imagination.<sup>30</sup> While Lane acknowledges challenges and concerns, he suggests imagination's importance for contemporary theology since it "transforms the detached reason of Enlightenment into an engaged and participatory reason which has been one of the hallmarks of religions down through the centuries."<sup>31</sup> J. Robert Barth addresses the imagination as the key to analogical knowledge and religious experience, but bases his observation on Ignatius Loyola (AD 1556-1609) and applies imagination to personal reflection and Jesuit art rather than expository homiletic endeavor.<sup>32</sup>

Nevertheless, though surrounded by a culture where "the image reigns supreme,"<sup>33</sup> expository homileticians rarely recognize how they might use the "sacred gift of seeing, the ability to peer beyond the veil and gaze with astonished wonder upon the beauties and mysteries

---

29. Peter J. M. Henry, "Shared Imaginings: The Understanding and Role of Imagination in Contemporary Homiletics," PhD dissertation (Princeton Theological Seminary, 2009).

30. Dermot A. Lane, "Imagination and Theology: The *Status Quaestionis*," *Louvain Studies*, 34 (2009-2010): 119.

31. Lane, "Imagination and Theology," 133.

32. J. Robert Barth, "Mortal Beauty: Ignatius Loyola, Samuel Taylor Coleridge, and the Role of Imagination in Religious Experience," *Christianity and Literature* 50, no. 1 (Autumn 2000): 69-78.

33. Richard Kearney, *The Wake of the Imagination* (New York: Routledge, 1988), 3. See also Eva T.H. Brann, *The World of the Imagination: Sum and Substance*, 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Edition (London: Rowman & Littlefield, 2017), 204.

of things holy and eternal.”<sup>34</sup> In part because of the command to “Hear, O Israel!” (Deut. 6:1), the prophetic call to “behold” (e.g., Isa. 7:14, 40:9; Jer. 18:3) is minimized. The implications of the Greek word for “I know” being related to “I have seen” (*eidon*) are forgotten.<sup>35</sup> Even when the lack of scholarly attention has been pointed out, the imagination, “though it has always been understood by those skilled in the practice of the Christian cure of souls, has never been given proper place in Christian theology, which has been too much ruled by intellectualist preconceptions.”<sup>36</sup>

The lack of scholarly attention in expositional homiletics regarding imagination seems to stem from a perception that historically the imagination was thought of negatively. McIntyre sees a progression from the early Reformers’ condemnation of idolatry to a broader iconoclasm, to hundreds of years of Protestant iconophobia, which has resulted in “imageless thought” that sterilizes religion and theology of images.<sup>37</sup> This perception has only been aggravated in contexts

---

34. Aiden Wilson Tozer, “The Value of a Sanctified Imagination,” in *Developing a Christian Imagination: An Interpretive Anthology*, ed. Warren W. Wiersbe (Wheaton: Victor Books, 1995), 214. See also Fred. B. Craddock, “The Gospel of God,” in *Preaching as a Theological Task: World, Gospel, Scripture in Honor of David Buttrick*, ed. Thomas G. Long and Edward Farley (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 1996), 78; Bernard Dive, *John Henry Newman and the Imagination* (London: T & T Clark, 2018), 3.

35. Brann, *World of the Imagination*, 15. See also Wilhelm Michaelis, “Ὀράω, Εἶδον, Βλέπω, Ὀπτάνομαι, Θεάομαι, Θεωρέω, Ἄορατος, Ὀρατός, Ὀρασις, Ὀραμα, Ὀπτασία, Αὐτόπτης, Ἐπόπτης, Ἐποπτεύω, Ὀφθαλμός,” in *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, ed. Gerhard Kittel, Geoffrey W. Bromiley, and Gerhard Friedrich (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1964), 317.

36. John Baillie, *Our Knowledge of God* (London: Oxford University Press, 1964), 77. See also David J. Bryant, *Faith and the Play of Imagination: On the Role of Imagination in Religion*, Studies in American Biblical Hermeneutics 5 (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1989), 2; McIntyre, *Faith, Theology, and Imagination*, 1.

37. McIntyre, *Faith, Theology, and Imagination*, 6-8. That this is not only unfortunate, but also historically inaccurate, see David J. Davis, *Seeing Faith, Printing Pictures: Religious Identity during the English Reformation*, Library of the Written Word (Leiden: Brill, 2013).

where rationalism – which generally has looked at imagination as suspicious – is highly regarded as the handmaid of theology.<sup>38</sup> David Allen’s article on homiletics and authority traces this well from the old path of “authority to revelation” to a fork in the road he titled “autonomy of reason,” from which there is the path of narrative and imagination.<sup>39</sup>

The lack of attention regarding homiletical use of imagination has not escaped professional challenges. At least one author has noted that sermon structures are standardized, generally predictable, and repetitive.<sup>40</sup> Sermon relevance is perceived as insincere and forced.<sup>41</sup> Sermons often neglect biblical truths that are applied urgently, orderly, and directly.<sup>42</sup> Finally, alternative sermons that are supposedly imaginative are merely shallow and trivial. However, what remains absent are sermons that are biblical, interesting, simple, clear, reflective of the text, with an affective objective.<sup>43</sup> And yet there has been no scholarly embrace of imagination within the Reformed, expository tradition, resulting in little being written on imagination from within

---

38. McIntyre, *Faith, Theology, and Imagination*, 89.

39. David L. Allen, “A Tale of Two Roads: Homiletics and Biblical Authority,” *The Journal of the Evangelical Homiletics Society* 43, no. 3 (Sept. 2000): 496-515.

40. Warren W. Wiersbe, *Preaching and Teaching with Imagination: The Quest for Biblical Ministry* (Wheaton: Victor Books, 1994), 289-300.

41. Stott, *Between Two Worlds*, 262-337.

42. See Albert N. Martin, *What’s Wrong with Preaching Today?* (Edinburgh: Banner of Truth Trust, 1992), 26.

43. See Edwards, *Deep Preaching*, 163-170. And yet Jeffrey Arthurs, “How to Include Imagination in Sermon Prep,” *Preaching: The Professional Journal for Ministry Leaders* 37, no. 3 (Spring 2022): 12-15 states that imagination is “yielding to the author’s intention,” and happens through prayer, slow reading, standard exegesis, logosomatic study, and the making of a mental movie. He is taking the biblical imagining seriously but leaves it in the hermeneutical side of preparation.

that tradition.<sup>44</sup>

That failure and the resulting myopia<sup>45</sup> needs to be the concern of practical theology departments in Reformed seminaries. Since practical theology remains the theory of the communication of the gospel regardless of time and challenges, how the gospel can best be communicated to audiences today necessitates consideration. People need to see, and preachers need to know how to communicate sight as best as they can, while remaining dependent on the

---

44. For examples of homiletical literature within the expository tradition that do not mention or highlight imagination see Beeke, *Reformed Preaching*; John Carrick, *The Imperative of Preaching: a Theology of Sacred Rhetoric* (London: Banner of Truth, 2002); Bryan Chapell, *Christ-Centered Preaching: Redeeming the Expository Sermon*, second edition (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2005); Herman Hoeksema, *Homiletics* (Grandville, MI: Theological School of the Protestant Reformed Churches, 1993).

For exceptions to the above, see J.A. Broadus, *On the Preparation and Delivery of Sermons* (Grand Rapids: Associated Publishers and Authors, Inc, 1971), 156-159; Sinclair Ferguson, *Some Pastors and Teachers: Reflecting a Biblical Vision of What Every Minister is Called to Be* (London: Banner of Truth, 2017); Faris Daniel Whitesell, *The Art of Biblical Preaching* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1950), 88-91.

For examples of literature outside the expository tradition that do encourage imagination see Elizabeth Achtemeier, *Creative Preaching* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1980); Kate Bruce, *Igniting the Heart: Preaching and Imagination* (London: SCM Press, 2015); Walter Brueggemann, *The Practice of Prophetic Imagination: Preaching an Emancipated Word* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2012); Linda Clader, *Voicing the Vision: Imagination and Prophetic Preaching* (Harrisburg, PA: Morehouse Publishers, 2004); Fred Craddock, *As One Without Authority*, Revised and with New Sermons (St. Louis, MO: Chalice Press, 2001); Richard L. Eslinger, *Narrative and Imagination: Preaching the Worlds that Shape Us* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1995); Zachary Guiliano and Cameron E. Partridge, *Preaching and the Theological Imagination* (New York: Peter Lang, 2015); Richard Hart, "Creative Preaching: Walk with Imagination in the Footsteps of Jesus," *The Priest* 68, no. 9 (September 2012): 89 -95; Thomas G. Long, *The Witness of Preaching* (Minneapolis: 1517 Media, 2016); Eugene Lowry, *The Sermon: Dancing the Edge of Mystery* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1997); Wiersbe, *Preaching and Teaching with Imagination*.

45. Kevin VanHoozer, "In Bright Shadow: C.S. Lewis on the Imagination for Theology and Discipleship," in *The Romantic Rationalist: God, Life, and Imagination in the Work of C.S. Lewis*, ed. John Piper and David Mathis (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2014), 82-83.

Holy Spirit.<sup>46</sup> The gospel needs to be communicated to a contemporary audience that often rejects imagination for the imaginary.<sup>47</sup> That communication needs to enchant and reason, and imagination encourages both simultaneously.<sup>48</sup>

Practical theology needs to retrieve clear teaching on imagination within exposition sermons. It has been done in the past. In a sermon on Hosea 2:10, “I have multiplied visions, and used similitudes,” Charles Spurgeon (AD 1834-1892) encouraged his hearers to see that “when Christ was on earth he preached in parables, and, though he is in heaven now, he is preaching in parables today. . . . The things which we see about us are God’s thoughts and God’s words to us; and if we were but wise there is not a step that we take, which we should not find to be full of mighty instruction.”<sup>49</sup> More recently, D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones (AD 1899-1981) and Timothy

---

46. Green, *Imagining God*, 150. See also J. Stephen Yuille, “‘A Simple Method’: William Perkins and the Shaping of the Protestant Pulpit,” *Puritan Reformed Journal* 9, no. 1 (2017): 215-230.

47. That the postmodern context has rejected true imagination for the imaginary see Brann, *World of the Imagination*, 10.

48. See Paul Avis, “Apologetics and the Rebirth of the Imagination,” *Ecclesiology*, 9 (2013): 307; Richard Conrad, “Moments and Themes in the History of Apologetics,” in *Imaginative Apologetics*, 126; Andrew Davison, “Introduction,” in *Imaginative Apologetics: Theology, Philosophy, and the Catholic Tradition*, ed. Andrew Davison (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2012), xxv; John Milbank, “Foreword: An Apologia for Apologetics,” in *Imaginative Apologetics*, ed. Andrew Davison, xiii-xiv; Albert J. Raboteau, “Re-enchanting the World: Education, Wisdom, and Imagination,” *Cross Currents* 45, no. 3 (Fall 1995): 395; Tim Keller, “Preaching to the Secular Mind,” *The Journal of Biblical Counseling* 14, no. 1 (Fall 1995): 61-62; Michael Ward, “How Lewis Lit the Way: Why the Path to Reasonable Faith Begins with Story and Imagination,” *Christianity Today* 57, no. 9 (November 2013): 41. This can be seen when one considers the antonyms of imagination: Clyde S. Kilby, “The Decline and Fall of the Christian Imagination,” in *The Arts and the Christian Imagination: Essays on Art, Literature, and Aesthetics*, ed. William Dyrness and Keith Call (Brewster, MA: Paraclete Press, 2016), 232 says they are cliché and copy.

49. Charles Haddon Spurgeon, “Everybody’s Sermon,” *New Park Street Pulpit* (London: Alabaster and Passmore, 1859), 4:330-331. See John 16:25 for Christ’s own acknowledgement of using figurative language.



Keller, as expository preachers, have both encouraged the use of imagination within homiletics.<sup>50</sup> And yet beyond the suggestion itself, these authors have left little instruction on how that might be accomplished. It is true that imagination is not just another important tool to nervously remember to use while preparing a sermon; it is to become part of who preachers are, buoyed by the grace of God.<sup>51</sup>

Appealing to the imagination is not mere reaction to postmodernism, it is following the example of God. If God appeals to imaginations through similitudes and images, certainly preachers can appeal to imaginations. As revealed in Scripture, the preacher should not just define the love of God, but “comprehend with all the saints what is the width and length and depth and height – to know the love of Christ which passes knowledge” (Eph. 3:18-19).<sup>52</sup> The need for such appeals is only exacerbated in a postmodern context, which rejects focusing on rationality, progress, and objective truth.<sup>53</sup> Therefore, in service to the broad church, a project about a homiletical use of imagination in expository preaching addresses a current need in the communication of the gospel.

---

50. See Lloyd-Jones, *Preaching and Preachers*, 235-237; Timothy Keller, *Preaching: Communicating Faith in an Age of Skepticism* (New York: Viking, 2015): 169-175, 287.

51. Craig Dykstra, “A Way of Seeing: Imagination and the Pastoral life,” *Christian Century* 125, no. 7 (April 8, 2008): 26-31; Edwards, *Deep Preaching*, 43-56; Clyde S. Kilby, “Evangelicals and the Call of the Imagination,” in *Arts and the Christian Imagination*, ed. William Dyrness and Keith Call, 245.

52. Andrew Davison, “Christian Reason and Christian Community,” in *Imaginative Apologetics*, ed. Andrew Davison (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2012), 28.

53. Stanley J. Grenz, *A Primer on Postmodernism* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1996), 12-14; Timothy R. Phillips and Dennis L. Okholm, eds., *Christian Apologetics in the Postmodern World* (Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity Press, 1995), 22. Already over seventy years ago, Whitesell, *Art of Biblical Preaching*, 88 observed “a visual-minded generation.”

## I.2 The Method

There have been other studies tying together imagination and preaching, though often they focus on content and techniques.<sup>54</sup> These often stem from systematic or historical concerns. However, the challenge of this study is not to just describe a theological issue, or study a historical situation, but to mine the topic for practical theological norms today. This will be done by understanding practical theology methodology, particularly as it can be used in a retrieval situation. The method for studies in practical theology has been described by Richard Osmer and Gerben Heitink, as beginning with descriptive and interpretative elements and working towards normative and pragmatic elements for practical theology.<sup>55</sup>

Retrieval studies are a method of inquiry – a style of theological discernment – that seeks to recover the richness of the past.<sup>56</sup> Retrieval studies recover that richness through dialogue with historical documents and ideas. However, they do not merely take past ideas, but use and *think with* the historical data.<sup>57</sup> In that way, there is not a plea to return to the past, but to use the past

---

54. See Painter, “The Preacher and the Imagination.”

55. Richard Osmer, *Practical Theology: an Introduction* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2008), 4, 240; Osmer concludes with a pragmatic element. Gerben Heitink, *Practical Theology: History, Theory, Action Domains: Manual for Practical Theology*, trans. Reinder Bruinsma (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999), 228 suggests the four elements to be description, interpretation, explanation, and action.

56. W. David Buschart and Kent D. Eilers, *Theology as Retrieval: Receiving the Past, Renewing the Church* (Downer’s Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2015), 12.

57. Darren Sarisky, “Tradition II: Thinking with Historical Texts – Reflections on Theologies of Retrieval,” in *Theologies of Retrieval: An Exploration and Appraisal*, ed. Darren Sarisky (New York: T & T Clark, 2017), 195-201.

to speak into the present.<sup>58</sup>

Retrieval studies do have a place in practical theology. David Randolph realizes the possibility of retrieval for homiletics through repeating, replacing, or renewing the current practice of preaching, while suggesting that renewal through novel resources is the best option.<sup>59</sup> While Randolph would see retrieval as a method of replacing current practice with older practice, it need not be that simplistic. Retrieval does call for reception and transmission of older, recognized practices. However, it does so not to move current practice backward, but to “look back in order to move forward.”<sup>60</sup> There is a cadence of descriptive and interpretative reception and normative and pragmatic transmission for the benefit of present challenges in the church.<sup>61</sup>

Part I of this study presents the context into which this retrieval study might speak. As practical theology, Part I includes both descriptive elements and interpretative elements. The descriptive element begins broadly in chapter 1 with the concept of imagination and its relationship to theology, before moving in chapter 2 to describing some current homiletical uses of imagination. The interpretative element of Part I will consider implications of current understandings of imagination and theology in chapter 1, and of imagination and homiletics in

---

58. Sarisky, “Thinking with Historical Texts,” 205.

59. David J. Randolph, *The Renewal of Preaching in the Twenty-First Century: The Next Homiletic*, Second edition with commentary by Robert Stephen Reid (Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2009), xiv.

60. Buschart and Eilers, *Theology as Retrieval*, 21. See also Kent Eilers and W. David Buschart, “‘An Overtaking of Depth’: Theology as Retrieval,” *American Theological Inquiry* 8, no. 1 (2015):19; Michael Allen and Scott R. Swain, *Reformed Catholicity: The Promise of Retrieval for Theology and Biblical Interpretation* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2015); Willem Van Vlastuin and Kelly M. Kopic, eds., “Introduction, Overview and Epilogue,” in *John Owen Between Orthodoxy and Modernity* (Leiden: Brill, 2019), 9-13.

61. Buschart and Eilers, *Theology as Retrieval*, 14-15.

chapter 2. As a retrieval study, Part I includes pointing out underdevelopment in, and opportunities for strengthening, homiletical uses of imagination that this study might help navigate or develop.<sup>62</sup>

The bulk of the study lies in Part II. Chapter 3 seeks to describe and interpret Jonathan Edwards' understanding and use of imagination. Chapter 4 continues that interpretative work by suggesting that a helpful way to synthesize Edwards' understanding and use of imagination is by using the concept of a Puritan baroque mindset and how that might appear in imaginative prose. Chapter 5 focuses the explanatory lens by exploring sermons for evidence of that concept in a more deductive manner.<sup>63</sup> The interpretative analysis of select sermons in Chapter 5 will suggest what a normative homiletical use of imagination might be, by retrieving "a model of good practice from the past . . . with which to reform a [preacher's] present actions."<sup>64</sup> In other words, the descriptive and interpretative elements will lead to the proposal of normative and pragmatic elements of Part III.

Part III will speak to the present. To that end, Chapter 6 will take Edwards' homiletical use of imagination and think with it, considering possible benefits to the contemporary expository preacher. While no effort is made to recover specific techniques or language of Edwards, the use of imagination crystallized in the concept of the Puritan baroque will be

---

62. See Gavin Ortlund, *Theological Retrieval for Evangelicals: Why We Need our Past to Have a Future* (Wheaton: Crossway, 2019), 65.

63. That this combining of inductive and deductive approaches is acceptable in qualitative research, see June F. Gilgun, "Writing Up Qualitative Research," in *The Oxford Handbook of Qualitative Research*, ed. Patricia Leavy (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014): 668. Heitink, *Practical Theology*, 230-231 would consider this a form of testable predictions, or deduction and further testing.

64. Osmer, *Practical Theology*, 152.

discussed for its potential benefit.

While a retrieval study in an area of practical theology, this study may seem to reflect some aspects of grounded theory method. Such a method would also begin by acknowledging the complex context of imagination. It would move through various stages of data gathering and reflection.<sup>65</sup> However, this study is not working through a grounded theory sequence of data studies to arrive at conceptual conclusions. Following a retrieval methodology, this study is narrower in that it seeks to inductively understand a current challenge, and then look back for possible solutions. The past context of Jonathan Edwards is described and interpreted through primary and secondary sources, with the goal of possibly recognizing ways a homiletical use of imagination might emerge from the research with normative and pragmatic pedagogical relevance for today. So, while there may be parallels to grounded theory, this practical theology retrieval study does not depend on other disciplines but looks back to another expository preacher in the broad Reformed tradition for help in strengthening contemporary expository preachers' use of imagination.<sup>66</sup>

The advantage of such a retrieval study includes acknowledging contemporary challenges, while recognizing the broader universal issues, and seeking wisdom from outside the

---

65. See Osmer, *Practical Theology*, 52 for a general description of grounded theory strategy. See also Antony Bryant, "The Grounded Theory Method," in *The Oxford Handbook of Qualitative Research*, ed. Patricia Leavy (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014): 116-136; Allen Trent and Jeasik Cho, "Interpretation Strategies: Appropriate Concepts," in *The Oxford Handbook of Qualitative Research*, ed. Patricia Leavy (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014): 639-657.

66. John Webster, "Theologies of Retrieval," in *The Oxford Handbook of Systematic Theology*, ed. John Webster, Kathryn Tanner and Iain Torrance (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 584. See also Buschart and Eilers, *Theology as Retrieval*, 25. As an example of this see Michael Pasquarello III, *Sacred Rhetoric: Preaching as a Theological and Pastoral Practice of the Church* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2005). Pasquarello's book surveys ten preachers from ancient, medieval, and renaissance times who saw preaching as theological practice.

realm of known current voices. Retrieval serves as a tool for helping homiletics recover the use of imagination while they continue to herald the word. It also serves as a practical tool for the church at large as it seeks to “open contemporary theological reflection to the lines of sight that may have become obscured or clouded by the biases, blinders, or prejudices of our own historical and cultural settings.”<sup>67</sup> It is well within the parameters of practical theology, as well as homiletics, to take a “close reading of sermons seriously” as a means “toward understanding theory at the service of theology for the sake of refining preaching practice.”<sup>68</sup> The hope is not to innovate some new response, but to look discerningly back – not to find a formula, but to see the light and the possibilities.<sup>69</sup>

### **I.3 A Rationale for the Study of Jonathan Edwards**

Jonathan Edwards is well known for his sermon “Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God.” This has stereotyped Edwards as a dour Puritan and left many with a simplistic view of his preaching. But Edwards was complex and deserves greater homiletical attention. And yet, in desiring to use Edwards for a retrieval study, one needs to take the caution of Doug Sweeney seriously: one should not use Edwards, and Edwardsean concepts, for selfish purposes.<sup>70</sup> Therefore, the expressed rationale for studying Jonathan Edwards lies in four elements: he was

---

67. Buschart and Eilers, *Theology as Retrieval*, 29. See Oliver Crisp, *Retrieving Doctrine: Essays in Reformed Theology* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2010), vii-ix, 203.

68. Jacobsen, “Unfinished Task,” 49. That a resurgence of interest in Early Modern sermons is occurring is defended in David Parry, “‘A divine kinde of rhetoricke’: Godly Preaching and the Rhetorical Tradition,” A paper delivered to the Early Modern British and Irish History Seminar (May 2010), 1.

69. Eilers and Buschart, “An Overtaking of Depth,” 19. See also Jeffrey W. Barbeau, “A Theology of Imagination,” in *God and Wonder: Theology, Imagination, and the Arts*, ed. Jeffrey W. Barbeau and Emily Hunter McGowin (Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2022): 13-29.

70. Douglas A. Sweeney, “Edwards Studies Today,” *OHJE*, 578.

an apologist, he was a preacher, he was imaginative, and his ideas have been said to have urgent contemporariness.

Edwards was somewhat of an apologist, though in a different era entirely. While his work as a missionary is “rarely remembered,”<sup>71</sup> Edwards promoted true religion to groups that were culturally Christian as well as those encountering Christianity. He combatted errors of Deism and Arminianism.<sup>72</sup> His theological anthropology, which will allow a study of imagination, played a role in his apologetic regarding the will.<sup>73</sup> He has been studied in other apologetic endeavours, such as in the recovery of beauty.<sup>74</sup> He interacted within cultural conversations of his day, rather than embracing or outright rejecting them.<sup>75</sup> Jonathan Edwards did not dismiss the heritage of the

---

71. Rachel M. Wheeler, “Edwards as Missionary,” in *Cambridge Companion to Jonathan Edwards*, ed. Stephen J. Stein (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 196.

72. John E. Smith, *Jonathan Edwards: Puritan, Preacher, Philosopher* (Notre Dame, IN: Notre Dame University Press, 1992), 2; Michael J. McClymond, *Encounters with God: An Approach to the Theology of Jonathan Edwards* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), 80-112.

73. K. Scott Oliphint, “Jonathan Edwards on Apologetics: Reason and the Noetic Effects of Sin,” in *The Legacy of Jonathan Edwards: American Religion and the Evangelical Tradition*, ed. in D.G. Hart, Sean Michael Lucas, and Stephen J. Nichols (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2003), 135.

74. See Scott Oliphint, “Jonathan Edwards: Reformed Apologist,” *Westminster Theological Journal* 57 (1995):165-186; Jeffrey C. Waddington, *The Unified Operations of the Human Soul: Jonathan Edwards’s Theological Anthropology and Apologetic* (Eugene, OR: Resource Publications, 2015); Joseph D. Wooddell, *The Beauty of the Faith: Using Aesthetics for Christian Apologetics* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2011). While not explicitly apologetic, James R. Salladin, *Jonathan Edwards and Deification: Reconciling Theosis and the Reformed Tradition*, *New Explorations in Theology* (Downers Grove: IVP Academic, 2022), is a good example of *resourcing*, or retrieval in Edwards studies.

75. Josh Moody, *Jonathan Edwards and the Enlightenment: Knowing the Presence of God* (New York: University Press of America, 2005), 2-9. That this is important in a study of imagination, see Malcolm Guite, *Lifting the Veil: Imagination and the Kingdom of God* (Baltimore: Square Halo Books, 2021), 14.

past nor the concerns of the Puritans. He was not of a philosophical camp just to be popular. He took the issues seriously, living as a great model for preachers and theological students today.<sup>76</sup>

Jonathan Edwards, while known as America's philosopher and a brilliant theologian, has also been described as a practical theologian concerned with the communication of the gospel.<sup>77</sup>

Edwards was certainly a preacher. He was known as a homiletical genius, though not pretentious as an orator. He presented truth with such force of argument, and intensity of feeling, that his whole person was focused on conceiving and delivering the message, thereby riveting his audiences.<sup>78</sup> His homiletical example as a preacher-apologist therefore deserves "investigation, if not some imitation."<sup>79</sup> And yet, Edwards' homiletics remains one of the areas least studied.<sup>80</sup>

---

76. George M. Marsden, "Jonathan Edwards in the Twenty-First Century," in *Jonathan Edwards at 300: Essays on the Tercentenary of His Birth*, ed. Harry S. Stout, Kenneth P. Minkema, and Caleb J. D. Maskell (New York: University Press of American 2005), 152-164. See also Douglas J. Ellwood, *The Philosophical Theology of Jonathan Edwards* (New York: Columbia Press, 1960), 2-3; McClymond, *Encounters with God*, 80-106; Ralph Turnbull, *Jonathan Edwards The Preacher* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1958), 154.

77. Turnbull, *Jonathan Edwards*, 111.

78. Sereno E. Dwight, "Memoir of Jonathan Edwards," in *The Works of Jonathan Edwards*, ed. Edward Hickman, 2 volumes (Edinburgh: Banner of Truth Trust, 1974), 1:cxc.

79. Richard A. Bailey, "Driven by Passion: Jonathan Edwards and the Art of Preaching," in *The Legacy of Jonathan Edwards: American Religion and the Evangelical Tradition*, ed. D.G. Hart, Sean Michael Lucas, and Stephen J. Nichols (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2003), 77. See also Jeffrey C. Waddington, "Jonathan Edwards: Pastor-Apologist," in *Jonathan Edwards for the Church: The ministry and the means of Grace*, ed. William M. Schweitzer (Edinburgh: Evangelical Press, 2015), 93-114.

80. See Kenneth P. Minkema, "Jonathan Edwards in the Twentieth Century," in *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society*, 47 no. 4, (December 2004): 659-87. See also John Carrick, *The Preaching of Jonathan Edwards* (London: Banner of Truth, 2008): 18-20; Patricia J. Tracy, *Jonathan Edwards, Pastor: Religion and Society in Eighteenth-Century Northampton* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1979), 4.



While some academic work has been done on analyzing Edwards' sermons,<sup>81</sup> this project seeks to build on the recent work of Michael Keller, Roy Paul, and Rachel Wheeler, who have described Jonathan Edwards' Stockbridge sermons as unique, creative and rhetorically important.<sup>82</sup> While Keller, Paul, and Wheeler all demonstrate that the Stockbridge sermons were unique, Keller goes the furthest, pointing out that Edwards' imagination was focused on imagery and affective language, and not abstract considerations.<sup>83</sup> This study goes beyond Keller's quantitative data, to think towards recognizing and working with Edwards' homiletical use of imagination through an interpretative concept.

Further, Edwards was imaginative. Perry Miller (AD 1905-1963) saw Edwards as an artist,<sup>84</sup> following the Puritans who "dramatized the needs of the soul exactly as does some great

---

81. For example, Carrick, *Edwards*; John D. Hannah, "The Homiletical Skill of Jonathan Edwards," *Bibliotheca Sacra* 159, no. 633 (Jan-March 2002): 96-107; Wilson H. Kimnach, "Introduction," *WJE*, 10; Wilson H. Kimnach, Kenneth P. Minkema, Douglas A. Sweeney, eds., *The Sermons of Jonathan Edwards: a Reader* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1999); Helen Westra, *The Minister's Task and Calling in the Sermons of Jonathan Edwards*, Volume 17 of *Studies in American Religion* (Lewiston, NY: Edwin Mellen Press, 1986).

82. Michael Keller, "Experiencing God in Words: Rhetoric, Logic, Imaginative Language, and Emotion in Jonathan Edwards' Sermons, a computational analysis," PhD diss. (Vrije Universiteit, 2018); Roy M. Paul, *Jonathan Edwards and the Stockbridge Mohican Indians: His Mission and Sermons* (Peterborough, ON: H & E Publishing, 2020); Rachel Wheeler, "Living Upon Hope: Mahicans and Missionaries, 1730-1760," PhD diss. (Yale University, 1999); Rachel Wheeler, *To Live Upon Hope: Mohican and Missionaries in the Eighteenth Century Northeast* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2013).

83. Keller, "Experiencing God in Words," 34, 49.

84. Perry Miller, *Jonathan Edwards* (Cleveland: World Publishing Co., 1959), 328, 330; Terrence Erdt, *Jonathan Edwards: Art and the Sense of the Heart* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1980), 82 disagrees with that description. McClymond, *Encounters with God*, 3 makes the observation that Miller's description of Edwards as an artist allowed people to learn from Edwards without adhering to his creed.

poem or work of art.”<sup>85</sup> While disagreeing with Miller’s assessment of Edwards as an artist, Simonson is clear that Edwards worked as a theological artist in line with Augustine.<sup>86</sup> To recapture that theological debt, Michael McClymond has described Edwards as an “artful theologian.”<sup>87</sup> But McClymond does not include Edwards’ sermons in his survey. Since this study concerns practical theology and homiletics, understanding Edwards as imaginative rather than an artist may be more fundamental and helpful.<sup>88</sup>

So, while Edwards may not seem an obvious choice, there is a growing understanding of Edwards as an imaginative preacher.<sup>89</sup> From within expository tradition, both D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones and Timothy Keller encourage preachers to use imagination carefully, also recommending

---

85. Perry Miller, *The New England Mind: the Seventeenth Century*. Boston: Beacon, 1961, 6. Similarly, see Annette Kolodny, “Imagery in the Sermons of Jonathan Edwards,” *Early American Literature* 7, no. 2 (Fall 1972): 172-182.

86. Harold P. Simonson, *Jonathan Edwards: Theologian of the Heart*, Jonathan Edwards Classic Studies Series (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 1982), 85; Miller, *Edwards*, xxxi, 328. The following are evidence of Edwards’ theological aesthetic impacting his work: Edwin H. Cady, “The Artistry of Jonathan Edwards,” *New England Quarterly* 22 (March 1949): 61-72; Conrad Cherry, *Nature and Religious Imagination: From Edwards to Bushnell* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1980), 10-11; Ronald A. Delattre, *Beauty and Sensibility in the Thought of Jonathan Edwards: An Essay in Aesthetics and Theological Ethics*, The Jonathan Edwards Classic Studies Series (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 1968); Richard A. Spurgeon Hall, “Bach and Edwards on the Religious Affections,” in *Johann Sebastian: A Tercentenary Celebration*, ed. Seymour L. Benstock, Contributions to the Study of Music and Dance, Number 19 (London: Greenwood Press, 1992); Ryan J. Martin, *Understanding Affections in the Theology of Jonathan Edwards: ‘The High Exercises of Divine Love,’* T & T Clark Studies in Systematic Theology (Oxford: T & T Clark, 2019).

87. McClymond, *Encounters with God*, 4.

88. Harold P. Simonson, “Jonathan Edwards and the Imagination,” *Andover Newton Quarterly* 16, no. 2 (Nov. 1975): 109.

89. Keller, “Experiencing God in Words,” 215 suggests that when preaching to the Stockbridge natives, “Edwards used the emotional and imaginative preaching that mark Whitefield’s entire career.” On page 237 Keller suggests his data also affirms Sang Hyun Lee’s focus on Edwards use of beauty and imagination.

that preachers study the example of Jonathan Edwards for help in preaching.<sup>90</sup> If therefore a use of imagination is encouraged, and the study of Jonathan Edwards is also encouraged, is there material within the corpus of Jonathan Edwards that would help on this issue? Outside the expository tradition, Thomas Troeger wonders whether Edwards represents an “early instance of homiletics as the discipline of imaginative theology.”<sup>91</sup> Gerald McDermott suggests a similar evocative, sublime vision of “an aesthetic and mystical” gospel that continued to the Stockbridge Indians.<sup>92</sup> George Marsden differs, seeing the appeal of Edwards as the manner in which Edwards “combines spiritual intensity and keen insight in bringing out the wonders latent within” the Reformed and Puritan tradition.<sup>93</sup>

The fourth reason for studying Edwards lies in the contemporary value of some of Edwards’ ideas. Harold Simonson’s article on Edwards and imagination points to an “urgent contemporariness of Edwards’ ideas.”<sup>94</sup> While this might also be recognized in the references made by Lloyd-Jones, Keller, Troeger, and others, the contemporariness of Edwards’ ideas goes beyond recent accolades. It stems from the fact that the imagination has a theological basis, and therefore recurring implications for spiritual life, illumination, and creative work. And yet Simonson seems unclear on the possible effect of the imagination, stating in one place that

---

90. See Lloyd-Jones, *Preaching and Preachers*, 176; Keller, *Preaching*, 169-170; Carrick, *Edwards*, ix.

91. Thomas Troeger, *Imagining a Sermon*, Abingdon Preacher’s Library (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1990), 110.

92. Gerald R. McDermott, *Jonathan Edwards Confronts the Gods: Christian Theology, Enlightenment Religion, and Non-Christian Faiths* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 201.

93. George M. Marsden, “Foreword,” *JEE*, vii.

94. Simonson, “Edwards and the Imagination,” 109.

“Edwards’ concept of the imagination never pointed to the imagination as producing spiritual effect,”<sup>95</sup> while concluding the same article with the observation that Edwards regarded imaginations’ “true activity originates in response to God.”<sup>96</sup>

There are some studies which have considered Edwards’ thoughts regarding imagination, as well as on the creative language within his homiletics.<sup>97</sup> Ralph Turnbull says that Edwards the preacher was “gifted with a highly fertile imagination, and a lover of the beautiful.”<sup>98</sup> Kathryn Reklis has argued that the sanctified imagination is “key to understanding Edwards’s overall hermeneutic.”<sup>99</sup> However, rather than approaching Edwards’ sermons from a hermeneutic, aesthetic, or historical perspective, this study aims to look at Edwards’ use of imagination in select sermons from a homiletical perspective. This is superficially obvious with sermons that are filled with the call for the people to imagine.<sup>100</sup> Edwards’ sermons were powerful in that his logic was balanced by a vivid imagination; his “intellectual acumen, emotional intensity, and experimental faith” were tied together.<sup>101</sup> Edwards had an “intensely concrete” imagination.<sup>102</sup>

---

95. Simonson, “Edwards and the Imagination,” 112.

96. Simonson, “Edwards and the Imagination,” 118.

97. For examples see Charles L. Geschiere, “‘Taste and See that the Lord is Good:’ The Aesthetic-Affectional Preaching of Jonathan Edwards,” Th.M. thesis, Calvin Theological Seminary, 2008; Sang Hyun Lee, *The Philosophical Theology of Jonathan Edwards* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000); Simonson, “Edwards and the Imagination,” 109-118.

98. Turnbull, *Jonathan Edwards*, 76.

99. Kathryn Reklis, “Imagination and Hermeneutics,” *OHJE*, 309-323.

100. According to an online search using the Jonathan Edwards Centre at Yale University, there are 305 occasions in his sermons alone where Edwards calls his hearers to imagine.

101. Turnbull, *Jonathan Edwards*, 89.

102. Kimmach, “Introduction,” *WJE*, 10:213.

And this was not for accolades or popularity; it was an extraordinary combination of character, insight, imagination, and philosophical grasp of his subject, with an even “rarer combination of masterful will and great tenderness, burning devotion, singleness of purpose and the complete union of will, intellect, and feeling in one supreme effort to glorify God and save souls.”<sup>103</sup> He was someone who saw.

#### **I.4 Goal**

This study recognizes the challenge that Edwards did not write explicitly on his use of imagination in homiletics; it will therefore aim to retrieve his “thought forms to open up fresh opportunities for Christian faithfulness in the present.”<sup>104</sup> This study also recognizes the further challenge of how these thought forms may be relevant in the contemporary context of postmodernism and a visually-saturated society.

Therefore, this study is not about collecting more data on imagery or affective language. Nor is it about rote parroting of Edwards’ techniques of homiletical imagination, such as might be heard from a piano student learning the ornamentals in J.S. Bach (1685-1750). The goal is to understand the intersection of imagination and homiletics in Jonathan

---

103. Thomas Harwood Pattison, *The History of Christian Preaching* (Philadelphia: American Baptist Publishing Society, 1903), 358. See also Turnbull, *Jonathan Edwards*, 151-152.

104. Buschart and Eilers, *Theology as Retrieval*, 22 mention “thought forms,” along with texts and forms of life, as one of the sources of the Christian past which can open fresh opportunities for the present. This study will aim to retrieve the thought form of Edwards, rather than focusing on relevant texts or history. The retrieval of thought forms will happen through analysis of Edwards own understanding and use of imagination and select sermons. This retrieval of thought forms should remain distinct from what has been described as a “history of mentalities.” See Patrick H. Hutton, “The History of Mentalities: The New Map of Cultural History,” *History and Theory* 20, no. 3 (Oct. 1981): 237-259. The history of mentalities aims at understanding common people and their conceptions of everyday life, which this study seems to do with Edwards. However, history of mentalities tends to dismiss worldviews and continuities of ideas (which remain important for Edwards).

Edwards, so preachers today might re-establish a guiding principle for imagination; just as a student might study Bach's basso continuo to perform their own masterpiece.<sup>105</sup>

---

105. That music might be a helpful analogy for theological retrieval, see Buschart and Eilers, *Theology as Retrieval*, 223. Here they describe how music performance also negotiates the tensions of constraints and freedom, identity and development that are present in any retrieval of Christian practice.

## Chapter 1 - Understanding the Imagination and Its Implications for Practical Theology

In order to properly retrieve a strengthened homiletical use of imagination, the current description of imagination needs to be understood. The imagination is a widely discussed topic, with many sources considering its intersection with literature, politics, philosophy, or psychology.<sup>106</sup> The descriptions of imagination within those resources are myriad, the claims numerous, and the positions often debatable.<sup>107</sup> This has resulted in some authors saying that the imagination is almost a useless term.<sup>108</sup>

For the topic of imagination to retain value in practical theology, more clarity is required. There have been various efforts at connecting the theory of imagination to theology in a broad

---

106. Most sources referencing imagination describe an author's understanding of one person, place, concept, or thing. By doing this, these sources may describe a focused imagination, but do not discuss what imagination is. For select examples consider J.M. Cocking, *Imagination: A Study in the History of Ideas* (New York: Routledge, 1991); Jim Davies, *Imagination: The Science of Your Mind's Greatest Power* (New York: Pegasus Books, 2019); Richard Matthews, *Fantasy: The Liberation of Imagination* (New York: Routledge, 2011); Barbara Taylor, *Mary Wollstonecraft and the Feminist Imagination* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), Charles Taylor, *Modern Social Imaginaries* (London: Duke University Press, 2004).

107. Dennis L. Sepper, "Foreword," in Brann, *World of the Imagination*, xv, xvii. See also Brann, *World of the Imagination*, 16; Mary Gerhart, "Imagination and History in Ricœur's Interpretation Theory," *Philosophy Today* (Spring 1979): 51; Ray L. Hart, "Imagination and the Scale of Mental Acts," *Continuum* 3, no. 1 (Spring 1965): 3-21; Amy Kind, "Introduction: Exploring Imagination," *RHPI*, 1-2.

108. E.J. Furlong, *Imagination* (London: Routledge, 2002), 17; McIntyre, *Faith, Theology, and Imagination*, 2.

sense, but the relationship between religion and imagination has been “stormy.”<sup>109</sup> Within the religious literature, apart from a recognition of historical or philosophical development, there is little consensus as to what imagination is or what its implications are.<sup>110</sup> This can be seen clearly in the dual definition given in a classic theological dictionary: “Theologians interpret the imagination as the ability of humans to construct meaning from images and concepts, and as a medium through which religious communities may be shaped through Scripture and tradition.”<sup>111</sup> Compare that to another theological dictionary which contrasted imagination with linear logic, saying “imagination proceeds by making a lateral leap,” which for preaching happens in

---

109. Thomas H. Troeger, “A Poetics of the Pulpit for Post-Modern Times,” in *Intersections: Post-Critical Studies in Preaching*, ed. Richard L. Eslinger (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1994), 42. Recent years have produced works connecting imagination and theology, though these often remain motivated by literary, philosophical, or psychological questions. For examples see Paul Avis, *God and the Creative Imagination: Metaphor, Symbol, and Myth in Religion and Theology* (New York: Routledge, 1999); David Lyle Jeffrey, *Scripture and the English Poetic Imagination* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2019). One example connecting imagination and Protestant systematic theology would be McIntyre, *Faith, Theology, and Imagination*. While focusing on visual culture, one work connecting imagination and Protestant theology would be William A. Dyrness, *Reformation Theology and Visual Culture: The Protestant Imagination from Calvin to Edwards* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004). Literature connecting imagination and Catholic theology includes Andrew M. Greeley, *The Catholic Imagination* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2000); Robert P. Imbelli, *Rekindling the Christic Imagination: Theological Meditations for the New Evangelization* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2014).

110. Bryant, *Play of Imagination*, 2. Brian Reich, *The Imagination Gap: Stop Thinking the Way You Should and Start Making Extraordinary Things Happen* (EBSCO eBook Collection: Emerald Publishing, 2017), 1 says there is “no single or perfect definition of imagination.” Dennis L. Sepper, *Understanding Imagination: The Reason of Images*, *Studies in History and Philosophy of Science* 33 (Dordrecht: Springer, 2013), 3-5 points out that while the confusion around imagination may promote an overly objective and scientific approach to imagination, the need for imagination is more fundamentally human, and requires a framework of foundational questions.

111. Donald K. McKim, *Westminster Dictionary of Theological Terms* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1996), 138.



prophetic, ethical/communal, and poetic/interpretative ways.<sup>112</sup>

This chapter introduces background material relevant to developing a clearer understanding of imagination in practical theology. It is not intended to bring comprehensive clarity to imagination in psychology or philosophy, or even imagination as it relates to theology. It is not intended to introduce an “aesthetic theology.”<sup>113</sup> It is not a rhetorical or historical defense of imagination.<sup>114</sup> It is select background material for a proper understanding of the use of imagination in homiletics. Attention will be given to the understanding of imagination in the history of Western thought, as well as to the Reformed and Puritan traditions. This will provide the context for understanding Jonathan Edwards and any use of imagination in his sermons. Still, the delineation will not be chronological nor necessarily progressive.<sup>115</sup>

To structure this background material, Chapter 1 provides brief introductions to five main understandings and four implications of imagination. This survey of understandings and

---

112. William H. Willimon and Richard Lischer, eds., *Concise Encyclopedia of Preaching* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1995), 267.

113. Viladesau, *Theological Aesthetics*, 23 defines aesthetic theology as the approach that “interprets the objects of theology... through the methods of aesthetic studies.” An example of this would be understanding God or revelation through lens of theories of beauty or imagination. Viladesau contrasts aesthetic theology with theological aesthetics which interprets “the objects of aesthetics – sensation, the beautiful, and art – from the properly theological starting point... and in the light of theological methods.”

114. McIntyre, *Faith, Theology, and Imagination*, 2 helpfully states that in recognizing the history and different senses of the term imagination, “we are not falling into the fallacy that the philosophical use of the concept must be taken as determinative of any theological application that we intend to make. In fact, our minds should be sufficiently open to expect the theological reference of the concept to bring its own penetrating illumination. Ignoring these other usages, however, would be not only unscholarly if not even irresponsible; it would lead to a grave impoverishment in our understanding of it.”

115. See Richard R. Topping, “Scripture Funded: Reforming Reformed Imagination,” in *Calvin @ 500: Theology, History, and Practice*, ed. Richard R. Topping and John A. Vissers (Eugene, OR: Pickwick Publications, 2011), 24-26.

implications of imagination exposes elements that are conducive, as well as elements that are not conducive, to use in homiletics. It also reveals how simplistic understandings of imagination lead to theological problems; in reverse, it uncovers the need for a strengthened foundation for a theologically complex and nuanced understanding of imagination. The chapter concludes with a definition developed for retrieval of imagination in practical theology.<sup>116</sup>

### 1.1 Understandings of the Imagination

The various understandings of imagination discussed below include seeing the imagination as reproduction, as creativity, as fantasy, as spiritual awareness, and as recognized possibilities.<sup>117</sup> Each of these understandings have common elements and remain, to varying

---

116. While not directed to practical theology, Mary Warnock, *Imagination* (London: Faber and Faber, 1976), 35, proposes that there are common elements in the various meanings of imagination that are helpful for application in the creative arts.

117. Not every possible definition or understanding of imagination will be considered. One understanding that is intentionally left out due to negligible historical or religious background is the understanding of imagination as illusion or parody. Those promoting this definition find that due to recent technological advances and media saturation, reality is no longer separable from the image, the imaginary, and imitation and performance. The result is that the imaginary is more persuasive than reality. The traditional use of the imagination collapses because there is no place for ideas, language, or allusions to reality. Instead, parodic repetition and recurrence replaces creative narrative. See Kearney, *Wake*, 252-89. One work found discussing imagination as illusion is Peter J.M. Henry, "Shared Imaginings: The Understanding and Role of Imagination in Contemporary Homiletics," PhD dissertation, Princeton Theological Seminary, 2009.

The first three understandings explained below parallel the descriptions set out by Furlong, *Imagination*, 25-27 who differentiates between 'in imagination,' 'with imagination,' and 'supposal.' These have alternatively been described as mental visualization, creative activity, and fantastical reality. These categories are also paralleled in Kearney, *Wake*, 16, though Kearney expands the fantastical category into two distinctions: the fictional projection of non-existent things, and the capacity to become fascinated by illusions resulting in confusion between the real and unreal. Kind, "Introduction," *RHPI*, 5 suggests only three forms: propositional imagining, imagistic imagining, and experiential imagining; Mark Johnson, *The Body in the Mind: The Bodily Basis of Meaning, Imagination, and Reason* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1987), 165 lists four functions of imagination: reproductive, productive, schematizing, and creative; Bryant, *Play of Imagination*, 65 says the number of possible understandings is overwhelming.

degrees, in popular usage. Therefore, there is overlap between these understandings, which cannot be clearly delineated in the space below. However, what will be clear is the divergent positions in historic and contemporary discussion.

### *Imagination as Reproductive*

The first understanding of imagination is the basic definition: to mentally recall or reproduce an object when that object is no longer present to the senses.<sup>118</sup> This can be described most simply as mentally reproducing the sight of a piano or the hearing of a piano's sound based on previous experience, and not because that visual or aural information is being sensed at the moment.

The understanding of imagination as reproductive can be traced back to Aristotle (384-322 BC). Greek philosophy had already suggested that imagination was inferior to logic and rhetoric due to its dependence on the senses, and was to be regarded with suspicion.<sup>119</sup> Aristotle saw imagination as more psychological, since it was a process that presented an interpreted sensation and thereby supplied the mind with materials for constructing thought.<sup>120</sup> While his understanding of the imagination remained dependent on the senses, Aristotle saw imagination as reproductive since the imagination was drawing on previous experience and memory as a

---

118. Brann, *World of the Imagination*, 193. See also A.R. Manser, "Imagination," in *The Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, ed. Paul Edwards (London: Collier Macmillan Publishers, 1972), 4:136.

119. Gerard Watson, "Imagination and Religion in Classical Thought," in *Religious Imagination*, ed. James P. Mackey (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1986), 29.

120. Aristotle, *De Memoria*, 451a; Aristotle, *De Anima*, 427b, 431. See also Kearney, *Wake*, 106; Rafael Reyes III, "Open Receptacles: Imagination in Continental and Process Thought, and the Opening of Religious Pluralism," PhD dissertation, Claremont School of Theology (2019), 53.

reservoir of images.<sup>121</sup> The imagination became the bridge connecting sense and memory with the intellect.<sup>122</sup>

In continuity with Aristotle, Augustine (AD 354-430) also saw the memory as part of the reproductive imagination, though he was somewhat suspicious of its power. The imagination used the memory to store, reproduce, and arrange images that it had already gained,<sup>123</sup> whether from things experienced (*phantasia*) or things thought of or heard of (*phantasma*).<sup>124</sup> Both of these categories were regarded suspiciously as hindrances to spiritual contemplation.<sup>125</sup>

Yet Augustine described the reproductive imagination as being able to expand mental

---

121. Aristotle, *De Memoria*, 450a; Kearney, *Wake*, 107. It was this understanding of mental functions such as imagination and memory that eventually led to “faculty psychology.” This understanding of human psychology was later associated with Francis Bacon and John Locke and the Scottish Enlightenment, seeing the mind as separate departments with distinct operations and locations, though some Puritans worked towards union of faculties. See Paul Helm, *Human Nature from Calvin to Edwards* (Grand Rapids: Reformation Heritage Books, 2018); Richard Muller, “Scholasticism, Reformation, Orthodoxy and the Persistence of Christian Aristotelianism,” *Trinity Journal* 19, no. 1 (Spring 1998): 93.

122. Ray L. Hart, *Unfinished Man and the Imagination: Toward an Ontology and a Rhetoric of Revelation*, The Seabury Library of Contemporary Theology (New York: Seabury Press, 1968), 193; James P. Mackey, *Religious Imagination* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1986), 35; Kearney, *Wake*, 108; Reyes, “Open Receptacles: Imagination,” 54.

123. Augustine, *Confessions*, X.xiv-xvii. See also Todd Breyfogle, “Memory and Imagination in Augustine’s Confessions,” *New Blackfriars* 75, no. 881 (April 1994): 215; Gene Edward Veith, Jr. and Matthew P. Ristuccia, *Imagination Redeemed: Glorifying God with a Neglected Part of Your Mind* (Wheaton: Crossway, 2015), 37.

124. Augustine, *DeTrinitate*, 11.1.1-11.2.6, 8.6.9; Mackey, *Religious Imagination*, 45.

125. As examples see Augustine, *Exposition of Psalms*, 80.13-80.14; *Confessions*, 3.6. See also Marianne Djuth, “Veiled and Unveiled Beauty: The Role of the Imagination in Augustine’s Esthetics,” *Theological Studies* 68, no. 1 (Feb. 2007): 85-86; Kearney, *Wake*, 117.

images and expect things within the life of faith.<sup>126</sup> People were to focus their imaginative memories in accordance with the truth on “the remembering, seeing, loving that highest Trinity, in order that [they] may recollect, contemplate, be delighted by it.”<sup>127</sup>

The idea that the imagination was reproductive continued throughout the Middle Ages. Boethius (AD 477-524) clarified that the imagination was only an instrument; knowledge was a process from sense perception through imagination to reason, and only then to understanding.<sup>128</sup> Following Albert the Great (AD ca. 1200-1280), Thomas Aquinas (AD 1225-1274) described four inner senses and five outer senses, the former being *sensus communis* (common sense), *imaginatio* (imagination), *vis cogitatio* (cogitative) and *memoria* (sense-memory).<sup>129</sup> While Aquinas saw the imagination as having the ability to construct or connect two distinct sensual experiences, his understanding of imagination remained grounded in reproduction, because it required sensory input.<sup>130</sup> While people may understand immaterial things such as God by comparing them to things sensed, they should, according to Aquinas, only use the imagination as

---

126. Augustine, *Confessions*, XI.xix. See also Breyfogle, “Memory and Imagination,” 215-216; Ritva Palmén, *Richard of St. Victor’s Theory of Imagination*, Volume 8 of *Investigating Medieval Philosophy* (Leiden: Brill, 2014), 26; Reyes, “Open Receptacles: Imagination,” 57-58.

127. Augustine, *DeTrinitate*, 15.20.39. See also Breyfogle, “Memory and Imagination,” 217; Djuth, “Veiled and Unveiled Beauty,” 91.

128. Palmén, *Theory of Imagination*, 31.

129. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, 1.78.4; see Kearney, *Wake*, 128; Edward Mahoney, “Sense, Intellect, and Imagination in Albert, Thomas, and Siger,” in *The Cambridge History of Later Medieval Philosophy: From the Rediscovery of Aristotle to the Disintegration of Scholasticism, 1100-1600*, ed. Norman Kretzmann, et al. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982): 603, 606-607.

130. Thomas Aquinas, *Commentary on Aristotle’s De Anima*, 3.5, par. 644; Frederick Christian Bauerschmidt, “Imagination and Theology in Thomas Aquinas,” *Louvain Studies*, 34 (2009-2010): 169; Veith and Ristuccia, *Imagination Redeemed*, 38, 171-176; Lane, “Imagination and Theology,” 124.

the starting point and not the conclusion of their knowledge of divine things.<sup>131</sup>

The understanding of the imagination as reproductive continued into the Reformation and the movement known as Puritanism. John Calvin (AD 1509-1564) considered imagination, or “fancy,” as one of the three cognitive faculties, along with reason and intellect.<sup>132</sup> Though the Puritans were not monolithic in their understanding of the imagination nor its reproductive function, they did use imagination to develop case studies of souls and mental faculties.<sup>133</sup> Edward Reynolds (AD 1599-1676) may have been the Puritan with the most positive understanding of imagination.<sup>134</sup> Richard Baxter (AD 1615-1691) differentiated between the sensitive soul (which included common sense, imagination, and memory) and the intellectual soul (which included reason, will, and conscience).<sup>135</sup> Thomas Manton (AD 1620-1677)

---

131. Thomas Aquinas, *Expositio super librum Boethii De trinitate*, 6.2; see Bauerschmidt, “Imagination and Theology in Thomas Aquinas,” 176; Mahoney, “Sense, Intellect, and Imagination,” 609.

132. John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, 1.15.6. makes the comment that to the “intellect, fancy, and reason, the three cognitive faculties of the soul, correspond three appetite faculties—viz. will—whose office is to choose whatever reason and intellect propound; irascibility, which seizes on what is set before it by reason and fancy; and concupiscence, which lays hold of the objects presented by sense and fancy.”

133. John K. La Shell, “Imagination and Idol: a Puritan Tension,” *Westminster Theological Journal*, 49 (1987): 306; see Ralph Erskine, *Faith No Fancy: Or, a Treatise of Mental Images* (Edinburgh: W. and T. Ruddimans, 1745), 7.

134. Edward Reynolds, *A Treatise of the Passions and Faculties of the Soule of Man. With the severall Dignities and Corruptions thereunto belonging* (London: R.H. for Robert Bostock, 1650). See also Deanna Smid, *The Imagination in Early Modern English Literature* (Leiden: Brill, 2017), 18-29.

135. Richard Baxter, “Dying Thoughts,” in *Select Practical Writings of Richard Baxter: With a Life of the Author*, ed. Leonard Bacon (New Haven: Durrie & Peck, 1831), 2:263. See also Elizabeth Flower and Murray G. Murphey, *A History of Philosophy in America*, Two volumes (New York: G.P. Putnam’s Sons, 1977), 1:41-42, 1:71; David S. Sytsma, *Richard Baxter and the Mechanical Philosophers* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017).

recognized the material limits of reproductive imagination, concerned that it could only develop “fleshly conceptions and notions of God” from sense.<sup>136</sup> Other Puritans continued the dependence on the external senses for the reproductive imagination, but also allowed the verbal images of the Word to be turned into mental pictures that could be reproduced by the mind.<sup>137</sup>

Today, the idea of imagination as reproductive is perceived to have waning value. While the limited nature of reproductive imagination has resulted in reduced contemporary discussion, the encouragement of the use of imagination for recall or reproduction continues until today.

### *Imagination as Creativity*

The second understanding of imagination is that imagination is creativity, or the act of making something new according to a mental ideal. While this understanding of imagination is also re-presenting something, the difference between this understanding and the former lies in the source of the original. For imagination as reproduction, the source was the senses or memory of sense experiences. For imagination as creativity, the source of the representation is from within the imaginer.<sup>138</sup>

The understanding of imagination as creativity can be traced back to Plato (ca. 429-347 BC). In elevating reason to having sole access to divine ideas, Plato condemned imagination to the realm of the imitation that leads away from the real and ideal, revealing what is artificial.<sup>139</sup>

---

136. Thomas Manton, *An Exposition, with Notes, Upon the Epistle of Jude*, CWTM, 5:253.

137. Baxter, “Dying Thoughts,” 421; Erdt, *Sense of the Heart*, 66-67; Susan Hardman Moore, “For the Mind’s Eye Only: Puritans, Images, and ‘the Golden Mines of Scripture,’” *Scottish Journal of Theology* 59, no. 3 (2006): 296.

138. Brann, *World of the Imagination*, 197.

139. Plato, *Republic*, 509d-511e; Kearney, *Wake*, 88; Reyes, “Open Receptacles: Imagination,” 49.

Thus, according to Plato, the imaginative person is far removed from reason and is only an imitator trying to mimic an ideal.<sup>140</sup> But, Plato concluded, the imagination cannot reach the ideal; it can only lead to idolatry as it replaces the true with its own imitation.<sup>141</sup> Yet even Plato did not dismiss the imagination entirely, as he remained concerned that the imagination would make things as right as possible.

Medieval theology wrestled with aspects of the imagination as creativity, seeing it as necessary but also potentially problematic. Richard of St. Victor (d. AD 1173) interpreted Genesis 29-30 to explain imagination in three modes: its basic activity, when ordered by reason, and when mixed with understanding. In applying the passage, imagination was both necessary for a life of contemplation and yet also a constant obstacle to the highest levels of meditation.<sup>142</sup> Following Richard of St. Victor, Bonaventure (AD 1221-1274) saw finite images as merely copies of the divine image of Christ. This was not necessarily disparaging, since the highest vocation was to imitate or mirror the divine act of creation.<sup>143</sup> Yet, such a creative imagination was subject to rational scrutiny so that it would not lead to evil and idolatry.<sup>144</sup>

Concerns with imagination as creativity turned from theological to philosophical with the

---

140. Plato, *Republic*, 603a; Kearney, *Wake*, 90; Robin Stockitt, *Imagination and the Playfulness of God: The Theological Implications of Samuel Taylor Coleridge's Definition of the Human Imagination*, Distinguished Dissertations in Christian Theology (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2011), 27-28.

141. Plato, *Republic*, 596a-607a; summarized in Kearney, *Wake*, 91-94.

142. Richard of St. Victor, *Benjamin Minor V*, par.102.6.12-15, 27-30. See also Kearney, *Wake*, 120; Palmén, *Theory of Imagination*, 88-89, 257-265.

143. Bonaventure, *St. Bonaventura Opera Omnia*, Op. Collegii S. Bonaventura, Florence, 5:386; cited in Viladesau, *Theological Aesthetics*, 113. See also Michelle Karnes, *Imagination, Meditation and Cognition in the Middle Ages* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2011), 65-67.

144. Kearney, *Wake*, 126.



emergence of empiricism. John Locke (AD 1632-1704) saw imagination as an instrument of perception that was independent of reason, and therefore an extravagance unnecessary for a sober person who valued reality.<sup>145</sup> Experience, including past experience, was the source of reality; Locke diminished any role for innate ideas, habits, and inclinations in the activity of the mind.<sup>146</sup> Imagination only brought about absurdities, especially in the context of faith.<sup>147</sup>

According to Locke, because the imagination was creative, it weakened truth and language.<sup>148</sup>

While David Hume (AD 1711-1776) saw the imagination as important – as the source of ideas to contemplate – he also saw it as a dangerous occasion for error, since people used imagination creatively to believe in the existence of things they could not see or sense.<sup>149</sup>

The empiricist concerns with imagination as creativity were overturned by the later trends of Romanticism. Represented most often by Samuel Taylor Coleridge (AD 1772-1834), the

---

145. John Locke, *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, IV.iv.1. See also Ernest Lee Tuveson, *The Imagination as a Means of Grace: Locke and the Aesthetics of Romanticism* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1960), 77.

146. Locke, *Essay*, II.xiii.28. See also Lee, *Philosophical Theology*, 121; Tuveson, *Means of Grace*, 34-36, 43, 75.

147. Locke, *Essay*, IV.viii.11, IV.xix.6-7. See also Katharine Park, Lorraine J. Daston and Peter L. Galison, “Bacon, Galileo, and Descartes on Imagination and Analogy,” *Isis* 75, no. 2 (June 1984): 289.

148. Locke, *Essay*, II.xi.13, III.ix.21. See also Avis, *God and the Creative Imagination*, 17; Brann, *World of the Imagination*, 686.

149. David Hume, *A Treatise of Human Nature* (London: J. M. Dent & Sons, 1977), 209; Brann, *World of the Imagination*, 82-89; Garrett Green, *Theology, Hermeneutics, and Imagination: the Crisis of Interpretation at the End of Modernity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 189; Manser, “Imagination,” 136; Stockitt, *Imagination*, 10-11; Warnock, *Imagination*, 15-25.

Romantics reasserted the power of creative imagination to perceive reality.<sup>150</sup> Coleridge distinguished between a primary imagination, which as an act of faith, resides deep in the human mind and is connected to the image of God; and a secondary imagination, which is active, creative, and focused by a person's will.<sup>151</sup> It is the secondary imagination that "dissolves, diffuses, dissipates, in order to recreate; or where this process is rendered impossible, yet still at all events it struggles to idealise and unify. It is essentially *vital*."<sup>152</sup> The imagination works against the created and accumulates significance, while striving to balance the temporal and the eternal.<sup>153</sup> This happens when minds are forced out of lethargic, familiar, and selfish customs to the loveliness that is usually not seen.<sup>154</sup> In more recent years, the understanding of imagination as creativity has come to include scientific experimentation, historical quests, artistic creativity, moral vision, literary insight, relational empathy, and theological expression.

### *Imagination as Fantasy*

The third understanding of imagination is that of fantasy. In this understanding, the

---

150. William S. Stafford, "Imagination and Scripture: Seeing the Unseen," *Sewanee Theological Review* 50, no. 1 (Christmas 2006): 163.

151. Stockitt, *Imagination*, 64-65.

152. Samuel T. Coleridge, *Biographia Literaria; Or Biographical Sketches of My Literary Life and Opinions*, two volumes (London: Rest Penner, 1817), 1:296; see Furlong, *Imagination*, 19; Stockitt, *Imagination*, 11; Warnock, *Imagination*, 94.

153. Coleridge, *Biographia Literaria*, 1:295-296. See also J. Robert Barth, "Mortal Beauty: Ignatius Loyola, Samuel Taylor Coleridge, and the Role of Imagination in Religious Experience," *Christianity and Literature* 50, no. 1 (Autumn 2000): 72; Douglas Hedley, *Living Forms of the Imagination* (London: T & T Clark, 2008), 49; Warnock, *Imagination*, 82. Interestingly, William Greenough Thayer Shedd, "Coleridge as a Philosopher and Theologian," in *Literary Essays*, 271-344 suggests, with exceptions to a couple of doctrinal points, agreement with Coleridge.

154. Coleridge, *Biographia Literaria*, 2:2. See also Guite, *Lifting the Veil*, 12 for a further discussion of this.

imagination does not just reproduce what has been previously sensed or produce a creative real attempt to reflect an ideal, but depicts that which could never be perceived.<sup>155</sup> This understanding sees imagination focusing on “a sense of possibility beyond the ordinary, material, rationally predictable world in which we live.”<sup>156</sup>

The fantasy is sometimes conflated with fancy. It is true that the sense of “beyondness” has given the fantastical imagination the reputation of frivolousness or illusion.<sup>157</sup> Yet understanding the imagination as fantasy is not the same as fancy: the fancy re-arranges ideas into novel patterns. As Leigh Hunt (AD 1786-1859) suggested, fancy is “a lighter play of imagination, or the feeling of analogy coming short of seriousness, in order that it may laugh with what it loves.”<sup>158</sup> On the other hand, the fantastical imagination “sunders and re-creates” into meaningful symbols.<sup>159</sup>

The understanding of imagination as fantasy was seen vividly in medieval life. Amid the pre-Enlightenment world, imagination filled life and society with perceived divine activity, as well as an enchantment with spirits, demons, and moral focus.<sup>160</sup> While medieval philosophies of imagination were locked away in the understanding of imagination as reproductive, the vibrant imaginations in medieval folk culture displayed things far beyond the ordinary and predictable,

---

155. Brann, *World of the Imagination*, 422.

156. Matthews, *Fantasy*, 1.

157. Brann, *World of the Imagination*, 21.

158. Leigh Hunt, *Imagination and Fancy; Or, Selections from the English Poets*, Fourth Edition (London: Smith, Elder & Co., 1871), 2.

159. Hart, *Unfinished Man*, 201.

160. Charles Taylor, *A Secular Age* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2007), 25. See also Matthews, *Fantasy*, 2.

things the people had not perceived.<sup>161</sup>

While the Protestant Reformation eventually transformed medieval life, retrieved realism, and developed a form of scholasticism, yet it too displayed a vibrant fantastical imagination. This can best be seen in the woodcuts of Albrecht Durer (AD 1471-1528), the Bible illustrations of Lucas Cranach the Elder (AD 1472-1553), and the music of J. S. Bach.<sup>162</sup> The Reformation redirected the medieval fantastical “beyondness” to themes of creation and exodus, stewardship and liberation, Zion and the New Jerusalem, and covenants yearning for peace and justice. Through these fantastic themes, “the moral imagination was kindled. Political agendas were forged. The horizon flared with the transcendent vision of shalom.”<sup>163</sup>

While the Enlightenment brought disdain and disruption to the ideas of imagination as fantasy,<sup>164</sup> Immanuel Kant (AD 1724-1804) resurrected the validity of the imagination as fantasy. Kant used the term *einbildungskraft* to denote a “power or faculty for making images, pictures, or representations” that allowed the creation of meaningful symbols.<sup>165</sup> While sense experience and intellectual understanding had previously been understood as the building blocks of knowledge, in the original edition of *Critique of Pure Reason*, Kant added the third and equal

---

161. Kearney, *Wake*, 131.

162. See Peter Matheson, *The Imaginative World of the Reformation* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 2000); Laurel Gasque, “The Bible of the Poor: An Example of Medieval Interpretation and Its Relevance Today,” in *Imagination and Interpretation: Christian Perspectives*, ed. Hans Boersma (Vancouver, BC: Regent College Publishing, 2005), 63.

163. Matheson, *Imaginative World*, 76.

164. Kearney, *Wake*, 163; See Alison Milbank, “Apologetics and the Imagination: Making Strange,” in *Imaginative Apologetics: Theology, Philosophy, and the Catholic Tradition*, ed. Andrew Davison, 32-34.

165. Lane, “Imagination and Theology,” 124. See also Warnock, *Imagination*, 26.

element of imagination.<sup>166</sup> From the chaos of experiences, this imagination could construct any number of transcendental connections to build order and understanding.<sup>167</sup> While Stockitt sees Kant's understanding as limited to synthesis, others see Kant as unfastening imagination from sensation and reason, and opening the door to limitless fantastical imagination.<sup>168</sup>

The height of understanding imagination as fantasy may have come in the twentieth century. G. K. Chesterton (AD 1874-1936) desired the imagination to “make settled things strange; not so much to make wonders facts as to make facts wonders.”<sup>169</sup> While C. S. Lewis (AD 1898-1963) may be thought to have encouraged fantastical imagination, Lewis did not see imagination as having limitless license, but saw imagination as necessary for metaphor and meaning.<sup>170</sup>

---

166. Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason, Second Part*, trans. F. Max Müller (London: Macmillan, 1881), 109. See also Lane, “Imagination and Theology,” 125; Samantha Matherne, “Kant’s Theory of the Imagination,” *RHPI*, 60.

167. Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, 125. See also Lane, “Imagination and Theology,” 125; Bryant, *Play of Imagination*, 66; Warnock, *Imagination*, 27-30.

168. Stockitt, *Imagination*, 40. See also Johnson, *Body in the Mind*, 160; Karnes, *Imagination*, 1-2; Kearney, *Wake*, 111; Lane, “Imagination and Theology,” 126-127.

169. Gilbert Keith Chesterton, *The Defendant* (London: R. Brimley Johnson, 1902), 76; see Ian Ker, “G.K. Chesterton: Imagination and Wonder,” *Louvain Studies*, 34 (2009-2010): 209.

170. Lewis, “Bluspels and Flalansferes,” 263-265. See also C. S. Lewis, “Image and Imagination,” in *Image and Imagination: Essays and Reviews by C. S. Lewis*, ed. Walter Hooper (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013): 44-45; Robert Holyer, “C.S. Lewis on the Epistemic Significance of the Imagination,” *Soundings: An Interdisciplinary Journal* 74, no. 1-2 (Spring/Summer 1991): 215-241; Harry Lee Poe, “The Book C. S. Lewis Never Wrote: On Imagination and the Knowledge of God,” *Sewanee Theological Review* 57, no. 4 (Michaelmas, 2014): 469-70; Brian M. Williams, *C. S. Lewis: Pre-evangelism for a Post-Christian World – Why Narnia Might Be More Real than We Think* (Cambridge, OH: Christian Publishing House, 2021), 136-142; Donald T. Williams, “Meaningful Truth: The Critical Role of Imagination in the Work of C. S. Lewis,” *Touchstone: A Journal of Mere Christianity* 31, no. 6 (Nov. / Dec. 2018): 34-37.

*Imagination as Spiritual Awareness*

The fourth understanding of imagination is as spiritual awareness. While this is more difficult to define, it stems from the understanding that “the imagination is (1) a faculty of the mind (2) that mediates between sense and intellect (i.e., perception and reason) *and the human mind and the divine mind* (i.e., finite creatures and the infinite Creator) (3) for meaning and inventing.”<sup>171</sup>

Understanding the imagination as spiritual awareness is not as historically rich as the three previous understandings; however, hints of imagination as spiritual awareness have emerged at times in theological history. In this view, the imagination assumes a high or even divine place of origin.<sup>172</sup> Giordano Bruno (AD 1548-1600) elevated the imagination to be the vehicle of the Holy Spirit that would allow people to transcend their finite condition.<sup>173</sup> While not seeing it necessarily as a vehicle of divinity, the Puritan John Willison (AD 1680-1750) allowed the possibility: “Do you think God hath created the imagination, or any inferior Faculty of the Soul, merely for the Devil’s use? Hath he not access to the imagination himself when he will?”<sup>174</sup>

Recognizing the possibility of imagination as spiritual awareness developed in nineteenth-century philosophical movements. Friedrich Wilhelm Joseph von Schelling (AD

---

171. Paul M. Gould, *Cultural Apologetics: Renewing the Christian Voice, Conscience, and Imagination in a Disenchanted World* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2019), 107. Emphasis added. Douglas Hedley, *The Iconic Imagination* (New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 2016), 10 agrees, but also sees imagination as that which unifies body and soul.

172. Kearney, *Wake*, 158.

173. Kearney, *Wake*, 160.

174. John Willison, *A Letter from Mr. John Willison Minister at Dundee, to Mr. James Fisher Minister at Glasgow* (Edinburgh: T. Lumisden and J. Robertson, 1743), 10.

1775-1854) understood the imagination as an unconscious activity that could be equated with the divine mind.<sup>175</sup> Friedrich Schleiermacher saw the imagination as a divine power that freed the spirit from limitations.<sup>176</sup> By minimizing logic and revelation, Søren Kierkegaard (AD 1813-1855) allowed for the subjective imagining of religious beliefs, recognizing that such subjective faith still desires experience with the transcendent Other.<sup>177</sup> Friedrich Nietzsche (AD 1844-1900) welcomed the imagination as pure desire to be apart from God, since only when the transcendent God disappears can a person creatively propose the superman.<sup>178</sup> While Abraham Joshua Heschel writes of God pursuing man, and giving “eyes of the heart,” he still calls imagining revelation a perversion that wrecks its mystery.<sup>179</sup>

Today, the concept of imagination as spiritual awareness is an accepted idea by some contemporary Christian authors. Imagination as spiritual awareness (through expression and use of metaphor, symbol, and narrative) is seen as a high point in the evolutionary development of

---

175. Kearney, *Wake*, 180; Warnock, *Imagination*, 69.

176. Friedrich Schleiermacher, *Schleiermacher's Soliloquies*, trans. Horace Leland Friess (Chicago: Open Court Publishing, 1926), 81. See also Troeger, *Imagining a Sermon*, 113. For context, see Ronald H. Nash, *The Word of God and the Mind of Man* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P & R Publishing, 1992), 28-32.

177. Kearney, *Wake*, 203.

178. Green, *Theology, Hermeneutics, and Imagination*, 170-71; Kearney, *Wake*, 211; Topping, “Reforming Reformed Imagination,” 25-26.

179. Abraham Joshua Heschel, *God in Search of Man: a Philosophy of Judaism* (New York: World Publishing Company, 1955), 187.

humanity, which some suggest leads to greater interfaith dialogue.<sup>180</sup> This has led not just to a use of imagination in theology, but to theology that is imaginative and exempt from conditions of common sense and noncontradiction.<sup>181</sup> Paul Avis defends understanding imagination as spiritual awareness since this brings people “into living contact with our object (the sacred, the divine, revelation, God), . . . [and] these modes of discourse have a truth-bearing capacity.”<sup>182</sup> Garrett Green proposes that imagination is the location where divine revelation occurs.<sup>183</sup> Others understand spiritual awareness as perceiving reconfigured reality, or hearing the signs of God’s presence and grace, and thus speak of a “sacramental imagination” that is full of revelatory potential.<sup>184</sup> Philip Sheldrake finds value for imagination in gospel contemplation and *lectio divina*.<sup>185</sup>

---

180. Peter Barrett, “On Creative Human Imagination at the Heart of Interfaith Engagement,” *Journal of Theology for Southern Africa*, 159 (Nov. 2017): 39, 42; Peter Barrett, “The Emergence of Imagination and Altruism in Human Evolution: Key Elements in a New-Style Natural Theology,” *Journal of Theology for Southern Africa*, 153 (Nov. 2015): 29-31. See also Lane, “Imagination and Theology,” 121.

181. Reyes, “Open Receptacles: Imagination,” 2.

182. Avis, *God and the Creative Imagination*, vi.

183. Green, *Imagining God*, 4-12. See also James Wallace, *Imaginal Preaching: An Archetypal Perspective* (New York: Paulist Press, 1995), 16. Another source agreeing with Green is Amy Bentley Lamborn, “The Deep Structure of Imagination,” *Union Seminary Quarterly Review* 65, no. 3&4 (2016): 67.

184. Bruce, *Preaching and Imagination*, 86-87. See also Mary Catherine Hilker, *Naming Grace: Preaching and the Sacramental Imagination* (New York: Continuum, 1997), 188-191.

185. Philip Sheldrake, *Images of Holiness: Explorations in Contemporary Spirituality* (London: Darton, Longman, and Todd, 1987), 109.



*Imagination as Recognized Possibilities*

The final understanding to be considered is that of imagination as recognized possibilities. This is not another description of imagination as fantasy, but as recognized possibilities through humble reflection and “fulfilled in action, a life in which the imagination is not worshiped as an autarchic (self-ruling) source but understood as the enigmatic (mysterious) conduit of visions.”<sup>186</sup>

The understanding of imagination as recognized possibilities depends less on a Hellenic background but is developed from the Hebrew Scriptures. It is the Hebrew Scriptures that demonstrate a connection among the imagination, the heart and ethical action.<sup>187</sup> While “imagination” has often been viewed negatively because of the Authorized Version’s use of the term to describe a particular evil; the Hebrew word often translated “imagination” refers to the forming or shaping of something physically or mentally through human or divine agency.<sup>188</sup>

The biblical Hebrew understanding of imagination is that it is a central component of human nature.<sup>189</sup> The imagination is not comprehensive of all human faculties, but because

---

186. Brann, *World of the Imagination*, 790.

187. Alison Searle, *‘The Eyes of Your Heart’: Literary and Theological Trajectories of Imagining Biblically* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2008), 34, 96.

188. Thomas E. McComiskey, “898 יָצַר,” ed. R. Laird Harris, Gleason L. Archer Jr., and Bruce K. Waltke, *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1999), 396. Brann, *World of the Imagination*, 689 notes that it is “not clear that the word translated as imagination in the King James Version refers to any sort of image, either of mind or heart: It is rendered as ‘plan’ in Jewish versions (Plaut 1981), as *cogitatio* in the Vulgate, as *dicten*, meaning ‘fashioning, imagining, making poetry,’ in the Luther Bible. The English wording evidently expresses the sense, by now traditional, that the imagination, as the agency of whatever mentation may have been meant in the original, is a source of evil.”

189. Searle, *Imagining Biblically*, 31.

people are created in the image of God, it is a function of a whole human person.<sup>190</sup> The imagination can be evil, but it is not necessarily so.<sup>191</sup> While the Hellenic tradition treated imagination primarily epistemologically, the Hebrew concept of imagination has four properties: (1) the mimetic (imitation of the divine act), (2) the ethical (choice between good and evil), (3) the historical (a projection of future possibilities), and (4) the anthropological (an activity that differentiates man from other creatures).<sup>192</sup> While not referring specifically to the Hebraic understanding, one description of such an imagination is “a fusion of the intellectual and the senses. It is how we perceive things to be.”<sup>193</sup> In this distinct understanding, the human imagination is a “quasi-faculty whereby we construe the world on a precognitive level . . . a kind of midlevel organizing or synthesizing faculty that constitutes the world for us in a primarily affective mode.”<sup>194</sup> This makes imagination the human capacity for sense-making.<sup>195</sup> It is the gift

---

190. Bruce, *Preaching and Imagination*, 44-48. This is still different from those who seem to have reversed the order. They see “the image of God” as stemming from man’s language use, ability to contemplate; see Hedley, *Iconic Imagination*, 39-40.

191. Searle, *Imagining Biblically*, 32-36 includes a cursory word study and translation study showing that while the Authorized King James Version includes the most negative and most broad usage of imagination, subsequent English translations including the New King James Version, the New International Version, English Standard Version, etc. have narrower ranges of use which result in less negative forms. For additional word studies, see McIntyre, *Faith, Theology, and Imagination*, 5; Bruce, *Preaching and Imagination*, 29-31; Stockitt, *Imagination*, 7.

192. Kearney, *Wake*, 52-53; for imagination due to man being created in the image of God, see Wiersbe, *Preaching and Teaching with Imagination*, 290.

193. Reyes, “Open Receptacles: Imagination,” 98.

194. Gaston Bachelard, *The Poetics of Space*, trans. John R. Stigloe (Boston: Beacon, 1969), xx, quoted by James K.A. Smith, *Imagining the Kingdom: How Worship Works* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2010), 18. See also Bryant, *Play of the Imagination*, 203.

195. VanHoozer, “In Bright Shadow,” 99-100; Buschart and Eilers, *Theology as Retrieval*, 203.

of “making fresh and creative connections, of ‘seeing’ certain things in our minds.”<sup>196</sup>

This turning from an imitative imagination to sense-making imagination has led some to dub this the “interpretive imagination.” One view of the interpretative imagination sees it as freedom from any metanarrative while maintaining effort to make sense of subjective, disconnected, and arbitrary events.<sup>197</sup> Yet it is possible to see the interpretative imagination working beyond mere subjectivism. The boundaries for the interpretative imagination lie in the fact that it “is *alio-relative* (defined *vis-à-vis* something *other* than itself) rather than *ipso-relative* (defined exclusively in reference to itself).”<sup>198</sup> Therefore, the interpretative imagination is not just a mental faculty to remember or create, but it remains an ethical meaning-making ability.<sup>199</sup>

This view of the meaning-making aspect of imagination was present among the Puritans. Charles Spurgeon said of the Puritan Thomas Brooks (AD 1608-1680) that “he had the eagle eye of faith, as well as the eagle wing of imagination.”<sup>200</sup> Brooks’ imagination was known not just for its creativity, but for the way he could provoke theological deep meaning through sensory

---

196. Glen A. Scorgie, “Hermeneutics and the Meditative Use of Scripture: The Case for a Baptized Imagination,” *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 44, no. 2 (June 2001): 280.

197. William Dean, “The DeHellenization of the Religious Imagination,” *Word & World* 5, no. 3 (1985): 272-273.

198. Kearney, *Wake*, 83.

199. Brann, *World of the Imagination*, 785; Reyes, “Open Receptacles: Imagination,” 105.

200. Charles Spurgeon, *Smooth Stones Taken From Ancient Brooks* (Carlisle, PA: Banner of Truth Trust, 2011), v.

imagery.<sup>201</sup>

Today, the concept of imagination as recognized possibilities is used within Christianity. This should not be surprising to the theological mind, as Jesus Christ demonstrated imagination through parables, metaphors, and sacraments that called his listeners to belief and action.<sup>202</sup> It is Christians who believe the invisible world, including the reality of the risen Lord Jesus Christ, needs to “exegete critically the popular tales of the day.”<sup>203</sup>

The five understandings of imagination described above are not without overlap or implication. In many ways, they are facets or partial descriptions of something that is so universal, that it is hard to define strictly and remain bound by only that understanding. This complexity is even more apparent as implications are uncovered.

## 1.2 Implications of Imagination in Practical Theology

The implications of imagination for theology are numerous and significant.<sup>204</sup> This brief survey will describe implications of applying imagination to God, hermeneutics, meditation, and faith.<sup>205</sup> The implications will not be pursued in detail but merely sketched for contextual

---

201. Shane W. Parker, “The Eagle Wing of Imagination: Methods for Vivid Pastoral Writing in the Works of Thomas Brooks,” *Puritan Reformed Journal* 13, no. 1 (January 2021): 36-38.

202. McIntyre, *Faith, Theology, and Imagination*, 21-38.

203. Quentin Schultze, “He-Man and the Masters of the Universe: Media, Postmodernity and Christianity,” in *Imagination and Interpretation: Christian Perspectives*, ed. Hans Boersma (Vancouver, BC: Regent College Publishing, 2005), 173.

204. Brann, *World of the Imagination*, 685, 705; Dive, *Newman and the Imagination*.

205. In addition to those described below, McIntyre, *Faith, Theology and Imagination*, 49-64 also proposes a role for imagination within the doctrines of creation, incarnation, atonement, and the Holy Spirit. In remaining chapters, McIntyre proposes that imagination can also help solve tensions within ethics, psychology, and epistemology.

consideration of this retrieval study.

### *Imagination and God*

The understanding of imagination has been connected to a discussion of God and sin in the writings of John Calvin. Calvin saw the creative imagination as subject to human depravity.<sup>206</sup> In discussing the imagination of hearts referenced in Genesis 8:21, Calvin wrote that people “can conceive only sinful thoughts, until they become the new workmanship of Christ, and are formed by His Spirit to a new life.... Philosophers, by transferring to habit, what God here ascribes to nature, betray their own ignorance.”<sup>207</sup> Indeed, people often “measure God by the yardstick of their own carnal stupidity...; thus out of curiosity they fly off into empty speculation.”<sup>208</sup> This concern continued through the Puritans, with many seeing the possibility of falsehood and deception through the imagination as a primary means of theological error.<sup>209</sup> The

---

206. This should not necessarily be understood as a blanket rejection of imagination by Calvin. If imagination is the faculty to mentally see and make connections, in his *Institutes of Christian Religion*, I.V.II, Calvin writes that “men cannot open their eyes without being compelled to see him [God].” See also Dyrness, *Visual Culture*, 69.

207. John Calvin, *Commentaries on the First Book of Moses Called Genesis*, trans. and ed. John King (Bellingham, WA: Logos Bible Software), 1:284-285. In John Calvin, *Commentary on the Epistle of Paul the Apostle to the Romans*, ed. John Owen (Bellingham, WA: Logos Bible Software), 285-286 Calvin correlates Moses’ use of imagination with Paul’s use of minded in Romans 8:6, noting how Erasmus rendered this affection, but saying that since “under this word are included all the faculties of the soul - reason, understanding, and affections, it seems to me that minding (*cogitatio* - thinking, imagining, caring) is a more suitable word.”

208. John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, I.iv.1.

209. La Shell, “Imagination and Idol,” 309; Dyrness, *Visual Culture*, 7-10; Eifion Evans, “The Puritan Use of Imagination,” *Reformation & Revival* 10, no. 1 (Winter 2001): 51-58; Miller, *New England Mind*, 239-255; Searle, *Imagining Biblically*, 59; Smid, *Imagination*, 27. For particular examples see William Perkins, *A Treatise of Mans Imaginations shewing his natural euill thoughts: His want of good thoughts: The way to reforme them. Framed and preached by M. Wil. Perkins* (Cambridge: John Legat, 1607); 19-22; Richard Sibbes, *The Soul’s Conflict with Itself*, in Volume 1 of *The Complete Works of Richard Sibbes*, ed. Alexander B. Grossart (Edinburgh: James Nichol, 1862), 130-294.

Second Commandment made this such a concern that all mental images, as well as images that represented God metaphorically, were forbidden by some.<sup>210</sup>

The understandings of imagination have also been used to describe who God is.<sup>211</sup> The understanding of imagination as reproductive has been linked to an understanding of God as Creator. The imaginative person is acting according to the image of God in which they were created, and that imitation is at once “spiritual and intellectual, a way of being and an activity.”<sup>212</sup> The understanding of imagination as creativity has often turned any understanding of God into something made by man.<sup>213</sup> However, if God is merely an imaginative construction, then he is only a product of human culture and not God at all.<sup>214</sup>

The imaginative propensity towards error also has appears through those who claim that

---

210. John K. La Shell, *Imaginary Ideas of Christ: A Scottish-American Debate* (PhD dissertation, Westminster Theological Seminary, 1985), 178-179; La Shell, “Imagination and Idol,” 309. Many Puritan authors made this connection. See as one example Thomas Boston, “Of the Second Commandment,” in *The Whole Works of the Late Reverend Thomas Boston, of Ettrick*, ed. Samuel M’Millan, twelve volumes (Aberdeen: George and Robert King, 1848), 2:127-130; Westminster Larger Catechism, Question and Answer 109.

211. Many of the discussions ignore the implications of such a thought, and whether there is univocity of being and God has an imagination like human imagination, or whether there is analogical understanding of being, so that people might understand God through imagination, but not because God has the same imagination as He gave people. This also connects to the imagination and image of God discussion. Regarding univocity and analogical understanding, see Richard A. Muller, “Not Scotist: understandings of being, univocity, and analogy in early-modern Reformed thought,” *Reformation & Renaissance Review* 14, no. 2 (2012): 127-150.

212. Brann, *World of the Imagination*, 701-702. See also Stockitt, *Imagination*, 171.

213. Kearney, *Wake*, 89. See also Brann, *World of the Imagination*, 704-705; John Dewey, *A Common Faith* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1934), 41-43. For an unsympathetic description, see G.K. Chesterton, *The Everlasting Man*, People’s Library Edition (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1928), 128; see Ker, “G.K. Chesterton,” 217.

214. William Plancher, *The Domestication of Transcendence: How Modern Thinking about God Went Wrong* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 1996), 12. See also Viladesau, *Theological Aesthetics*, 23-24.

the imagination is the space in which God works.<sup>215</sup> Then, any imaginative sense of God results in a diversity of ultimate God experiences. Nirvana, the maypole, and the communion of saints are equal spaces for God to work.<sup>216</sup> Suddenly, the imagination in all its breadth is the place of receiving from, or responding to, God.<sup>217</sup>

### *Imagination and Hermeneutics*

Early Christian interpreters of Scripture generally saw positive implications of imagination for hermeneutics. Early Christian interpretations depended on active imaginations, not only to cross the cultural gap from Judaism for Israel to Christianity for the world, but also to build hermeneutical lenses to interpret and apply Scripture.<sup>218</sup> Typology and allegory became ways in which imagination was used for Scripture reading, even as they were bound by other principles so that they would not be wilful distortions.<sup>219</sup>

Concerns with the impact of imagination on hermeneutics grew through the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. William Perkins (AD 1558-1602) addressed the danger of the imagination

---

215. Geoff New, *Imaginative Preaching: Praying the Scriptures so God Can Speak Through You*, Global Perspective Series (Carlisle, CA: Langham Global Library, 2015), 4, 11.

216. John Bowker, *The Religious Imagination and the Sense of God* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1978), 28-29; John Bowker, *Why Religions Matter* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 291.

217. Bryant, *Play of Imagination*, 34; Andrew Greeley, "Protestant and Catholic: Is the Analogical Imagination Extinct?" *American Sociological Review* 54, no. 4 (Aug. 1989): 501; Hedley, *Living Forms*, 24; Gordon D. Kaufman, *The Theological Imagination: Constructing the Concept of God* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1981), 273, 278-279; Klaus Müller, "True Imaginings: Integrating Panentheism and a Personal View of God," *European Journal for Philosophy of Religion* 11, no. 1 (2019): 65-72.

218. Stafford, "Imagination and Scripture," 156.

219. Stafford, "Imagination and Scripture," 156-158.

in hermeneutics, especially considering the four-fold sense of interpretation.<sup>220</sup> While the Puritan commitment to the plain sense of the Word limited their use of imagination in hermeneutics, they could not deny the existence of allegory and symbolism.<sup>221</sup> Christ and His benefits were to be “lively represented.”<sup>222</sup> While arguing for one, literal, true, and proper sense of Scripture, Edward Leigh (AD 1602-1671) argued that allegories, anagogies, and tropologies exist in Scripture as aids toward this one meaning.<sup>223</sup>

John Bunyan (AD 1628-1688) anticipated objectors to the use of imagination, and yet asked:

May I not write in such a stile as this?  
 In such a method too, and yet not miss  
 My end, thy good? . . .  
 Some men by feigned words, dark as mine,  
 Make truth to spangle, and its rays to shine! . . .  
 Were not God’s laws, His gospel laws in olden time held forth  
 By types, shadows and metaphors? Yet loth  
 Will any sober man be to find fault  
 With them, lest he be found for to assault  
 The highest wisdom.<sup>224</sup>

---

220. William Perkins, *The Art of Prophesying* (Edinburgh: Banner of Truth, 1996), 26.

221. Evans, “The Puritan Use of Imagination,” 60-61. See also Perkins, *Art of Prophesying*, 26-29, 42; William Perkins, *A Reformed Catholicke: or, A declaration shewing how neere we may come to the present Church of Rom in sundrie points of religions: and wherein we must for ever depart from them: with An advertisement to all fauourers of the Romane religion, shewing that the said religion is against the catholike principles and grounds of the catechisme* (London: Iohn Legat, printer to the Universitie of Cambridge, 1598), 172-173.

222. Perkins, *Reformed Catholicke*, 173 (emphasis added); Dyrness, *Visual Culture*, 144-147. See also David Parry, *The Rhetoric of Conversion in English Puritan Writing from Perkins to Milton* (London: Bloomsbury, 2022), 7.

223. Edward Leigh, *A Treatise of Divinity Consisting of Three Bookes, etc.* (London: E. Griffin for William Lee, 1646), 174; Evans, “The Puritan Use of Imagination,” 58.

224. John Bunyan, “Apology,” in *The Pilgrim’s Progress, from this world to that which is to come, delivered under the similitude of a dream* (Leeds: George Wilson, 1809), iv-v.



Instead of rejecting the imagination as fictional, Bunyan linked the “embodied hermeneutic of scriptural interpretation developed by Puritan divines” with aesthetic literature and an engaged imagination for the transformation of life.<sup>225</sup>

The understanding of the imagination also shapes contemporary hermeneutics. Modernity brought about a rationalistic interpretation that led to a rejection of imagination. Within the expository tradition, there is a fear that imagination implies that the biblical text alone is insufficient for interpretation and application.<sup>226</sup> Others such as Hans Boersma fear that the historical-critical hermeneutical method has stifled the imagination.<sup>227</sup> As an alternative, he proposes a Christological interpretation of history and scripture, which requires trusting that the Holy Spirit can guide imagination.<sup>228</sup> Some extend this power of imagination so far as to say that traditional exegesis and textual discovery are not necessarily required.<sup>229</sup> Others see the imagination as central to the hermeneutical task, in order to do justice to narrative, imagery and

---

225. Searle, *Imagining Biblically*, 60-61. See also Bethany Joy Bear, “Fantastical Faith: John Bunyan and the Sanctification of Fancy,” *Studies in Philology* 109, no. 5 (Fall 2012): 671, 701; Cherry, *Religious Imagination*, 178; Michael Davies, *Graceful Reading: Theology and Narrative in the Works of John Bunyan* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002); Evans, “The Puritan Use of Imagination,” 47; U. Milo Kaufmann, *The Pilgrim’s Progress and Traditions in Puritan Meditation* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1966), 154.

226. Scorgie, “Baptized Imagination,” 279.

227. Hans Boersma, “Spiritual Imagination: Recapitulation as an Interpretive Principle,” in *Imagination and Interpretation: Christian Perspectives*, ed. Hans Boersma (Vancouver, BC: Regent College Publishing, 2005), 14; Sidney Greidanus would seem to agree in *The Modern Preacher and the Ancient Text: Interpreting and Preaching Biblical Literature* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1988), 32.

228. Boersma, “Spiritual Imagination,” 21-24, 31.

229. Anneke Viljoen, “Theological Imagination as Hermeneutical Device: Exploring the Hermeneutical Contribution of an Imaginal Engagement With the Text,” *Hervormde Teologiese Studies* 73, no. 1 (2017): 2.

visions.<sup>230</sup> However, others see the imagination giving rise to a hermeneutic of suspicion that understands the Bible as fantasies, and organized religion as bad imagination.<sup>231</sup>

### *Imagination and Meditation*

Another implication of the imagination relates to meditation and silent reflection. Within Catholic theology, the imaginative vision was valuable since it was authentic.<sup>232</sup> The imaginative vision fights against the perennial risk of religious language becoming hardened, clichéd, and formulaic, losing any of its mystagogic thrust.<sup>233</sup> This role for the imagination in Catholicism continues to this day through *lectio divina* and Ignatian contemplation.<sup>234</sup>

While the Protestant Reformation is often remembered as iconoclastic, various Reformers saw the value of imagination, particularly as it related to silent reflection. Martin Luther (AD 1483-1546) said it was impossible for him “to hear and bear [the Word of God] in mind without forming mental images of it in my heart.”<sup>235</sup> Calvin found in nature a skillful ordering that acts

---

230. Eslinger, *Narrative and Imagination*, 46-71; Sinclair Ferguson, *Mastering the Old Testament: Daniel*, ed. Lloyd J. Ogilvie (Dallas: Word Publishing, 1988), 20-22. See also Searle, *Imagining Biblically*, 198-199.

231. Green, *Theology, Hermeneutics, and Imagination*, 171.

232. Brann, *World of the Imagination*, 705; Karnes, *Imagination*, 239-240. See also Michelle Karnes, “Marvels in the Medieval Imagination,” *Speculum* 90, no. 2 (April 2015): 327-365; Michelle Karnes, “Nicholas Love and Medieval Meditations on Christ,” *Speculum* 82, no. 2 (April 2007): 380-408.

233. Imbelli, *Christic Imagination*, xxvii.

234. Ordway, *Apologetics and the Christian Imagination*, 168-172; New, *Imaginative Preaching*, 5.

235. Martin Luther, “Against the Heavenly Prophets,” in *Luther’s Works*, ed. Jaroslav Pelikan, Hilton C. Oswald, and Helmut T. Lehmann (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1958), 40:99-100. See also William Dyrness, *The Origins of Protestant Aesthetics in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019); Veith and Ristuccia, *Imagination Redeemed*, 37.

as “a sort of mirror in which we can contemplate God, who is otherwise invisible.”<sup>236</sup> And so the Reformers did not discard imagination; they used their own imagination while appealing to the imagination of the people through music, preaching, wood-carvings, and printed books.<sup>237</sup>

The Puritans continued to see implications for imagination in meditation.<sup>238</sup> While William Perkins opposed visualizing techniques, he did allow for imaging within parameters of Scriptural language and examples.<sup>239</sup> Richard Bernard (AD 1568-1641) intentionally set out to develop mental pictures “for Divine contemplation.”<sup>240</sup> Stephen Charnock (AD 1628-1680) said that to raise good thoughts, one must draw spiritual inferences from occasional subjects.<sup>241</sup> John Flavel (AD 1628-1691) recognized that ideas could be presented best through imagery, calling people to “walk with God from day to day, and *make the several objects you behold . . . wings*

---

236. Calvin, *Institutes*, 1.5.1. See also Dennis R. Danielson, “God’s Other Book,” in *Imagination and Interpretation: Christian Perspectives*, ed. Hans Boersma (Vancouver, BC: Regent College Publishing, 2005), 40-41.

237. Matheson, *Imaginative World*, 7, 79. See also Davis, *Seeing Faith*, 103-142.

238. See Evans, “The Puritan Use of Imagination,” 65-66; Louis L. Martz, *The Poetry of Meditation* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1954); Veith and Ristuccia, *Imagination Redeemed*, 39-40. Primary sources of Puritan literature displaying this include Edward Bury, *The Husbandman’s Companion, containing an 100 occasional meditations suitable to men of that employment*, 1677; John Collinges, *The Weavers Pocket-book*, 1675; John Flavel, *Husbandry Spiritualized: or, The Heavenly Use of Earthly Things*, *WJF*, 5:3-204; John Flavel, *Navigation Spiritualized: or, A New Compass for Seamen*, *WJF*, 5:206-292.

239. Perkins, *Art of Propheying*, 69; Moore, “Mind’s Eye Only,” 291.

240. Richard Bernard, *Contemplative Pictures with Wholesome Precepts* (London: n.p., 1610), ‘Epistle Dedicatorie,’ and 1; quoted in Dyrness, *Visual Culture*, 139.

241. Stephen Charnock, “The Sinfulness and Cure of Thoughts,” in *The Works of Stephen Charnock*, 5:304-309.

and ladders to mount your souls nearer to him.”<sup>242</sup> Thomas Manton (AD 1620-1677) encouraged people to “behold outward objects to a heavenly purpose.”<sup>243</sup> George Swinnock (AD 1627-1673) put it actively: “labour to spiritualise earthly things.”<sup>244</sup> Richard Sibbes (AD 1577-1635) would have agreed: “What is the use of the sacraments but to help our souls by our senses, and our faith by imagination?”<sup>245</sup>

The Puritans even extended the positive use of imagination to meditation on Christ. Sibbes called for seeing Jesus Christ.<sup>246</sup> Isaac Ambrose (AD 1604-1664) wrote a well-known volume, calling on the reader to see the suffering of Jesus: “Thou art called on to ‘Behold the man:’ Dost thou see him? Is thy imagination strong? Canst thou consider him at present, as if thou hadst a view of this very man!”<sup>247</sup> The letters of Samuel Rutherford (AD c. 1600-1661) also called for a broader imagining of Christ: “Oh! Oh! But we have short, and narrow, and creeping thoughts of Jesus, and do but shape Christ in our conceptions according to some created

---

242. John Flavel, “The Epistle Dedicatory” in *Husbandry Spiritualized: The Heavenly Use of Earthly Things*, *WJF*, 5:3-6; emphasis added. See also Dyrness, *Visual Culture*, 267-268.

243. Thomas Manton, *An Exposition, With Notes, Upon the Epistle of James*, *CWTM*, 4:421.

244. George Swinnock, “The Christian Man’s Calling – Part 2,” in *The Works of George Swinnock* (Edinburgh: James Nichol, 1868), 2:414, 2:421, 2:462.

245. Sibbes, “The Soul’s Conflict,” in Volume 1 of *The Complete Works of Richard Sibbes*, 185. See also Dyrness, *Visual Culture*, 168-171; Parry, “Godly Preaching,” 15.

246. Richard Sibbes, *The Description of Christ*, in Volume 1 of *The Complete Works of Richard Sibbes*, 5-6, 14; Richard Sibbes, *The Bruised Reed*, in Volume 1 of *The Complete Works of Richard Sibbes*, 47.

247. Isaac Ambrose, *Looking Unto Jesus: A View of the Everlasting Gospel; or, The Soul’s Eyeing of Jesus*, two volumes (Berwick: H. Richardson, 1819), 2:83. Some of the words in the quote are not found in every edition; see La Shell, “Imagination and Idol,” 316 for the broader discussion regarding the omissions.

portraiture! O angels, lend in your help to make love-books and songs of our fair, and white, and ruddy Standard-bearer among ten thousand!”<sup>248</sup> In another letter, Rutherford encouraged a persecuted brother, “so to act as if ye did see Jesus Christ by you, and beholding you.”<sup>249</sup>

### *Imagination and Faith*

According to Searle, while the imagination may reflect the heart of a person, it cannot be conflated with faith or even spiritual awareness.<sup>250</sup> While imagination and faith may be connected, the implications have been expressed as differences, parallels, overstatements, and imperatives.

There are differences between imagination and faith. Faith is a gift of God, but operates through human faculties of reason, conscience, and imagination.<sup>251</sup> Faith does much more than the imagination can.<sup>252</sup> The Puritan John Owen (AD 1616-1683) saw it this way: “Imagination

---

248. Samuel Rutherford, *Letters of Samuel Rutherford*, ed. Thomas Smith (Edinburgh: Oliphant, Anderson, & Ferrier, 1881), 422. See also John Coffey, *Politics, Religion and the British Revolutions: The Mind of Samuel Rutherford*, Cambridge Studies in Early Modern British History, ed. Anthony Fletcher et al. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 110. Alison Searle, “The Biblical and Imaginative Interiority of Samuel Rutherford,” *The Dalhousie Review* 85, no. 2 (2005): 307-320; Searle, *Imagining Biblically*, 80-84.

249. Rutherford, *Letters*, 553. These are not the only two examples within Rutherford’s work. It was a theme of his, described in various ways, and perhaps captured most appropriately in Mrs. A. Cousin’s hymnic tribute to Rutherford’s *Letters*: “The bride eyes not her garment, / But her dear Bridegroom’s face; / I will not gaze at glory, / But on the King of Grace.” The entire poem, often referred to as “In Immanuel’s Land,” or “The Sands of Time are Sinking,” can be found in Rutherford, *Letters*, 573-576.

250. Searle, *Imagining Biblically*, 49.

251. Avis, *God and the Creative Imagination*, 78.

252. McIntyre, *Faith, Theology and Imagination*, 37. See also *Belgic Confession* Article 22; *Heidelberg Catechism* Question and Answer 21.

creates its own object; faith finds it prepared beforehand.”<sup>253</sup> People ought not to confuse imagination, a function of human beings that can be used for good or evil, and faith which is a supernatural gift (Ephesians 2:8), centered on Jesus Christ that transforms the heart and life of every believer (Romans 8:1-17).<sup>254</sup>

Yet some have drawn tighter correlations between imagination and faith. John Henry Newman (AD 1801-1890) saw it as a duty of Christians to make the unknown known through the faithful use of images.<sup>255</sup> George MacDonald (AD 1824-1905) saw a wise imagination as the presence of the Spirit of God helping individuals, who are created in the image of God, navigate the challenges of life by faith.<sup>256</sup> McIntyre observes that there is a type of spiritual seeing that is “a mental activity not dissimilar to faith” as it focuses on the invisible God.<sup>257</sup> Douglas Hedley argues that “through the ‘inner eye’ of imagination, finite beings can apprehend eternal and immutable Forms,” and therefore, imagination may be necessary for reflective faith.<sup>258</sup>

And yet, too often the connection between imagination and faith is often overstated.

---

253. John Owen, *The Grace and Duty of Being Spiritually Minded: Declared and Practically Improved* (New York: Whiting and Watson, 1813), 85.

254. Searle, *Imagining Biblically*, 50.

255. Dive, *Newman and the Imagination*, 3-4.

256. George MacDonald, “The Imagination: Its Function and Its Culture,” in *A Dish of Orts: Chiefly Papers on the Imagination, and on Shakespeare* (Project Gutenberg: 2005), 51. See also Dive, *Newman and the Imagination*, 5; McIntyre, *Faith, Theology, and Imagination*, 17; Stockitt, *Imagination*, 178.

257. McIntyre, *Faith, Theology, and Imagination*, 91.

258. Hedley, *Living Forms*, 1. See also Garrett Green, “Myth, History, and Imagination: The Creation Narratives in Bible and Theology,” *Horizons in Biblical Theology* 12, no. 1 (1990): 34; James Reimer, *The Dogmatic Imagination: The Dynamics of Christian Belief* (Waterloo, ON: Herald Press, 1989), x.

According to Cheryl Forbes, the imagination not only can be, but *is* the means of grace towards spiritual sight.<sup>259</sup> Similarly, Terrence Erdt exaggerates his case when he says, “one’s spiritual fate may well hinge upon one’s power of imagination.”<sup>260</sup> Others suggest that imagination might be a means of grace within aspects of life.<sup>261</sup> Stephen Fowl argues that Christians can only live faithful to Scripture through “cultivating their imaginations and developing their capacities for practical wisdom.”<sup>262</sup> Because of such overstatements, too often faith and imagination are seen synonymously in contemporary theological discussion.<sup>263</sup>

### 1.3 Imagination

One of the consequences of the various understandings and implications of imagination is the difficulty of identifying a simple working definition for the purpose of this study. At the same time, it should not be understood that the usefulness of imagination for practical theology depends solely on any single one of the above understandings. Imagination is not just reproduction, nor is it restricted to the sense of sight.<sup>264</sup> Imagination is not just fantasy, nor

---

259. Cheryl Forbes, *Imagination: Embracing a Theology of Wonder* (Colorado Springs: Multnomah, 1986), 15-19, 161.

260. Erdt, *Sense of the Heart*, 73.

261. Robert D. Young, *Religious Imagination: God’s Gift to Prophets and Preachers* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1979), 14. See also Tuveson, *Means of Grace*, 97.

262. Stephen E. Fowl, “Kindling (and Sustaining) Biblical Imagination,” *Word & World* 34, no. 3 (Summer 2014): 239.

263. Searle, *Imagining Biblically*, 80.

264. Contra Jay Adams, “Sense Appeal and Storytelling,” in *The Preacher and Preaching: Reviving the Art*, ed. Samuel T. Logan, Jr. (Phillipsburg, NJ: P & R Publishing, 1986), 354. Adams seems to reflect there the influence of Joseph Addison; see Tuveson, *Means of Grace*, 96.

should the imaginative be confused with the imaginary.<sup>265</sup> Neither is imagination just spiritual awareness, nor the origin of the fabrication of religion.<sup>266</sup> Finally, imagination is not just recognized connections; this definition runs the risk of producing reference-less images, dismissing the imaging function of the imagination in favour of subjective operations.<sup>267</sup>

The various implications reveal a necessary caution. It is true that certain understandings of imagination could minimize the Creator-creature distinction and the complete Otherness of God.<sup>268</sup> It is also true that there are limits to the usefulness of the imagination, particularly if it is removed from truth and rationality and leading to idolatry.<sup>269</sup> Creativity is not universally good. However, dismissing the imagination as unnecessary remains an overreaction that hurts practical theology and homiletics.

Therefore, orthodoxy should not stand as an obstacle to imagination. Indeed, there is a

---

265. Tozer, "Sanctified Imagination," 212. This distinction is also made by C.S. Lewis in a letter to Eliza Butler, 25 September 1940; see C.S. Lewis, *The Collected Letters of C.S. Lewis, Volume II*, ed. Walter Hooper (London: HarperCollins, 2004), 445. With Tozer publishing this in 1959 and Lewis writing his letter in 1940, it is possible Lewis made this distinction first, but it is possible there is another mutually read source. The imaginary is picked up positively by Taylor, *Modern Social Imaginaries*, 23 to refer to the "common understanding that makes possible common practices and a widely shared sense of legitimacy."

266. John McIntyre, "New Help from Kant: Theology and Human Imagination," in *Religious Imagination*, ed. James P. Mackey (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1986), 121.

267. Brann, *World of the Imagination*, 694.

268. MacDonald, "The Imagination," 11.

269. Brann, *World of the Imagination*, 785.



human ability to shape mental images, and that should not be dismissed.<sup>270</sup> As William Dyrness notes, there are two reasons: first, because “God is the great Creator and couldn’t have intended creation – certainly not the part created in God’s own image – to be insensitive to beauty.

Second, imagination must be important given the creativity and style displayed throughout the book in which God was most intimately involved, the Scriptures.”<sup>271</sup>

The value of imagination for practical theology lies in its definition: it is a heart-based structuring mental activity by which people perceive coherent and significant possibilities that are indispensable in understanding and generating objects and experiences.<sup>272</sup> As heart-based activity, it acknowledges a unified understanding of immortal, unified, relational and responsible people created by God, fallen into sin, and in need of grace and redemption. It also makes the activity of the imagination a personal responsibility rather than just a common apprehension.<sup>273</sup>

---

270. Dyrness, *Visual Culture*, 4. See also Paul Ricoeur, “The Bible and the Imagination,” in *The Bible as a Document of the University*, ed. Hans Dieter Betz (Chico, CA: Scholar’s Press, 1981), 49-75; George H. Taylor, “Ricoeur’s Philosophy of Imagination,” *Journal of French Philosophy* 16, no. 1 and 2 (Spring-Fall 2006): 93-104; Topping, “Reforming Reformed Imagination,” 23-27.

271. William Dyrness, “Introduction,” in *Arts and the Christian Imagination* (Brewster, MA: Mount Tabor Books, 2016), 205-206.

272. Adapted from Johnson, *Body in the Mind*, 168; though Johnson would likely not agree with the heart-based source. See also Kevin VanHoozer, *Pictures at a Theological Exhibition: Scenes of the Church’s Worship, Witness and Wisdom* (Downers Grove: IVP Academic, 2016), 166. The use of “heart-based” intentionally alludes to the biblical understanding of heart; an understanding that is not anatomical, nor a feeling faculty, but the unified understanding and will which interacts with its body, otherwise described as psychosomatic unity. This unified and interactive view is described in Louis Berkhof, *Systematic Theology*, New Combined Edition (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1996), 192-196.

273. See Dive, *Newman and the Imagination*, 19. It is Mary Stewart Van Leeuwen, *The Person in Psychology: A Contemporary Christian Appraisal*, Studies in a Christian World View, ed. Carl F. H. Henry (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1985), 45 who describes the biblical view of persons as immortal, unified, relational, and responsible.

As a structuring mental activity, imagination is not about *what* is in the mind, as much as *how* the mind works, and takes its place alongside language, logic, memory, and reason, and reflects the creation of humanity as in the image of God.<sup>274</sup> It cannot replace authoritative revelation.<sup>275</sup> As a creative process, it is still bound by rules and morality,<sup>276</sup> and depends on the power of the Spirit for any proper use.<sup>277</sup> As an activity that results in possibilities and understanding and generating objects and experiences, it spurs to vital faith in invisible things and practice.<sup>278</sup> Imagination

---

274. This reflects the Augustinian distinction between *facultas* (which is a power) and *facilitas* (which is a quality). Imagination is an activity of the whole mind, not a quality or limited faculty. See Lane, “Imagination and Theology,” 131; McIntyre, *Faith, Theology, and Imagination*, 159. This idea may benefit from further study of the concepts of imagination and intuition as described by Michael Polanyi, “The Creative Imagination,” in *The Idea of Creativity*, ed. K. Bardsley, D. Dutton, and M. Krausz, Volume 28 of *Philosophy of History and Culture* (Leiden: Brill, 2009), 147-163. Dustin Stokes, “Imagination and Creativity,” *RHPI*, 254-255 provides a helpful summary of Polanyi’s ideas: “Imagination refines and narrows the vaguely understood solution space in response to the coherence sensed by intuition, and this reflexive process continues as the coherence deepens. This largely deliberative effort, ‘racking our brain,’ as encouraged by the feeling of getting closer, ultimately gives way to some spontaneous insight – an Ah-ha! moment.” Sepper, *Understanding Imagination*, 8 states his definition as: “the power human beings have of situating and reworking the appearances of things against, or among, different backgrounds, foregrounds, frameworks, and fields.”

275. See Topping, “Reforming Reformed Imagination,” 36-37.

276. Herman Bavinck, “Foundation of Psychology,” trans. Jack Vanden Born, in “Herman Bavinck’s *Foundation of Psychology*,” M.C.S. thesis, Calvin College (1981): 91-92. As one example of this, see what is referred to as the norms in Garrett Green, *Imagining Theology: Encounters with God in Scripture, Interpretation, and Aesthetics* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2020), 12-22. While some of those rules or norms may be beyond orthodoxy, Green’s list is thought provoking.

277. See Topping, “Reforming Reformed Imagination,” 37. See Exodus 30, Exodus 36, 2 Chronicles 1, Isaiah 3, Acts 2 for biblical references.

278. Lane, “Imagination and Theology,” 133. That this can include both ideas and feelings is defended in Hart, “Imagination,” 15-16. For the practice of imagination, see Todd D. Baucum, “Bishop Joseph Hall and Puritan Imagination: An Analysis of *The Art of Divine Meditation*,” (Th.M. thesis, Puritan Reformed Theological Seminary, 2019); Charles Hambrick-Stowe, *Practice of Piety: Puritan Devotional Disciplines in Seventeenth-Century New England* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1985).

becomes “the capacity to perceive the ‘more’ in what is already before us. It is the capacity to see beneath the surface of things, to get beyond the obvious and the merely conventional, to note the many aspects of any particular situation, [and] to attend to the deep meanings of things.”<sup>279</sup>

Because imagination aids to understand experience, it is not separate from the senses and reality.<sup>280</sup>

As it relates to practical theology, imagination is an activity that requires action. It is not a compartment of the brain, nor an image recalled in the brain. It is the complex process or ability to think meaningfully of things invisible.<sup>281</sup> It is to be employed to develop insights by making connections.<sup>282</sup> Those connections and insights can play a positive role in true Christian piety.<sup>283</sup> The imagination that is sanctified by grace expands as new themes, metaphors and imagery fill its horizons, even as it limits what is true, good, and beautiful. And so Scorgie’s conclusion is helpful: “the truly baptized or converted imagination is not less creative than before. Just the opposite is true. But it is now a more useful and constructive imagination,

---

279. Craig Dykstra, “Pastoral and Ecclesial Imagination,” in *For Life Abundant*, ed. Dorothy C. Bass and Craig Dykstra (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2008), 48. For similarly expressed thoughts see Avis, “Rebirth of the Imagination,” 307; Brann, *World of the Imagination*, 785-86; Hart, “Imagination,” 5-6; Mackey, *Religious Imagination*, 23; Searle, *Imagining Biblically*, 22. Sepper, *Understanding Imagination*, 8 expands it this way: “Within the conceptual topography of matrixes, human imagination comes to appear as more about making and remaking, contextualizing and recontextualizing appearances than about envisioning and fixing them in mind.... Imagination is the human power that textures and contextualizes what we experience.” In this sense, phenomenology is a practice of the imagination.

280. Sepper, *Understanding Imagination*, 9.

281. Jürgen Klein, Vera Damm, and Angelika Giebeler, “An Outline of a Theory of Imagination,” *Zeitschrift für allgemeine Wissenschaftstheorie* 14, no. 1 (1983): 16, 20; Richard Lischer, “Imagining a Sermon,” *Word and World* 5, no. 3 (Summer 1985), 279.

282. Viladesau, *Theological Aesthetics*, 87.

283. Topping, “Reforming Reformed Imagination,” 37.

because it is tethered to the truth.”<sup>284</sup>

#### 1.4 Conclusion

Imagination is important because it has been and remains part of the theory of communicating the gospel that defines and validates practical theology.<sup>285</sup> Yet, as this chapter has implied, there are elements that are not conducive to a use of imagination in homiletics, just as there are elements that are conducive.

The elements that are not conducive to using imagination in homiletics relate to the abuse or extreme applications of this gift. For the Reformed theologian, the imagination is not apart from the depravity that impacts all and leads to sin.<sup>286</sup> The imagination is confusing and has overlapping understandings. The norms of Scripture concerning imagination are overlooked, and content of Scripture minimized, while theories and speculations related to psychological and philosophical trends are embraced.<sup>287</sup> It is not helpful that the imagination is polarizing and abused as the rationale for every unstructured thought or imaginary idea.

And yet there are elements of imagination that remain conducive to further use in homiletics. Theologically, the imagination remains part of God’s creation and means of knowing and communicating. Historically, the imagination has been used, and contemporary expository

---

284. Scorgie, “Baptized Imagination,” 282. See also Haddon W. Robinson, *Biblical Preaching: The Development and Delivery of Expository Messages*, Third Edition (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2014), 107.

285. Grethlein, *Practical Theology*, 1-3 suggests that “communicating the gospel” outlines a two-way praxis of contemporary practical ministry. See also Gerben Heitink, *Practical Theology*, trans. Reinder Bruinsma (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999), 155-156.

286. See Canons of Dordt, Head 3/4, Articles 1-4, 16, Rejection 5; Belgic Confession Article 14; Brann, *World of the Imagination*, 695-696.

287. See King, *Theology as Aesthetics*, 4 for discussion of how Scripture must remain the norm over the other aspects of theologies of aesthetics.

preachers need an understanding broader than the stereotypes.<sup>288</sup> Practically, the imagination can be useful in promoting the truth, beauty, and goodness in spiritual sight. Therefore, studying the use of imagination in homiletics follows a long trajectory of balancing theological, philosophical, and rhetorical concerns, with the goal of communicating the gospel.

While the theory undergirding imagination may at times be suspect, and various streams within theology may use imagination for unorthodox ends, the imagination cannot be dismissed. Indeed, there is no choice between imagination and no imagination; there is only a choice between good and poor imagination.<sup>289</sup> Therefore, as explained earlier, defining imagination as a heart-based structuring mental activity by which people perceive coherent and significant possibilities that are indispensable in understanding and generating objects and experiences helps towards understanding what a homiletical use of imagination may be. And yet, just having a clear definition does not mean a homiletical use of imagination is fully developed. The understanding of imagination can use strengthening, as can its relationship to homiletics.

---

288. For help with this, see Baucum, “Hall and Puritan Imagination,” 154, where he concludes that Bishop Hall had “a pivotal and foundational role” in shaping Puritan piety as well as a Calvinist imagination.

289. Clyde S. Kilby, “The Christian and the Arts,” in *The Arts and the Christian Imagination: Essays on Art, Literature, and Aesthetics*, ed. William Dyrness and Keith Call (Brewster, MA: Paraclete Press, 2016), 95-96.



## Chapter 2 - Imagination in Contemporary Homiletics

Suggesting benefit from a retrieval of a homiletical use of imagination presumes a context for such a practice. That context has gradually risen, with homiletics developing into an academic discipline in the past two centuries, and rising in the last sixty years to high scholarly standing.<sup>290</sup> Within the past two centuries the use of imagination in homiletics has received sporadic interest; however, in the last fifty years the imagination has come to be recognized as important.<sup>291</sup> Recently, the imagination has been described as “a vital tool” throughout the stages of the sermon process.<sup>292</sup> While there has been a “wide and general consensus” of the value of imagination in preaching, there has been little clarity on how homiletic *dispositio* might benefit from this gift.<sup>293</sup>

There are various ways a homiletical use of imagination has been described. Richard Eslinger applies the theory of Philip Wheelwright to propose the imagination confronts, stylizes, composes, and deepens the message.<sup>294</sup> Richard Kearney claims that imagination synthesizes the sensible and intelligible into new expression.<sup>295</sup> Edward Murray sees imagination as the

---

290. Randolph, *Renewal of Preaching*, 10.

291. Paul Scott Wilson, *Preaching and Homiletical Theory* (St. Louis, MO: Chalice Press, 2004), 30. See also Ronald Allen, “New Directions in Homiletics,” *Journal for Preachers* 16, no. 3 (Easter 1993): 21.

292. Bruce, *Preaching and Imagination*, xiv.

293. Paul Scott Wilson, *Imagination of the Heart: New Understandings in Preaching* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1988), 21.

294. Richard Eslinger, *The Web of Preaching: New Options in Homiletic Method* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2002), 248-249.

295. Richard Kearney, *Poetics of Imagining: Modern to Post-Modern* (New York: Fordham University Press), 6.

intellectual effort of seeing, thinking, and describing designed to move people toward an end.<sup>296</sup>

David Bryant calls for preachers to associate perceptions with images already in memories.<sup>297</sup>

While these methods have some overlap, most homiletical understandings of imagination depend on the use of images.<sup>298</sup>

In the popular literature, the homiletical use of imagination as images leads to goals of various value. There have been appeals for increased imagination in intertextual study,<sup>299</sup> in first-person narrative sermons,<sup>300</sup> for illustration,<sup>301</sup> to build emotion into a sermon,<sup>302</sup> to make ties to literature and music,<sup>303</sup> as the “necessary correlate” for ethical applications,<sup>304</sup> to structure

---

296. Edward L. Murray, “Imagination Theory and Phenomenological Thought,” in *Phenomenological Psychology*, ed. Edward L. Murray (Pittsburgh: Duquesne University Press, 1987), 180-193.

297. Bryant, *Play of Imagination*, 88-91. See also Eslinger, *Web of Preaching*, 252-254.

298. Eslinger, *Web of Preaching*, 273.

299. David L. Bartlett, *Between the Bible and the Church: New Methods of Biblical Preaching* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1999), 24; Richard L. Eslinger, *A New Hearing: Living Options in Homiletic Method* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1987), 21-22.

300. J. Kent Edwards, *Effective First-Person Biblical Preaching* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2005), 91-92; Stephen Chapin Garner, *Getting Into Character: The Art of First-Person Narrative Preaching* (Grand Rapids: Brazos, 2008).

301. Webb B. Garrison, *Creative Imagination in Preaching* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1960); Long, *Witness of Preaching*, 249.

302. Ralph L. Lewis, *Persuasive Preaching Today* (Ann Arbor, MI: Lithocrafters, 1977), 137-140.

303. Cyril S. Rodd, *Preaching with Imagination*, Volume 7 of The Preacher’s Library (Peterborough, UK: Foundry Press, 2001); Hart, “Creative Preaching,” 89-95.

304. Richard L. Eslinger, “Narrative and Imagery,” in *Intersections*, ed. Richard L. Eslinger, 71-72.



creative sermon series,<sup>305</sup> to connect with and influence hearers through controlling images,<sup>306</sup> and, as the skill to stop imitating others and preach with one's own gifts and insights.<sup>307</sup>

While the lack of consensus and the variety of uses of imagination in homiletics may appear to undermine the value of this study, the opposite is true. Homiletics needs to retrieve a proper and clear use of imagination. Since homiletics is “the intertwining of theoretical reflection both on the proclamation of the gospel and on human discourse,”<sup>308</sup> the seeming divide between rhetorical imagination and gospel proclamation needs addressing. That divide has been described as between models of expository, experiential preaching that purportedly focus on gospel proclamation and the New Homiletic and its influential fixation on an expansive imagination.<sup>309</sup> There are other models promoting imagination, but the New Homiletic is the most popular and most explicitly committed to imagination in the homiletic process.

---

305. Craig Skinner, “Creativity in Preaching,” in *Handbook of Contemporary Preaching*, ed. Michael Dudit (Nashville: B & H Academic, 1992), 562-570.

306. Peter Jonker, *Preaching in Pictures: Using Images for Sermons that Connect*, The Artistry of Preaching Series (Nashville: Abingdon, 2015), 22-24; Whitesell, *The Art of Biblical Preaching*, 88.

307. Warren Wiersbe, “Imagination: The Preacher’s Neglected Ally,” in *The Art and Craft of Biblical Preaching*, ed. Haddon Robinson and Craig Brian Larson (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2005), 563.

308. Immink, “Homiletics,” 91.

309. Expository preaching has already been defined in the introduction. The New Homiletic will be defined in detail below. These are not the only two options. Homiletical models that display use of imagination also include Karl Barth’s kerygmatic model, or Paul Ricoeur’s narrative model. McClure, *Other-wise Preaching*, describes a deconstructive model that explicitly moves well beyond the New Homiletic, and encourages further exiting from Scripture, tradition, experience, and reason. For the sake of this retrieval study, the expository tradition will be compared to the influential New Homiletic; regarding its influence, see Hershael W. York, “Communication Theory and Text-Driven Preaching,” in *Text-Driven Preaching: God’s Word at the Heart of Every Sermon*, ed. Daniel L. Akin, David L. Allen, and Ned L. Mathews (Nashville: B & H Academic, 2010), 234.

To use the categories of homiletical criticism suggested by Charles Bartow, there is little scholarly interest in a homiletical use of imagination by the expository tradition.<sup>310</sup> Both the expository and the New Homiletic traditions expect seminaries to allow degrees of imagination (pedagogical criticism). Pastors in both traditions reflect on sermons prepared and delivered (professional criticism). This pedagogical and professional criticism has resulted in many of the references that follow in this chapter. But when it comes to relevant scholarly ideas regarding imagination and homiletics (scholarly criticism), this is primarily being addressed by those committed to the New Homiletic.

Rather than conceptualizing this divide as competing dialectics,<sup>311</sup> a more accurate description of the fracture as it relates to imagination may come from a survey of authors in both camps. There has been a historic and contemporary call for imagination by those of the expository persuasion; however, it is those interacting with the New Homiletic who have developed more scholarly ways and means for the use of imagination in homiletics.

## 2.1 Imagination in Expository Homiletics

Expository homiletics is not limited to one branch of Protestantism. Those who hold to the authority of the Word of God in the Scriptures, the calling of the preacher to re-present that Word, and the responsibility of the audience to receive that Word with meekness can be

---

310. Charles Bartow, "Homiletical (Theological) Criticism," in *New Interpreter's Handbook of Preaching*, ed. Paul Scott Wilson (Nashville: Abingdon, 2008), 154. For one somewhat dated but balanced example of a survey of scholarly literature on preaching see Craig Loscalzo, "The Literature of Preaching," in *Handbook of Contemporary Preaching*, ed. Michael Dudoit (Nashville: B & H Academic, 1992).

311. As in the analysis of Shawn D. Radford, "The New Homiletic within Non-Christendom," *The Journal of the Evangelical Homiletics Society* 5, no. 2 (Sept. 2005): 4-18. See also O. Wesley Allen Jr., "The Pillars of the New Homiletic," in *The Renewed Homiletic*, ed. O. Wesley Allen Jr. (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2010), 9.

understood as belonging to that tradition.<sup>312</sup> The broad form of current expositional preaching has been shaped by the three-point Catholic *university sermon*, and the Puritan plain style of preaching which was focused less on three points, and promoted expository preaching through *exposition, doctrine, and application*.<sup>313</sup> Today, expository preachers may be from a broad range of theological traditions including Anglican, Reformed, Presbyterian, Baptist, and Congregational.<sup>314</sup>

Though it could be stated that the expository tradition lacks scholarly vision when it comes to imagination, it would be incorrect to insinuate that imagination is not, nor ever has been, a part of the expository tradition. The professional products of preaching (i.e., sermons) clearly demonstrate imagination. But there is much less evidence related to pedagogical or scholarly reflection. A survey of historical and contemporary expository homiletics will demonstrate inconsistent and incomplete direction for the use of imagination in preaching.

*The Historic Call for Imagination in Expository Homiletics*

Many early expository Homiletics teachers encouraged the use of imagination. This may stem from the Reformation itself. While Martin Luther and John Calvin were among the Reformations most influential teachers of expositional preaching, their focus remained more on content than method. This allowed Reformation preachers to retain elements of classic

---

312. See Gibson, "Preaching in American Evangelicalism," 192-199; Stott, *Between Two Worlds*, 68-69.

313. O. Wesley Allen Jr., "The Pillars of the New Homiletic," in *The Renewed Homiletic*, ed. O. Wesley Allen Jr., (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2010), 3.

314. See Beeke, *Reformed Preaching: Old, Reading and Preaching*.

rhetoric.<sup>315</sup> The post-Reformation usage was not uniform, as can be seen in some Puritan material, though the common assumptions about preaching in that time may not be fair either.<sup>316</sup> The ideal Puritan was one who found the best method of preaching to be that “which was the most helpful to understanding, affection, and memory.”<sup>317</sup> In turn, this led to many of the main homiletics teachers of the past two hundred years in both North America and England having a place for the imagination.

Early American expository Homiletics teachers were examples and mentors in the use of imagination. Archibald Alexander (A.D. 1772-1851), a Presbyterian and the first professor at Princeton Theological Seminary, was known for vivid verbal portraits that appealed to the mind, heart, and will.<sup>318</sup> Henry Ward Beecher (A.D. 1813-1887), an American Congregationalist

---

315. Carl C. Fickenscher, “The Contribution of the Reformation to Preaching,” *Concordia Theological Quarterly* 58, no. 4 (October 1994): 255-282; Old, *Reading and Preaching*, 4:101-108.

316. See Perkins, *Art of Prophesying*, 69-70; James F. Stitzinger, “The History of Expository Preaching,” *The Master’s Seminary Journal* 3, no. 1 (Spring 1992): 5-32 pits expository preaching against rhetoric. The dialectic between the traditional plain style of Puritan preaching and metaphysical Anglican preachers may be more nuanced than commonly believed; see Maarten Kater, “Puritan Preaching and Pathos: Some Uses from ‘Puritan Rhetoric,’” *Studies in Puritanism and Piety* 1, no. 1 (2019): 44-45; Eugene Lowry, “The Significance of the ‘New Homiletic,’” in *God’s Word and Our Words: Preaching from the Prophets to the Present and Beyond*, ed. W. Hulitt Gloer and Shawn Boyd (Eugene, OR: Pickwick Publications, 2019): 202; Mary Morrissey, “Scripture, Style and Persuasion in Seventeenth-Century English Theories of Preaching,” *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 59, no. 4 (October 2002): 705-706; Parry, “Godly Preaching,” 1-24; Debora Shuger, “Morris Croll, Flacius Dylricus, and the Origin of Anti-Ciceronianism,” *Rhetorica: A Journal of the History of Rhetoric* 3, no. 4 (Autumn 1985): 277-279; Debora K. Shuger, *Sacred Rhetoric: The Christian Grand Style in the English Renaissance* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1988), 30-31; Ezra Tawil, “Seduction, Sentiment, and the Transatlantic Plain Style,” *Early American Literature* 51, no. 2 (Special Issue 2016): 255-295.

317. John Gere, “The Character of an Old English Puritane, or Non-Conformist,” in *Images of English Puritanism: A Collection of Contemporary Sources 1589-1646*, ed. Lawrence A. Sasek (London: Louisiana State University Press, 1989), 209.

318. Garretson, *Princeton and Preaching*, 246.

preacher who was the inaugural speaker for the Yale Lectures on Preaching, named imagination as “a most vital element in preaching.”<sup>319</sup>

R.L. Dabney (AD 1820-1898), an American Southern Presbyterian who taught at Union Theological Seminary, valued the synthesizing function of imagination for preachers. The imagination is not merely for illustration or fancy; it is “that faculty by which the soul constructs complex images out of the separate parts, with truth and distinctness.”<sup>320</sup> Preachers were to cultivate this “imperial faculty of the soul,” which is most exalted when used in extemporaneous preaching.<sup>321</sup>

J.A. Broadus (AD 1827-1895), an American Baptist who taught at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, also commended the imagination. He called for the use of imagination in construction, style, and “invention of materials” for the sermon discourse.<sup>322</sup> While the preacher might use a perverted or undisciplined imagination to his ruin, the “possession, the culture, the control” of imagination is central to real success.<sup>323</sup> He believed it was the imagination that can

---

319. Henry Ward Beecher, *Yale Lectures on Preaching* (New York: J.B. Ford and Company, 1872), 110-11. See also Troeger, *Imagining a Sermon*, 114. Beecher’s importance to homiletics and his debt to Edwards is established in Michael Sounders “‘Truthing it in Love’: Henry Ward Beecher’s Homiletic Theories of Truth, Beauty, Love, and the Christian Faith,” *Rhetoric Society Quarterly* 41, no. 4 (2011): 316-339.

320. R.L. Dabney, *Evangelical Eloquence: A Course of Lectures on Preaching* (Edinburgh: Banner of Truth Trust, 1999), 243.

321. Dabney, *Evangelical Eloquence*, 245, 334.

322. Broadus, *Sermons*, 156; Henry, “Shared Imaginings,” 15 sees Broadus as focused primarily on images.

323. Broadus, *Sermons*, 156. The imagination could be cultivated through the study of art and nature, the study of literature and poetry, the study of parishioners, the life of prayer and devotion, and an intentional use of imagination.

reach the heart and give impulse to the will.<sup>324</sup> Imagination should be used in sermon construction, in analysis of ideas, in affective language, and in application.<sup>325</sup> Pastors should engage in the application of imagination “under the control of sound judgment and good taste, and above all of devout feeling and a solemn sense of responsibility to God.”<sup>326</sup>

In England, Charles Haddon Spurgeon relied heavily on his own imagination, and encouraged others to do the same. He expected preachers to throw their “strength of judgment, memory, imagination, and eloquence into the delivery.”<sup>327</sup> While aware of potential misuses of imagination,<sup>328</sup> Spurgeon was convinced that the imagination was to be developed by preachers,<sup>329</sup> so that their sermons would be “full of windows” that let more light in.<sup>330</sup>

Spurgeon’s successor, Arthur T. Pierson (AD 1837-1911), described preaching as the finest of

---

324. Broadus, *Sermons*, 156. See Jason C. Meyer, *Preaching: A Biblical Theology* (Wheaton: Crossway, 2013), 324.

325. Broadus, *Sermons*, 156-58. This reflects Broadus’ distinction that homiletics was a branch of rhetoric as opposed to a branch of practical theology; see Randolph, *Renewal of Preaching*, 16. Justin Wainscott, “Imagination in Preaching: What John Broadus (Still) Can Teach Us,” *Preaching* 37, no. 2 (Winter 2022): 28-31 suggests Broadus’ imagination focused more on content than rhetoric.

326. Broadus, *Sermons*, 159. While some editions of Broadus may also include references to the Holy Spirit as part of imagination, Broadus himself did not include such references; see Robert L. Compere, III, “Revisions of John A. Broadus’ Classic Work, *A Treatise on the Preparation and Delivery of Sermons* Miss the Mark: Materials Provided at the Time (Invention), Borrowing of Sermon Material, Argument and Imagination,” *The Journal of the Evangelical Homiletics Society* 19, no. 1 (March 2019): 70-73; Whitesell, *The Art of Biblical Preaching*, 89.

327. Charles Haddon Spurgeon, *Lectures to my Students* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers Marketing, 2010), 78.

328. Spurgeon, *Lectures*, 91, 105.

329. Spurgeon, *Lectures*, 442.

330. Spurgeon, *Lectures*, 377. See also Long, *Witness of Preaching*, 228.

the fine arts that demanded all of a preacher's faculties, including the pictorial.<sup>331</sup> Later, John Stott (AD 1921-2011) seemed to imitate Spurgeon in calling for imagination to be used in the application of the sermon truths to the specific congregation in front of the preacher.<sup>332</sup>

David Martyn Lloyd-Jones (AD 1899-1981) was a Welsh Calvinist preacher and teacher at Westminster Chapel in London, England who also called for imagination. While he may be considered one of the preachers at the height of twentieth-century modernist preaching, who relied heavily on reason and persuasion through argument,<sup>333</sup> Lloyd-Jones still called for imagination. Despite his training as a doctor, he lamented the overly scientific mind that left little room for the imagination, which he also saw as a gift of God.<sup>334</sup> Lloyd-Jones felt a need for imagination to properly understand an audience, as well "moulding into shape" the artistic element of a sermon,<sup>335</sup> to "make the Truth lively and living."<sup>336</sup>

*The Contemporary Call for Imagination in Expository Homiletics*

The influence of Alexander, Broadus, Spurgeon, and Lloyd-Jones has been significant.<sup>337</sup> And yet, even those following in their footsteps have failed to consistently maintain their call for

---

331. Arthur T. Pierson, *The Divine Art of Preaching: Lectures delivered at the "Pastor's college," connected with the Metropolitan tabernacle, London, England, from January to June, 1892* (n.p. 2014), 1, 19-20.

332. Stott, *Between Two Worlds*, 252.

333. Lloyd-Jones, *Preaching and Preachers*, 77.

334. Lloyd-Jones, *Preaching and Preachers*, 235.

335. Lloyd-Jones, *Preaching and Preachers*, 78-79.

336. Lloyd-Jones, *Preaching and Preachers*, 235-36.

337. See Scott M. Gibson, "Evangelical Homiletics Society Legacy Preaching Textbook Survey," *The Journal of the Evangelical Homiletics Society* 19, no. 2 (September 2019): 5-25.

imagination.

Within contemporary Protestant homiletical teaching, there have been authors who avoid the term imagination while asking for it in preaching. Jay Adams (AD 1929-2020) was an American, Reformed pastor and seminary professor who taught; “If you wish to communicate biblical truth effectively, without squeezing it dry, you must learn, . . . to appeal to the full range of human senses as the Bible itself does.”<sup>338</sup> John Piper is clear that “God intends for preachers to make the fullest use of their natural powers in preaching.”<sup>339</sup> John MacArthur helpfully distinguishes between revelation and illumination, and calls for careful communication of Scripture, and yet seems not to address speech patterns, rhetoric, or imagination.<sup>340</sup>

There have also been contemporary Protestant homiletics teachers who caution against the overuse of the imagination. Bryan Chapell acknowledges the imagination but warns against overestimating its role: “It is possible for storytelling to get too imaginative and too exuberant. If you end up basing a point of your sermon on an imaginary detail, then your narration is no longer exposition but imposition.”<sup>341</sup> Joel Beeke’s book on Reformed preaching highlights the need for experiential applications that reach the hearts of hearers. While he calls for preachers to

---

338. Jay Adams, *Preaching with Purpose: The Urgent Task of Homiletics* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1982), 88. It must be acknowledged that in another book, Adams has a chapter highlighting Andrew Blackwood’s theory of imagination in preaching; see Jay Adams, *The Homiletical Innovations of Andrews W. Blackwood*, Volume Three of *Studies in Preaching* (Nutley, NJ: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing, 1977), 122-128; Whitesell, *The Art of Biblical Preaching*, 89.

339. John Piper, *Expository Exultation: Christian Preaching as Worship* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2018), 124. See also Peter Adam, *Speaking God’s Word: a Practical Theology of Preaching* (Vancouver: Regent College Publishing, 2004), 118-119.

340. John MacArthur, Richard L. Mayhue, and Robert L. Thomas, eds., *Preaching: How to Preach Biblically* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2005).

341. Chapell, *Christ-Centered Preaching*, 122.



avoid a cold or dry manner, seeking rather to be authentic and spiritually zealous as they press home a memorable message with passion and energy, there is no application of historical rhetorical devices, or imagination, as aids in reaching audiences. Imagination in preaching is only mentioned as the unflattering, subjective source of private experiences of God.<sup>342</sup>

Despite the lack of clarity by some and the cautions by others, there have been prominent preachers and teachers who have called for the use of imagination in expositional preaching.

Sinclair Ferguson is a Scottish preacher and professor at Reformed Theological Seminary. Ferguson makes imagination one of the keys to expository, experiential preaching.<sup>343</sup> To him it is so fundamental that “all good preaching involves the use of the imagination.”<sup>344</sup> To be truly expository and experiential, preachers must be able to understand the truth well enough to translate or transpose it into another kind of language or musical key in order to present the same truth in a way that enables others to see it, understand its significance, and feel its power – and to do so in a way that gets under the skin, breaks through the barriers, and grips the mind, will, and affections, so that the hearer will not only understand the word preached but also feels its truth and power.<sup>345</sup>

---

342. Beeke, *Reformed Preaching*, 353-354. At the same time, Beeke includes as examples such preachers as Bunyan, Edwards, Alexander, Broadus, Lloyd-Jones and Ferguson whose works display and discuss imagination. Further, Beeke has granted a role for imagination in personal conversation and in-class discussions. See also Joel Beeke and Mark Jones, *Puritan Theology* (Grand Rapids: Reformation Heritage Books, 2010), 892 where they critique an author for his “negative assessment of Hall and Ambrose [that] fails to consider the remarkable freedom that both writers gave to scriptural imagination and use of the senses... The Puritans serve as mentors on how we can use sanctified imagination.” However, when it comes to scholarly homiletical instruction, the silence sounds.

343. Ferguson, *Some Pastors and Teachers*, 717-732.

344. Ferguson, *Some Pastors and Teachers*, 757.

345. Ferguson, *Some Pastors and Teachers*, 757.

Timothy Keller is an American Presbyterian preacher and former professor at Westminster Theological Seminary who also calls for preaching that is imaginative.<sup>346</sup> Keller links imagination to images and illustrations because they appeal to the senses and thus are more memorable.<sup>347</sup> And yet the images are not merely illustrations, but are to appeal to the heart.<sup>348</sup> Keller believes truth should be put in refreshing ways that allows the “hearers to see old truths in a new light.”<sup>349</sup> This means that a degree of imagination is necessary for audience adaptation.<sup>350</sup> This is particularly true for postmoderns, who “need to be appealed to through the imagination,” which can act as a backdoor to their knowledge of God.<sup>351</sup>

The recognition of imagination by some, and the minimization of imagination by other expository preachers has disappointing consequences. It allows some preachers to reject imagination. It brings others to superficial uses of imagination, creating boring sermons sandwiched between stories and illustrations that do not unfold the text, but merely add human interest.<sup>352</sup> It pushes others towards unbounded ideas. It keeps some at an impasse. But the pedagogical and scholarly weakness must be resolved if preachers are to deliver sermons that are

---

346. Keller, *Preaching*, 166.

347. Keller, *Preaching*, 169-170.

348. Keller, *Preaching*, 287-288.

349. Timothy Keller, “A Model for Preaching (Part One),” *Journal of Biblical Counseling* XII, no. 3 (Spring 1994): 38.

350. Timothy Keller, “A Model for Preaching (Part Two: The Situational Aspect),” *Journal of Biblical Counseling* XIII, no. 1 (Fall 1994): 46-48.

351. Keller, “Preaching to the Secular Mind,” 61-62.

352. Lischer, “Imagining a Sermon,” 283; Eslinger, *Web of Preaching*, 248.

“biblical, practically oriented, and consciously accommodated to human capacities.”<sup>353</sup>

## 2.2 Imagination in the New Homiletic

Much of the scholarly interest regarding imagination in homiletics has stemmed from an embrace of the New Homiletic. It is helpful therefore to briefly consider the origins, theological development, criticisms, and contributions of the New Homiletic, before taking a more in-depth look at four contemporary examples of imagination in homiletics.

The New Homiletic has been understood with various origins. John McClure points to an underlying resistance towards authoritarian speechmaking after World War II.<sup>354</sup> Others point to the demise of liberalism and historical criticism, and emerging subjective directions from psychological, literary, and phenomenological positions.<sup>355</sup> David Clark points to the influence of narrative theology, in both its autonomous narrative form championed by Hans Frei (AD 1922-1988) and others at Yale; and its hermeneutical form championed by Paul Ricœur (AD 1913-2005) and others at the University of Chicago.<sup>356</sup> There is an organic connection between the New Homiletic and the New Hermeneutic of Gerhard Ebeling (AD 1912-2001) which desired to engage secular life and allow for revelation through a sermon that linked ancient texts

---

353. Plancher, *Domestication of Transcendence*, 53.

354. McClure, *Other-wise Preaching*, 48-50.

355. Allen, “Pillars,” 4-5; Bryan Chapell, “Preaching His Story: Narrative Paths, Problems, and Promise,” *Journal of the Evangelical Homiletics Society* 6, no. 1 (March 2006): 27-28; Richard L. Eslinger, “Editor’s Introduction,” in *Intersections*, ed. Richard L. Eslinger, x-xi.

356. David K. Clark, “Narrative Theology and Apologetics,” *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 36, no. 4 (December 1993): 500.

to present experiences.<sup>357</sup>

The beginnings of the New Homiletic can be found in H. Grady Davis' *Design for Preaching*, which described organic forms of sermons that allowed for stories and dramatic development.<sup>358</sup> The term New Homiletics was first used by David Randolph in 1969 to summarize Davis' ideas, though it did not come to widespread use until the 1980s.<sup>359</sup> Then the label "New Homiletics" became attached to ideas around story, narrative, and inductive preaching.<sup>360</sup> The breakthrough for the New Homiletic occurred when Fred Craddock (AD 1928-2015) published *As One Without Authority*, which proposed an inductive method that made listening to a sermon an experiential event. The imagination suddenly had an essential role for the form and content of a sermon.<sup>361</sup>

The New Homiletic has resulted in several enduring contributions. The first is the "event" nature of preaching. This originated from the idea of Rudolph Bultmann (AD 1884-1976) that language needed to be fresh for the moment, and was developed by Ebeling as he focused on

---

357. See Lowry, "The Significance," 201; Sam Persons-Parkes, "The Once and Future 'Pulpit': Hearing Gerhard Ebeling Again," *Homiletic* 37, no. 1 (2012): 26; Dalton Wayne Reimer, "Approaches to Preaching: An Analysis of Twentieth-Century Concepts and Theories of Preaching," (PhD dissertation, Northwestern University, 1971), 219-224.

358. Henry Grady Davis, *Design for Preaching* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1958), 157-159, 180-184.

359. Davis, *Design for Preaching*, 15; Randolph, *Renewal of Preaching*, dust jacket; Paul Scott Wilson, *The Four Pages of the Sermon: A Guide to Biblical Preaching*, Revised and Updated (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2018), 7. See also Lowry, "The Significance," 201.

360. Craddock, *As One Without Authority*, 63. The book referenced is the more recent fourth edition; the book was originally published in 1971. Craddock studied under Ebeling at Tubingen and acknowledged the influence of Bultmann on page 42. He also wrote *Overhearing the Gospel*, which was based primarily on the work of Soren Kierkegaard. Compare Lowry, "The Significance," 207.

361. Craddock, *As One Without Authority*, 63; Eslinger, *A New Hearing*, 118-119.

what a sermon did as an event or experience.<sup>362</sup> In highlighting “event,” the New Homiletic dismissed much historical-critical interpretation,<sup>363</sup> claiming it distorted and changed “the experiential meaning” of the gospel.<sup>364</sup> The result was a minimization of the text of Scripture and its authority, and at times even its exposition or even inclusion within a sermon.<sup>365</sup> Experience of the moment is what brings meaning and weight to a sermon.<sup>366</sup> Some have traced this back to Barth’s teaching that the written Scriptures are not revelatory, and the subsequent depreciation of exposition.<sup>367</sup>

The second enduring contribution of the New Homiletic is attention to the form and content of sermon. It is promoted in studies related to oral culture that call for a distinctive oral logic.<sup>368</sup> It allows for moving away from the model of a preacher-as-herald to a model of the

---

362. Allen, “Pillars,” 5-6; Scott M. Gibson, “Defining the New Homiletic,” *Journal of the Evangelical Homiletics Society* 5, no. 2 (September 2005): 19-20.

363. Eslinger, *Intersections*, xi.

364. Eugene Lowry, *Doing Time in the Pulpit: The Relationship between Narrative and Preaching* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1985), 79, 80; Long, *Witness of Preaching*, 122.

365. Fred Craddock, *Preaching* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1985), 27. See also David Buttrick, *Homiletic: Moves and Structures* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1987), 458; Radford, “New Homiletic,” 7.

366. Buttrick, *Homiletic*, 178; Radford, “New Homiletic,” 9-10.

367. Adam, *Speaking God’s Word*, 15-26; Allen, “A Tale of Two Roads,” 496.

368. Allen, “Pillars,” 6; Michael E. Williams, “Toward an Oral/Aural Homiletic,” *Homiletic* 11, no. 1 (June 1986): 1-4. For philosophical background see Marshall McLuhan, “The Medium is the Message,” in *Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man* (London: MIT Press, 1964); Walter Ong, *Orality and Literacy: The Technologizing of the Word* (New York: Routledge, 1982), 36-56. For one attempt of an oral homiletic outside of the New Homiletic tradition, see Weiwen Tu, “A Praxis of Oral Homiletics: Preaching from the Heart,” Duquesne University, PhD diss, 2019.

preacher-as-artistic poet/storyteller.<sup>369</sup> This makes narrative a preferred counteraction to the rational and logical explanations seen in the church's creeds and catechisms and systematic theologies.<sup>370</sup> Imaginative story is of greater importance because it not only calls for knowledge, but for a "response from head and heart."<sup>371</sup>

The third enduring contribution is a greater concern for the listener. It has benefitted from the trends of phenomenology in religion and the use of consciousness and the experience of people as a source for theological knowledge.<sup>372</sup> The person in the pew is an active contributor and creator of the truth of the message.<sup>373</sup> This concern for listeners has also fueled alternatives, such as James Wallace's imaginal preaching which promoted images "as manifestations of soul."<sup>374</sup>

The New Homiletic has not been without its critics. New Homiletic sermons have been

---

369. Long, *Witness of Preaching*, 40-43. See also Radford, "New Homiletic," 5.

370. William J. Bausch, *Storytelling: Imagination and Faith* (Mystic, CT: Twenty-Third Publications, 1984), 9-17, 27.

371. Bausch, *Imagination and Faith*, 114, 195-199. See also Eslinger, "Narrative and Imagery," in *Intersections*, ed. Richard Eslinger, 68; Immink, "Homiletics," 100. Clark, "Narrative Theology and Apologetics," 511-515 wrestles with implications of this. Wiersbe, *Preaching and Teaching with Imagination* is an example of evangelical appropriation of this emphasis.

372. See Eslinger, *A New Hearing*, 143; Gibson, "Defining the New Homiletic," 22; Long, *The Witness of Preaching*, x; Wilson, *Preaching as Poetry*, xi. Phenomenology sees imagination as essential to the achievement of meaning, but as it is described by Buttrick and Eslinger, it fails to distinguish between creating meaning and recognizing meaning. The difference is the source of all things – human or divine.

373. Craddock, *Preaching*, 25-6; Radford, "New Homiletic," 8.

374. Wallace, *Imaginal Preaching*, 22.

criticized as disconnected from reality, lacking unity, without clear ideas or teaching.<sup>375</sup> Some of the foundational concepts of the New Homiletic have been described as “not preaching,”<sup>376</sup> and as minimizing the meaning of Scripture.<sup>377</sup> The growing lack of Scriptural knowledge has proven to have detrimental results for the church, particularly in the growing non-Christian context in North America.<sup>378</sup> Some see the New Homiletic as contributing to the relativization of, and perceived irrelevancy, of the biblical narrative.<sup>379</sup> Others see the New Homiletic as stopping short of a full use of imagination, as it assumes a rather homogenous relationship between speaker and audience, rather than involve voices of “preachers and listeners amid various socio-political and cultural contexts.”<sup>380</sup>

The contribution of the New Homiletic is significant, regardless of whether one is a proponent or not.<sup>381</sup> It has brought attention back to narrative and imagery. It has highlighted the

---

375. Long, *Witness of Preaching*, 120-21.

376. Bartlett, *New Methods*, 11.

377. David L. Larsen, *The Anatomy of Preaching: Identifying the Issues in Preaching Today* (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 1989), 145-146. See also Carl. F. H. Henry, “Narrative Theology: An Evangelical Appraisal,” *Trinity Journal* 8 (1987): 3-19; Walter C. Kaiser, “The Modern Aversion from Authorial Intentionality and from ‘Making Points’ in a Sermon,” *The Journal of the Evangelical Homiletics Society* 13, no. 2 (September 2013): 8-10; Kevin VanHoozer, “A Lamp in the Labyrinth: The Hermeneutics of ‘Aesthetic’ Theology,” *Trinity Journal* 8 (Spring 1987): 27.

378. Radford, “New Homiletic,” 4; Arthur Van Seters, “The Problematic of Preaching in the Third Millennium,” *Interpretation* 45, no. 3 (July 1991): 274.

379. Lose, *Preaching at the Crossroads*, 103-104.

380. Dawn Ottoni-Wilhelm. “New Hermeneutic, New Homiletic, and New Directions: An U.S. – North American Perspective,” *Homiletics* 35, no. 1 (2010): 31.

381. The following four points are derived from Gibson, “Defining the New Homiletic,” 24-27. See also Immink, “Homiletics,” 92-105.

value of clear and colourful language. It has called attention to how sermons are heard. It has valued the affective experience of those in the pew. While those influenced by the New Homiletics have varied emphases and consistency, they promote the imagination, as Paul Scott Wilson, Walter Brueggemann, Thomas Troeger, and Calvin Miller evidence.

*Paul Scott Wilson and the Call for Imagination in Homiletical Structure*

Paul Scott Wilson defines imagination as that which is “the bringing together of two ideas that might not otherwise be connected and developing the creative energy they generate.”<sup>382</sup> Because imagination is the bringing together of ideas, Wilson is careful to encourage preachers to re-examine “the vertical, horizontal, and multidirectional needs of this changed world. Preaching needs to... find fresh ways to speak of God.”<sup>383</sup> It is an imagination “leavened by scripture and experience” that makes preaching relevant for today.<sup>384</sup> To preach well then is to use poetic language that moves “from logic, argument, points, and illustrations toward poetry, imagination, metaphor, and story.”<sup>385</sup>

Wilson’s contribution to homiletical use of imagination lies particularly in his promotion of homiletical structures. While faithfulness does not demand a particular sermon structure, there are “formal elements that enhance gospel proclamation.”<sup>386</sup> The elements Wilson promotes include the use of binaries, juxtapositions, and “poles apart,” all which provide the spark for

---

382. Wilson, *Imagination of the Heart*, 32.

383. Wilson, *Preaching as Poetry*, xi.

384. Wilson, *Imagination of the Heart*, 145, 249.

385. Wilson, *Homiletical Theory*, 69; Wilson, “Postmodernity and Preaching,” 19.

386. Wilson, *Four Pages*, 147.



imagination.<sup>387</sup> Related to that, Wilson promotes structural elements of law and gospel, elsewhere described as trouble and grace.<sup>388</sup>

Wilson's most known contribution to homiletics may be his "Four Pages" paradigm. The four pages are equal sections of a sermon that describe trouble in the biblical text, trouble in our world, grace in the biblical text, and grace in our world.<sup>389</sup> They are not individual, unrelated components, but structural sections that have "one text, one theme sentence, one doctrine, one need, one image and one mission."<sup>390</sup>

Wilson's understanding of the imagination is careful and purposeful. While he maintains concern for authority of Scripture,<sup>391</sup> his conviction is that propositional data-filled sermons do not suffice in for the postmodern context. Despite the comment that "the preacher's first and foremost task is simply to be a faithful witness to the scriptural word,"<sup>392</sup> Wilson's own examples of his own theopoetic sermons do not limit themselves to imaginative language but seem so un-unified that they do misjustice to his valid theme sentences about the scriptural

---

387. Wilson, *Homiletical Theory*, 92; Wilson, *Preaching as Poetry*, 119-120. Wilson explicitly relies on Samuel Coleridge's theory of imagination as something that brings "two images or ideas into relationship" though he seems to oversimplify the matter. See Guite, *Lifting the Veil*, 12-13.

388. Wilson, *Four Pages*, 23-24; Wilson, *Preaching as Poetry*, 74; in Wilson, *Imagination of the Heart*, 92 (an earlier work), the dichotomy is between judgment and grace.

389. Wilson, *Four Pages*, xiv.

390. Wilson, *Four Pages*, 57.

391. Wilson, *Homiletical Theory*, 53; Wilson, *Imagination of the Heart*, 19.

392. Wilson, *Imagination of the Heart*, 24.

word.<sup>393</sup>

*Walter Brueggemann and the Call for Imagination in Homiletical Purpose*

Walter Brueggemann's understanding of the imagination is tied to his understanding of a prophetic ministry. Brueggemann understands imagination to be the hosting of "otherwise:"<sup>394</sup> the "human capacity to picture, portray, receive, and practice the world in ways other than it appears to be at first glance."<sup>395</sup> Particularly as it relates to preaching, to imagine is "to utter, entertain, describe, and construe a world other than the one that is manifest."<sup>396</sup> Brueggemann puts so much weight on the necessity of imagination that he fears the church will disappear with the rest of modernity without permission for, or confidence in the imagination.<sup>397</sup> It should be a valued and "authoritative practice of epistemology."<sup>398</sup>

Though an Old Testament scholar, Brueggemann's sees the foundation of prophetic ministry in the Pentateuchal narratives,<sup>399</sup> and realizes that his work has homiletical

---

393. See example of a sermon preached on Isaiah 52:13-53:12 in Wilson, *Preaching as Poetry*, 84-85. Jonker, *Preaching*, 22 references Wilson as he calls for a single controlling image.

394. Walter Brueggemann, "Biblical Authority: A Personal Reflection," *Christian Century* 118, no. 1 (January 3-10, 2001): 16.

395. Walter Brueggemann, *Texts Under Negotiation: The Bible and Postmodern Imagination* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1993), 13.

396. Brueggemann, *Practice*, 13. See also Wallace, *Imaginal Preaching*, 17.

397. Brueggemann, *Texts Under Negotiation*, 25; Walter Brueggemann, "The Preaching of the Prophets: Holy Intrusions of Truth and Hope," in W. Hulitt Gloer and Shawn E. Boyd, *God's Word and our Words: Preaching from the Prophets to the Present and Beyond* (Eugene, OR: Pickwick Publications, 2019), 1.

398. Brueggemann, *Texts Under Negotiation*, 13.

399. Brueggemann, *Practice*, 18.

implications.<sup>400</sup> A prophetic ministry should nurture, nourish, and evoke in listeners a conscious alternative to the dominant culture.<sup>401</sup> He interchanges “prophetic preaching” with “social-justice preaching,” or “public-issues preaching.”<sup>402</sup> As the preacher voices and imagines “a counterworld,”<sup>403</sup> he may lead listeners to the embrace of an “redescription of reality.”<sup>404</sup>

The use of imagination in homiletics is then to redefine the purpose of preaching as that which creates a “sub-version.”<sup>405</sup> To enable this, Brueggemann highlights two homiletical purposes: encouraging relinquishing and encouraging receiving. Preachers need to encourage their listeners “to *relinquish* a world that is passing” from them.<sup>406</sup> Through this, sermons subvert the “simplistic explanatory logic of dominant imagination.”<sup>407</sup> Preachers also need to empower and enable people to *receive*. Preachers are to open the eyes and ears of people “to receive a new

---

400. Walter Brueggemann, “Preaching as Reimagination,” *Theology Today* 52, no. 3 (October 1995): 325.

401. Brueggemann, *Prophetic Imagination*, 13. See also Long, *Witness of Preaching*, 62-63.

402. Leonora Tubbs Tisdale, *Prophetic Preaching: A Pastoral Approach* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2010), 5.

403. Brueggemann, *Texts Under Negotiation*, 55. See also Leonora Tubbs Tisdale and Friedrich W. de Wet, “Contemporary Prophetic Preaching Theory in the United States of America and South Africa: a comparative study through the lens of shared Reformation roots,” *HTS Teologiese Studies / Theological Studies* 70, no. 2 (2014): 1.

404. Brueggemann, “Preaching as Reimagination,” 319; for an example of this see Walter Brueggemann, *Preaching from the Old Testament* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2019).

405. Brueggemann, “Preaching a Sub-version,” 199. See also Brueggemann, “Preaching as Reimagination,” 323; Viljoen, “Theological Imagination,” 2-3.

406. Brueggemann, *Practice*, 135.

407. Brueggemann, *Practice*, 99.

world that is emerging before our very eyes that we confess to be a gift of God.”<sup>408</sup> This new world comes through imagination.<sup>409</sup> Preaching therefore should not be equated with instruction, argument, or persuasion; it summons praise, and “that task requires an enormous act of poetic imagination.”<sup>410</sup>

Brueggemann has been accused of misconstruing the idea of prophetic imagination.<sup>411</sup> He falls to romanticizing the prophetic imagination in a way that is not helpful. He embraces a hermeneutic of suspicion, explicitly leaning on Karl Marx to set up a dialectic that opposes “old traditions.”<sup>412</sup> This leads Brueggemann to contrast burdensome, objective religion with “engaged, interactive, subjective faith.”<sup>413</sup>

*Thomas Troeger and the Call for Imagination in Homiletical Language*

Thomas H. Troeger, Jr. has a high view of imagination. He borrows William Wordsworth’s definition of imagination: “imagination is the clearest insight, amplitude of mind, and reason in her most exalted mood.”<sup>414</sup> It is necessary because people “have been created to know, love, and serve God with all that [they] are.”<sup>415</sup> This means any denial of the imagination

---

408. Brueggemann, *Practice*, 137.

409. Brueggemann, *Prophetic Imagination*, 45.

410. Walter Brueggemann, *Finally Comes the Poet: Daring Speech for Proclamation* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1989), 74.

411. Bruce, *Preaching and Imagination*, 56.

412. Walter Brueggemann, *Reality, Grief, Hope: Three Urgent Prophetic Tasks* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2014), 8.

413. Brueggemann, *Prophetic Tasks*, 145.

414. Troeger, *Imagining a Sermon*, 27.

415. Troeger, *Imagining a Sermon*, 30.

only leads to a shriveled heart,<sup>416</sup> and superficial theology.<sup>417</sup> Imagination is what vitalizes faith amid broken relationships, institutions, and theological understandings.<sup>418</sup> And yet imagination depends on the Holy Spirit:<sup>419</sup> “the imaginative process can be compared to the art of sailing a boat: We cannot make the wind blow, but we can trim the sails and tend the helm. We cannot compel the Spirit to fill our imaginations with wind and fire, but we can practice those disciplines of prayer and thought that will open us to God’s revelations.”<sup>420</sup> So in a world where technology has turned everything into bits and bytes, homiletics use of imagination needs to remember the soul and embrace mystery.<sup>421</sup>

This witness of mystery may call for more visual sources for imaginative language.<sup>422</sup> Language remains valuable, as “a medium that expresses the fullness and wonder of what personality is, and that is accomplished more completely by speech than by the written word.”<sup>423</sup> Therefore fresh religious language,<sup>424</sup> requires “language that is congruent with what is felt, dreamed, and believed in the heart.”<sup>425</sup> The task of preachers is not to minimize the experience of

---

416. Thomas H. Troeger, *Preaching While the Church is Under Construction: The Visionary Role of Preachers in a Fragmented World* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1999), 151.

417. Troeger, *Imagining a Sermon*, 26.

418. Troeger, *Visionary Role of Preachers*, 16-17.

419. Troeger, *Visionary Role of Preachers*, 36-37; see Wallace, *Imaginal Preaching*, 17.

420. Troeger, *Imagining a Sermon*, 14.

421. Troeger, *Imagining a Sermon*, 28-29; Troeger, *Visionary Role of Preachers*, 112.

422. Troeger, *Imagining a Sermon*, 29-30.

423. Troeger, *Imagining a Sermon*, 69.

424. Troeger, “A Poetics of the Pulpit,” 64.

425. Troeger, *Visionary Role of Preachers*, 38.

spoken language, but to “enlighten and expand” the inner worlds of their hearers with symbols and values that bring grace.<sup>426</sup> The crucial question then becomes what words or practices to God are nurtured over time?<sup>427</sup> This ties back into imagination, as “preaching whose end is praying” resists the diminishment of humanity through scientific reductionism and rationalist, data-driven reality.<sup>428</sup>

Troeger stretches the role of imagination. This is helpful because it moves the use of imagination from beyond a superficial communication strategy of sermon illustrations to a role in gaining entrance to the landscape of hearts.<sup>429</sup> And yet Troeger also unhelpfully exalts the authority of human opinion. He believes theological accuracy comes not from Scriptures, confessions, or a plurality of believers, but from “as diverse a community as possible.”<sup>430</sup> Imagination is suddenly used to minimize the historical creeds and objective teachings of the Christian faith as “the traditional articulation of our historically conditioned imaginative worlds.”<sup>431</sup>

*Calvin Miller and the Call for Imagination in Homiletical Application*

The work of Calvin Miller (AD 1936-2012) is dependent on a vibrant imagination, and yet his definition is simple: “imagination is a way of seeing.” From his writings, it can be

---

426. Troeger, *Visionary Role of Preachers*, 139.

427. Thomas H. Troeger, *The End of Preaching* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2018), 18.

428. Troeger, *End of Preaching*, 56.

429. Troeger, *Visionary Role of Preachers*, 141.

430. Troeger, *Visionary Role of Preachers*, 46. In this he seems to echo the consensus theology of Jurgen Habermas. See McClure, *Other-wise Preaching*, 98-108.

431. Troeger, “A Poetics of the Pulpit,” 64.

understood that Miller sees imagination as a spiritual gift that imitates the divine. Miller sees the origin of imagination in the creation where God considered his own image and then imagined and made man in that image.<sup>432</sup> It is the imagination that gives “format to religion and to metaphysics.”<sup>433</sup> The imagination leads to balanced life, and mental health.<sup>434</sup> But more foundational for Christians is that imagination is necessary for a relationship with Christ, and is fueled by a relationship with Christ.<sup>435</sup> And so Miller says, people “cannot even have a very vital affair with Christ without some ability to imagine this great Lord.... The greater our ability to ‘image’ the Christ who attends us, the stronger grows our relationship to him.”<sup>436</sup> Therefore images are as necessary for preachers as oils are for painters.<sup>437</sup> And yet too often preachers fail to use the tools of their medium, and subsequently “sermons often seem to be the least-communicative form of contemporary speech.”<sup>438</sup>

Miller uses the ministry of Jesus, which could be defined by image-based metaphors,<sup>439</sup> to build a theory of embellishment. By embellishment he seems to mean adding image, simile,

---

432. Calvin Miller, “Genesis 1:26,” *Review and Expository* 87, no. 4 (1990): 599.

433. Calvin Miller, *Marketplace Preaching: How to Return the Sermon to Where it Belongs* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1995), 158.

434. Calvin Miller, *Spirit, Word, and Story: A Philosophy of Preaching* (Dallas: Word Publishing, 1989), 176.

435. Calvin Miller, *The Table of Inwardness: Nurturing our Inner Life in Christ* (Wheaton: Intervarsity Press, 1984), 94.

436. Miller, “Genesis 1:26,” 599-600.

437. Miller, “Genesis 1:26,” 599.

438. Calvin Miller, *The Empowered Communicator: 7 keys to Unlocking an Audience* (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1994), 4.

439. Calvin Miller, *Preaching: The Art of Narrative Exposition* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2006), 21, 149.

and metaphor in a manner that does not smother the precept of the Word.<sup>440</sup> And yet too often preachers, in preparing sermons, think they have covered the ideas they want to communicate; but they have not communicated an image.<sup>441</sup> They do not preach in ways “that lets the image do the talking.”<sup>442</sup> And without that driving image, the precepts also fail because they find “no mooring in the mind.”<sup>443</sup>

Miller’s unique contribution to the imagination and preaching is his call for application within a sermon.<sup>444</sup> Merely teaching ideas without application eliminates both relevance and authority of the preacher.<sup>445</sup> However, Miller does not see application as a section or component of a sermon, but a quality that begins with the ethos of the preacher himself.<sup>446</sup> Application depends on the preacher’s conviction that God has something to say.<sup>447</sup> The preacher must have such a love of God, that it will overflow into application.<sup>448</sup> Without the love of God, sermons only “get pushier.”<sup>449</sup> But when focused on God with concrete metaphor and appropriate

---

440. Miller, *Marketplace Preaching*, 138; Miller, *Spirit, Word, and Story*, 105.

441. Miller, “Genesis 1:26,” 601.

442. Calvin Miller, *The Sermon Maker: Tales of a Transformed Preacher* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2002), 8.

443. Miller, “Genesis 1:26,” 599.

444. Miller, *Preaching*, 50.

445. Miller, *Spirit, Word, and Story*, 37, 70.

446. Miller, *Marketplace Preaching*, 56-59; Miller, *Preaching*, 29-39; Miller, *Spirit, Word, and Story*, 200.

447. Miller, *Sermon Maker*, 16.

448. Miller, *Sermon Maker*, 144.

449. Miller, *Sermon Maker*, 18.



prescription, audiences are inspired to listen.<sup>450</sup> The contemporary audience is more likely to favor the *apokalupto* (revealing) sermon than the *kerusso* (exhorting) sermon, and preachers should therefore include motivations and devotion in their applications.<sup>451</sup>

Miller is very aware that the Holy Spirit is the ultimate applier. Preachers are only used by God. It is God who has the power.<sup>452</sup> Therefore sermons should include a mysterious altar, an experiential space, that “calls people to a rendezvous with God and encourages them to touch the face of God.”<sup>453</sup> Imagination is then central to a relationship with God, and a life of faith.

### 2.3 Conclusion

The entirety of this chapter displays F. Gerrit Immink was correct when he wrote, “homiletics is fragmented.”<sup>454</sup> There is no consistent call from expository preachers for imagination. There is no consistent understanding or application of imagination from preachers in the New Homiletic tradition. While Calvin Miller tries to act as a bridge between the two camps, the gaps remain, as do the fractured understandings and applications of imagination in homiletics.

The four contemporary homiletics teachers surveyed focus on using imagination in preaching for experiential religion. In some ways, this may seem to be the same goal as Rembrandt and Edwards as discussed in the Introduction. In their work they also, to one degree or another, reflect scholarly discussion and ideas. They display interaction with theological

---

450. Miller, *Marketplace Preaching*, 116; Miller, *Sermon Maker*, 108.

451. Miller, *Marketplace Preaching*, 116.

452. Miller, *Empowered Communicator*, 5-6; Miller, *Spirit, Word, and Story*, 71.

453. Miller, *Marketplace Preaching*, 142.

454. Immink, “Homiletics,” 89.

underpinnings and philosophical implication. And they promote a future where the New Homiletical tradition is experiential, participatory, imagistic, and connective.<sup>455</sup> However, to varying degrees, Wilson, Brueggemann, Troeger, and Miller all move beyond traditional expository preaching. They underestimate the external source of light, Word-based reflection, and affective response. Their focus on the listener, narrative, imaginative logic, and individual application tends towards predictable patterns and/or subjective entertainment.<sup>456</sup>

As such, the current context for a homiletical use of imagination in expository preaching remains underdeveloped. It appears the main options are minimizing it, or embracing it for eventfulness.

Minimizing the imagination results in problems for expository preaching. Without imagination, sermons are dry, rationalistic lectures. Any effort to dry rationalism as well as imagination, leaves preachers merely repeating platitudes and cliches that have lost their meaning and are empty for new congregants. Therefore, minimizing the imagination, and its homiletic implications, remains no solution.

Embracing the imagination seems to result in one of two directions. There is the modernistic direction where a use of imagination is embraced only as it interacts with other disciplines to arrive at new solutions. But those solutions are bound by other disciplines and are seen as a distinct mode of experience and knowledge.<sup>457</sup> There is also the postmodern direction,

---

455. This description is adapted from Leonard Sweet, “The Future Shapes of Preaching,” in *God’s Word and Our Words*, 248-249, who, for these reasons, sees the future of preaching lying in the Eastern Orthodox and African American traditions.

456. Keller, “A Model for Preaching (Part Two),” 41.

457. See Ole Vinther, “Imagination and Narratives in Preaching: Homiletical Illustrations as an Alternative Mode of Experience, Knowledge, and Understanding,” *International Journal of Homiletics* 5, (2022), 123.

where a homiletical use of imagination freed from any foundation results in socially constructed dilemmas and audience-preferred issues to arrive at solutions open to interpretation.<sup>458</sup> This is where many of the New Homiletics preachers end up, to one degree or another. The result is a subjective experientialism.

All of this highlights the reasonableness of the appeal Immink makes for a homiletic model that is a “reasonable alternative in the ongoing debate between kerygmatic and subjective-experiential models of preaching.”<sup>459</sup> With a similar appeal, Dermot A. Lane writes that “attempts to retrieve the neglected role of the imagination within the exercise of theological reason will not succeed simply by giving a new primacy to the reign of the imagination. Such a move would only serve to feed the old prejudices against imagination. Instead, we need to walk a middle path.”<sup>460</sup> This means the current homiletical use of imagination might benefit from a retrieval of another model. There needs to be an alternative that is neither avoidance, nor modernistic, nor postmodern,<sup>461</sup> that grapples with the proclamation of the whole counsel of God through a homiletical process that is still homiletically imaginative.<sup>462</sup> Such a model strives to promote the intertwining of expository gospel proclamation and imaginative human communication.<sup>463</sup> The definition of imagination at the end of chapter 1 needs to be considered,

---

458. Immink, “Homiletics,” 100-105.

459. Immink, “Homiletics,” 109.

460. Lane, “Imagination and Theology,” 130.

461. Ortlund, *Theological Retrieval*, 72.

462. James Thomas Ford, “Preaching in the Reformed Tradition,” in *Preachers and People in the Reformations and Early Modern Period*, ed. Larissa Taylor (Boston: Brill, 2003), 66-73.

463. See Immink, “Homiletics,” 91.

in light of homiletics, as a heart-based structuring mental activity by which preachers and listeners create coherent and significant connections that are indispensable in understanding.<sup>464</sup>

Such an imagination needs to be brought into relationship with exposition, as in the figure below:

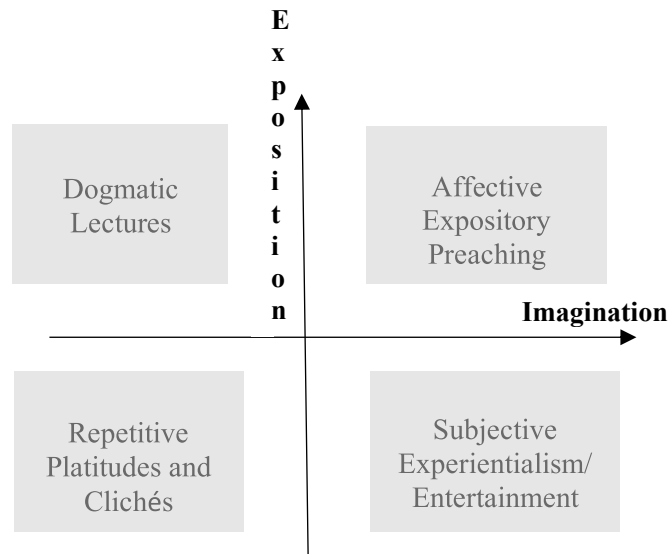


Figure 2. Achieving Exposition with Imagination

It is exactly here where other expositional preachers such as Jonathan Edwards, who also grappled with the imagination, might serve as helpful homiletical guides.<sup>465</sup>

---

464. As stated in chapter 1, this definition is adapted from Johnson, *Body in the Mind*, 168; though Johnson would likely not agree with the heart-based source.

465. See Keller, *Preaching*, 101-102, 271-275. The reason Keller's description of Jonathan Edwards' work does not satisfy this project, is because Keller's understanding of the imagination in sermons seems limited to quantifiable instances of vivid illustration and sense appeal.

### Chapter 3 -- Jonathan Edwards and the Imagination

In order for contemporary expository homiletics to benefit, or be strengthened, by a retrieval of Jonathan Edwards' homiletical use of imagination, it is important to understand the foundations of his understanding of the imagination apart from homiletics. While Edwards is known for philosophical concepts related to will and sin, and for theological discernment regarding religious affections, his contributions to practical theology should not be limited to those things. Edwards also has much to contribute as a preacher with imagination. Edwards thought about the imagination, used his imagination, and even anticipated more recent understandings of imagination.<sup>466</sup> Rarely has there been a preacher "as obsessed with rendering essentially abstract ideas so concretely."<sup>467</sup> Edwards wanted to see what he was preaching about.

Since Edwards' life predates much of the discussion on homiletics and imagination, there are challenges in understanding his potential contribution. Some of the secondary literature discussing the imagination of Edwards does not consider his own understanding of the term.<sup>468</sup> Edwards was not explicit about his homiletical use of imagination. Therefore, Edwards' solutions and conclusions can only be suggestive, as he did not address the homiletical issues explicitly.

Further to the challenges, current reflections on Edwards' understanding of imagination have generated various responses. Many of these responses remain underdeveloped and simplistic. For example, John Smith says Edwards generally had a "dim view" of imagination.<sup>469</sup>

---

466. Dyrness, *Visual Culture*, 4; Lee, *Philosophical Theology*, 163.

467. Kinnach, "Introduction," *WJE*, 10:286.

468. La Shell, "Imagination and Idol," 308 footnote 7.

469. Smith, "Editor's Introduction," *WJE*, 2:33.

Erdt has a mixed response, seeing Edwards as denouncing imagination while recognizing its importance.<sup>470</sup> Cherry points out Edwards' "imaginative use" of nature.<sup>471</sup> And yet, as referenced in the introduction, Lloyd-Jones and Keller point to Edwards as having an exemplary imagination in preaching.<sup>472</sup> Naturally this results in some confusion.

This chapter displays Jonathan Edwards' thoughts regarding imagination, particularly as it might be understood in relation to his homiletic. His understanding is not dim nor simplistic, nor limited to nature. While Jonathan Edwards' understanding and usage of imagination are broader than his own definition and reflect varied influences, they are worth being retrieved.

### **3.1 Edwards' Understanding of Imagination**

Jonathan Edwards was born on October 5, 1703, in East Windsor, Connecticut. The world outside of that colonial village was in the full throes of Enlightenment, and rationalism seemed to have the upper hand. Though John Locke had recently published his *Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, reason was still considered the chief source of knowledge. By the time Edwards was a school-aged boy, both reason and the senses were popular sources for knowledge and beliefs. Thus, one might conclude that there would be little room for imagination in the thinking of this Yale graduate from the "quaint, dated, and even laughable" world of East Windsor, as he sought to answer the literature of the British Enlightenment.<sup>473</sup>

Notwithstanding, Jonathan Edwards appears to have given thought to the imagination.

---

470. Erdt, *Sense of the Heart*, 51-56.

471. Cherry, *Religious Imagination*, 17-24.

472. See Lloyd-Jones, *Preaching and Preachers*, 235-237; Keller, *Preaching*, 169-175, 287.

473. George Marsden, *Jonathan Edwards: A Life* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003), 7.

Edwards seems to have considered it for inclusion in the planned treatise, titled *The Natural History of the Mental World, or of the internal world: being a Particular Inquiry into the Nature of the Human Mind with respect to both its Faculties, the Understanding and the Will, and its various instincts and Active and Passive Powers*.<sup>474</sup> While that treatise would remain undeveloped, an online data search of The Jonathan Edwards Center at Yale University uncovered 503 occurrences of the word “imagination” in the *Works of Jonathan Edwards Online* (which includes editorial uses of the word).<sup>475</sup> It can be reasonably concluded that Edwards used or quoted the term in at least half of these occurrences.<sup>476</sup> The bulk of occurrences (337 of 503) appear in works from the years 1740 to 1758.<sup>477</sup> Within his written sermons and discourses, the

---

474. See Jonathan Edwards, “The Mind,” *WJE*, 6:386.

475. Volume 4 of *WJE* was not included in this number due to database error. A basic search will display 527 results, but the 24 references from Volume 24 do not make sense. From other sources 11 uses of imagination have been counted in volume 4.

476. Within the first ten volumes of *WJE*, the term “imagination” occurs 162 times; 128 of those occurrences are within Edwards’ writing. The breakdown is as follows: in Vol. 1, it is Edwards’ use of the term “imagination” 11 of 11 occurrences; Vol. 2, 53 of 63 occurrences; Vol. 3, 12 of 15 occurrences; Vol. 4 not included; Vol. 5, 3 of 6 occurrences; Vol. 6, 20 of 45 occurrences; Vol. 7, 26 of 28 occurrences; Vol. 8, 0 of 6 occurrences; Vol. 9, 3 of 6 occurrences; Vol. 10, 0 of 22 occurrences. If the five volumes of most frequent occurrences are selected, it is Edwards’ use of the term 98 of 177 occurrences. The breakdown is as follows: in Vol. 2, 53 of 63 occurrences are from Edwards; Vol. 6, 20 of 45 occurrences; Vol. 7, 26 of 28 occurrences; Vol. 10, 0 of 22 occurrences; Vol. 37, 19 of 19 occurrences. Volume 10 is the first collection of sermons, and the imagination is discussed by Wilson Kinnach in relation to these sermons, but not in the sermons themselves.

477. This would include editorial comments. The years of 1750-1758 include the greatest ratio of references to imagination with 1.25 occurrences per 10,000 words (though this includes the aforementioned Volume 4). The years of 1740-1750 has the highest number of occurrences at 248, though the ratio is the lowest at 0.28 occurrences per 10,000 words. At the time of writing, the Yale database also puts the volumes of sermons of 1743-1758 and 1756-1758 in the decade of 1740-1750; Edwards used the term imagination 14 of those 18 occurrences.

call to imagine occurs about 305 times.<sup>478</sup> In his published works, the descriptive “imagining” happens another 42 times.<sup>479</sup> Edwards’ attention to imagination can also be seen in his use of terms such as conceive, conception, apprehend, and apprehension.<sup>480</sup>

After uncovering Edwards’ definition of imagination, this section describes Edwards’ broader understanding of imagination. While his definition of imagination is explicit and seemingly simple, his understanding of imagination should eclipse how his definition might be used. Edwards’ definition reflects a narrower philosophical definition consistent with the age he lived in, but the rest of his writing shows a broader understanding.

#### *Edwards’ Definition of Imagination*

Edwards explicitly defined imagination in at least two separate writings. In a sermon preached in 1734, Edwards defined the imagination as “the power of the mind whereby a man is capable of having the images or ideas of an outward thing in his mind.”<sup>481</sup> Later, in *A Treatise Concerning Religious Affections* (1746), he described the imagination as “that power of the mind, whereby it can have a conception, or idea of things of an external or outward nature (that is, of such sort of things as are the objects of the outward senses), when those things are not present.”<sup>482</sup> In both of these definitions, the mind conceives or reproduces external images.

Edwards understood the imagination as a power of the mind that could be passive, or

---

478. Several of these would have been editorial. See also Simonson, “Edwards and the Imagination,” 112.

479. Several of these would again be editorial references.

480. Edwards himself connects these terms to imagination in “The Mind,” *WJE*, 6:349.

481. Jonathan Edwards, “False Light and True,” *WJE*, 19:135.

482. Jonathan Edwards, *Religious Affections*, *WJE*, 2:210-211.



receptive. There could be no “idea, thought, or act of the mind unless the mind first received some ideas from sensation, or some other way equivalent, wherein the mind is wholly passive in receiving them.”<sup>483</sup> In this instance, Edwards seems to follow John Locke and others.<sup>484</sup>

This has resulted in descriptions of Edwards’ imagination as something that is weaker than the ideas of sense. Reklis seems to misquote Edwards as saying, “the ideas of sense are more strong, lively, and distinct than those of the imagination; they have likewise a steadiness, order, and coherence, and are not excited at random, as those which are the effects of human wills often are.”<sup>485</sup> However, because the quote is misattributed, the limitations on the imagination and the preconception of a weak imagination should be reconsidered. Edwards was not limited to a passive understanding of the imagination.<sup>486</sup>

---

483. Edwards, “The Mind,” *WJE*, 6:390.

484. This instance would seem to give credence to Perry Miller’s assertion that John Locke was the dominating source of Edwards’ foundational thoughts. See Perry Miller, “Jonathan Edwards on the Sense of the Heart,” *Harvard Theological Review* 41 (1948): 123-45. For a sample of reactions to Miller or alternative theories, see Smith, *Jonathan Edwards*; Paul Helm, “John Locke and Jonathan Edwards: A Reconsideration,” *Journal of History of Philosophy* 7, no. 1 (1969): 51-61; Conrad Cherry, *The Theology of Jonathan Edwards: A Reappraisal* (1966; reprint, Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1990); Terence Erdt, “The Calvinist Psychology of the Heart and the ‘Sense’ of Jonathan Edwards,” *Early American Literature* 13 (1975):165-80; Marsden, *A Life*, 63; Hyunkwan Kim, “Jonathan Edwards’s Reshaping of Lockean Terminology into a Calvinistic Aesthetic Epistemology in his *Religious Affections*,” *Puritan Reformed Journal* 6, no. 2 (2014): 103-122.

485. Reklis, “Imagination and Hermeneutics,” *OHJE*, 310-311 quotes and references this as if it comes from Jonathan Edwards, “The Mind,” *WJE*, 6:102. In fact, the reference she provides is part of the introduction to volume 6 that is quoting from George Berkeley, *A Treatise Concerning the Principles of Human Knowledge*, ed. Charles P. Krauth (Philadelphia: J.B. Lippincott & Co., 1881), 210. Edwards’ essay “The Mind” does not begin until page 332. Reklis also seems to suggest the imagination stems from the will and is separate from the understanding. And yet in the next paragraph she says Edwards admits that the imagination is the repository of knowledge (and therefore part of the understanding).

486. See Simonson, *Theologian of the Heart*, 26.

By defining imagination as a power of the mind, Edwards also recognized the activity of imagination. In translating Genesis 8:21, Edwards called imagination an “operation.”<sup>487</sup> In a letter to a friend, Edwards connected imagination to his own active memory,<sup>488</sup> though imagination was not just connected to memory: the imagination was unavoidable in thinking.<sup>489</sup>

Since Edwards defined imagination as a power of the mind, it is beneficial to understand his unique understanding of the mind. He did not think of the mind as merely involved in thinking. Rather, Edwards differentiated between the “mere cogitation,” which absorbed sensory information, and “apprehension,” which reflected a direct ideal view or contemplation of the object being thought of.<sup>490</sup> In this way, the mind, as well as the imagination, did not just passively receive information, but also dealt with active apprehension and the contemplation of a thing.<sup>491</sup>

Further, by defining imagination as a power of the mind, Edwards implied that imagination is also part of the heart or soul of a person.<sup>492</sup> He noted that every soul has an understanding and a will: “God has indued the soul with two faculties: . . . [that] which is called the understanding. . . . [The other] faculty is called by various names: it is sometimes called the inclination: and, as it has respect to the actions that are determined and governed by it, is called the will: and the mind,

---

487. Jonathan Edwards, *Original Sin*, *WJE*, 3:267.

488. Jonathan Edwards, “56. To a Friend,” *WJE*, 16:155. See also Edwards, “The Mind,” *WJE*, 6:384.

489. Edwards, “The Mind,” *WJE*, 6:391.

490. Jonathan Edwards, “Miscellanies #782,” *WJE*, 18:458.

491. Edwards, “The Mind,” *WJE*, 6:349.

492. See Edwards, *Religious Affections*, *WJE*, 2:289; Reklis, “Imagination and Hermeneutics,” *OHJE*, 311; Searle, *Imagining Biblically*, 96.

with regard to the exercises of this faculty, is often called the heart.”<sup>493</sup> The will and the affections are not separate faculties, but are expressions of the same heart.<sup>494</sup> As the heart, the understanding and the will both like and dislike.<sup>495</sup> They are expressions of the same person, though Edwards often qualified their similarity with “in some sense.”<sup>496</sup>

Therefore, as a power of the mind, the imagination was seen as a spiritual activity on the part of a person.<sup>497</sup> Put another way, Edwards understood imagination, conception, and apprehension as spiritual activities. The reason these spiritual things derived names from sensible activities such as imagining was “because there was no other way of making others readily understand men’s meaning . . . than by giving of them the names of things sensible to which they had an analogy.”<sup>498</sup>

Even though Edwards recognized the imagination as reflecting spiritual activity, there was still a connection to the body: the spiritual was not separate from the physical. Edwards considered that “the soul may be said to be in the brain, because ideas that come by the body immediately ensue only on alterations that are made there, and the soul most immediately

---

493. Edwards, *Religious Affections*, *WJE*, 2:96.

494. Edwards, *Religious Affections*, *WJE*, 2:97; Smith, *Jonathan Edwards*, 41; Erdt, *Sense of the Heart*, 25 summarizes this to mean that the will is “virtually identical” with the affections. Like Edwards, Erdt qualifies this. See also Oliphint, “Reformed Apologist,” 171.

495. Edwards, *Religious Affections*, *WJE*, 2:96. See also Edwards, “Miscellanies #782,” *WJE*, 18:458-459; Kim, “Lockean Terminology,” 108; Simonson, *Theologian of the Heart*, 23, 27.

496. Edwards, *Religious Affections*, *WJE*, 2:97; Edwards, *Some Thoughts Concerning the Revival*, *WJE*, 4:297. See also William Scheick, *The Writings of Jonathan Edwards: Theme, Motif, and Style* (College Station, TX: Texas A & M University Press, 1975), 88.

497. Edwards, “The Mind,” *WJE*, 6:352.

498. Edwards, “The Mind,” *WJE*, 6:349.

produces effects nowhere else.”<sup>499</sup> So the imagination was active in physical sense perception and spiritual activity.<sup>500</sup> People are inundated with sensations from their very birth, and their senses bring about imaginations and opinions that shape their minds.<sup>501</sup>

This dependence on sensory information throughout life can lead people to false spiritual perceptions and opinions. According to Edwards, they believe what they can see, and there are times they end up believing absurd things. In Edwards’ words, “men come to make what they can actually perceive by their senses, or by immediate and outside reflection into their own souls, the standard of possibility and impossibility: so that there must be no body, forsooth, bigger than they can conceive of, or less than they can see with their eyes; nor motion either much swifter or slower than they can imagine.”<sup>502</sup>

So, while linked to the senses, the imagination should not be conflated with the ideas of sense. While active in sensory reception, as a power of the mind, the imagination comes with a degree of responsibility. In Edwards’ view, the senses could be deceitful in the manner in which they were experienced; not only because the sense of sight may be defective, but because the mind judges what the sight discovers according to its limited experience, and this may bring it to incorrect conclusions.<sup>503</sup> In this way, an impression of a voice, or a light, or the nauseousness of

---

499. Edwards, “The Mind,” *WJE*, 6:339.

500. Contra Simonson, “Edwards and the Imagination,” 109. Martin, *Understanding Affections*, 133 footnote 59 describes this as an “emphasis on the *externality* of the imagination.” But as described below, this may unduly limit Edwards’ understanding of the imagination.

501. Jonathan Edwards, “Of the Prejudices of Imagination,” *WJE*, 6:196; Edwards, *Religious Affections*, *WJE*, 2:211. Sepper, *Understanding Imagination*, 95 says this is part of the topology of imagination.

502. Edwards, “Of the Prejudices of Imagination,” *WJE*, 6:196.

503. Edwards, “The Mind,” *WJE*, 6:369-370.

a thing could still be connected through a responsible imagination.<sup>504</sup>

Therefore, Edwards' own definition of imagination is somewhat confusing. On the one hand, his definition was the narrow seventeenth-century sense of the term, in which the imagination was limited to mental reproduction of the physical or sensual, where one can imagine the sun or the "relish of a delicious fruit."<sup>505</sup> However, because imagination can be an active power of the mind and is the ability to use or abuse those images, Edwards also displayed a nuanced understanding of imagination. Already in his own definition he cannot be neatly pegged.<sup>506</sup>

#### *Edwards' Understanding of Imagination*

While Edwards expressed the traditional seventeenth-century definition of imagination as reproductive of external sensory information, his understanding of imagination's power went beyond that. This has been recognized by other scholars, who generally describe Edwards' understanding as a creative mental activity.<sup>507</sup> However, imagining this suggests Edwards held to the second of five understandings in Chapter 1 would be too simplistic. Therefore, Edwards' broader understanding of imagination will be described below as mediating, liberating, and transforming.

---

504. Edwards, "False Light and True," *WJE*, 19:135. For a similar argument, see Jonathan Edwards, "Miscellanies #1340. Reason and Revelation," *WJE*, 23:363.

505. Jonathan Edwards, *Freedom of the Will*, *WJE*, 1:146.

506. Realizing this, is evidence from within Edwards of what he wrote in "The Mind," *WJE*, 6:367: "That is not always a true definition that tends most to give us to understand the meaning of a word, but that which would give anyone the clearest notion of the meaning of the word, if he had never been in any way acquainted with the thing signified by that word."

507. See Cherry, *Religious Imagination*, 8; Lee, *Philosophical Theology*, 126-127; Simonson, "Edwards and the Imagination," 109-110.

*Edwards' Understanding of Imagination as Mediating*

As a power of the mind, the imagination is not arbitrary, but is able to mediate. It has the ability to combine things, and it can do this with or without sensory input. The human imagination can take multiple sources of information and pull them together to form one idea.<sup>508</sup> Though this may seem arbitrary, Edwards saw this as “exceeding useful and indeed absolutely necessary. For how miserable should we be if we could think of things only individually, as beasts do. How slow, narrow, painful, and endless would be the exercise of thought.”<sup>509</sup> It was so useful, Edwards was fond of using variations of the phrase “let us suppose.”<sup>510</sup> In supposing, the mind, rather than using the senses, uses signs as a substitute for the things themselves.<sup>511</sup>

Edwards was convinced that such a mediating imagination could result in evil. This should be no surprise, since Edwards’ understanding of original sin included the loss of spiritual image and the marring of natural powers.<sup>512</sup> The impact of original sin included wickedness that

---

508. See Terrence Erdt, “Aesthetics,” *JEE*, 8; Joe Rigney, “Imagination,” *JEE*, 323; Simonson, “Edwards and the Imagination,” 112.

509. Edwards, “The Mind,” *WJE*, 6:340.

510. A search for the phrase “let us suppose” displays 51 results in the Yale Jonathan Edwards Centre database. These are predominantly in *The Freedom of the Will* (1754) and *Scientific and Philosophical Writings*. See as one example Jonathan Edwards, “Of Being,” *WJE*, 6:204-205, where suppose/supposing is used at least four times. The word “suppose” is used at least 150 times in the papers included in *Scientific and Philosophical Writings*, *WJE*, 6. For a good example of Edwards supposing to help the imagination, see “The Mind,” *WJE*, 6:379.

511. Edwards, “Miscellanies #782,” *WJE*, 18:452-454.

512. Tan, “Anthropology,” *OHJE*, 251. Just as Edwards stated humans are, because of sin, incapable of religious affections, yet wrote and promoted religious affections; so, Edwards’ writing about the evil of imagination should not be taken as no desire or use for imagination. See also Scheick, *Writings*, 123; though I think Scheick is wrong in attributing Edwards’ insistence on original sin to tradition, internal meditation, and physical isolation at Stockbridge.

stemming from “the imagination of [people’s] own heart,”<sup>513</sup> making some people “roar out” against rational truths and believe “things most absurd.”<sup>514</sup> Therefore, Edwards, in a way that suggested rationality was less impacted by original sin, promoted logical propositions to “put every man clean out of conceit with his imagination.”<sup>515</sup>

While the mediating imagination should be logical, it can still be linked to moral wrong. It leads to ideas that are not relevant to the essence of things.<sup>516</sup> The senses can stimulate ways of youthful vanity, resulting in an “indulgence of a vain and unclean imagination” that changes how one lives.<sup>517</sup> This moral wrong is also seen in the love and joy that hypocrites display through a misled imagination.<sup>518</sup> It is only a vain imagination that allows people to make themselves so righteous that they will be the object of God’s favour.<sup>519</sup> Edwards saw that on the day of judgment, it will be evident that some have indulged themselves “in a way of wicked imagination.”<sup>520</sup>

The mediating imagination may therefore be spiritually deceptive. That deception may

---

513. Jonathan Edwards, *Original Sin*, *WJE*, 3:265.

514. Edwards, “Of the Prejudices of Imagination,” *WJE*, 6:196.

515. Edwards, “Of the Prejudices of Imagination,” *WJE*, 6:198. However, this pamphlet cannot be taken as a dismissal of imagination either, as Edwards’ idea of prejudice was not a preconceived, harmful opinion, but “those ideas which do not pertain to the prime essence of things.”

516. Edwards, “The Mind,” *WJE*, 6:348 – 387.

517. Jonathan Edwards, “The Beauty of Piety in Youth,” *WJE*, 25:109.

518. Edwards, *Religious Affections*, *WJE*, 2:253; 2:309-310.

519. Jonathan Edwards, “All God’s Methods are Most Reasonable: A sermon on Isaiah 1:18-20,” *WJE*, 14:180.

520. Jonathan Edwards, “The Day of Judgment: A sermon on Acts 17:31,” *WJE*, 14:528.

stem from dark spiritual forces, as the devil uses the imagination to deceive common people.<sup>521</sup> He transforms himself into an angel of light, and causes imaginations of beauty or glory that are mistaken as spiritual light.<sup>522</sup> Satan accesses souls through the imagination, and buries them under the influence of false religion, counterfeit graces, and affections.<sup>523</sup> He fills souls with deceptive ideas, and makes a person imagine that seventy years of happiness now is better than an eternity of happiness later.<sup>524</sup>

Such deceptive ideas confuse spiritual life. Many people cannot distinguish “between impressions on the imagination, and truly spiritual experiences.”<sup>525</sup> This is, at least in part, because people often assume religious impressions are positive spiritual thoughts.<sup>526</sup> Edwards saw that there were those who were so confused, they imagined others’ godliness.<sup>527</sup> In order to undermine some of these wrong impressions, Edwards did at times attach adjectives such as

---

521. Jonathan Edwards, “Miscellanies #394,” *WJE*, 13:460; Edwards, “False Light and True: A sermon on 2 Corinthians 11:14,” *WJE*, 19:134; Jonathan Edwards, “True Grace,” *WJE*, 25:632.

522. Jonathan Edwards, “Divine and Supernatural Light: A sermon on Matthew 16:17,” *WJE*, 17:412; Edwards, “False Light and True,” *WJE*, 19:135; Jonathan Edwards, “Graces of the Spirit,” *WJE*, 25:304.

523. Edwards, *Religious Affections*, *WJE*, 2:288; similarly see Edwards, “True Grace,” *WJE*, 25:618; Erdt, *Sense of the Heart*, 51; Scheick, *Writings*, 28.

524. Jonathan Edwards, “A Spiritual Understanding of Divine Things Denied to the Unregenerate. A sermon on 1 Corinthians 2:14,” *WJE*, 14:86.

525. Jonathan Edwards, “130. To the Reverend Thomas Gillespie,” *WJE*, 16:383; see similarly Jonathan Edwards, “147. To the First Church of Christ, Northampton,” *WJE*, 16:481; Smith, “Editor’s Introduction,” *WJE*, 2:27.

526. Edwards, *Religious Affections*, *WJE*, 2:185; Jonathan Edwards, “True Saints are Present with the Lord,” *WJE*, 25:247.

527. Edwards, *Religious Affections*, *WJE*, 2:189.



“mere,”<sup>528</sup> “groundless,”<sup>529</sup> and “unreasonable”<sup>530</sup> to the imagination. Indeed, Edwards hardly knew any other prejudice so powerful against truth.<sup>531</sup>

All this to say that the mediating imagination has significant power to shape thought, but since the mediating imagination is affected by sin, it does not necessarily equate with spiritual imagination or spiritual life.<sup>532</sup> Indeed, the “imagination makes us fancy we see shapes and colors and magnitudes.... All, in these respects, is alike confounded with and indistinguishable from infinite emptiness.”<sup>533</sup> For this reason, the imagination does not hold the spiritual discoveries that people desire from it. For enthusiasts to base their affections on imaginary revelations and voices is dangerous.<sup>534</sup> It was a great fear of the Northampton preacher that souls under his care would go on being spiritually ignorant due to the imagination of their hearts.<sup>535</sup>

However, as an activity of the mind, the mediating imagination could also promote good

---

528. Edwards, *Freedom of the Will*, *WJE*, 1:377.

529. Edwards, *Freedom of the Will*, *WJE*, 1:385.

530. Edwards, *Original Sin*, *WJE*, 3:293.

531. Edwards, “Of the Prejudices of Imagination,” *WJE*, 6:196.

532. Jonathan Edwards, “A Spiritual Understanding of Divine Things Denied to the Unregenerate. A sermon on 1 Corinthians 2:14,” *WJE*, 14:70-96. See also Waddington, *Human Soul*, 126-127. While quoting Richard Hays, Gerald McDermott sees Edwards’ promotion of typology as an invitation “to a ‘conversion of the imagination.’” While McDermott references the Spirit opening eyes, he seems to put this after the conversion of imagination, and not prior to; see Gerald R. McDermott, *Everyday Glory: The Revelation of God in All of Reality* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2018), 43.

533. Edwards, “Of Being,” *WJE*, 6:204-205.

534. Edwards, *Religious Affections*, 2:206-207. See also Simonson, *Theologian of the Heart*, 74-75.

535. Jonathan Edwards, “The Great Concern of a Watchman for Souls. A sermon on Hebrews 13:17,” *WJE*, 25:73-74.

thought. After all, according to Edwards, “truth is the perception of the relations there are between ideas. . . . All truth is in the mind, and only there.”<sup>536</sup> Further, knowledge is the “perceiving whether two or more ideas belong to one another. *Corol.* Hence it is not impossible to believe or knoe [sic] the truth of mysteries, or propositions that we cannot comprehend, or see the manner how the several ideas that belong to the proposition are united.”<sup>537</sup> At one point, Edwards admitted that a previously imagined thought was good, when he found it stated by other writers.<sup>538</sup> The mediating imagination can be good as it helps establish a broader understanding. As Lee summarizes well, “The mind’s ordering activity is creative not only in its ability to make explicit the relations among simple ideas but also in its capacity to place those relations into a context larger than what is given in sensation at a particular moment.”<sup>539</sup>

Therefore, the mediating imagination has been described by Lee as the “ordering, shaping power of the human mind.”<sup>540</sup> The mediating imagination can work with the senses. Indeed, the imagination mediates “between sensation and the intentions of the mind.”<sup>541</sup> It can take what is received from the five senses and alter and change those ideas or obtain a fresh idea.<sup>542</sup> The

---

536. Edwards, “The Mind,” *WJE*, 6:340.

537. Edwards, “The Mind,” *WJE*, 6:385.

538. Edwards, *Freedom of the Will*, *WJE*, 1:446.

539. Lee, *Philosophical Theology*, 133. Salladin, *Edwards and Deification*, 178 helpfully makes an important distinction within Lee’s dispositional thesis: just because some created essence (like the imagination) exhibits a dispositional habit does not mean the created thing (again, like the imagination) is that dispositionally.

540. Lee, *Philosophical Theology*, 115.

541. Lee, *Philosophical Theology*, 116.

542. Erdt, “Aesthetics,” *JEE*, 8; Rigney, “Imagination,” *JEE*, 323.

imagination is not bound purely by sense, as it can “bridge speculative and sensible knowledge, [unify] the poles of reason and sensation, and thereby [embrace] the totality of natural existence. Functioning in this way the imagination mediates between intellect and sense.”<sup>543</sup>

*Edwards’ Understanding of Imagination as Liberating*

While Edwards’ definition of imagination focused on the senses and reproduction, his understanding of imagination encouraged a mediating function, and allowed for hypotheticals that had not yet been seen. In that way, the power of imagination can be described as liberating - that is, unrestrained by, or liberated from, the sensible nature of external and outward objects. This power of the mind was available to believers and unbelievers alike.

Edwards himself is seen as having an imagination liberated from observed phenomenon. Since youth, Edwards’ mind imagined relations in physics and geometry. In “Of the Prejudices of Imagination,” likely written in the fall of 1723, Edwards rebutted the idea that there was nothing beyond what could be imagined through their senses. There he demonstrated through “physical theorems” the endless limits of what is possible scientifically.<sup>544</sup> It was his imagination that fuelled that which he wanted to write about.<sup>545</sup>

Over the years his imagination continued to be active. It is beyond the purview of this paper to support this in detail, but supposedly Edwards had a finer mind and more imagination than either his grandfather Solomon Stoddard (AD 1643-1729) or father Timothy Edwards (AD

---

543. Simonson, “Edwards and the Imagination,” 112. See also Simonson, *Theologian of the Heart*, 73.

544. Edwards, “Of the Prejudices of Imagination,” *WJE*, 6:196-201. In this, Edwards displays what Sepper, *Understanding Imagination*, 5-6 says Descartes did mathematically.

545. See Jonathan Edwards, “Things to be Considered an[d] Written Fully About,” *WJE*, 6:219-295.

1669-1758).<sup>546</sup> His critics accused him of an “unbridled imagination.”<sup>547</sup> Those less critical saw in Edwards an “integrative imagination.”<sup>548</sup>

The liberating imagination is free from empiricism and experience. Edwards raised the question of whether it is possible for the mind to imagine something that has existed forever and yet has remained unknown.<sup>549</sup> Even if the mind could stretch its conception to such a degree, Edwards did not think it possible to conceive of a state of perfect nothingness.<sup>550</sup> Further, his thought that “if a man would imagine space anywhere to be divided” could not have originated with experience.<sup>551</sup> Even when considering things much more lowly, Edwards hypothetically imagined how spiders might get down from heights, yet concluded that nature has a better way than “we can imagine beforehand.”<sup>552</sup>

Free from the senses, the liberating imagination can also “see” present but invisible realities. Edwards believed the imagination should strengthen the argument of the greatness of eternal punishment.<sup>553</sup> It is imagination that should picture material things invisible to the human

---

546. Kimmach, “Introduction,” *WJE*, 10:24-25.

547. John F. Wilson, “Critical Reception of *A History of the Work of Redemption*,” *WJE*, 9:86.

548. William Kimmach, “The Literary Techniques of Jonathan Edwards,” PhD diss., University of Pennsylvania, 1971: 327; Kimmach, “Introduction,” *WJE*, 10:225.

549. Edwards, “Of Being,” *WJE*, 6:204.

550. Edwards, “Of Being,” *WJE*, 6:202.

551. Edwards, “Of Being,” *WJE*, 6:203.

552. Jonathan Edwards, “Of Insects,” *WJE*, 6:158.

553. Edwards, *Freedom of the Will*, *WJE*, 1:355.

eye, such as atoms.<sup>554</sup> It is imagination that “sees” immaterial things invisible to the human, such as character. Because people lack imagination, it is astonishing how many people judge character wrongly.<sup>555</sup>

The liberating imagination can also work with invisible truths such as ideas and affections. Edwards thought that possibility should be embraced, to a degree. Abstraction can bring to view truths and realities that have not been seen. And yet such views are still but “obscure glances.”<sup>556</sup> Therefore the liberating imagination is best served by wisdom, where people “abstract no farther than we can conceive of the thing distinctly and explain it clearly.”<sup>557</sup> Edwards discussed this as speculative knowledge (of the head) and sensible knowledge (of the heart). According to Edwards, both the head and the heart can apprehend without “any proper ideal apprehension or view” but with “signs.” This apprehension can be of “beauty and deformity, or loveliness and hatefulness, and all ideas of delight or comfort, and pleasure of body or mind, and pain, trouble, or misery, and all ideal apprehensions of desires and longings, esteem, acquiescence, hope, fear, contempt, choosing, refusing, accepting, rejecting, loving, hating, anger, and the idea of all the affections of the mind, and all their motions and exercises.”<sup>558</sup> This apprehension of the invisible can be used by believers and unbelievers.<sup>559</sup>

---

554. Jonathan Edwards, “Of Atoms,” *WJE*, 6:217.

555. Edwards, *Religious Affections*, *WJE*, 2:319.

556. Edwards, “The Mind,” *WJE*, 6:341.

557. Edwards, “The Mind,” *WJE*, 6:341.

558. Edwards, “Miscellanies #782,” *WJE*, 18:459-460. See also Waddington, *Human Soul*, 121.

559. Jonathan Edwards, “The Importance and Advantage of a Thorough Knowledge of Divine Truth: A sermon on Hebrews 5:12,” *WJE*, 22:87; Simonson, *Theologian of the Heart*, 69.

The liberating imagination can work with a variety of ideas. These can include abstract concepts like time<sup>560</sup> and liberty.<sup>561</sup> They may be imagined conversations with the divine.<sup>562</sup> As the liberated imagination considers such unexperienced phenomena, it may contemplate things pertaining to religion.<sup>563</sup> In that, it should not limit its expectation, because one day the external glory and beauty in which Christ will appear “will be ten thousand times greater than ever was impressed on the imagination of either saints or sinners.”<sup>564</sup>

The liberating imagining also allows for a mind to think about God Himself. This is not necessarily creatively making a god in one’s own image, but rather, thinking imaginatively about hypotheticals as they relate to God. Even unbelievers at times have a “kind of religious desire, love and joy, [where] the mind is only assisted to a clearer apprehension of the natural good that is in divine things.”<sup>565</sup> However, believers can also imagine true things.<sup>566</sup> And yet, even believers can wrongly “suppose that the Almighty” does not care about matter.<sup>567</sup> There are times that believers do not properly imagine the character of Christ.<sup>568</sup>

The liberating imagination also allows for thought about God’s activity. God’s care for

---

560. Edwards, *Freedom of the Will*, WJE, 1:386.

561. Edwards, *Freedom of the Will*, WJE, 1:454.

562. Edwards, *Religious Affections*, WJE, 2:224.

563. Edwards, “Miscellanies #782,” WJE, 18:461-462.

564. Edwards, “True Grace,” WJE, 25:626; similarly, see Edwards, “True Grace,” WJE, 25:634.

565. Edwards, *Religious Affections*, WJE, 2:277.

566. Edwards, *Freedom of the Will*, WJE, 1:386.

567. Edwards, “Of Atoms,” WJE, 6:217.

568. Jonathan Edwards, “Seeking after Christ: a sermon on Matthew 2:10,” WJE, 22:290.

creation should be imagined.<sup>569</sup> The potential for God to act can be imagined.<sup>570</sup> It may even be imagined that God “can make matter think.”<sup>571</sup> People can imagine the degree of pleasure God has by receiving acts of external worship.<sup>572</sup> God, in his wise design, puts people in a variety of circumstances, though it is incongruous to imagine that God puts people in such circumstances that they would hate him.<sup>573</sup> Yet, such a liberating imagination, considering even the good activity of God, is not enough to understand or believe the gospel. The gospel is “to be seen, not with bodily eyes, not in the imagination, but in the understanding and sense of the heart.”<sup>574</sup>

While the imagination may be liberating, Edwards found humility essential. Though imagined ideas may be true, he advised, “we may not have strength of mind sufficient to conceive clearly of the manner of it. We see farther, indeed, but ‘tis but very obscurely and indistinctly. . . . Otherwise we shall be apt to run into error and confound our minds.”<sup>575</sup>

*Edwards’ Understanding of Imagination as Transforming*

While the imagination can be mediating or liberating, Edwards also understood the

---

569. Jonathan Edwards, “Miscellanies #215,” *WJE*, 13:343.

570. Jonathan Edwards, “Honey from the Rock: A sermon on Deuteronomy 32:13,” *WJE*, 17:124.

571. Edwards, “The Mind,” *WJE*, 6:347.

572. Jonathan Edwards, “Mercy and not Sacrifice: A sermon on Matthew 12:7,” *WJE*, 22:131. According to McDermott, *Confronts the Gods*, 56, one of the reasons Edwards dismissed deism was because it separated head from heart, or reason from affections, and understanding from experience.

573. Jonathan Edwards, “Miscellanies #1356,” *WJE*, 23:597.

574. Jonathan Edwards, “Seeking after Christ,” *WJE*, 22:294; in this sermon as well as others, Edwards used the word “sense” to refer to the inclination of the will; see Martin, *Understanding Affections*, 145.

575. Edwards, “The Mind,” *WJE*, 6:341.

imagination as being related to a renewed sinner changed by the work of the Holy Spirit. Though the organ of the mind remains the same, the change that does happen in sinners through regeneration is different than impressions, and therefore does things the unchanged mind cannot do. This will be identified here as the transforming power of imagination.

This transforming power can only come through a renewed mind, which God gives not through imagination, but through regeneration. Transforming, or spiritual imagination, requires a prior divine work.<sup>576</sup> God, through the Holy Spirit, works in the faculties of human nature, “not merely as assisting and co-working with natural principles, but infusing something above nature.”<sup>577</sup> Edwards describes that from that first moment on, the Spirit of God dwells in saints, including their minds: “He is represented as being there so united to the faculties of the soul, that he becomes there a principle or spring of new nature and life.”<sup>578</sup>

Still, Edwards insisted on discerning between the activity of transformed imagination and spiritual impression. Spiritual light is not the same thing as an impression on the imagination, nor as the imagination itself.<sup>579</sup> Transforming spiritual light allows one to see new and true relationships and connections.<sup>580</sup> That transforming spiritual light is not outward, and to hear

---

576. Edwards, “Miscellanies #782,” *WJE*, 18:463.

577. Edwards, “Miscellanies #782,” *WJE*, 18:463; Jonathan Edwards, “Miscellanies #397. Convention. Spiritual Knowledge,” *WJE*, 13:463. See also William Dyrness and Christi Wells, “Aesthetics,” *OHJE*, 302-306 for a broader discussion of this.

578. Edwards, *Religious Affections*, *WJE*, 2:200. See also Smith, *Jonathan Edwards*, 42; David Luke, “Disposition,” *JEE*, 148.

579. Jonathan Edwards, “A Divine and Supernatural Light,” *WJE*, 17:412; Edwards, “False Light and True,” *WJE*, 19:135.

580. Jonathan Edwards, “Miscellanies #408. Spiritual Knowledge,” *WJE*, 13:470; Jonathan Edwards, “Miscellanies #628. Spiritual Knowledge. Faith,” *WJE*, 18:156-157.



external sounds remains rooted in the natural, or liberating, imagination.<sup>581</sup> Transforming spiritual light comes with knowledge, so whenever affections are not based in knowledge, those affections are not spiritual, but natural and common.<sup>582</sup> Enthusiasms and impressions then consist not of delight in the beauty of divine things, but of individual impressions of imagination.<sup>583</sup>

While impressions may come from the senses, spiritual light and religious experience come through the infinite God of love.<sup>584</sup> This sight of things new and different is due to the grace of Christ which “causes the faculties to do that that they do not by nature; causes those things to be in the soul that are above nature and of which there is nothing of the like kind in the soul by nature; and causes them to be in the soul habitually.”<sup>585</sup> When a person receives that gift of the Holy Spirit from God, he or she may intuitively see God and know “His power, holiness, purity, majesty, excellency, beauty, loveliness, and ten thousand other things.”<sup>586</sup> This is not separate from the power of thinking, because “when the mind has a lively discovery of spiritual things, and is greatly affected by the power of divine light, it may, and probably very commonly doth, much affect the imagination.”<sup>587</sup>

---

581. Edwards, “False Light and True,” *WJE*, 19:135.

582. Edwards, *Religious Affections*, *WJE*, 2:217, 2:268.

583. Edwards, *Religious Affections*, *WJE*, 2:286. See also Tan, “Anthropology,” *OHJE*, 257-258.

584. Simonson, *Theologian of the Heart*, 29; Scheick, *Writings*, 136, 144.

585. Jonathan Edwards, “Miscellanies #626. Spirit’s Operation. Nature. Grace. Common Grace. Special Regeneration,” *WJE*, 18:155. See also Simonson, *Theologian of the Heart*, 77.

586. Jonathan Edwards, “Miscellanies #aa,” *WJE*, 13:177. See also Simonson, *Theologian of the Heart*, 26; Robert E. Brown, *Jonathan Edwards and the Bible* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2002), 39-40.

587. Edwards, “A Divine and Supernatural Light,” *WJE*, 17:412.

Accordingly, the transforming imagination goes far beyond reproductive function to presenting things that are new and different. These new things include “all spiritual and gracious affections.”<sup>588</sup> However, the new and different go beyond affection to seeing “everything as related to divine mystery.”<sup>589</sup> And so the regenerate person will “view nothing as he did before.”<sup>590</sup> But without this regeneration and the sight of Christ, “nothing is seen, that is worth seeing: for there is no other true excellency or beauty.”<sup>591</sup>

The transforming imagination is also correlated to the sense of the heart. The transformed heart desires a “sense of divine things, that apprehension of the truth, importance and excellency of the things of religion, which then sways and prevails, and governs his heart and hands; this is the most excellent spiritual light.”<sup>592</sup> And yet, when understood as Edwards understood it, apprehension is spiritual perception, or transformed imagination.<sup>593</sup>

The transforming imagination therefore remains spiritual. Put differently, the spiritual

---

588. Edwards, *Religious Affections*, *WJE*, 2:207. Later John Henry Newman would also link imagination with the affections; see Dive, *Newman and the Imagination*, 15.

589. Simonson, “Edwards and the Imagination,” 115.

590. Edwards, *Religious Affections*, *WJE*, 2:273, 275, 282-283.

591. Edwards, *Religious Affections*, *WJE*, 2:274. This emphasis on beauty or the aesthetic, as opposed to the moral or legal experience of God, has been said to be a line of discontinuation from previous Calvinism. See Douglas Elwood, *The Philosophical Theology of Jonathan Edwards* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1960), 3; Erdt, *Sense of the Heart*, xiii.

592. Edwards, *Religious Affections*, *WJE*, 2:453.

593. In Jonathan Edwards, [“Notes on Knowledge and Existence,”] *WJE*, 6:398, Edwards encourages himself to think and write about whether knowing through reasoning is but “a composition of intuitive perceptions.” Later on the same page, he says that man’s ability depends on “association of ideas.”

person can imagine, and will imagine.<sup>594</sup> When the Holy Spirit works the enlightening of the heart, a person does not just think a new thought, but “feels, senses, and sees the divine truth, beauty, and excellence in the idea.”<sup>595</sup> While there is a distinction between the impressions and spiritual light, and they remain qualitatively different, the spiritual light “nevertheless functions through the natural human faculties.”<sup>596</sup> This is the experience that allows a regenerate heart to imagine, and is how the imagination can envision the “wonder of the invisible world and to speak of it is to affirm this original integration, the gift of grace.”<sup>597</sup>

The transformed imagination has been understood as habit - the character or orientation of the person. As Lee defines it, “habit is not one of the self’s faculties or powers; it is rather *the manner in which all the powers of the self operate.*”<sup>598</sup> However Edwards saw that manner transformed by the Holy Spirit who “operates by infusing or exercising new, divine, and

---

594. Edwards, *Religious Affections*, *WJE*, 2:273. See also Simonson, *Theologian of the Heart*, 79.

595. John E. Smith, “Testing the Spirits: Jonathan Edwards and the Religious Affections,” *Union Seminary Quarterly* 37 (Fall-Winter 1981-1982): 33. See also Steve Edwards, “Affections,” *JEE*, 12; Simonson, *Theologian of the Heart*, 76-78.

596. Tan, “Anthropology,” *OHJE*, 260.

597. Simonson, “Edwards and the Imagination,” 117.

598. Sang Hyun Lee, “Imagination and the Increasing Reality in Jonathan Edwards,” in *Philosophy of Religion and Theology 1973: Papers for the section on philosophy of religion and theology*, ed. David Griffin (Tallahassee: American Academy of Religion, 1973), 33. Emphasis added. See also Edwards, *Religious Affections*, *WJE*, 2:206; Sang Hyun Lee, “Mental Activity and the Perception of Beauty in Jonathan Edwards,” *Harvard Theological Review* 69, no. 3-4 (October 1976): 382.

supernatural principles.”<sup>599</sup> That habit, or manner, does not depend on rational argumentation, but as habit, it works “at once” and “without rationation [sic] or any kind of argument.”<sup>600</sup> In this way, it is a transformed-heart manner of operating.

### *Conclusion on Edwards’ Understanding of Imagination*

As a summary of Edwards’ definition and understanding, it must be maintained that, whether negatively or positively, Edwards considered the imagination important. He understood aspects of it as mediating, liberating, and transforming. His understanding went far beyond that of the ability to recall images. Yet, one also finds in Edwards the traditional definition of his day, whereby he defined imagination as a power of mind that could reproduce external and sensible objects.

This seeming bifurcation between a narrower definition and a broader understanding leaves an unsettled grasp of what Edwards understood regarding imagination. Various definitions in themselves would not necessarily be a problem, but his consistent definition alongside a much broader usage appears challenging. This unsettled creativity may be significant.

### **3.2 Understanding Jonathan Edwards’ Use of Imagination**

The above conclusion could lead one to assume that Edwards’ understanding of the imagination and its powers is not useful. However, it is much more beneficial to begin by seeing Edwards’ understanding of the imagination as unique. Edwards’ understanding of what the imagination is, and can do, does not line up easily with the common understandings of

---

599. Edwards, *Religious Affections*, *WJE*, 2:207. See also Ray S. Yeo, *Renewing Spiritual Perception with Jonathan Edwards: Contemporary Philosophy and the Theological Psychology of Transforming Grace* (London: Routledge, 2016), 204-207.

600. Edwards, “The Mind,” no. 42, 59, *WJE*, 6:46, 56-57; Jonathan Edwards, “Miscellanies #268,” *WJE*, 13:373. That should not mean that the imagination is automatic.

imagination. This is most evident in the way Edwards used his own imagination. Comparing his use of imagination to the common understandings discussed in Chapter 1 highlights this uniqueness.

### 3.2.1 Edwards' Use of Imagination Relative to Other Understandings

A reflection on the five understandings described in Chapter 1 reveals that Edwards' use of imagination does not cleanly fit within the understandings of imagination as reproductive, creative, fantastical, or spiritual. Nor does his use of imagination fit neatly within the recognized possibility model described earlier. His understanding remains incongruous and unique.

#### *Not Limited to Reproduction*

Even though his definition focused on the power of mind to recall or reproduce, Edwards' use of imagination reveals that he saw it as much more than the re-presentation of sense information. There certainly was a re-presentational component, but it was re-presentation for a higher meaning. This higher purpose is highlighted in Edwards' conviction that the unregenerate rationalist is unable to use their imagination properly because they are limited by what their senses reported to them.<sup>601</sup> They have a God-given capacity to imagine, but still fail to recognize the divine beauty and universal system of things.<sup>602</sup>

Edwards also called for imagination for situations for which reproduction was impossible. In a sermon on Ezekiel 22:14, Edwards did depend on limited experience of fire, to imagine the never-experienced fires of final judgment: "To help your conception, imagine yourself to be cast into a fiery oven, all of a glowing heat, or into the midst of a glowing brick-kiln, or of a great

---

601. Simonson, "Edwards and the Imagination," 110.

602. Jonathan Edwards, "The Nature of True Virtue," *WJE*, 8:610-612. See also Lee, *Philosophical Theology*, 141.

furnace, where your pain would be as much greater than that occasioned by accidentally touching a coal of fire, as the heat is greater. Imagine also that your body were to lie there for a quarter of an hour, full of fire!”<sup>603</sup>

Edwards also used imagination in ways contrary to reproduction. He stated that people could frame various options in their imaginations.<sup>604</sup> The imagination could exaggerate what was only a mental concept; it could add weight to different options through perceived results or anticipated punishments.<sup>605</sup> But he also explained that the imagination also could work in spiritual ideas that could never be reproduced, despite desire for reproduction: “It may be impossible for him to bring the idea into his mind again distinctly, or indeed at all. We can’t renew them when we please, as we can our idea of colors and figures, but [only] at some times when mind is particularly adapted to the reception of that idea.”<sup>606</sup> Beyond that, he noted that some spiritual impressions were lively despite not being reproductions of what was seen.<sup>607</sup>

#### *Not Focused on Creativity*

Edwards seemed to have a low view of imagination as it related to creativity. This was in part because of the role of imagination in spiritual life, and the danger and disobedience of

---

603. Jonathan Edwards, “The Future Punishment of the Wicked Unavoidable and Intolerable: A sermon on Ezekiel 22:14,” in Clarence H. Faust and Thomas H. Johnson, eds, *Jonathan Edwards: Representative Selections, with Introduction, Bibliography and Notes*, American Century Series (New York: Hill and Wang, 1962), 146-147.

604. Jonathan Edwards, “Miscellanies #238,” *WJE*, 13:353. See also Jonathan Edwards, “58. To the Revered Thomas Clap,” *WJE*, 16:166; Jonathan Edwards, *Writings on the Trinity, Grace, and Faith*, *WJE*, 21:115.

605. Edwards, *Freedom of the Will*, *WJE*, 1:355.

606. Jonathan Edwards, “Miscellanies #123,” *WJE*, 13:286.

607. Jonathan Edwards, “A Faithful Narrative,” *WJE*, 4:188.

imagining God according to one's own ideas. Edwards' understanding of imagination certainly did not allow creativity to extend to novel understandings of God. God is the only one who can reveal truth of Himself. Rather, because Christ is the final and ultimate mediator between human imagination and divine truth, one uses imagination to know the beauty of divine creation and providence.<sup>608</sup> Edwards' imagination only allowed for what already existed.<sup>609</sup>

Yet, Edwards' personal imagination can be seen as creative. There is a degree of creativity in his ideas for future writing. There are even times in his personal narrative that his use of the word imagination is juxtaposed uniquely against his creative imaginative language: "My wickedness, as I am in myself, has long appeared to me perfectly ineffable, and infinitely swallowing up all thought and imagination: like an infinite deluge, or infinite mountains over my head."<sup>610</sup>

### *Beyond Mere Fantasy*

Edwards seems to hint at the possibility of a fantastical understanding of imagination. He wanted people to be clear that the visions of Revelation were fantastical, not literal.<sup>611</sup> In this way too, God uses the imagination of his people:

---

608. Simonson, *Theologian of the Heart*, 81-82. See also Guite, *Lifting the Veil*, 18, 27, 53-57. Guite is not writing about Edwards here, but about the way Christ is the mediator between imagination and truth.

609. Simonson, "Edwards and the Imagination," 117.

610. Jonathan Edwards, "Personal Narrative," *WJE*, 16:802.

611. Jonathan Edwards, "Nothing Upon Earth Can Represent the Glories of Heaven: A sermon on Revelation 21:18," *WJE*, 14:138.

I dare appeal to any man, of the greatest powers of mind, whether or no (sic) he is able to fix his thoughts on God or Christ, or the things of another world, without imaginary ideas attending his meditations? As God has given us such a faculty as the imagination and so made us that we cannot think of things spiritual and invisible, without some exercise of this faculty; so, it appears to me, that such is our state and nature, that this faculty is really subservient and helpful to the other faculties of the mind, when a proper use is made of it.<sup>612</sup>

Indeed, Edwards saw himself as possibly facing a charge of fantastical imagination: “I expect by very ridicule and contempt to be called a man of a very fruitful brain and copious fancy, but they are welcome to it. I am not ashamed to own that I believe that the whole universe . . . be full of images of divine things.”<sup>613</sup> His opponents found it beyond their wits to invent “or form a higher imagination” of liberty.<sup>614</sup>

And yet the reverse is true as well. Edwards was convinced that the fantastical could also be used for deceptive purposes. Something could be “the work of pure imagination, and contrary to the reality of things.”<sup>615</sup> People must be concerned that their “fancy and imagination, do not so far impose upon [their] Judgments, as to make [them] attribute to incorporeals, what properly belongeth to bodies only.”<sup>616</sup>

---

612. Jonathan Edwards, “The Distinguishing Marks,” *WJE*, 4:236.

613. Jonathan Edwards, *Types*, *WJE*, 11:152. However, Edwards saw these images as shadows of divine things, not as the divine things themselves. He maintained a distinction between the Creator and the creature; see Rick Destree, “Images of Divine Things,” *JEE*, 322.

614. Edwards, *Freedom of the Will*, *WJE*, 1:454. See also Jonathan Edwards, “True Nobleness of Mind: A sermon on Acts 17:11,” *WJE*, 14:240; Jonathan Edwards, “227. To the Reverend John Erskine,” *WJE*, 16:707.

615. Edwards, *Freedom of the Will*, *WJE*, 1:386.

616. Jonathan Edwards, “Miscellanies #1359,” *WJE*, 23:655.



*Beyond Spiritual Awareness*

While Edwards would not subscribe to a form of imagination that formed its own awareness of God, he still saw a place for spiritual imagination. To him, this spiritual imagination was not about divine awareness, but analogical knowledge: “The reason why the names of spiritual things are all, or most of them, derived from the names of sensible of corporeal ones, as “imagination,” “conception,” “apprehend,” etc., is because there was no other way of making others readily understand men’s meaning, when they first signified these things by sounds, than by giving of them the names of things sensible, to which they had analogy.”<sup>617</sup> The spiritual imagination was still affective and experiential, but in a unique way.

Edwards thought that the spiritual imagination could be used towards religious affections, and that the affections and imagination “act reciprocally.”<sup>618</sup> When excited, the imagination filled with grace “can make the things of religion seem vital rather than remote.”<sup>619</sup> The use of imagination then is not introspective mysticism, but a new capacity believers receive to sense the beauty and sweetness of thing, “a perception that illuminate[s] the truths of Scripture and the magnificence of the natural world in a common apprehension of God’s glory.”<sup>620</sup> Indeed, the

---

617. Edwards, “The Mind,” *WJE*, 6:349. In this, Edwards should not be confused as having what David Tracy, *The Analogical Imagination: Christian Theology and the Culture of Pluralism* (New York: Crossroad, 1981), xii, 447 calls the analogical imagination. Rather Edwards is explaining analogical knowledge; Tracy’s analogical imagination leads to the development of a similarity-in-difference discourse. See Winqvist, “Analogy, Apology, and the Imaginative Pluralism,” 312.

618. Edwards, *Religious Affections*, *WJE*, 2:157; Rigney, “Imagination,” *JEE*, 323.

619. Erdt, *Sense of the Heart*, 55-56.

620. Edwards, *Religious Affections*, *WJE*, 2:291. See also Erdt, *Sense of the Heart*, 32, 52; Belden C. Lane, “Jonathan Edwards on Beauty, Desire, and the Sensory World,” *Theological Studies* 65, (2004), 45; Smith, “Editor’s Introduction,” *WJE*, 2:31. This also struck at the popular pietistic notion that a right relation with God was based on vivid experiences and imaginings.

imagination may help a person's heart so that "seeing the outward glory of God enable[s] him to have a greater sense of his spiritual glory; as in the beginning of Isaiah 6."<sup>621</sup>

Therefore, Edwards' unique understanding of the spiritual imagination is not the same as the contemporary understanding of spiritual awareness. When speaking of David Brainerd, Edwards noted that Brainerd was prone to melancholy as "the fruit of a warm imagination."<sup>622</sup> Brainerd himself, in his diary, used imagination in the sense of spiritual awareness and fantasy.<sup>623</sup> And yet, Edwards wrote that Brainerd was not one of those with a "teeming" imagination, but was one with "a penetrating genius, of clear thought, of close reasoning."<sup>624</sup> But in his funeral sermon for Brainerd, Edwards then used the idea positively: "In him, whose death we are now called to consider and improve, we have not only an instance of mortality; but an instance of one, that being absent from the body, is present with the Lord; as we have *all imaginable reason* to conclude."<sup>625</sup>

### *Beyond Recognized Possibilities*

The understanding of imagination as recognized possibilities is not apart from truth or reality. While the concept of recognized possibilities seems to be more consistent with Edwards, it would be too simplistic to suggest that this was Edwards' position.

Edwards acknowledged that the mind reorganizes its knowledge based on what it is

---

621. Edwards, "False Light and True," *WJE*, 19:137.

622. Jonathan Edwards, *The Life of David Brainerd*, *WJE*, 7:91-92.

623. Edwards, *The Life of David Brainerd*, *WJE*, 7:450-452.

624. Edwards, *The Life of David Brainerd*, *WJE*, 7:92.

625. Jonathan Edwards, "True Saints are Present with the Lord. A sermon on 2 Corinthians 5:8," *WJE*, 25:244. Emphasis added.

currently engaged in and on patterns it sees and understands. He remarked that this reflection of the mind can be spontaneous: “How exceedingly apt are we, when we are sitting and accidentally casting our eye upon some marks or spots in the floor or wall, to be ranging of them into regular parcels and figures and, if we see a mark out of its place, to be placing of it right by our imagination.”<sup>626</sup> With frequency and practice, minds can “naturally and spontaneously suggest many relations of the thing signified to others, as the hearing of a certain sound or seeing such letters does by custom and habit spontaneously excite such a thought.”<sup>627</sup> This can happen “while we are meditating on something else.”<sup>628</sup>

After Edwards noted that the topic of imagination should be covered in a treatise on the mind (as thought #42), that thought #43 was about the connection of ideas. There he wrote, “the force or strength of a mind consists very much in an ability to excite actual ideas, so as to have them lively and clear, and in its comprehension, whereby it is able to excite several at once to that degree as to see their connection and relations.”<sup>629</sup> So Edwards realized one thought could trigger another through association, resemblance, cause and effect, or overlap.<sup>630</sup> He believed that alternative worlds or universes left people imagining all kinds of things, most of them worthless.<sup>631</sup> Yet other times, he realized that God could use a recognized possibility to promote profound truths:

---

626. Edwards, “The Mind,” *WJE*, 6:336.

627. Edwards, “Miscellanies #782,” *WJE*, 18:457.

628. Edwards, “The Mind,” *WJE*, 6:336.

629. Edwards, “Miscellanies #782,” *WJE*, 18:457.

630. Edwards, “The Mind,” *WJE*, 6:391-392.

631. Jonathan Edwards, “Miscellanies #42,” *WJE*, 13:224.

I imagine that Solomon, . . . being a very philosophical, musing man, and a pious man, and of a very loving temper, set himself in his own musings to imagine and to point forth to himself a pure, virtuous, pious and entire love. . . . God's Spirit made use of his loving inclination, joined with his musing philosophical disposition, and so directed and conducted it in this train of imagination as to represent the love that there is between Christ and his spouse.<sup>632</sup>

Thus, Edwards still resisted understanding imagination as it is often recognized today; that would have been too anthropocentric. It is true that peoples' imaginations may be struck by evidence of another person's wisdom, capacity, appearance, reputation, or respect.<sup>633</sup> When people think that only *their* recognized possibilities are imagination, they become the standard of possibility and impossibility, so that nothing exists beyond what they could imagine.<sup>634</sup> That would be a very small world; there are things far beyond the imagination. One only must try comprehending eternity<sup>635</sup> or God's sovereignty: "It appears to be a very unreasonable thing to imagine that God's decrees are unjust because they are a mystery," Edwards exhorted.<sup>636</sup>

### 3.2.2 Edwards' Use of Imagination Within His Theology

While Edwards' understanding and use of imagination do not fit neatly within any one category of imagination, his work displayed imagination. And while it is not the primary purpose of this paper to prove a use of imagination within Edwards' corpus, how his theology could impact a preacher with imagination is worth describing and is summarized here.

---

632. Jonathan Edwards, "Miscellanies #303," *WJE*, 13:389-390.

633. Jonathan Edwards, "Miscellanies #592. Hell Torments," *WJE*, 18:126.

634. Edwards, "Of the Prejudices of Imagination," *WJE*, 6:196.

635. Jonathan Edwards, "Sinners in Zion. A sermon on Isaiah 33:14," *WJE*, 22:277.

636. Jonathan Edwards, "All God's Methods are Most Reasonable. A sermon on Isaiah 1:18-20," *WJE*, 14:175.

Every preacher bears the image of God, in both moral and natural senses. The natural image of God in a preacher is seen in his understanding and will.<sup>637</sup> The purpose of the image of God, or the natural and spiritual image, is so that man can love God. As those created in the image of God, preachers have affections “for the same purpose which he has given all the faculties and principles of the human soul for, viz. that they might be subservient to man’s chief end, and the great business for which God has created him.”<sup>638</sup> The imagination should not be neglected, because God knows “what affections may arise from imagination, and how far imagination may be mixed with spiritual illumination.”<sup>639</sup> Central to Edwards’ understanding of psychology was the image of God: structurally through the remaining natural image, and after regenerating grace, directionally through the moral image.<sup>640</sup>

Every preacher should also recognize a fundamental difference between the unregenerate and the regenerate. Edwards noted that unbelievers should have “no imagination that they have any true faith in Christ or love to Him.”<sup>641</sup> In order to see the same things as others, and to be delighted in them, they need a certain “internal sense and experience.”<sup>642</sup> This internal sense comes through the saving work of the Holy Spirit who forms a “new inward perception or

---

637. Waddington, *Human Soul*, 44; Scheick, *Writings*, 143.

638. Edwards, *Religious Affections*, *WJE*, 2:122. Jan van Vliet, *The Rise of Reformed System: The Intellectual Heritage of William Ames*, *Studies in Christian History and Thought* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2013), 70 gives evidence of a similar Augustinian strain in Ames.

639. Edwards, *Religious Affections*, *WJE*, 2:460.

640. Kosits, “Psychological Thought,” *JEE*, 477.

641. Jonathan Edwards, “An Humble Inquiry into the Rules of the Word of God, Concerning the Qualifications Requisite to a Complete Standing and Full Communion in the Visible Christian Church,” *WJE*, 12:209.

642. Edwards, “Miscellanies #123,” *WJE*, 13:287.

sensation of their minds, entirely different in its nature and kind.”<sup>643</sup> This new spiritual sense is not a new faculty, but a new principle that exercises the understanding and the will.<sup>644</sup> The “sanctified imagination enables one to grasp what to natural man is invisible and unknowable.”<sup>645</sup> While unbelievers may have an imagination, it is dependent on their limited creatureliness; it is only the believer who can use their imagination in a spiritual way.<sup>646</sup> This distinction between unbelievers and believers suggests that while the disposition of imagination exhibits the *imago dei*, it cannot be stated that the imagination is *imago dei*.<sup>647</sup>

Yet, as preachers called others to faith, they needed to understand that faith is an act of the whole person. Like other Puritans, Edwards understood faith to be part of the unified mind and will.<sup>648</sup> The imagination helps humanity consider the invisible. It was obvious to Edwards, that “God has really made use of this faculty to truly divine purposes; especially in some that are

---

643. Edwards, *Religious Affections*, *WJE*, 2:205. That this may reflect Puritan influence is discussed briefly in William K.B. Stoeber, “Godly Mind: Puritan Reformed Orthodoxy and John Locke in Jonathan Edwards’s Conception of Gracious Cognition and Conviction,” *Jonathan Edwards Studies* 4, no. 3 (2014): 327-328. Edward H. Davidson, *Jonathan Edwards: The Narrative of a Puritan Mind* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1968), 116 acknowledges this moral perception, but still derives it merely from individual consciousness.

644. Edwards, *Religious Affections*, *WJE*, 2:206; *ibid.*, 2:97-98. See also Hambrick-Stowe, “Spirituality and Devotion,” *OHJE*, 365; Belden C. Lane, *Ravished by Beauty: The Surprising Legacy of Reformed Spirituality* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 183-186; Miller, *Edwards*, 187.

645. Simonson, *Theologian of the Heart*, 13.

646. Jonathan Edwards, “Miscellanies #481,” *WJE*, 13:523-24. See also William Wainwright, “Ontology,” *OHJE*, 97.

647. Contra Lee; see Salladin, *Edwards and Deification*, 178.

648. Cherry, *Reappraisal*, 13; Seng-Kong Tan, “Anthropology, Affections, and Free Will,” *OHJE*, 250.

more ignorant. God seems to condescend to their circumstances.”<sup>649</sup> When discussing the faith of four-year-old Phebe Bartlet, Edwards praised her love for God, even though it was not through “any imagination of any thing seen with bodily eyes, that she called God.”<sup>650</sup> No matter the age of the person, true saving grace occurs when God unites himself “to the soul of a creature as a vital principle, dwelling there and exerting himself by faculties of the soul of man, in his own proper nature, after the manner of a principle of nature.”<sup>651</sup> God, therefore, leads a person to use their faculties in a certain manner.<sup>652</sup>

In other words, according to Edwards, the imagination was cognitive, not ornamental.<sup>653</sup> The transformed mind became the recipient of a new sense that Edwards was able to add to the

---

649. Edwards, “Distinguishing Marks,” *WJE*, 4:236.

650. Edwards, “A Faithful Narrative,” *WJE*, 4:201. See also Michael J. Colacurcio, “The Example of Edwards: Idealist Imagination and the Metaphysics of Sovereignty,” in *Puritan Influences in American Literature*, Illinois Studies in Language and Literature, vol. 65, ed. Emory Elliot (Ann Arbor, MI: UMI, 1991), 64-65.

651. Jonathan Edwards, “Treatise on Grace,” *WJE*, 21:194ff.

652. Wainwright, “Ontology,” *OHJE*, 96; Luke, “Disposition,” *JEE*, 147.

653. Searle, *Imagining Biblically*, 97.

five natural senses.<sup>654</sup> Once, after a walk, Edwards described a sweet sense “of the glorious majesty and grace of God. . . . After this [his] sense of divine things gradually increased, and became more and more lively, and had more of that inward sweetness. The appearance of everything was altered.”<sup>655</sup> And so preachers, like Edwards himself, need to be strengthened by imagination. By grace, the Spirit of God transformed their reasoning faculty “by adding greater light, clearness, and strength to the judgment in this matter.”<sup>656</sup> They should confidently use their transformed mind.<sup>657</sup>

Preachers still need to be careful in how they use this transformed imagination. Edwards once unknowingly provoked a pamphlet war in England between various orthodox Presbyterians, including Ralph Erskine (AD 1685-1752) and James Robe (AD 1688-1753), through a printed sermon. Erskine decried every imaginary idea of Christ, and Robe considered an imaginary idea

---

654. Edwards, *Religious Affections*, 2: 205-206. See also Helm, “Epistemology,” *OHJE*, 112; Helm notes that this includes Locke’s term of simple idea of a sixth sense from which experience can be based, and notes that similar language can be found in Locke’s tutor at Oxford, the Puritan John Owen. This is not an additional physiological sense, but a spiritual sense of a new reality: see Colacurcio, “Edwards: Idealist Imagination,” 70; Smith, “Editor’s Introduction,” *WJE*, 2:30. James Hoopes, “Jonathan Edwards’s Religious Psychology,” *The Journal Of American History* 69, no. 4 (March 1983): 851 thinks this is an oversimplification that Edwards rejected. However, the term “sixth sense” does appear in Jonathan Edwards’ *Minor Controversial Writings*, “Subjects of Inquiry,” *WJEO*, 28: n.p. For the thought that this may stem back beyond Locke to Calvin, see John Calvin, *Institutes*, III.2.34; Lane, “Sensory World,” 58. The argument that Edwards held to Calvin’s understanding can be found in Erdt, “Calvinist Psychology,” 171-78; Erdt, *Sense of the Heart*, 2. That Edwards used the idea and Lockean terms can be seen in Edwards, *Religious Affections*, *WJE*, 2:205, 207; Colacurcio, “Edwards: Idealist Imagination,” 69; Kim, “Lockean Terminology,” 111.

655. Edwards, “Personal Narrative,” *WJE*, 16:793.

656. Jonathan Edwards, “Miscellanies #628,” *WJE*, 18:156-157; Cherry, *Reappraisal*, 32.

657. Simonson, *Theologian of the Heart*, 12.



of Christ as man to be a prerequisite of faith.<sup>658</sup> Erskine thought that the senses and imagination were radically separate from faith and understanding, and were actually hindrances to faith rather than help towards faith.<sup>659</sup> But Edwards had written that persons “often conceive in their imaginations of a pleasant, beautiful, and glorious form of countenance in Christ; and sometimes have a lively conception of his sufferings on the cross: how the blood runs from his veins, and of Christ standing with his arms open, or of his speaking or calling to them, or the like.”<sup>660</sup>

So, the imagination in the regenerate preacher is not characterized by new knowledge, but by new understanding and affections. This role of conversion and imagination on the affections separates Edwards from those who suggest that the imagination could create an experience of grace. Edwards belonged to the Reformed stream of theology that allows for imagination, but understood and maintained the centrality of faith in Jesus Christ logically prior to a person being filled with the transforming work of the Holy Spirit.<sup>661</sup>

### 3.2.3 Conclusions on Edwards’ Use of Imagination

Edwards’ understanding and use of imagination parallels what Dane Ortlund has said

---

658. La Shell, “Imagination and Idol,” 319.

659. Erskine, *Faith*, xxvi, 128. See also Adriaan Neele, “Exchanges in Scotland, the Netherlands, and America: The Reception of the *Theoretico-practica theologia* and *A History of the Work of Redemption*,” in *Jonathan Edwards and Scotland*, ed. Kelly Van Ansel, Adriaan C. Neele, Kenneth P. Minkema (Edinburgh: Dunedin, 2011), 32.

660. Edwards, “False Light and True,” *WJE*, 19:137. This sermon was preached in July 1734, and pre-dates the Erskine-Robe debate by nearly a decade. The debate was sparked by comments in “The Distinguishing Marks” which were published in 1741. See LaShell, *Imaginary Ideas*, 54-57. For a general overview of Edwards’ position on mental images of God see Matthew D. Stewart, “Images (Worship),” *JEE*, 320.

661. See Dyrness, *Visual Culture*, 4; Stoeber, “Godly Mind,” 327-352; Alvin Plantinga, *Knowledge and Christian Belief* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2005), 71; Waddington, *Human Soul*, 173.

about Edwards' understanding of motivation: it refuses to fall neatly into one of the categories commonly outlined.<sup>662</sup> His use of imagination also displays layers of understanding. It appears Edwards was at pains to fight against what others could not see about the imagination and its implications.

Edwards was not disregarding all categories of understanding the imagination. But he did stretch the definition beyond the tight reproductive definition he inherited. In other words, Edwards was less empirical and more spiritual in his understanding of the imagination. Edwards' allowance for a dispositional concept of the mind beyond the empiricism of his day leads towards the understanding of imagination as recognized possibilities.<sup>663</sup> This suggests a break with any purely natural or evolutionary explanation today, as it reflects the human *imago dei*. While bounded and limited by sin, the sanctified imagination can bring about a synthesis that mediates among the past, present, and future; between the visible and the invisible; between the physical and spiritual; between that which is seen and that which is not seen; and between appearance and truth.<sup>664</sup>

It seems Edwards did not have the philosophical language to fully express his own understanding. Yet it seems he wanted to. In one manuscript, Edwards crossed out the word

---

662. Dane Ortlund, *A New Inner Relish: Christian Motivation in the Thought of Jonathan Edwards* (Ross-shire, UK: Christian Focus, 2008), 94.

663. Lee, *Philosophical Theology*, 163, 157-160. See also Lee, "Increasing Reality," 31. Erdt, "Calvinist Psychology," 165-180 seems to see Edwards as dependent on biblical understanding of the heart, which would again correlate with Searle's understanding of imagination.

664. See Simonson, *Theologian of the Heart*, 73.

“imagination”, and replaced it with “conceptions.”<sup>665</sup> His manifold use of the metaphor of physical sight and spiritual sight indicates more than an understanding of purely reproductive imagination. Still, it seems as though - as it relates to his understanding of imagination - Edwards lived too early. The explanation of a synthesizing mind would only come in later decades.<sup>666</sup>

What should be clear is that people have imaginations and are to use them to the glory of God - not to create anthropocentric idols, but to discover the creation, and in the end, as Simonson puts it, “to apprehend the full beauty and glory of the Creator.”<sup>667</sup> This requires imaginative knowledge, which even according to Edwards, was “the perception of the union or disunion of ideas, or the perceiving whether two or more ideas belong together.”<sup>668</sup> While imaginative knowledge may perceive union or disunion, it cannot be used by people to lead themselves to see God. This keeps Edwards at odds with the contemporary ideas of the spiritual power of imagination.

While this chapter and dissertation will continue to look at Edwards’ use of the concept of imagination, the unique relationship between Edwards’ definition and use of imagination needs explanation in order to benefit a homiletical use of imagination. There are sources and influences that may help contextualize that uniqueness.

---

665. See Harvey Townsend, ed., *The Philosophy of Jonathan Edwards From His Private Notebook*, The Jonathan Edwards Classic Studies Series (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2009), 2.

666. Reklis, “Imagination and Hermeneutics,” *OHJE*, 312 suggests that Edwards did not link imagination to a creative or synthesizing power. And yet it seems, Edwards’ own understanding of imagination was that. Lee, *Philosophical Theology*, 135 sees Edwards as anticipating Samuel Coleridge; though Miller, “Sense of the Heart,” 127 and Simonson, *Theologian of the Heart*, 80 would not. Any comparative study with Coleridge is outside the scope of this dissertation.

667. Simonson, *Theologian of the Heart*, 80.

668. Edwards, “The Mind” *WJE*, 6:385. See also Smith, *Jonathan Edwards*, 25.

### 3.3 Considering Possible Influences on Edwards' Imagination

In considering Jonathan Edwards' disparate definition and use of imagination, a challenge emerges. Why is it the way it is? What held this together? What benefit is there in retrieving such a mixed understanding of the imagination?

It may be possible to trace chronological development in his own thinking, but that also leads to challenges as his definitions were stated in 1734 and 1746, thereby consistent over a dozen years. Many of the other sources and uses display a varied understanding already in the 1730s and 1740s.

It may also be possible to trace intellectual influences. Much of the current understanding of influences on Edwards has been shaped by previous scholarship, which suggests a myriad of influences.<sup>669</sup> Apart from the two most important influences of his father and grandfather, other sources are difficult to trace.<sup>670</sup> Indeed, the study of influences and sources have been seen as an "imaginative mixture."<sup>671</sup> There are other suggestions that Edwards' influences were his own experiences.<sup>672</sup> Yet, the foundational intellectual influences on Edwards go back "to John Calvin, back further to St. Augustine, and finally to St. Paul."<sup>673</sup>

How might these various influences be simply understood today? While there may have

---

669. Peter J. Thuesen, "Sources of Edwards's Thought," *OHJE*, 69-70.

670. Kimnach, "Introduction," *WJE*, 10:5.

671. Colacurcio, "Edwards: Idealist Imagination," 74.

672. Tan, "Anthropology," *OHJE*, 260; Herbert Schneider; quoted in Elwood, *Philosophical Theology*, 3.

673. Simonson, *Theologian of the Heart*, 12.

been significant European influence seen in philosophical and theological areas,<sup>674</sup> Edwards reflects an integrative approach to imagination for a greater purpose. Such an understanding of Edwards' imagination gains strength in light of possible philosophical, theological, and biblical influences.

### 3.3.1 Philosophical Influences

The philosophical influences on Edwards have been noted in a wide variety of articles, with Enlightenment writings receiving considerable attention.<sup>675</sup> While all philosophical influences on Edwards are beyond the scope of this study, his understanding of imagination can be briefly considered in light of empiricism and John Locke, as well as rationalism and Nicholas Malebranche (AD 1638-1715).

#### *Empiricism and Locke*

It has been suggested that Edwards was influenced by the empirical movement in general and John Locke in particular.<sup>676</sup> Miller described Edwards' reading of Locke's *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding* as "the central and decisive event in his intellectual life."<sup>677</sup> Edwards' legacy then becomes a "Puritanism recast in the idiom of empirical psychology."<sup>678</sup>

Aspects of Edwards' understanding of imagination seem to lend themselves to corroborating Miller's understanding of Edwards' legacy. Edwards' definitions of imagination

---

674. See Neele, "Exchanges," 21-33.

675. Thuesen, "Sources of Edwards's Thought," *OHJE*, 71-72.

676. Thuesen, "Sources of Edwards's Thought," *OHJE*, 82-83, Richard A.S. Hall, "Enlightenment," *JEE*, 198-200; Miller, *Edwards*, 46.

677. Miller, *Edwards*, 52.

678. Miller, *Edwards*, 62. Smith, *Jonathan Edwards*, 15 sees Edwards as more critical towards Locke, and still says Miller was overall accurate.

seem indebted to empiricism. In his stated definitions, Edwards seems to forsake the Scholasticism of his world, and understand things in terms of ideas derived from experience and sensation.<sup>679</sup> This can be supported by the Puritan care of souls, as well as the New England revival focus on experience and evidence, culminating in Edwards' interviews describing revival experiences in almost neuroscientific terms.<sup>680</sup>

As it relates to John Locke, Edwards is said to have borrowed the idea of a unified mind, in which imagination was a part of the human constitution.<sup>681</sup> More specifically, in *Freedom of the Will*, Edwards seems to apply Locke's idea of the "last dictate of the understanding." But again, Edwards points to the unity of the understanding: "It appears from these things that in some sense, the will always follows the last dictate of the understanding. But then the understanding must be taken in a large sense, as including the whole faculty of perception or apprehension and not merely what is called reason or judgment."<sup>682</sup>

However, Edwards' broader understanding of imagination diverges from a strong empiricist influence. In Edwards' most explicit tract about imagination, "Of the Prejudices of the

---

679. Miller, *Edwards*, 54-55. Numerous authors since Miller continue to point this out. See also Davidson, *Puritan Mind*, 31; Erdt, *Sense of the Heart*, 2; Jonathan S. Marko, "Empiricism," *JEE*, 195-196.

680. Hambrick-Stowe, "Spirituality and Devotion," *OHJE*, 366-367; George Marsden, "Historical and Ecclesiastical Contexts," *OHJE*, 48.

681. Ramsey, "Editor's Introduction," *WJE*, 1:48-49. See also Cherry, *Religious Imagination*, 8; Martin, *Understanding Affections*, 52; Miller, *Edwards*, 182; Tracy, *Edwards, Pastor*, 5, 75-76.

682. Edwards, *Freedom of the Will*, *WJE*, 1:148. See also Perry Miller, "Editor's Introduction," *WJE*, 1:1-128; Smith, *Jonathan Edwards*, 18-19. Terrence Erdt, "Art," *JEE*, 38-40 claims Edwards also strengthened his position through Lockean sensationalism for his sense of the heart, although Edwards did add beauty which could enable the mind to have "an analogous idea of spiritual beauty and thereby help raise the affections.

Imagination,” there are no Lockean terms or ideas.<sup>683</sup> In spite of common terminology, Edwards should not be considered a Lockean,<sup>684</sup> in part because he did not allow empiricism to define religious experience.<sup>685</sup> He differs from Locke on the meaning of pleasure and pain, the role of uneasiness in volition, the nature of personal identity, and the moral disposition prior to experience.

Further, some of Edwards’ ideas contradict empiricism and Locke on a broader scale. Edwards’ “sense of the heart” could also have been influenced by sources other than Locke.<sup>686</sup> Edwards’ defence of original sin would counter Locke’s *tabula rasa*.<sup>687</sup> His broader anthropological considerations of memory, imagination, will, feelings, and judgment could not be answered through Lockean sensation.<sup>688</sup> His use of internal language reveals “his anti-Lockean distrust” of language’s dependence on the external world and the senses.<sup>689</sup> Edwards’ assumption that complex ideas can be apprehended immediately, and be determined by the habits

---

683. Anderson, “Introduction,” *WJE*, 6:24.

684. Marsden, *A Life*, 63; Obbie Tyler Todd, “What is a Person? Three Essential Criteria for Jonathan Edwards’s Doctrine of Personhood,” *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 61, no. 1 (2018): 129; David Laurence, “Jonathan Edwards, John Locke, and the Canon of Experience,” *Early American Literature* 15, no. 2 (1980): 108.

685. Simonson, *Theologian of the Heart*, 12.

686. Erdt, *Sense of the Heart*, xii, 2.

687. Smith, *Jonathan Edwards*, 24. See also Anderson, “Introduction,” *WJE*, 6:120; Lee, *Philosophical Theology*, 119. Miller, “Sense of the Heart,” 124 acknowledges that Edwards saw beyond the passive nature of Locke’s *tabula rasa*.

688. For example, Edwards, “The Mind,” *WJE*, 6:385. See also Erdt, *Sense of the Heart*, 21-22; Simonson, *Theologian of the Heart*, 26.

689. Scheick, *Writings*, 120. See also Paul Copan, “Jonathan Edwards’ Philosophical Influences: Lockean or Malebranchean?” *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 44 (March 2001): 111.

of the mind, minimizes Locke's requirement of step-by-step growth in knowledge.<sup>690</sup>

It can therefore be concluded that Edwards's relationship with Locke's ideas "was selective," and subject to other influences and commitments.<sup>691</sup>

### *Rationalism and Malebranche*

Others have pointed to rationalism as having had an influence on Edwards' understanding of the imagination. Reason does seem to have been given a higher place early in Edwards' career. Seemingly simultaneous with the influence of empiricism mentioned above, the influence of rationalism appears to be similarly muted.

Edwards' did reflect some influence of rationalism. In a sermon on Job 31:3 preached in 1729, Edwards said, "Reason is the highest faculty in man and is designed by our maker to ever rule and exalt sense, imagination, and passion, which were made to be servants."<sup>692</sup> Edwards, like René Descartes (AD 1596-1650), understood imagination as a power that could grasp, synthesize, and conceive of "one thing fused out of many equal parts."<sup>693</sup> The imagination existed for the maintenance of the union between the soul and body.<sup>694</sup> The necessity of imagination for communication had been promoted by the Cartesian Bernard Lamy (AD 1640-

---

690. Edwards, "The Mind," *WJE*, 6:348; Edwards, *Religious Affections*, *WJE*, 2:113-114. See also Anderson, "Introduction," *WJE*, 6:122; Davidson, *Puritan Mind*, 132.

691. Stoeber, "Godly Mind," 345.

692. Quoted in Kimmach, "Introduction," *WJE*, 10:195.

693. Rene Descartes, *Compendium of Music*; quoted in Sepper, "Descartes," *RHPI*, 29. See also Park, Daston and Galison, "Imagination and Analogy," 287-289; Sepper, *Understanding Imagination*, 5, 267-329. John D. Lyons, "Introduction: The Crisis of the Baroque," *OHB*, 10 sees this as reflective of the Baroque era.

694. Rene Descartes, *Meditations*; quoted in Sepper, "Descartes," *RHPI*, 34.



1715).<sup>695</sup>

It has also been suggested that Edwards was influenced more specifically by Nicholas Malebranche.<sup>696</sup> The suggestion of influence by Malebranche is significant, because Malebranche deals with the imagination more than most. Malebranche's *Recherche de la Verité* was originally written in French and translated into English by 1700. It was part of Yale's library and contained a detailed and influential examination of imagination.<sup>697</sup> In it, Malebranche proposed that the imagination, along with the sense and passions, were "absolutely useless" to the discovery of truth and happiness.<sup>698</sup> For the search of truth, the only thing necessary was perception and understanding.<sup>699</sup>

However, once again, there are elements that contradict that influence. Malebranche believed the imagination depended on retrieving images and therefore could not imagine spiritual

---

695. Kinnach, "Introduction," *WJE*, 10:188 fn. 1 makes a connection to Bernard Lamy's *L'art de parler* (1675). Lamy had acknowledged the material and spiritual advantage of a good imagination. Further acknowledgment of Lamy's work references the anonymous English translation of 1676.

696. Those in favor include Norman Fiering, *Jonathan Edwards's Moral Thought and Its British Context*, The Jonathan Edwards Classic Studies Series (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 1980), 40-45. See also Copan, "Philosophical Influences," 107-124; Paul Helm, "Epistemology," *OHJE*, 105; Avihu Zakai, "The Natural Sciences and Philosophy of Nature," *OHJE*, 330. Other articles discussing similarities and differences between Edwards and Malebranche include Jasper Reid, "The Trinitarian Metaphysics of Jonathan Edwards and Nicholas Malebranche," *Heythrop Journal* 43, no. 2 (April 2002):152-169; Wainwright, "Ontology," *OHJE*, 91, 95. The author disagreeing the most is Kinnach, "Introduction," *WJE*, 10:5.

697. Nicholas Malebranche, *Treatise Concerning the Search after Truth. The Whole Work Complete. To which is added The Author's Treatise of Nature and Grace: Being a Consequence of the Principles contained in the Search*, trans. T. Taylor (London: W. Bowyer, 1700). See also Wallace E. Anderson, "Introduction," in *Scientific and Philosophical Writings*, *WJE*, 6:20. Fiering, *Moral Theology*, 40-44 makes the case that Edwards read Malebranche by 1726.

698. Malebranche, *Search After Truth*, preface.

699. Malebranche, *Search After Truth*, 1.

things.<sup>700</sup> He saw the imagination as an animalistic distraction, unworthy of those desiring perfection of the mind.<sup>701</sup> So, Edwards' signing of a copy of Antoine Arnaud's *The Art of Thinking* may be more significant than possibly perceived, as Arnaud (AD 1612-1694) was an important critic of Malebranche.<sup>702</sup>

Though the philosophical influence has been described as significant by some, it should not be overstated to turn Edwards into a pure empiricist or rationalist. While philosophically attuned, there were more foundational concerns for Edwards, including what and how a Christian may think.<sup>703</sup> Edwards can be characterized then as "a 'Christian philosopher' " more than by any other philosophical label.<sup>704</sup> With this in view, it should be no surprise that he may have been influenced by other sources.

### 3.3.2 Theological Influences

While Edwards may have been influenced by philosophy, any attempt to consider him a philosopher needs be balanced with the recognition of the revelatory foundation to philosophy that Edwards also received through theological tradition.<sup>705</sup> Which theological traditions influenced Edwards has also been a significant area of study and will not be repeated here.

---

700. Malebranche, *Search After Truth*, 9.

701. Malebranche, *Search After Truth*, preface.

702. Anderson, "Editor's Introduction," *WJE*, 6:21. According to George Kennedy, *Classical Rhetoric and Its Christian and Secular Tradition from Ancient to Modern Times* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1999), 261 Arnaud, like Pascal, was a Jansenist who dismissed affective rhetoric.

703. Davidson, *Puritan Mind*, 49.

704. Colacurcio, "Edwards: Idealist Imagination," 55.

705. Colacurcio, "Edwards: Idealist Imagination," 56.

However, there are again some clues suggesting the theological traditions which may be reflected in his understanding of imagination, including Reformed Scholastic, and Puritan influences.

### *Reformed Scholastic Influences*

The influence of John Calvin, and subsequent Calvinism, on Edwards has already been established. Edwards himself noted that he was not following Calvin but happened to believe many of the same things.<sup>706</sup> The Reformed Scholastic tradition, through the Yale curriculum, was “the basis” of Jonathan Edwards’ theological education.<sup>707</sup> And yet, while there are influences and similarities, it should not be assumed that Edwards was a blind disciple of Calvin or Reformed Scholasticism, also in relation to the imagination.<sup>708</sup>

Edwards’ understanding regarding the imagination seems similar to Calvin’s thoughts regarding the mind. Like Calvin, Edwards highlighted the need for a knowledge of God and a knowledge of oneself.<sup>709</sup> The knowledge of oneself included knowledge of the nature of the human mind.<sup>710</sup> But in what did the regenerating and illuminating Spirit work? The

---

706. Edwards, *Freedom of the Will*, *WJE*, 1:131. See also Simonson, *Theologian of the Heart*, 13; Jeffrey C. Waddington, “Calvinism,” *JEE*, 81.

707. Thomas Whittaker, “Scholasticism,” *JEE*, 511.

708. See Kenneth P. Minkema, “A ‘Dordtian Philosophe’: Jonathan Edwards, Calvin, and Reformed Orthodoxy,” *Church History and Religious Culture* 91, no. 1-2 (2011): 241-253.

709. Edwards, *Freedom of the Will*, *WJE*, 1:144; John Calvin, *Institutes*, I.1.i; Russell Kosits, “Psychological Thought,” *JEE*, 472-473; Scheick, *Writings*, 91, 118 seems to overlook this influence of Calvin, ascribing the unity and balance to Edwards’ moderate attitude.

710. Jonathan Edwards, “The Natural History of the Mental World, or of the Internal World: Being a Particular Inquiry into the Nature of the Human Mind with Respect to Both Its Faculties, the Understanding and the Will, and Its Various Instincts and Active and Passive Powers,” *WJE*, 6:386-387.

understanding or the will?<sup>711</sup> Edwards, like Calvin, saw a dynamism between the understanding and the will that demonstrated the “psychological unity of creatures made in the image of God.”<sup>712</sup> Particularly when considered through the lens of faith, the powers of “intellect and will tend to merge into one.”<sup>713</sup> The imagination is considered as part of the cognitive faculties, or the intellect.<sup>714</sup> Calvin also allowed for more than sense information, so that people can “conceive the invisible God and the angels, something the body can by no means do.”<sup>715</sup>

Other Reformed Scholastics had similar confirming influences on Edwards. William Ames (AD 1576-1633) continued the close interaction of understanding and will, while valuing

---

711. Erdt, *Sense of the Heart*, 15.

712. van Vliet, *Reformed System*, 59, 69, 83.

713. Cherry, *Reappraisal*, 17. See also van Vliet, *Reformed System*, 241. Benjamin B. Warfield, “On Faith in Its Psychological Aspects,” in *Biblical and Theological Studies*, ed. Samuel G. Craig (Philadelphia: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing, 1968), 402-403 recognizes the knowledge and commitment within faith, yet asserts that the assent of faith depends not on the will, but on the intellect. See also William J. Bouwsma, *John Calvin: A Sixteenth Century Portrait* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), 132; Helm, *Human Nature*, 29-31 points this out as an adoption of Aristotle’s hylomorphism; Matthew A. Lapine, *The Logic of the Body: Retrieving Theological Psychology*, Studies in Historical and Systematic Theology (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2020), 164-167 seems to disagree, arguing that Calvin holds to a strict dualism. See Frederick Copleston, *A History of Philosophy, Volume 2: Mediaeval Philosophy, Part I: Augustine to Bonaventure* (New York: Image Books, 1962): 308-322 for a helpful description of Aristotle’s hylomorphism.

714. Calvin, *Institutes*, 1.15.6. See also Bouwsma, *Portrait*, 131-132; Lapine, *Logic of the Body*, 164-165. This view seems to have existed in at least one of Edwards’ contemporaries. Mark Akenside, “The Pleasures of Imagination (1744),” in Andres Ashfield and Peter de Bolla, *The Sublime: A Reader in British Eighteenth-Century Aesthetic Theory* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996): 86, states that “the influence of the imagination on the conduct of life, is one of the most important points in moral philosophy. It were easy by an induction of facts to prove that the imagination directs almost all the passions, and mixes with almost every circumstance of action or pleasure.”

715. Calvin, *Institutes*, 1.15.2.

affections and habit,<sup>716</sup> in part because of his high theology of the Holy Scriptures.<sup>717</sup> Petrus van Mastricht (AD 1630-1706) rejected the Cartesian rationalism that depended on thinking to define the soul, and embraced the distinctions between the vegetative, sensible, and rational qualities of the soul.<sup>718</sup> Edwards was influenced by Mastricht,<sup>719</sup> possibly in part by the regeneration of all faculties of the person commonly understood as light.<sup>720</sup> Other Reformed Scholastics who influenced Edwards' anthropology, and by implication his understanding of imagination, include

---

716. Norman S. Fiering, "Will and Intellect in the New England Mind," *The William and Mary Quarterly* 29, no. 4 (Oct. 1972): 520-533; Martin, *Understanding Affections*, 93; Brad Walton, *Jonathan Edwards, 'Religious Affections' and the Puritan Analysis of True Piety, Spiritual Sensation and Heart Religion*, Studies in American Religion #74 (Lewiston: Edwin Mellen Press, 2002), 231. Lee, *Philosophical Theology*, 24-25 notes how Ames, among other Puritans, understood habit.

717. van Vliet, *Reformed System*, 2-3.

718. Aza Goudriaan, *Reformed Orthodoxy and Philosophy, 1625-1750: Gijbertus Voetius, Petrus van Mastricht, and Anthonius Driessen* (Leiden: Brill, 2006), 244-245.

719. Jonathan Edwards, "Letter to Joseph Bellamy (1747)," *WJE*, 16:217. See also Elwood, *Philosophical Theology*, 121; Adriaan Neele, *Before Jonathan Edwards* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018), 100; Thuesen, "Sources of Edwards's Thought," *OHJE*, 80.

720. Petrus van Mastricht, *A Treatise on Regeneration: Extracted from his System of Divinity, called Theologia theoretico-practica; and faithfully translated into English; with an Appendix, containing extracts from many celebrated Divines of the reformed Church, upon the same subject*, (New Haven: Thomas and Samuel Green, 1770), 25. See also Cherry, *Reappraisal*, 34; van Vliet, *Reformed System*, 243.

Francis Turretin (AD 1623-1687)<sup>721</sup> and Gijsbertus Voetius (AD 1589-1676).<sup>722</sup>

Yet Edwards was not a Scholastic in the sense of those he respected; some of the Scholastic conceptual frameworks, terms, and distinctions are absent in his work. Instead, some see his writing as falling into in a contemporary, careful yet creative, common-sense style.<sup>723</sup> The anthropology of Reformed Scholastics may well be reflected in Edwards, but this may not necessarily be due to a strong influence. It may be correlated to another source, as Reformed views often went back to the Jewish and Christian Scriptures and wrestled with the dilemmas of combining Hebraic and Hellenic strains in western culture.<sup>724</sup>

### *Puritan Influences*

While not monolithic, the Puritans were influential, and Edwards' explanations of theological and even philosophical issues have been at times described in light of the Puritan influence.<sup>725</sup> The heart and its affections were important topics to both the Puritans and to

---

721. Edwards, *Religious Affections*, *WJE*, 2:289. See also Francis Turretin, *Institutes of Elenctic Theology*, trans. George Musgrave Giger; ed. James T. Dennison, Three Volumes (Phillipsburg, NJ: P & R Publishing, 1997), 1:591; 2:564; 3:609.

722. Goudriaan, *Reformed Orthodoxy*, 241; Neele, "Exchanges," 21-33. See also Goudriaan, *Reformed Orthodoxy*, 234-238; Helm, *Human Nature*, 77; B. Hoon Woo, "The Understanding of Gisbertus Voetius and Rene Descartes on the Relationship of Faith and Reason, and Theology and Philosophy," *Westminster Theological Journal* 75 (2013): 46-47. Voetius would maintain that while soul and body together form one total individual, the soul informs the body.

723. Helm, *Human Nature*, 213; Oliphint, "Reformed Apologist," 165-186.

724. Bouwsma, *Portrait*, 131.

725. Martin, *Understanding Affections*, 100; William Sparkes Morris, *The Young Jonathan Edwards: A Reconstruction*, The Edwards Classic Studies Series (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2005), 134-135, 210; Stephen J. Stein, "Foreword," in Cherry, *Reappraisal*, x.

Edwards.<sup>726</sup>

Edwards welcomed several Puritan emphases. Following the Puritans, he “roundly rejected ostentatious ceremonies, vestments, relics, and church architecture in favor of simplicity of form founded on scriptural precedent – [but also] produced elaborate gravestone carvings, a poetry rich in imagery, and theories of the sacraments that sought a close correlation between the visible and the invisible.”<sup>727</sup> Edwards embraced the symbolic consciousness of the Puritan mind.<sup>728</sup> Poetry, writing, and sermonizing were the patterns for response and reflection.<sup>729</sup> In that, he did not find an aesthetic that eschewed ornamentation, but attempted to put ornamentation into perspective: everything was to be proportionate and useful. Everything, including ornamentation, was for the glory of God.<sup>730</sup>

So, there was a Puritan influence on Edwards.<sup>731</sup> He reflects the language of Richard Sibbes, who used both sensory language and imaginative connections, ascribing to the Trinity a

---

726. As evidence see sermons and treatises focused on the heart, including Richard Baxter, *The Tender Heart* (Edinburgh: Banner of Trust, 2011); William Fenner, *A Treatise of the Affections: Or, The Souls Pulse; whereby a Christian May Know Whether He be Living*, 5; Thomas Goodwin, *The Heart of Christ* (Edinburgh: Banner of Truth Trust, 2015). See also Fiering, *Moral Philosophy*, 159-165.

727. Cherry, *Religious Imagination*, 17. See also Michael Clark, “The Honeyed Knot of Puritan Aesthetics,” in *Puritan Poets and Poetics: Seventeenth-Century American Poetry in Theory and Practice*, ed. Peter White (University Park, PA: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1985), 68, 70-71.

728. Cherry, *Religious Imagination*, 18-23.

729. Cherry, *Religious Imagination*, 16.

730. Cherry, *Religious Imagination*, 21. See also Harrison Meserole, *Seventeenth-Century American Poetry* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1968), xxi, xxv.

731. See Harry S. Stout, “The Puritans and Edwards,” in *The Princeton Companion to Jonathan Edwards*, ed. Sang Hyun Lee (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005), 274-291 for how Edwards was influenced by the Puritans, particularly as regarding federal theology.

use of “heavenly rhetoric to persuade and move the affections.”<sup>732</sup> His emphasis on experiential religion paralleled various Puritans, including Anthony Burgess (AD 1600-1663) whose book on original sin Edwards used to “support his own contention that the imagination is open to corruption and furnishes a constant source of temptation.”<sup>733</sup> He also repeated Perkins’ idea that the imaginations are conceived in the brain.<sup>734</sup> For the sake of this study, more detailed attention will be given to Reynolds, Manton, and Flavel, and their possible influence on Edwards’ understanding of imagination.<sup>735</sup>

### *Edward Reynolds*

The Puritan Edward Reynolds (AD 1599-1676) may have been the single biggest Puritan influence on Edwards as it relates to the imagination.<sup>736</sup> Edwards’ familiarity with some of Reynolds’ writings is recorded.<sup>737</sup> What is less known is whether Reynolds’ *Faculties of the Soule* (1640), which was available to read in the Yale library, was well-known to Edwards. At

---

732. Richard Sibbes, *Bowels Opened: or, Expository Sermons on Canticles IV.16, V, VI*, in Volume 2 of *The Complete Works of Richard Sibbes*, 84. See also Mark E. Dever, *Richard Sibbes: Puritanism and Calvinism in Late Elizabethan and Early Stuart England* (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 2000), 140-141; Kater, “Puritan Preaching,” 50-51; Parry, *Rhetoric*, 14.

733. Smith, “Introduction,” *WJE*, 2:71; see Edwards, *Religious Affections*, *WJE*, 2:289.

734. Edwards, *Religious Affections*, *WJE*, 2:157, fn 6.

735. Reynolds, Manton, and Flavel are referenced in Kimnach, “Introduction,” *WJE*, 10:194, 214 as models for Edwards’ typology.

736. Care should be taken not to confuse Edward Reynolds with Peter Reynolds (a pastor in Enfield, CT), or John Reynolds (an English Presbyterian minister). These other two men both appear more often in Edwards’ writings. Edward Reynolds was English bishop in the Anglican church, who was a representative to the Westminster Assembly.

737. Jonathan Edwards, *Catalogue of Books*, *WJEO*, 26: 52, 204.



times described as an Aristotelian-Scholastic,<sup>738</sup> Reynolds treated the passions in a moral manner.

The possible parallels between Edwards and Reynolds on imagination stem from interactive unity of the soul. Reynolds saw the principal acts of the soul as reason and discourse (from the understanding) and action and morality (from the will), which are all dependent on the organs and faculties of the body.<sup>739</sup> Yet physical senses are not the only sources of information for the soul: the gospel is supernatural, and its principles transcend the natural faculties.<sup>740</sup>

For Reynolds, the dignity of imagination was its unique role in the soul.<sup>741</sup> The imagination assists the understanding, not merely through recall or reproduction, but through invention that quickens and raises the mind with “a kind of heat and rapterie proportionable in the inferior part of the soul, to that which in superior, philosophers call ecstasy.”<sup>742</sup> The imagination assists the will “to quicken, allure, and sharpen” its desire towards an object.<sup>743</sup> It does this through a latitude that allows the imagination an abundance of objects, and continual interchanges and successions. Reynolds wrote that “though the act of apprehending be the proper work of the understanding, yet the form and quality of that act (namely the lightness, volubility,

---

738. Amy M. Schmitter, “Passions and Affections,” *Oxford Handbook of British Philosophy in the Seventeenth Century*, ed. Peter R. Anstey (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 443.

739. Reynolds, *Faculties of the Soule*, 3-4.

740. Reynolds, *Faculties of the Soule*, 9-10.

741. Reynolds, *Faculties of the Soule*, 13.

742. Reynolds, *Faculties of the Soule*, 18.

743. Reynolds, *Faculties of the Soule*, 19. See also Shuger, *Sacred Rhetoric*, 199.

and suddenness thereof) proceeds from the immediate restlessness of the imagination.”<sup>744</sup>

Reynolds also focused on the transforming nature of the imagination, going beyond the rationalist or empiricist functions: “Now, the liberty of the imagination . . . is three-fold: creation, as I may so speak, and the making of objects; composition, or new mixing them; and translation, or new placing them: unto some of which three, will be reduced all poetical fictions, fabulous transmutations, high metaphors, and rhetorical allegories; things of excellent use, and ornament in speech.”<sup>745</sup> That transforming nature of the imagination is not just rational, but has more power to persuade and sweeten and delight than to reason.<sup>746</sup>

After all, “that which must persuade the will, must not only have a truth, but a worthiness in it.”<sup>747</sup> This is not just a means of man’s devising, as God Himself sets out creative means of communicating that appeal to people so that they would be without excuse. Reynolds explains that “the creation of the fancy, having a kind of delightful liberty in them, wherewith they refresh and do as it were open and unbind the thoughts, which otherwise by a continual pressure in exacter and more massie reasonings, would easily tyre and despair.”<sup>748</sup>

Reynolds was not unaware of the typical Puritan concerns with the imagination: that the imagination could produce error, melancholy, levity, and distraction; that it could paralyze

---

744. Reynolds, *Faculties of the Soule*, 23-24. See also Shuger, *Sacred Rhetoric*, 207.

745. Reynolds, *Faculties of the Soule*, 24.

746. Reynolds, *Faculties of the Soule*, 19.

747. Reynolds, *Faculties of the Soule*, 20. Interestingly salvation through Jesus is described as faithful and worthy (1 Timothy 1:15; 1 Timothy 4:9).

748. Reynolds, *Faculties of the Soule*, 21-22.

people in fear; and that the devil was keen to use imagination to deceive.<sup>749</sup> To Reynolds, the imagination could not be denied, as it reflected the image of God as part of the simplicity of the soul.<sup>750</sup> His emphases seem to find parallels in Edwards.

*Thomas Manton*

Various works of Thomas Manton (AD 1620-1677) were known by Edwards and are often quoted.<sup>751</sup> Wilson H. Kinnach goes so far as to say that Manton “appears to have been esteemed” by Edwards.<sup>752</sup> Manton would not have been an example of imagination to Edwards because of his own creative prowess. When it came to imaginative content, Manton was seen as far less talented in imagination than others such as Thomas Brooks (AD 1608-1680) and Thomas Watson (AD 1620-1686) who wrote pages “often like picture-galleries, in which the pictures are so thickly hung that you can hardly see the walls. . . . [Manton] paints his pictures and exhibits them, and they are always well sketched; but their number is comparatively small.”<sup>753</sup>

---

749. Reynolds, *Faculties of the Soule*, 25-29.

750. Reynolds, *Faculties of the Soule*, 402.

751. The *Catalogue of Books, WJEO*, 26 mentions Dr. Manton’s sermons, with the possibility of seven volumes which were in the Dummer Collection. Edwards himself mentions Manton’s sermons on Psalm 119, Thessalonians, Philippians, and the Commentary on James which would already be multiple volumes. The complete works of Thomas Manton today are collected in 22 volumes. For examples of specific references see: Jonathan Edwards, “Resolutions #65,” *WJE*, 16:758; Jonathan Edwards, “Miscellanies #790,” *WJE*, 18:474; Jonathan Edwards, “Miscellanies #1128,” *WJE*, 20:500; Jonathan Edwards, “Miscellanies #1130[a],” *WJE*, 20:508; Jonathan Edwards, “Miscellanies #1157,” *WJE*, 23:71. The search WJE online function at the Jonathan Edwards Center at Yale University yields 96 occurrences of Manton’s name in *The Works of Jonathan Edwards Online*. See also Ava Chamberlain, “Editors Introduction,” *WJE*, 18:41; Jonathan Edwards, *Typological Writings*, *WJE*, 11:104; Clyde A. Holbrook, “Editors Introduction,” *WJE*, 3:25; Kinnach, “Introduction,” *WJE*, 10:214; Sang Hyun Lee, “Faith,” *WJE*, 21:414; Martin, *Understanding Affections*, 81-82.

752. Kinnach, “Introduction,” 10:194 fn 9.

753. John Charles Ryle, “An Estimate of Manton,” *CWTM*, 2:xiv.

However, Manton is important to this consideration of Edwards' understanding of imagination, because he too was convinced of the importance of a unified person. While holding that the soul has three faculties – the understanding, the will, and the affections<sup>754</sup> – Manton also saw them interacting. Indeed, in every person there is a psychosomatic unity, so that the affections of the soul reveal themselves “in the body, especially in the face.”<sup>755</sup> Affections are not emotions but reflect the interests and drive of a person.<sup>756</sup> Further, the understandings “may work upon our wills and affections.”<sup>757</sup>

Manton saw the imagination as necessary to proper reasoning.<sup>758</sup> There is a parallelism between thinking and imagining,<sup>759</sup> in this sense, even Christ had an imagination.<sup>760</sup> But the thoughts and thinking of God should not demand an imagination. God's higher understanding needs nothing outside of Himself – no objects, no instruments, and no imagination.<sup>761</sup> Yet as people consider and think of divine things, Manton recognized an appropriate imagination of

---

754. Manton, “Thessalonians,” *CWTM*, 3:179.

755. Manton, “The Transfiguration of Christ. Sermon II,” *CWTM*, 1:348.

756. Manton, “Thy Will Be Done in Earth,” *CWTM*, 1:135, 147.

757. Manton, “The Transfiguration of Christ, Sermon II,” *CWTM*, 1:350.

758. Manton, “Sermons Upon Hebrews 11,” *CWTM*, 14:131; Manton, “Sermons Upon 2 Corinthians V,” *CWTM*, 13:418.

759. Manton, “Eighteen Sermons on the Second Chapter of the Second Epistle to the Thessalonians,” *CWTM*, 3:136; Manton, “Sermons Upon the CXIX,” *CWTM*, 7:70.

760. Manton, “The Temptation of Christ. Sermon V,” *CWTM*, 1:302; Manton, “Fifty-Third Chapter of Isaiah,” *CWTM*, 3:394.

761. Manton, “2 Corinthians V,” *CWTM*, 13:418-419.

God.<sup>762</sup> Indeed, God can do exceedingly “above what we can imagine, and above what we can pray for to him.”<sup>763</sup>

But Manton saw the imagination following the loves of the heart.<sup>764</sup> The total depravity of man applies to the use of reason and imagination.<sup>765</sup> Therefore, the imagination cannot be removed entirely from deceit and conceit,<sup>766</sup> and thus can be tied to lies and vain thoughts.<sup>767</sup> It can result in a false spirituality without true graces, such as faith, hope, and love.<sup>768</sup> As such, Manton was clear that imagination does not equate with faith.<sup>769</sup> Spiritual awareness derives more from a taste and knowledge of their truth, than from an imagination of the truth.<sup>770</sup>

Manton also preceded Edwards in considering the power of God over the imagination.

---

762. Manton, “As We Forgive Our Debtors,” *CWTM*, 1:185; Manton, “No Excuse against a Speedy Obeying Christ’s Call,” *CWTM*, 2:126; Manton, “Sermons Upon the CXIX,” *CWTM*, 6:203; Manton, “Sermons Upon the CXIX,” *CWTM*, 7:466; Manton, “Sermons Upon the CXIX,” *CWTM*, 8:442; Manton, “Several Sermons Upon the Twenty-Fifth of St. Matthew,” *CWTM*, 9:488; Manton, “Twenty-Fifth of St. Matthew,” *CWTM*, 10:61; Manton, “Sermons Upon the Eighth Chapter of the Romans,” *CWTM*, 12:337;

763. Manton, “The Sixteenth Sermon. John 3:16,” *CWTM*, 2:342. See also Manton, “Thessalonians,” *CWTM*, 3:136.

764. Manton, “James,” *CWTM*, 4:339.

765. Manton, “A Practical Exposition Upon the Fifty-Third Chapter of Isaiah,” *CWTM*, 3:299; Manton, “Jude,” *CWTM*, 5:253.

766. Manton, “The Excellency of Saving Faith,” *CWTM*, 2:149.

767. Manton, “The Seventeenth Sermon. Deuteronomy 30:15,” *CWTM*, 2:364.

768. Manton, “Sermons Upon the CXIX,” *CWTM*, 7:80; Manton, “Sermons Upon Philippians III,” *CWTM*, 20:26.

769. Manton, “Jude,” *CWTM*, 5:179.

770. Manton, “Sermons Upon the CXIX,” *CWTM*, 6:432.

The grace of God can transform the imagination,<sup>771</sup> since God sanctifies “all the parts and faculties of body and soul.”<sup>772</sup> Every faculty, including understanding, will, and affection, must “express love to God.”<sup>773</sup>

Manton connected the imagination to the senses a little more strongly than Edwards. He saw imagination as tied to “pictures and emblems.”<sup>774</sup> In another exposition, Manton seemed to suggest that the imagination, depending on the senses, forms “conceptions and notions.”<sup>775</sup> While Manton did separate imagination from real and sensible as it applies to Christ’s transfiguration, this was done so that the transfiguration would be understood as an authentic and not a false appearance, and did not denigrate the imagination.<sup>776</sup>

Manton also suggested that which has been recognized in Edwards’ writing as the “liberating imagination.” Imagination is not mere reproduction; it is, at times, a fantasy of things not experienced.<sup>777</sup> Manton admitted that he imagined things not sensed, or reproduced; he imagined connections and possibilities.<sup>778</sup> In one sermon he wrote, “Faith doth succeed always,

---

771. Manton, “A Practical Exposition of the Lord’s Prayer,” *CWTM*, 1:144, 351; Manton, “Sermon XIX,” *CWTM*, 2:390.

772. Manton, “Sermons Upon the CXIX,” *CWTM*, 6:357.

773. Manton, “Sermons Upon the CXIX,” *CWTM*, 6:27; Manton “Thy Will Be Done in Earth,” *CWTM*, 1:131. See also Martin, *Understanding Affections*, 86.

774. Manton, “James,” *CWTM*, 4:71.

775. Manton, “Jude,” *CWTM*, 5:253.

776. Manton, “The Transfiguration of Christ, Sermon II,” *CWTM*, 1:355.

777. Manton, “Sermons Upon the CXIX,” *CWTM*, 8:46.

778. Manton, “The Twelfth Sermon. Job 19:25,” *CWTM*, 2:293.

though not in the way that we imagine and fore-conceive,” he wrote.<sup>779</sup> People can imagine the invisible.<sup>780</sup> This has great import for practical theology, through the practice of meditation: “Imagination and fancy is a great instrument in the work of meditation, but still it must be wisely ordered and guided by reason.”<sup>781</sup>

Manton also saw a role for imagination in preaching. Manton himself explicitly called his hearers to imagine hypothetical scenarios.<sup>782</sup> Manton saw the minds of preachers as one reason for the spiritual decay he witnessed. Preachers truly serving “must ‘bring forth. . . old truths in a new way, *otherwise represented to the imagination or fancy*, to take off that tedium or natural satiety that is in us, . . . that truths may still have a fresh look upon the conscience and affections.”<sup>783</sup>

What can then be seen in Manton is a progressive sense of what the imagination is and can do. While direct correlations cannot be traced to Edwards for any of these thoughts, it is evident that some of Edwards’ understanding of imagination was not novel.

### *John Flavel*

The Puritan John Flavel (AD 1627-1691) was also familiar to, and referenced favorably by, Edwards. Flavel was a like-minded author who saw earthly things as “signs of heavenly

---

779. Manton, “Sermons Upon Hebrews XI,” *CWTM*, 14:378.

780. Manton, “Twenty-Fifth of St. Matthew,” *CWTM*, 10:15.

781. Manton, “Sermons Upon Genesis XXIV.63,” *CWTM*, 17:318.

782. Manton, “Sermons Upon Psalm XIX.13,” *CWTM*, 21:348.

783. Manton, “England’s Spiritual Languishing; with, The Causes and Cure: Discovered in a Sermon Preached Before the Honourable House of Commons, on Their Solemn Day of Fast, at Margaret’s, Westminster, June 28, 1648,” *CWTM*, 5:434. Emphasis added.

things or the things of religion.”<sup>784</sup>

When it came to understanding human nature, Flavel was also one who believed in the unity, or simplicity, of the soul (as opposed to hierarchical faculty psychology).<sup>785</sup> Within the soul lies the power of thought - the ability to cogitate, or muse, or meditate. As Flavel described it, “thoughts are the figments and creatures of the mind.”<sup>786</sup>

Like the others, Flavel understood the imagination as when people “apprehend things absent.”<sup>787</sup> Yet while the soul is embodied, the apprehension of things absent need not to depend on things previously sensed: “It can form thoughts of things which the fancy can present no image of, as when the soul thinks of God, or of itself. This power of cogitation goes with the soul.”<sup>788</sup> The invisible can be seen, since as Flavel wrote, “the eye of the soul is the mind, that thinking, considering, and reasoning power of the soul.”<sup>789</sup> This could encompass studies, enquiries, and meditations, but Flavel required an exercise of humility: “Nor am I such a vain

---

784. Smith, “Editor’s Introduction,” *WJE*, 2:61-62; Wallace E. Anderson, Mason I. Lowance, Jr., David H. Watters, “Editor’s Introduction,” *WJE*, 11:23; Kenneth P. Minkema, “God’s All-Sufficiency for the Supply of Our Wants,” *WJE*, 14:472, fn.5. That Edwards was aware of Flavel can also be seen in *Catalogue*, *WJE*, 26:98, 107, 253. For Edwards’ referencing of Flavel, see *Religious Affections*, *WJE*, 2:137, 170, 171, 181, 182, 186, 213, 215, 233, 366, 372, 375, 433.

785. John Flavel, *Pneumatologia: A Treatise of the Soul of Man*, *WJF*, 2:501. See also Helm, *Human Nature*, 60-61. Flavel, “Sermon VI: Of that Act on Our Part, by Which We Do Actually and Effectually Apply Christ to our Own Souls (John 1:12),” *WJF*, 2:109 says faith is not expressed fully by any one habit or act, either of the mind or will; nor does he see anything contrary to “scripture or philosophy” if it is placed in both the mind and the will.

786. Flavel, *Pneumatologia*, *WJF*, 2:504.

787. Flavel, *Pneumatologia*, *WJF*, 2:500.

788. Flavel, *Pneumatologia*, *WJF*, 2:504.

789. Flavel, *Pneumatologia*, *WJF*, 3:182.



opinionator, as to imagine my discourses every way suitable to the dignity of such subjects; no, no, the more I think and study about them, the more I discern the indistinctness, darkness, crudity, and confusion of my own conceptions.”<sup>790</sup>

Negatively, the natural heart includes the working imagination, “which depending upon sense, and not elevated and rectified by faith, first forms to itself carnal conceptions and notions of God, and then deviseth a way of worship suitable to those notions.”<sup>791</sup>

Like Edwards, Flavel was clear on the power of regeneration on the faculties. Jesus Christ through His ascension “sanctifies the natural gifts and faculties.”<sup>792</sup> The Spirit of God changes the soul by “implanting the principles of grace in all the powers and faculties.”<sup>793</sup> The faculties of the soul remain the same, but they are divested of old qualities and endowed with new qualities.<sup>794</sup>

Flavel called for his readers to imagine. They were to imagine the dangers of approaching hell.<sup>795</sup> But they were also to “imagine what an extasy of joy, and ravishing pleasure it will be,

---

790. Flavel, *Pneumatologia*, *WJF*, 2:484.

791. John Flavel, “Antipharmacum Saluberrimum,” *WJF*, 4:525

792. Flavel, “Sermon XL: The Ascension of Christ Illustrated, and Variously Improved, Being the Second Step of His Exaltation (John 20:17), *WJF*, 1:507.

793. Flavel, “Sermon V: Of the Work of the Spirit More Particularly, by Which the Soul is Enabled to Apply Christ (Eph. 2:1), *WJF*, 2:88.

794. Flavel, “Sermon V,” *WJF*, 2:88-89; Flavel, “Sermon XXV: Of the Nature and Necessity of the New Creature (2 Cor. 5:17), *WJF*, 2:350.

795. Flavel, *Pneumatologia*, *WJF*, 2:547.

for a soul thus to resume its own body.”<sup>796</sup> Positively, Flavel called for his hearers to imagine Christ: “Imagine Christ, like the general of an army, mentioning with honour, on the head of all the hosts of heaven and earth, all the services that the saints have done for him in this world.”<sup>797</sup> This was not for mere illustration or adornment; it was “rhetoric in reverse; instead of beginning with a general idea and expressing it in some figure or image, he begins with the concrete experience and finally arrives at the general idea.”<sup>798</sup>

Considering the Reformed scholastic and the Puritan theology influences leads to the consideration that Edwards should not be seen as just a philosopher, or just a theologian; rather, he is a theologian-philosopher, or a philosopher-theologian. Edwards stood at the place where the two streams converged: the philosophical thoughtfulness and the Puritan conviction that man lives cognizant because of the goodness of God. He used his philosophical acumen to defend and support Reformed theology, engaging “in the perennial task of reconciling faith with reason.”<sup>799</sup>

In conclusion, Edwards does display some continuity with other Puritans – though as it relates to the imagination, there is an eclecticism that does not allow consistency with a simple Puritan definition. This does not reflect an absurd, or broken perspective of the imagination, but rather what Edward Davidson intriguingly calls a “kind of baroquerie of the mind.”<sup>800</sup> Charles

---

796. Flavel, “Sermon XXXIX: Wherein the Resurrection of Christ, with Its Influences upon the Saints Resurrection, Is Clearly Opened, and Comfortably Applied, Being the First Step of His Exaltation (Matth. 28:6),” *WJF*, 1:495.

797. Flavel, “Sermon XLII: Christ’s Advent to Judgment, Being the Fourth and Last Degree of His Exaltation, Illustrated and Improved (Acts 10:42),” *WJF*, 1:529.

798. Ramsey, “Editor’s Introduction,” *WJE*, 2:62.

799. Hall, “Enlightenment,” *JEE*, 200.

800. Davidson, *Puritan Mind*, vii-viii.

Geschiere hints similarly:

He [Edwards] adopted the inherited Puritan method handed down to him, adapted it and used it to the fullest sense possible. With great eloquence, he tried to cast grand visions of God like the great Michelangelo did in the Sistine Chapel; in fugue-like repetition with power akin to Bach, he explored every Idea and Doctrine – with one aim: not the tickling of the ears, not the titillation of the eyes, but the moving of the heart, mind, will, and soul, toward God.<sup>801</sup>

### 3.3.3 Biblical Influences

While some of the philosophical and theological influences on Edwards' understanding of imagination cannot be denied, they should also not be overstated. In the same way, while the philosophical and theological influences on Edwards' understanding of human nature also cannot be denied,<sup>802</sup> a wide reading of Edwards reveals that his answers reflect a foundational influence from the Bible.<sup>803</sup> If Edwards' answers to anthropological issues were biblical, then it is reasonable to suggest that the Bible also influenced his understanding of imagination. It is therefore a goal of this section to consider the biblical influences on Edwards' understanding of the imagination.

Some secondary research has declared that divine Scripture was Edwards' "most

---

801. Geschiere, "Aesthetic-Affectional Preaching," 123.

802. The philosopher Leslie Stevenson, *Thirteen Theories of Human Nature*, Seventh Edition (New York: Oxford University Press, 2018), 1-2 suggests that a complete theory of human nature requires: a background theory of the nature of the universe; a theory concerning the essence of human beings; an explanation for the ills of the present human condition; and a prescription for the alleviation of human ills. See also Van Leeuwen, *Person in Psychology*, 46.

803. See Erdt, "Calvinist Psychology," 165-180; Simonson, *Theologian of the Heart*, 12, 28; Sweeney, "Edwards Studies Today," *OHJE*, 577.

important primary source.”<sup>804</sup> It has been suggested that the mature Edwards was more “able to express himself biblically.”<sup>805</sup> Yet, despite scholars having called for recognition of Edwards’ biblical principles,<sup>806</sup> the influence of Holy Scripture on Edwards is a neglected area of research and deserves more attention.

There is primary research that defends the primacy of Scripture in Edwards’ work. He was explicit as to his own view of Scripture. In his twenty-eighth resolution he: “resolved, to study the Scriptures so steadily, constantly and frequently, as that I may find, and plainly perceive myself to grow in the knowledge of the same.” And then concerning the application of Scripture in Resolution #44, he adds: “Resolved, that no other end but religion, *shall have any influence at all* on any of my actions; and that no action shall be, in the least circumstance, any otherwise than the religious end will carry it.”<sup>807</sup> Edwards’ ‘Blank Bible’ reveals the centre of

---

804. Sweeney, “Edwards Studies Today,” *OHJE*, 577. See also Elwood, *Philosophical Theology*, 10-11, 121; Kenneth Minkema, “Jonathan Edwards’ Scriptural Practices,” in *Jonathan Edwards and Scripture: Biblical Exegesis in British North America*, ed. David P. Barshinger and Douglas A. Sweeney (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018), 18; Stephen R. C. Nichols, “Jonathan Edwards’ Principles of Interpreting Scripture,” in *Edwards and Scripture*, ed. David P. Barshinger and Douglas A. Sweeney, 34. Even Peter Gay, whose own views were unsympathetic, declared in *Loss of Mastery: Puritan Historians in Colonial America* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1966), 97 that “for Edwards, the authority of the Bible is absolute.”

805. Oliphint, “Reformed Apologist,” 169; Colacurcio, “Example of Edwards,” 58 disagrees, saying that after 1750, the philosophical becomes more explicit.

806. See Cherry, *Religious Imagination*, 2; Samuel Hopkins, *The Life and Character of the Late Reverend Mr. Jonathan Edwards* (Boston: S. Kneeland, 1765), 41; Minkema, “Dordtian Philosopher,” 253; Stephen J. Stein, “Jonathan Edwards and the Rainbow: Biblical Exegesis and Poetic Imagination,” *New England Quarterly* 47, no. 3 (Sept. 1974): 440; Stephen J. Stein, “Scripture (Exegetical Sources),” *JEE*, 516.

807. Jonathan Edwards, “Resolutions,” *WJE*, 16: 755; emphasis added. See also Kimmach, “Introduction,” *WJE*, 10:55, 70-71. This focus on Scriptures for various reasons can also be found in Edwards, “Subjects of Inquiry,” *WJEO*, 28.

his mental life. This is reinforced by his collection of commentaries on Scripture, primarily from Matthew Poole (AD 1624-1679), Matthew Henry (AD 1662-1714), and Philip Doddridge (AD 1702-1751).<sup>808</sup>

So, despite various connections to philosophical and theological influences, the primary influence on Edwards can be considered to be biblical. The biblical influence related to a homiletical use of imagination can be ascertained within the three areas: unified psychology, types and allegory, and examples of preaching.

### *Biblical Unified Psychology*

One aspect of Edwards' understanding of God is that he is "the author of all knowledge and understanding whatsoever."<sup>809</sup> God is not just the author of knowledge and understanding regarding Himself, but is also the creator and author of understanding regarding anthropology and psychology.<sup>810</sup> In discussing identity, Edwards stated that it was "the Most High" who could cause to exist or create another person.<sup>811</sup> He saw the Bible clearly teaching that the source of a unified psychology is God, and that such a unified psychology is reflective of the image of God. He also saw a unified psychology reflected in the terminology of the Bible, and evidenced in the creative force in life.

The source of, or creation of, the human mind is God. Humanity exists because of, and in

---

808. Thuesen, "Sources of Edwards's Thought," *OHJE*, 78.

809. Edwards, "A Divine and Supernatural Light," *WJE*, 17:409.

810. This can be said of Calvinist psychology; see Van Leeuwen, *Person in Psychology*, 42.

811. Edwards, "The Mind," *WJE*, 6:386.

relation to, God.<sup>812</sup> Accordingly, the human soul is also from God.<sup>813</sup> Further as Edwards said: “The emanation or communication of the divine fullness, consisting in the knowledge of God, love to God, and joy in God, has relation indeed both to God and the creature; but it has relation to God as its fountain, as it is an emanation from God; and as the communication itself, or thing communicated, is something divine, something of God.”<sup>814</sup>

Even while the Bible discusses the imagination as evil, Edwards maintained that the post-fall person still retains some of the image of God. God is the prime and original being, and minds are made in his image, so much so that people “may judge what is the excellence of other minds by what is his.”<sup>815</sup> This retained image would imply a continued place for imagination that is redeemable. While the weight of Greek thought regarding human nature put the emphasis on intellect (and thereby ranked people by intellect), the biblical tradition put the emphasis on the heart (and thereby eliminated ranking).<sup>816</sup> Not only that, but because it is impossible for God to be anything other than excellent,<sup>817</sup> being made in the image of God with an imagination, was excellent. It is man’s sin that makes the imagination evil; it is not evil in itself. The transformation that happens after regeneration changes the heart of a person, “to be in his image”

---

812. Edwards, “The Mind,” *WJE*, 6:380; Jonathan Edwards, “Outline of ‘A Rational Account,’” *WJE*, 6:396; Jonathan Edwards, “Treatise on Grace,” *WJE*, 21:172-173. Edwards saw this in the biblical record of Genesis 1:27 and Colossians 1:17. For broader academic support of divine creation of humanity see Stevenson, *Human Nature*, 122.

813. Edwards, *Religious Affections*, *WJE*, 2:96.

814. Jonathan Edwards, “Concerning the End for Which God Created the World,” *WJE*, 8:531.

815. Edwards, “The Mind,” *WJE*, 6:362-363.

816. Stevenson, *Human Nature*, 124.

817. Edwards, “The Mind,” *WJE*, 6:381.

again,<sup>818</sup> and this delights God.<sup>819</sup> Indeed, it is the excellency, goodness, and happiness of God that can be received by a person's faculty of perceiving and approving.<sup>820</sup>

The biblical tradition of emphasis on the heart of a person provides the proper context for understanding the heart as inclusive of the understanding and the will. It is true that this emphasis on the heart was part of the philosophical and theological thinking happening at Harvard.<sup>821</sup> While this idea may be traced to others such as Ames, the presupposition that the heart includes the will and the intellect, does not just align with seventeenth-century Puritan thinking. But even more significantly, it reflects a biblical understanding of the Hebrew term *leb*.<sup>822</sup> Edwards could therefore identify the heart as including the will and affections together, because he saw this confirmed "by the Scriptures."<sup>823</sup>

While recognizing the philosophical distinctions that had been proposed between heart and understanding and will, Edwards was convinced that "the Scriptures are ignorant of the philosophic distinction."<sup>824</sup> This may also explain the correlations between Edwards and some unexpected friends, such as parallels to the *Habad* branch of Hasidic Judaism and its Old

---

818. Jonathan Edwards, "Christians a Chosen Generation," *WJE*, 17:325.

819. Jonathan Edwards, "Miscellanies #679," *WJE* 18:238.

820. Jonathan Edwards, "Miscellanies #1142. Glory of God. End of Creation," *WJE*, 20:517.

821. Fiering, "Will and Intellect," 518.

822. See van Vliet, *Reformed System*, 66; Erdt, *Sense of the Heart*, 5-6.

823. Edwards, "The Mind," *WJE*, 6:352. See also Martin, *Understanding Affections*, 116.

824. Jonathan Edwards, "Subjects to be Handled in the Treatise on the Mind," *WJE*, 6:389.

Testament sources, which also insist that the “mind is a unified entity.”<sup>825</sup>

Edwards should not be seen as inventive when it comes to the unified operations of the human soul.<sup>826</sup> The biblical influence is substantial, and should cloud such enthusiastic comments that Edwards brought “understanding, will and affections into a *new* unity.”<sup>827</sup> Edwards was not creating a psychology that generally identified the heart with the will and affections, but was preserving the “tenor of Biblical teaching,” or at least his understanding of it.<sup>828</sup>

If the unified understanding of heart and all it contains is biblical, then it provides a place for imagination, which subsequently means that Edwards’ work does reflect a biblical understanding of the imagination.<sup>829</sup> As stated previously, imagination is heart-based mental activity. Edwards has been understood as seeing the heart as “the faculty that leads to synthesis, and the redeemed heart brings the beatific vision of true wholeness.”<sup>830</sup> It is that synthesis which has, and will, fight against the decay of vital religion.<sup>831</sup> And it is this sense of the heart that

---

825. Joseph P. Schultz, “The Religious Psychology of Jonathan Edwards and the Hassidic Masters of Habad,” *Journal of Ecumenical Studies* 10, no. 4 (Fall 1973): 716.

826. Both *Freedom of the Will* and *Original Sin* display this. See Waddington, “Will,” *JEE*, 600.

827. Smith, *Jonathan Edwards*, 1. Emphasis added.

828. Erdt, *Sense of the Heart*, 5.

829. This idea came through reading Searle and was fortified by Simonson, *Theologian of the Heart*, 31 where Simonson comments that Edwards’ way of knowing should be “distinguished by its Hebraic rather than Hellenic mode.” See also Colacurcio, “Edwards: Idealist Imagination,” 95.

830. Simonson, *Theologian of the Heart*, 89.

831. Elwood, *Philosophical Theology*, 116.



strikingly parallels understandings of imagination that come much later than Edwards.<sup>832</sup>

Understanding the unified human nature of the Bible, Edwards also embraced the biblical union of the soul and body. In writing about the location of minds, Edwards referenced the law that is “the union between soul and body. So the soul may be said to be in the brain. . . . The mind is so united with the body that an alteration is caused in the body, it is probable, by every action of the mind.”<sup>833</sup> He wanted to address further the laws and consequences of the soul’s union with the body.<sup>834</sup> Like Voetius, Edwards seemed to be cautious about the body unwittingly altering the exercise of the soul, while recognizing that the body may still promote affections.<sup>835</sup> This emphasized personal responsibility, the uniqueness and value of every person, and the potential for creativity.

#### *Biblical Types and Allegories*

The Bible is both simple and plain, as well as mysterious. Prior to Edwards, the Protestant Reformation had generally overturned the medieval reliance on allegory and symbolism in favour of a more literal approach. Yet, the Reformers acknowledged the figural

---

832. Cherry, *Religious Imagination*, 8.

833. Edwards, “The Mind,” *WJE*, 6:338-339.

834. See Edwards, “The Mind,” *WJE*, 6:392. In Jonathan Edwards, “Miscellanies #1233,” *WJE*, 23:166 a quote from *Deism Revealed* is included in which the unified body and soul is used as evidence that there is nothing impossible or absurd about the incarnation of Christ.

835. Edwards, *Religious Affections*, *WJE*, 2:98. See also Martin, *Understanding Affections*, 84.

realities of some passages, and Edwards embraced that allowance.<sup>836</sup> Typology and allegory<sup>837</sup> were imaginative forms of expression found in the Bible that Edwards welcomed, because while they could be easily misunderstood, he saw them as reflecting God's design and accommodation.

Edwards embraced typology and allegory because the Bible used typology and allegory. The beginning of his manuscript on types is full of Scriptural citations, because Edwards saw in Scripture "a typical world."<sup>838</sup> Through the prophet Hosea, God Himself explained how He had given symbols (Hosea 12:10). Those symbols were not just metaphors; they could also be in nature as well as the historic events recorded in Scripture.<sup>839</sup>

Edwards' use of typology and allegory has been explained for other reasons. Stein has suggested that Edwards focused on this to engage Enlightenment criticism of the Bible by finding a relationship between reason and revelation.<sup>840</sup> Nichols sees the confidence in figural language as one way that Edwards distanced himself from Locke.<sup>841</sup>

---

836. Anderson, "Editor's Introduction," *Typological Writings, WJE*, 11:5-6.

837. The distinction between types and allegories is not always clear. According to Donald McKim, ed., *Westminster Dictionary of Theological Terms* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 1996), 290, a type is an example or figure, "person or event that foreshadows or symbolizes another." Similarly, an allegory is a "description of one thing under the image of another. Communication of meaning by assigning a nonliteral meaning to elements or images in a story" (ibid, 7). Historically the difference has been that typology was often limited to Old Testament types that foreshadowed New Testament fulfillment. Edwards clearly went beyond this understanding.

838. Edwards, "Types," *WJE*, 11:146.

839. Jonathan Edwards, "Notes on the Apocalypse," *WJE*, 5:138; Jonathan Edwards, "Types of the Messiah," *WJE*, 11:202.

840. Stein, "Introduction," *WJE*, 15:2. See also Minkema, "Scriptural Practices," 24.

841. Nichols, "Interpreting Scripture," 45.

Edwards saw this typology as God's design for thoughtfulness. Types were for knowledge: "For, for what end is a type or picture, but to give some knowledge of the antitype or thing painted?"<sup>842</sup> Indeed, to Edwards, it seemed people were made for this: "What principles of human nature render types a fit method of instruction: it tends to enlighten and illustrate, and to convey instruction with impression, conviction and pleasure, and to help the memory. These things are confirmed by man's natural delight in the imitative arts, in painting, poetry, fables, metaphorical language [and] dramatic performances. This disposition appears early in children."<sup>843</sup> And so, Edwards pointed to the Scriptures' own promotion of typology for people's benefit.<sup>844</sup> After all, through a few words, a vast amount of "things that we are not able to behold directly are represented before us in lively pictures."<sup>845</sup>

Typology is an understanding of an eternal language that is in Scripture, as well as in nature, history, and in the moral life.<sup>846</sup> Indeed, Edwards saw God's works as "a kind a voice or language of God, to instruct intelligent beings in things pertaining to Himself."<sup>847</sup> In his 1728

---

842. Edwards, "Types," *WJE*, 11:148.

843. Edwards, "Types of the Messiah," *WJE*, 11:191.

844. Edwards, "Types," *WJE*, 11:146-147. More inclusive passages include Galatians 4 and 1 Corinthians 10 and Hebrews 9. Specific verses include Matthew 13:15, Matthew 16:11-12; Hebrews 5:10-12.

845. Jonathan Edwards, "Miscellanies #*dd*. Scripture," *WJE*, 13:181. See also Michael J. McClymond and Gerald R. McDermott, *The Theology of Jonathan Edwards* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 123.

846. See Jonathan Edwards, "Miscellanies #119. Types," *WJE*, 13:284.

847. Jonathan Edwards, "Images of Divine Things," *WJE*, 11:67; Edwards, "Types," *WJE*, 11: 150-151. See also Stuart Piggin and Dianne Cook, "Keeping Alive the Heart in the Head: The Significance of 'Eternal Language' in the Aesthetics of Jonathan Edwards and S.T. Coleridge," *Literature and Theology* 18, no. 4 (December 2004): 387; Westra, *Task and Calling*, 51.

sermon “Profitable Hearers of the Word,” Edwards described his view of parable and allegory: it is engaging, instructive, and familiar so that people “might have some exercise for our understandings to find out the truth contained in them. Our understandings were given us to be used, and above all to be exercised, in divine things. . . . God gives us the gold, but he gives it to us in a mine that we might dig for it and get in a way of our own industry.”<sup>848</sup> Edwards did not hold to the argument that all types needed to have a clear anti-type in Scripture, as God has not defined or explained all types in Scripture. However, God has taught his people the language of types – a language that people should grow more acquainted with.<sup>849</sup> So, images in language, or history, or nature were valid for the study of the saints.<sup>850</sup>

Use of typology and allegory could therefore be misunderstood; it was not an unlimited license to interpret Scripture according without boundaries.<sup>851</sup> After all, recognizing and describing types was not equivalent to having spiritual knowledge.<sup>852</sup> Indeed, according to Edwards, types can be easily misinterpreted by the imagination: “So when an interpretation of a Scripture type or allegory, is immediately, in an extraordinary way, strongly suggested, it is by suggesting words, as though one secretly whispered, and told the meaning; or by exciting others

---

848. Jonathan Edwards, “Profitable Hearers of the Word. A sermon on Matthew 13:23,” *WJE*, 14:246. See also Robert L. Boss, “Allegorical Method,” *JEE*, 16; McClymond and McDermott, *Theology*, 176.

849. Edwards, “Types,” *WJE*, 11:150-151; Edwards, “Miscellanies #1139. Types,” *WJE*, 20:516.

850. Nichols, “Interpreting Scripture,” 45.

851. Nichols, “Interpreting Scripture,” 48.

852. Edwards, *Religious Affections*, *WJE*, 2:278.

ideas in the imagination.”<sup>853</sup> Yet in response to the potential abuse of types, Edwards wrote,

I don't know that the types of Scripture are more abused by people that are enthusiastic and of teeming imagination than the visionary representations of the book of Revelation. And yet none makes that an objection against all attempts to understand that book. We have as good warrant from the Word of God to suppose the whole ceremonial law to be given in order to a figurative representing and signifying spiritual and evangelical things to mankind, as we have to suppose that prophetic representations are to represent and signify the events designed by them, and therefore as good reason to endeavor to interpret them.<sup>854</sup>

The biblical use of typology and allegory gave Edwards a degree of imaginative license.

While Edwards should not be grouped with medieval allegorists, some of his interpretations went beyond the biblical correspondences and “might more appropriately be described as, simply, figurative.”<sup>855</sup> While this use may hint at philosophical reasoning, it may be better seen as respect for God. Edwards saw God’s work everywhere, and desired to understand as much of that work as possible. Helm properly concludes, “This is epistemology which merges the sources of both general and special revelation, triggered by Jonathan Edwards’ intellect, piety, *and imagination*, as well as his scientist’s eye for the detail of the living world.”<sup>856</sup>

### *Biblical Description of Preaching*

It can be understood that “Edwards’s lifelong work as a pastor served as the starting point and context of his theological reflection – many of his theological contributions were first

---

853. Edwards, *Religious Affections*, *WJE*, 2:286.

854. Edwards, “Types of the Messiah,” *WJE*, 11:323-324.

855. Anna Svetlikova, “Allegorical Method,” *JEE*, 18.

856. Helm, “Epistemology,” *OHJE*, 117, emphasis added. See also Stephen R. C. Nichols, “Revelation,” *OHJE*, 171. Reklis, “Imagination and Hermeneutics,” *OHJE*, 309-310 sees sanctified imagination as the key to understanding Edwards’ system of typology.

offered in the form of sermons.”<sup>857</sup> And while Edwards’ sermons may reflect imagination, they do so because the biblical record allowed for it. His use of imagination can be understood as being influenced by the preaching contained in the Bible – preaching seen as proclamation, and yet full of exemplars and imagination.

The Bible’s description of preaching is proclamation of God’s Word. That is to remain a priority. The Word of God is to be the study and business of the pastor.<sup>858</sup> Though called to strengthen the saints’ love and joy, the preacher is to preach the Word.<sup>859</sup> Even when people neglect the Word, the minister is to faithfully preach the Word of God.<sup>860</sup> The only way spiritual understanding is healthy is through the hearing of the preaching of the Word.<sup>861</sup>

The preachers of Scripture proclaimed God’s Word and yet did so imaginatively. Edwards recognized in John the Baptist one who “preached to the people in a very earnest manner, warning of their danger, calling upon ‘em to fly from the wrath to come with great pathos, manifesting his great engagedness not only in words but deeds.”<sup>862</sup> And yet even Christ did not see John the Baptist as being moved by false enthusiasm. This was not just special revelation, or historical record, but the model for contemporary preachers. The trumpet of God’s

---

857. Dyrness and Wells, “Aesthetics,” *OHJE*, 297.

858. Jonathan Edwards, “Stupid as Stones: a sermon on Ezekiel 3:27,” *WJE*, 17:447.

859. Edwards, *Religious Affections*, *WJE*, 2:116.

860. Edwards, “Stupid as Stones: a sermon on Ezekiel 3:27,” *WJE*, 17:182.

861. Edwards, “Profitable Hearers of the Word: a sermon on Matthew 13:23,” *WJE*, 14:256; Jonathan Edwards, “Notes on Scripture,” *WJE*, 15:359.

862. Jonathan Edwards, “Miscellanies #1058. Enthusiasm,” *WJE*, 20:395.

Word is to be blown.<sup>863</sup>

Preachers are to humbly endeavour to follow Christ's example.<sup>864</sup> Christ used analogies and similitudes and presented his hearers with lively pictures.<sup>865</sup> With the clear recognition of being a voice of God, as an ambassador sent out by Christ Himself, Edwards was "acutely attentive not only to the content but also to the modes and manners in which Christ and the biblical teachers address their listeners."<sup>866</sup> Again, there is a blending of two things, or the fusion of the pastoral and prophetic in one role.<sup>867</sup>

This was not an imaginary fusion for Edwards: he saw Christ filling this role. So even the metaphors of ministry in Scripture – such as steward, ambassador, light, and olive branch – led Edwards to see Christ as the incarnation and perfect example of gospel ministry.<sup>868</sup> Therefore, one of the early studies of Edwards' homiletics concludes that preachers "cannot overestimate the importance in Edwards' pastoral theology, of his assumption that Christ's earthly ministry is the visible, audible demonstration of the words and word He has since delegated to his ministerial ambassadors."<sup>869</sup>

---

863. Jonathan Edwards, "One Great End in God's Appointing The Gospel Ministry," *WJE*, 17:446. See also Edwards, "Notes on the Apocalypse," *WJE*, 5:130.

864. Jonathan Edwards, "Christ the Great Example of Gospel Ministers. A Sermon on John 13:15-16," *WJE*, 25:341.

865. Jonathan Edwards, "Miscellanies #dd," *WJE*, 13:181.

866. Westra, *Task and Calling*, 69.

867. David Hall, *The Faithful Shepherd: A History of the New England Ministry in the Seventeenth Century* (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 1972), 269; Westra, *Task and Calling*, 130-131.

868. Westra, *Task and Calling*, 232-234.

869. Westra, *Task and Calling*, 14.

Within the Scriptures, Edwards also found models of preaching that demanded imagination. In preaching one sermon on Isaiah 27:13, Edwards showed “how the preaching of the Word may fitly be compared to the blowing of a trumpet.”<sup>870</sup> In a sermon on Micah 2:11, Edwards imagined the dramatic consequences of being hearers of the Word who only want their lusts gratified.<sup>871</sup> Westra describes that in this sermon, “Edwards’ imagination cleverly – one could almost say perversely – operates to create a fictional pulpit in which ministers preach sin, offer rewards for evil, promise freedom from punishment for willing sins, and encourage their parishioners to drink, game, and lust.”<sup>872</sup> And so Edwards could speak of times where “one seems to be actually present; and we insensibly fancy, not that we are readers, but spectators, yea, actors in the business. These little circumstances wonderfully help to brighten the ideas of the more principal parts of the history.”<sup>873</sup>

Many scholars today would assume that the influence of, or dependence on, biblical revelation would negate the theological and philosophical influences, or that they would stand in direct contrast with one another. This may also explain the neglect of studying Edwards’ understanding of Scripture as it has impacted his work.<sup>874</sup> However, within the Reformed Scholastic paradigm, it is very possible to advocate for a philosophical and theological

---

870. Jonathan Edwards, “The Blowing of the Great Trumpet,” *WJE*, 22:440.

871. Jonathan Edwards, “Mic. 2:11,” *Sermons, Series II, 1733, WJEO*, 48#304.

872. Westra, *Task and Calling*, 94.

873. Jonathan Edwards, “Miscellanies #6. Scripture,” *WJE*, 13:202-203.

874. David W. Kling, “Jonathan Edwards, the Bible, and Conversion,” in *Jonathan Edwards and Scripture*, ed. David P. Barshinger and Douglas A. Sweeney, 213.



understanding of imagination framed within biblical parameters.<sup>875</sup> The Reformed and Puritan influences were real and significant because they too emphasized Scripture.<sup>876</sup> Calvin himself said, “I leave it to the philosophers to discuss these faculties in their subtle way. For the upbuilding of godliness a simple definition be enough for us. I, indeed, agree that the things they teach are true, not only enjoyable, but also profitable to learn, and skillfully assembled by them. And I do not forbid those who are desirous of learning to study them.”<sup>877</sup>

With that recognition of biblical background, it could be that Edwards’ seeming multitudinous influences were merely the wrestling of a reader of the Scriptures who thought philosophically.

### 3.3.4 Conclusion on Influences

The influences on Edwards that have been considered here are philosophical, theological, and biblical. There are others. The question becomes, which influences are historically contextual, and which are intellectually foundational to any retrieval of Edwards’ homiletical use of imagination?

The interaction of influences is difficult to untangle. After all, the inclusion of one influence on Edwards does not mean his entire understanding of imagination was shaped by that

---

875. Lapine, *Logic of the Body*, 8; Sheehan, *Enlightenment Bible*, 1. See also Herman Bavinck, *Reformed Dogmatics*, trans. John Vriend, ed. John Bolt (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2004), 66-68, 75; Calvin, *Institutes*, I.i.2, I.xiv.20-22; Van Leeuwen, *Person in Psychology*, 239-240. This follows Augustine’s dictum: *credo ut intelligam* (I believe so I may understand). Though not Reformed nor biblical, that personal belief may inform and affirm philosophical positions has also been acknowledged by Michael Polanyi, *Personal Knowledge: Towards a Post-Critical Philosophy* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1962), 256, 266.

876. Erdt, “Calvinist Psychology,” 167; Marsden, “Historical and Ecclesiastical Contexts,” *OHJE*, 34-35, 46.

877. Calvin, *Institutes*, 1.15.6.

one influence. The reality is more complex. Consider how a term like *faculty* could be understood: like Locke, or as Miller says, because of Locke, Edwards had to use known terms like *faculty*.<sup>878</sup> Yet Edwards did not subscribe to the Scholastic psychology that proposed that every faculty is a unique power capable of acting distinctly.<sup>879</sup> While they differ, they are all modes of thinking. And so, Edwards can be seen as modifying the concept of faculty psychology of his day. He organized human behaviour under just two headings: the understanding, which perceives, discerns, and judges things; and the affections, which combine the will and the heart.<sup>880</sup>

While reflecting various historical influences, Edwards was able to see the larger issue, which, in the case of imagination, was the moral, holistic person.<sup>881</sup> Perry Miller suggested that

---

878. Miller, *Edwards*, 181.

879. Willem Van Vlastuin, "Faculties," *JEE*, 217; Waddington, *Human Soul*, 38. As Todd, "What is a Person?," 130 states, for Edwards, "faculties are not separate, self-determining entities. Rather, the moral agent is the person, *not* the individual faculty. Thanks to Lockean faculty psychology, Edwardsean personhood was noticeably unitary." Edwards' use of the word 'faculty' should not be mistaken for an adoption of Scholastic faculty psychology. Fiering, "Will and Intellect," 517-518 explains how the rejection of historic 'faculty psychology' is too simplistic, because even in the times of Locke and Edwards, *facultas* did not mean distinct agents with distinct realms able only to command, obey, and perform distinct actions. *Facultas* meant, "ability of power and no more."

880. Edwards, *Religious Affections*, *WJE* 2:97-98. See also Hambrick-Stowe, "Spirituality and Devotion," *OHJE*, 365; Van Vlastuin, "Faculties," *JEE*, 217.

881. That does not mean Edwards did not distinguish between the intellect and will; he just did not conceive of them as separate beings, with one of a higher value. See Edwards, *Freedom of the Will*, *WJE*, 1:163. See also Cherry, *Reappraisal*, 14-19; Kosits, "Psychological Thought," *JEE*, 473; McClymond and McDermott, *Theology*, 314; Smith, "Editor's Introduction," *WJE*, 2:11-12; Obbie Tyler Todd, "What is a Person? Three Essential Criteria For Jonathan Edwards's Doctrine of Personhood," *Journal of Evangelical Theological Society* 61, no. 1 (2018): 129-131. This idea would be continued through Archibald Alexander, *Thoughts on Religious Experience* (Carlisle, PA: Banner of Truth Trust, 1989), 63.

Edwards was ahead of his time on this,<sup>882</sup> but it may be more accurate to see him reflecting biblical norms. This understanding of the holistic person also helps contextualize some of Edwards' debate with Charles Chauncy (AD 1705-1787) in the 1740s as Chauncy argued his case based on Scholastic 'faculty' psychology in which the reason, imagination, and will were distinct and the affections were separate and autonomous.<sup>883</sup>

In conclusion, Edwards reflected a seemingly integrative approach to imagination, with significant continental interaction,<sup>884</sup> and an effort to remain biblical.<sup>885</sup> In this, the influences on Edwards' understanding of imagination contribute to a retrieval of imagination for homiletics, because they display the importance of understanding the relationship between soul and body; in other words, the understanding of where the imagination is impacts what the imagination can do.<sup>886</sup> And so, Edwards is an example of not promoting one philosophical method or concept. Rather, like a Baroque master, his understanding of Scriptural teaching was "the cantus firmus that persists through all of his thought, even amid the polyphonic complexity of his appropriation

---

882. Miller, *Edwards*, xxxii, 182.

883. Miller, *Edwards*, 177. See also Oliphint, "Reformed Apologist," 170; Reklis, "Imagination and Hermeneutics," *OHJE*, 313-314; Smith, "Editor's Introduction," *WJE*, 2:13-15. McClymond and McDermott, *Theology*, 685 point out this anthropological difference would arise again after the 1801-1802 revival.

884. See Neele, "Exchanges," 21-33.

885. Sweeney, "Edwards Studies Today," *OHJE*, 578.

886. In this Edwards provides a conceptual topology for imagination (the set of interrelated concepts that here includes biblical, theological, and philosophical influences regarding the moral heart, the mind, body-soul connections, etc. that shapes the activity of the imagination). See Sepper, *Understanding Imagination*, 50. For examples of other studies that have considered Edwards' unified psychology see Waddington, *Human Soul*, 216-228 for application to apologetics.

of other sources.”<sup>887</sup> While such an approach may not be clean-cut and simple, it itself is imaginative, and he would not be the first to reflect a myriad of influences.<sup>888</sup> This integrative approach is evident in Edwards’ homiletics.

### 3.4 Edwards’ Potential Contribution to a Homiletical Use of Imagination

While Edwards’ works display an understanding of imagination and reflect various influences regarding imagination, the question of his potential contribution to a homiletical use of imagination remains.<sup>889</sup> This dissertation is not about Edwards’ preaching or sermon understanding in general. Much of that discussion can be found elsewhere.<sup>890</sup> Prior to evaluating whether a homiletical use of imagination may benefit from one perspective of select sermons, this section will explore the context of Edwards’ imaginative work within his homiletical tradition. Any contribution of Edwards’ homiletical use of imagination is best grasped when the homiletical context is understood properly.

---

887. Thuesen, “Sources of Edwards’s Thought,” *OHJE*, 77. See also Charles E. Hambrick-Stowe, “Language of the Heart: The Bible in Jonathan Edwards’ Personal Life and Spiritual Practice,” in *Edwards and Scripture*, ed. David P. Barshinger and Douglas A. Sweeney, 68-85; Charles E. Hambrick-Stowe, “Spirituality and Devotion,” *OHJE*, 354-355; Helm, “Epistemology,” *OHJE*, 111.

888. Support for such a nuanced position can be found in other literature, such as Ezra Sullivan, “The Church Fathers’ Influence on Aquinas’s Account of *Habitus*,” in *Reading the Church Fathers with St. Thomas Aquinas*, ed. J. Vijgen and P. Roszak, Historical and Systematical Perspectives (Turnhout, Belgium: Brepols Publishers, 2021), 152: “Aquinas’s most developed concept of *habitus* is a place where concepts from all over the moral world meet, intermingle, rub shoulders, and find their way home – thanks to his unique synthesis of Patristic and philosophic sources.”

889. Painter, “Preacher and the Imagination,” 100-103 covers only superficially the infamous sermon, “Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God.”

890. To begin see Wilson H. Kimnach, “The Sermons: Concept and Execution,” in *The Princeton Companion to Jonathan Edwards*, ed. Sang Hyun Lee (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005), 243-257.

Part of the context of Edwards' homiletics is the long tradition of Christian and Puritan preachers that Edwards inherited. For years, the Puritan plain tradition was considered mechanical and rigid, in which the text was opened and explicated in basic terms. The stereotype became that plain preaching set forth doctrines in a flat, indicative manner, "with no other transition than a period and a number; after the last proof is stated there follow the uses or applications, also in numbered sequence, and the sermon ends when there is nothing more to be said."<sup>891</sup> Some early interpreters understood Edwards as a meager and mellow preacher whose preaching was not mere boring reading of manuscripts.<sup>892</sup> It seems that Edwards did not fall into the patterns of Ramist rhetoric as taught at Yale, nor the subsequent unadorned plain style encouraged by Perkins and Ames.<sup>893</sup> Rather, it seems that Edwards blended Ramist and Puritan homiletical theories, adopting what has been described as a "balanced rhetoric, one that emphasized all given traditional topics of classical theory – invention, arrangement, style,

---

891. Miller, *New England Mind*, 332-333.

892. Jim Ehrhard, "A Critical Analysis of the Tradition of Jonathan Edwards as a Manuscript Preacher," *Westminster Theological Journal* 60 (1998): 71-84. It seems unlikely Edwards would have been hired in Northampton in 1726, when his grandfather Solomon Stoddard preached in 1723 "The Defects of Preachers Reproved" (Evans Early American Imprint Collection) which included the position that the reading of sermons is not commendable, nor to be allowed.

893. Gescheire, "Aesthetic-Affectional Preaching," 106-111 suggests that the continuity between Ramus and the later Puritans was so strong, the Puritan model was application of Ramist theory. Likewise Kimmach, "Introduction," *WJE*, 10:4 concludes that Edwards' "studies in rhetoric were dominated by the philosophy of Peter Ramus."

delivery, and memory.”<sup>894</sup>

Further, there is a broader context to Edwards’ homiletics. He was not a typical Puritan preacher, and as Adriaan Neele suggests, the appraisal that Edwards was a typical Puritan preacher “should be abandoned.”<sup>895</sup> While many of his sermons do follow the Puritan plain form of explication-confirmation-uses, Edwards’ homiletic was also influenced by Petrus van Mastricht and a more classical rhetoric.<sup>896</sup> Van Vliet points out that van Mastricht’s four-dimensional manner of exposition, doctrinal teaching, polemic assertion, and practical application were classic for the age, and these can also be found in Edwards’ sermons.<sup>897</sup>

There was a context of creative expression that was permissible. The sermons therefore reflect not just a tradition, but the “man and his art in the midst of life.”<sup>898</sup> Within the context of Edwards’ time, sermons were not to be as unadorned as possible with no metaphoric language or creativity; rather, they were to be reflective of the Puritan desire to reorder life after biblical

---

894. Howard H. Martin, “Ramus, Ames, Perkins and Colonial Rhetoric,” *Western Speech* 23, no. 2 (Spring 1959): 76-77; Joshua Lee Harris, “Logic,” *JEE*, 355. Kater, “Puritan Preaching,” 47 suggests that Ramus separated *logos* and *pathos*, thereby sundering the two components that Edwards held together in affections. Paul Scott Wilson, “Beyond Narrative: Imagination in the Sermon,” in *Listening to the Word: Studies in Honor of Fred B. Craddock*, ed. Gail R. O’Day and Thomas G. Long (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1993), 133 notes how Ramus thought imagination belonged to rhetoric and logic to the intellect. Therefore, rhetoric and imagination were supposedly merely ornamental, and sermons historically focused on intellectual argument; see Eslinger, *Web of Preaching*, 246-247; Keith L. Sprunger, “John Yates of Norfolk: The Radical Puritan Preacher as Ramist Philosopher,” *Journal of the History of Ideas* 37, no. 4 (Oct. – De. 1976): 697-706.

895. Neele, *Before Jonathan Edwards*, 208.

896. Neele, *Before Jonathan Edwards*, 73.

897. van Vliet, *Reformed System*, 215. See also Richard Muller, *Post-Reformation Reformed Dogmatics* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2010), 1:219.

898. Kimmach, “Introduction,” *WJE*, 10:131.

patterns that were still “energetic and creative wrestling with life.”<sup>899</sup> Here, within his inherited traditions, “Edwards nevertheless displayed an unusual exegetical freedom and creativity.”<sup>900</sup> Kinnach has pointed out that while Edwards recorded many of his thoughts in a variety of forms, the sermon was “a seminal literary form. . . . If the evidence seems to indicate changes in his habits of composition as the years passed, a change in form and, for better or worse, new functions of the form must be anticipated.”<sup>901</sup> The prose of his sermons “soars to lofty poetry in the cadence, the image, and the metaphor.”<sup>902</sup> His “imagination carried him in unpredictable directions as he pondered upon the texts of Scripture.”<sup>903</sup>

While Edwards’ work within his received homiletical tradition needs to be recognized, one period of his life and homiletical work that particularly reveals his use of imagination is the Stockbridge years of 1751-8. This is a period of his life that begs more study.<sup>904</sup> The eight years Edwards spent in Stockbridge have been presumed by some to be of lower interest or quality.<sup>905</sup> Yet for Edwards his time in Stockbridge was a unique opportunity of which he took advantage. He was on the edge of the frontier, and yet “enmeshed” with the European high culture of his day.<sup>906</sup>

---

899. Dyrness, *Visual Culture*, 183.

900. Nichols, “Interpreting Scripture,” 40.

901. Kinnach, “Introduction,” *WJE*, 10:89-90.

902. Simonson, “Preface to the 2009 Edition,” in *Jonathan Edwards: Theologian of the Heart* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2009), n.p.

903. Stein, “Edwards and the Rainbow,” 456.

904. Sweeney, “Edwards Studies Today,” *OHJE*, 576.

905. Smith, *Jonathan Edwards*, 139; Stout, “Parish Ministry,” *OHJE*, 30.

906. McClymond, *Encounters with God*, 6.

The Stockbridge years turned into a time of imaginative synthesis for Edwards. It was here – in this early integrated settlement of the English and Indians, established just a few years earlier in 1735 – that Edwards worked on integrating his many thoughts.<sup>907</sup> The years 1742-58 have been categorized as the final period of Edwards’ sermon writing, “a truly multifaceted period, . . . best described as a time of permutation.”<sup>908</sup> Edwards then, while influenced by Reformed and Puritan forebears, was imaginative enough to put aside Ramist tendencies to define every item and place it exactly and appropriately, when such a method no longer worked for his audience.<sup>909</sup> Or more provocatively, Edwards may have realized what he had collected much earlier:

When the ideas themselves appear more lively, and with greater strength and impression, as the ideas of spiritual things do [to] one that is spiritually enlightened, *their circumstances and various relations and connections between themselves and with other ideas appear more*.... There is as it were a light cast upon the ideas of spiritual things in the mind of the believer, which makes them appear clear and real, which before were but faint, obscure representations.<sup>910</sup>

Stockbridge was also the time of Edwards’ greatest philosophical works. His philosophical background was no longer just implicit and pastoral; it became explicit and direct

---

907. See Paul, *Stockbridge*, 6.

908. Kinnach, “Introduction,” *WJE*, 10:91; Kinnach, “Preface to the Period,” *WJE*, 25:42.

909. This summary of Ramism from van Vliet, *Reformed System*, 73. See also Keith L. Sprunger, “Ames, Ramus, and the Method of Puritan Theology,” *The Harvard Theological Review* 59, no. 2 (April 1966): 133-151.

910. Jonathan Edwards, “Miscellanies #408: Spiritual Knowledge,” *WJE*, 13:469-470. Emphasis added.



in his defense of the will, true virtue, and original sin.<sup>911</sup> Turnbull interestingly describes this philosophical effort in Stockbridge as active “imaginative reason.”<sup>912</sup> It was in the study at Stockbridge that Edwards’ mind “was emboldened not only to return to the old adventure of his ideas but to undertaken [sic] new speculations.”<sup>913</sup>

And so, beyond the traditions that he had inherited, Edwards’ Stockbridge years represent his most mature work, including his most mature and imaginative homiletic. What had earlier been described as a “new sense of the heart” blossomed into a conviction of all that it allowed a person to see.<sup>914</sup> This is where Edwards was at his most efficient.<sup>915</sup> His sermons and his treatises were “not hermetically sealed compartments of his life; they flowed into and mutually nourished each other.”<sup>916</sup>

Edwards’ imagination is also evident in the adaptation of his sermon format during the Stockbridge years.<sup>917</sup> Minkema summarizes this as Edwards “melding the different parts into

---

911. Colacurcio, “Edwards: Idealist Imagination,” 58-59; Helen Westra, “Jonathan Edward’s [sic] Sermons: Search for ‘Acceptable Words,’” *ATLA Summary of Proceedings* 38, (1984): 108.

912. Turnbull, *Jonathan Edwards*, 27.

913. Davidson, *Puritan Mind*, 129.

914. Hambrick-Stowe, “Spirituality and Devotion,” *OHJE*, 367; Lane, *Ravished by Beauty*, 183.

915. Kenneth P. Minkema, “Writing and Preaching Sermons,” *OHJE*, 387.

916. Cherry, *Religious Imagination*, 42.

917. See Keller, “Experiencing God in Words,” 246.

one, so that his preaching became more narrative in style.”<sup>918</sup> He also adapted his format towards more practical, narrative-based sermons, with fewer “angry God” messages for which Edwards is most well-known.<sup>919</sup> Yet it would be incorrect to think that Edwards only realized the need for a different homiletic approach after struggling for some time; his imagination did not develop because of new difficulties so much as new opportunities.<sup>920</sup>

### 3.5 Conclusion

Edwards’ work in imagination and homiletics refuses to be simply categorized.<sup>921</sup> That refusal is not a rejection of either category, but a call for a paradigm that can make sense of the multifaceted understanding and use of imagination so that retrieval might be helpful.

Edwards used his imagination. However, it should be clear that for Edwards, the imagination was more about connections than free creativity.<sup>922</sup> Just because clear instructions and divine eloquence could bring stronger and more lively impressions than the imagination, it did not dismiss the use of imagination.<sup>923</sup> Though witty imagery could not reach the heart,

---

918. Minkema, “Writing and Preaching Sermons,” *OHJE*, 400. See also Kinnach, “Introduction,” *WJE*, 10:38; Minkema, “Scriptural Practices,” 31; Richard Snoddy, “Preaching,” *JEE*, 458. Paul, *Stockbridge*, 153 suggests that at least from 1755 on the abbreviated sermon outlines were because Edwards had been ill and had been housing soldiers.

919. Minkema, “Writing and Preaching Sermons,” *OHJE*, 401. See also Stephen J. Nichols, “Last of the Mohican Missionaries: Jonathan Edwards at Stockbridge,” in *The Legacy of Jonathan Edwards: American Religion and the Evangelical Tradition*, ed. in D.G. Hart, Sean Michael Lucas, and Stephen J. Nichols (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2003), 57.

920. Brian Russell Franklin, “Missions and Missiology,” *JEE*, 384-385; Haykin, “Foreword,” xv-xvi; Michael S. Martin, “Native Americans,” *JEE*, 390-391.

921. Nichols, “Interpreting Scripture,” 50, makes the point that Edwards’ exegesis also refuses to fit neat categories.

922. See Simonson, “Edwards and the Imagination,” 116.

923. Jonathan Edwards, “Miscellany #539. Means of Grace,” *WJE*, 18:86.

Edwards was convinced that “pointed, concrete, sensational imagery could.”<sup>924</sup> Clear thought and depth of insight brought vitality and concreteness to his sermons.<sup>925</sup> However, even within his sermons, the included artful imagery was not to draw attention to himself as artist, but to drive home the sharp point of the gospel message.<sup>926</sup> In this way, imagination served the message, and was not, as is often argued in contemporary discussions of faith and imagination, the “locus” of revelation.<sup>927</sup> Indeed, according to Edwards, the imagination would not bring valid immediate revelation.<sup>928</sup>

The sanctified imagination therefore is not just something described as possible, but is important to understanding the intersection between imagination and homiletics in Edwards. Indeed, Edwards evidences the concern that “questions of sacred discourse cannot be isolated from the structures of inner life nor from the theoretical nexus that conceptualizes the relation between these structures and the supernatural.”<sup>929</sup> His homiletic cannot be separated from his concept of the mind, nor from the way these things relate to the Divine. Rather he displays imagination: mental activity that perceives coherent and significant possibilities indispensable in understanding and producing homiletical objects and experiences.

Therefore, it is correct to see Edwards as a plain preacher with imagination. He did not

---

924. Cherry, *Religious Imagination*, 35.

925. Simonson, *Theologian of the Heart*, 85.

926. Cherry, *Religious Imagination*, 33. See also Erdt, *Sense of the Heart*, 50.

927. “Locus” is the word used by contemporary theology; see Hedley, *Iconic Imagination*, xii.

928. See Edwards, *Religious Affections*, *WJE*, 2:285-287; McClymond and McDermott, *Theology*, 319.

929. Shuger, *Sacred Rhetoric*, 194.

avoid imagination. Nor did he limit his understanding of imagination to rationalistic, early modern definitions. His response to the Enlightenment and rationalistic challenges demonstrated a faith that was both doctrinal and experiential, true as well as aesthetically valuable.<sup>930</sup> In this way, too, he resisted creeping rationalism, by combining clarity of thought with a proper sense of the heart that is bound by Scripture.<sup>931</sup> This may also hint at a helpful response to problematic postmodern responses in homiletics.<sup>932</sup> But any effort in retrieving this homiletical use of imagination is not naïve re-pristination either. Edwards is not consistent or clear enough to merely adopt. He never explained or rationalized his homiletical choices.

So how might Edwards' homiletical imagination be best understood? Rather than considering Edwards' understanding as pure philosophy, abstract theology, ideal biblicism, early modern, premodern, or even counter-modern, it is helpful to see the central concept in Edwards' homiletical use of imagination as a mindset that displayed Puritan baroque characteristics.<sup>933</sup>

While retrieving a label that the author has not stated explicitly may seem suspect, this has been done previously.<sup>934</sup> Further, such a retrieval is consistent with the baroque practice of

---

930. Moody, *Edwards and the Enlightenment*, 7. That this does parallel Coleridge, see Guite, *Lifting the Veil*, 14-15.

931. See Philip Fisk, "Jonathan Edwards and Alexander Gottlieb Baumgarten: Aesthetic Theology and the Art of Beautiful Thinking," in *Transatlantic Contexts*, ed. Rhys Bezzant, 114-115.

932. This thought emerged from reflection on Monika Kaup, "Antimonies of the Twenty-First-Century NeoBaroque: Cormac McCarthy and Demian Schopf," *OHB*, 151.

933. The usage of the central concept terminology was inspired by C. M. A. Van Ekris, *Making See: A Grounded Theory on the Prophetic Dimension in Preaching* (Zurich: LIT Verlag, 2018), 261.

934. Recently, Reklis, "Imagination and Hermeneutics," *OHJE*, 309 also acknowledged extending how scholars think about the imagination in Edwards beyond what he intended.

realizing knowledge can be embedded in past practices and yet stretched or folded in a new direction.<sup>935</sup> Edwards is an example in how to balance the details of new thought and complicated issues. It is possible to intentionally desire continuity with centuries of Christian thought, while at the same time maintaining personal honest biblical convictions expressed in new and non-simplistic ways that go beyond traditional methods to vibrant communication. When his use of imagination is considered in light of a Puritan baroque mindset, Edwards suddenly has great potential to benefit a homiletical use of imagination.

---

935. John Law and Evelyn Ruppert, eds., *Modes of Knowing: Resources from the Baroque* (Project MUSE: Mattering Press, 2016), 19.



## Chapter 4 – Jonathan Edwards’ Imagination as Reflective of a Puritan Baroque Imagination

Though the various, seemingly disparate elements regarding imagination found in Edwards may seem to minimize the potential benefit for homiletics, that benefit increases when they are considered as a unified concept. That unified concept in Edwards can be described as a homiletical imagination consistent with a Puritan baroque mindset.

The idea behind this thought has been previously described by Edward Davidson. In his book on Edwards’ mind, he wrote: “Edwards can well be called ‘a Puritan baroque,’: though his style could be as chill and neat as that admired in the age of Dryden, his imagination was all compact of wonder, exuberance, and joy. And though his logic was not as tempered as the reasonings of Schoolmen, his mind worked to break that logic and to find, even in its precepts which seem to mark an end of thought, a new way to adventures of the mind.”<sup>936</sup> This chapter expands on Davidson’s label and considers whether it may be an appropriate concept for Edwards’ understanding and usage of imagination in homiletics. It does so by explaining the Puritan baroque label, evaluating whether this can be found in Edwards, and looking for some further support for the idea, before drawing some anticipatory conclusions.

### 4.1 A Puritan Baroque Imagination

The Puritan baroque is not a common label. It may even seem counter-intuitive since the baroque is often described as the style of the Catholic Counter-Reformation. This has wrongly

---

936. Davidson, *Puritan Mind*, viii; Whittaker, “Scholasticism,” *JEE*, 512 seems to agree. Although the term baroque is not used, for how this may have been part of the New England mindset prior to Edwards, see Erdt, *Sense of the Heart*, xiii; Hall, *Faithful Shepherd*. Erdt, *Sense of the Heart*, 61 also describes Edwards as passionate and emotional, though living in an age infatuated with reason.

influenced its dismissal as a category for Anglo-Protestant studies.<sup>937</sup> However, recognizing the reality of Roman Catholic iterations should not eradicate the possibility of suggesting other iterations. Indeed, while historically connected to early modern Europe, the baroque has come to be applied to numerous parts of the world that were in dialogue with Europe at the time, even while these colonies retained some of their own culture and idioms.<sup>938</sup> This would not be the first study to suggest that the baroque is a concept that “not only permits us to understand but also *retrospectively* to provoke historical connections and events.”<sup>939</sup> To assist in clear understanding, this section defines a baroque mindset, modifies that adjectivally with “Puritan,” and suggests the application of that mindset to imaginative prose.

### *The Baroque Mindset*

The baroque is not just a style or historical period of art, music, and architecture. The origin of the term *baroque* is generally understood to have been derived from the Portuguese

---

937. Lois Parkinson Zamora, “Eccentric Periodization: Comparative Perspectives on the Enlightenment and the Baroque,” *PMLA* 128, no. 3 (May 2013): 690-697. That this characterization is over-simplistic see Anthony David Wright, *The Counter-Reformation: Catholic Europe and the Non-Christian World* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1982), 223-226. And yet, even Ulrich L. Lehner, Richard A. Muller, and A.G. Roebner, eds., *The Oxford Handbook of Early Modern Theology 1600-1800* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016), allow the use of baroque to apply to Catholic theologies while using early modern to describe Protestant theologies.

938. Peter Davidson, *The Universal Baroque* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2007), 1; Lois Parkinson Zamora and Monika Kaup, eds., *Baroque New Worlds: Representation, Transculturation, Counterconquest* (London: Duke University Press, 2010), 3-4. As one example of this see Timothy Brook, *Vermeer’s Hat: The Seventeenth Century and the Dawn of the Global World* (New York: Bloomsbury Press, 2008).

939. Howard Caygill, “Ottoman Baroque,” in *Rethinking the Baroque*, ed. Helen Hills (New York: Routledge, 2011), 68, emphasis added. For another study using the label of Puritan baroque, see Mitsushige Sato, “Puritan Baroque: The Transformation of Renaissance Intellectual Traditions in Anne Bradstreet, Edward Taylor, and Cotton Mather,” (PhD thesis, Keio University, 2000).



*barocco*, which jewellers used to describe irregular pearls.<sup>940</sup> Initially it was an adjective describing the dramatic, bizarre, or monstrous disintegration of the Renaissance.<sup>941</sup> The term gradually lost its pejorative connotations and came to describe a style based on criteria.<sup>942</sup> Only in the nineteenth-century did baroque become a neutral adjective of a “trans-historical aesthetic” that described the style that the Renaissance had evolved into.<sup>943</sup>

For the purposes of this study, the baroque needs to be understood, not just as a time period or an external style, but as a concept or mindset.<sup>944</sup> It assumed tension between the supernaturalism of the ancients and the naturalism of the moderns.<sup>945</sup> It fostered original forms as

---

940. Claude Mignot, “Baroque,” in *Dictionary of Untranslatables: A Philosophical Lexicon*, ed. Barbara Cassin, Emily Apter, Jacques Lezra, and Michael Wood (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2014), 77; Zamora and Kaup, *Baroque New Worlds*, 2-3.

941. See Carmen M. Chiappetta, “The Baroque Imagination of Alejo Carpentier, Derek Walcott, and Seamus Heaney: Folding the Periphery into a Center,” (PhD Dissertation, University of Miami, 2012), 11-12.

942. See John Rupert Martin, *Baroque* (London: Penguin Group, 1977), 11-12; Heinrich Wölfflin, *Renaissance und Barok*, trans. Kathrin Simon *Renaissance and Baroque* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1968). What those criteria are has generated continual debate. For a summary see Bernard C. Heyl, “Meanings of Baroque,” *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 19, no. 3 (Spring 1961): 275-287.

943. Mignot, “Baroque,” 77.

944. I recognize that Edwards lived at the end of colonial baroque period; but I am adapting Chiappetta, “Baroque Imagination,” 17-25 who, while recognizing others have described the baroque as a time period or stylistic category, chooses to describe it as a mindset, in part because it is part of a person’s ethical fashioning of works, or a mode of feeling and expression. While I will use the term concept throughout this section, it is not to be understood as a neutral mental structure but, as a mindset. See also Joseph M. Levine, *Between the Ancients and the Moderns: Baroque Culture in Restoration England* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1999), viii-ix; Vernon Hyde Minor, *Baroque and Rococo: Art and Culture* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1999), 14-15.

945. Levine, *Baroque Culture*, ix-xii. Lyons, “Introduction,” *OHB*, 18 says the baroque concept always escapes, exceeds and eludes theories and definition, but at the same time, is also fixated on control, unification, and codification.

it considered things differently.<sup>946</sup> While recognizing the existence of that tension, the baroque mindset suggested a perspective that can reveal truth while maintaining divine revelation.<sup>947</sup> The baroque dreamed of an eye that would be unable to reach its limits of seeing.<sup>948</sup> It had the capacity to “overarch contradictions and include oppositions.”<sup>949</sup> While its use and appropriation continue to stir debate,<sup>950</sup> for this project, baroque will be considered a mindset of various complex ideas.<sup>951</sup>

---

946. Law and Ruppert, *Modes of Knowing*, 23.

947. See Law and Ruppert, *Modes of Knowing*, 26. This has been adopted and applied to a variety of disciplines, but the purpose of this study is limited to practical theology and therefore those other adaptations are not suggested or endorsed. For example, this study of the baroque concept does not fully allow what Walter Benjamin advanced in perspectivism and interpretivism as it then applied to theatre or architecture or gardens or entertainment or political propaganda. See also William Egginton, *The Theatre of Truth: The Ideology of (Neo)Baroque Aesthetics* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2010); Allen Trent and Jeasik Cho, “Interpretation Strategies: Appropriate Concepts,” in *The Oxford Handbook of Qualitative Research*, ed. Patricia Leavy (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014): 639. And yet there is a Scriptural and spiritual perspectivism, as evidenced in Psalm 43:3 - *Oh, send out Your light and Your truth! Let them lead me; Let them bring me to Your holy hill and to Your tabernacle* (NKJV).

948. Christine Buci-Glucksmann, *The Madness of Vision: On Baroque Aesthetics*, trans. Dorothy Z. Baker, Series in Continental Thought (Athens, OH: Ohio University Press, 2013); Laura J. Snyder, *Eye of the Beholder: Johannes Vermeer, Antoni van Leeuwenhoek, and the Reinvention of Seeing* (New York: Norton, 2015).

949. Zamora and Kaup, *Baroque New Worlds*, 8.

950. Mignot, “Baroque,” 78; Caygill, “Ottoman Baroque,” in *Rethinking the Baroque*, 66; Heyl, “Meanings of Baroque,” 275-287.

951. Davidson, *Universal Baroque*, 1. The use of the concept of baroque seems to have had its zenith in the early to mid-twentieth century. It seems to have been a non-idea for approximately the last fifty years of the twentieth century, before becoming popular again early in the 21st century as academics sought alternatives to emerging postmodernism. See also Chiappetta, “Baroque Imagination,” 9; Levine, *Baroque Culture*, viii-ix uses the label ‘baroque,’ while wondering about the helpfulness of such a loaded term to characterize a complex culture, with the realization that it is the term that captures a unique frame of mind.

Suggesting a baroque mindset is to suggest a unified concept that described the *lebensgefühl* (attitude to life) of the time.<sup>952</sup> While its most concentrated manifestations appeared in different places at different times, it originally occurred from the early seventeenth century to the late eighteenth century – a period often referred to as early modern.<sup>953</sup> This complex mindset captured movement and variation, and the observation of problems of knowledge.<sup>954</sup> It was based on an observation of life:<sup>955</sup> a respect for nature, allegory, inner psychology, time, and a sense of the infinite.<sup>956</sup> As seen in art, music, and architecture, the baroque displayed spatiality,

---

952. Wölfflin's *Barok* (1888) used *lebensgefühl* to describe the qualities of Baroque architecture as an expression of the aspirations of the time. Eugenio d'Ors, *Lo Barroco* (1935), defined it as a worldview. See Zamora and Kaub, *Baroque New Worlds*, 9, 46-48, 75-92. See also Alden Buker, "The Baroque S-T-O-R-M: A Study in the Limits of the Culture-Epoch Theory," *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 22, no. 3 (Spring 1964): 304; Helen Hills, "The Baroque: The Grit in the Oyster of Art History," in *Rethinking the Baroque*, ed. Helen Hills (New York: Routledge, 2016), 21.

953. Davidson, *Universal Baroque*, 3. Interestingly, attaching Puritan to the Early Modern period is more acceptable than acknowledging the Baroque period because of the history and etymology attached to baroque. A distinction will be made here between baroque (with a lower case) referring to the broad concept described, and Baroque (with the upper case) referring to the historical period generally understood as 1600-1750. Therefore, for most of this study, references to baroque will not be capitalized. Sato, "Puritan Baroque," iv minimizes this distinction when he refers to the Baroque as encompassing "artifacts embodying hybridity, extemporaneousness, and experimentalism, as well as qualities such as deformity or barbarity." See also Helen Hills, *Rethinking the Baroque* (New York: Routledge, 2016), 3-9.

954. This list is adapted from Moriarty, "The Baroque and Philosophy," *OHB*, 607-610.

955. Charles Taylor, *Sources of the Self: The Making of the Modern Identity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 130 calls this radical reflexivity. See also Moriarty, "The Baroque and Philosophy," *OHB*, 610. Minor, *Baroque and Rococo*, 24-25 describes how the baroque required, assumed, and appealed to an audience.

956. John Rupert Martin, "The Baroque from the Point of View of the Art Historian," *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 14, no. 2 (Dec. 1955): 164-171. See also Roy Daniells, *Milton, Mannerism and Baroque* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1963), 62-63; Moriarty, "The Baroque and Philosophy," *OHB*, 607-610.

theatricality, ornamentality, rhythmic vitality, and monumentality.<sup>957</sup> While sometimes correlated to the Enlightenment, its driving force remained profound expression rather than formal beauty.<sup>958</sup> For the sake of this paper, the baroque mindset is described as prioritizing particular categories:<sup>959</sup> they will be abbreviated as imagery (B1); light (B2); space (B3); movement (B4); affections (B5); and glorification (B6).

This list excludes the frequently assumed baroque characteristics of extravagance and drama. It is not due to a rejection of those characteristics. It is because the extravagance and drama were in all of these characteristics; so that images, light, space, movement, affections, and glorification work as “a ground-bass over which astonishment [or extravagance and drama] can

---

957. Buker, “The Baroque,” 303-313. While Buker applies these five criteria to architecture and music, there are literary correlates.

958. Morris W. Croll, “The Baroque Style in Prose,” in *Essays on the Language of Literature*, ed. Seymour Benjamin Chatman and Samuel R. Levin (New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1967), 341; Law and Ruppert, *Modes of Knowing*, 28. Wölfflin, *Barok*, 29-37 described this as a ‘painterly’ style. Eugenio d’Ors, “Debate on the Baroque in Pontigny,” in *Baroque New Worlds: Representation, Transculturation, Counterconquest*, ed. Lois Parkinson Zamora and Monika Kaup (London: Duke University Press, 2010), 91 described it as a taste for character as opposed to the cult of regular beauty.

959. Adapted from John Barber, *The Road from Eden: Studies in Christianity and Culture* (Palo Alto, CA: Academica Press, 2008), 291-313. That such a prioritizing may happen is defended in Heyl, “Meanings of Baroque,” 282-283. Other sources highlighting similar characteristics include: Martin, *Baroque*, 12-17 includes naturalistic verisimilitude – which was balanced with allegory (B1); passions of the soul – balanced with spiritual psychology (B5); infinity – through space (B3), time, and light (B2); movement (B4); and classical antiquity (B1/B6); Minor, *Baroque and Rococo*, 28-29 summarizes them as light (B2); drama – which he explains in spatial way (B3); movement (B4); color; and emotion (B5). See also Daniells, *Baroque*, 62-63. This differs from Sato, “Puritan Baroque,” vii where the characteristics are hybridity, improvisation, experimentalism, deformity, and barbarity.

be improvised.”<sup>960</sup> There was a need for extravagance and astonishment,<sup>961</sup> but not for its own purposes, and certainly not for necessarily happy purposes.<sup>962</sup> Each of the six items below were extravagant and dramatic in the hands of a baroque master.

The baroque mindset prioritized imagery (B1) and symbolism, yet presented them naturally.<sup>963</sup> In one sense, this “defense and revaluation of images was the great undertaking of the Baroque age.”<sup>964</sup> Instead of rejecting symbols, the baroque embraced emblems as an honest form of imaginative endeavour.<sup>965</sup> Allegory and typology were encouraged. This can be seen in many examples of art, including the painting of Jan Vermeer (AD 1632-1675) titled *Allegory of Faith* which drew from ideas in “*Iconologia* by Cesare Ripa, a well-known catalogue of symbols used in art.”<sup>966</sup> The allegorical use of imagery was not about hidden symbols as much as it was about translating “abstract conceptions into visible form.”<sup>967</sup> It was a retention of metaphysical ideals in emblems and allegories even while growing the scientific mind.<sup>968</sup>

---

960. Davidson, *Universal Baroque*, 12. See also Cascardi, “Experience and Knowledge,” *OHB*, 454.

961. Benedetto Croce, *Storia di l’età barocca in Italia*, 1929; quoted in Davidson, *Universal Baroque*, 5.

962. Davidson, *Universal Baroque*, 19.

963. Martin, *Baroque*, 12-13.

964. Giulio Carlo Argan, *The Baroque Age* (New York: Rizzoli, 1989), 17.

965. See Davidson, *Universal Baroque*, 18; Jan C. Westerhoff, “A World of Signs: Baroque Pansemioticism, the *Polyhistor* and the Early Modern *Wunderkammer*,” *Journal of the History of Ideas* 62, no. 4 (Oct. 2001): 634.

966. Richard Viladesau, *The Pathos of the Cross: The Passion of Christ in Theology and the Arts - the Baroque Era* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 82.

967. Argan, *Baroque Age*, 53.

968. Martin, *Baroque*, 12-13.

The baroque mindset also prioritized dramatic representation of light (B2). Light was most famously used in baroque painting through *chiaroscuro* (placing lighted areas and objects against darker, shadowy ones), though it was also part of architectural design. It focused a viewer's attention on what was essential, while suggesting something visionary.<sup>969</sup> While light could highlight movement, it could also create a mood of stillness or introspection. Even in churches, light was introduced "to denote divine intervention."<sup>970</sup>

The baroque mindset also prioritized a continuum of space that drew attention to eternal things (B3).<sup>971</sup> This could be monumental size of space, as the baroque embraced a limitless dimension.<sup>972</sup> Yet, also in the baroque, small and individual miniatures had a place, and sometimes were reflective of the most monumental thoughts.

More often, the baroque use of space changed the visual plane. Not all elements were placed at the same level. There were things in the foreground, and things in the background; structural lines were shrouded, drawing focus to the dramatic moment and its overall effect.<sup>973</sup>

The baroque continuum of space also wrestled with exterior and interior distinctions. This exterior / interior distinction was also seen in discussions related to the senses and affections. The use of *quadratura* (the painting of architectural elements) erased boundaries between heavenly and earthly dimensions, developing a continuum where earthly viewers were

---

969. Minor, *Baroque and Rococo*, 93.

970. Martin, *Baroque*, 16.

971. Chiappetta, "Baroque Imagination," 10; Martin, *Baroque*, 14-15.

972. See Argan, *Baroque Age*, 53.

973. Minor, *Baroque and Rococo*, 29.

pulled up into a heavenly space through illusion.<sup>974</sup> And so, the inner psychology of believers was to match their exterior; and the inner psychology of believers was to matter inside as well as outside the physical spaces of church buildings.<sup>975</sup>



Figure 3. Dome of St. Stephen Walbrook, London, UK.<sup>976</sup>

The baroque mindset also highlighted movement (B4). There was a realism that was not

---

974. Argan, *Baroque Age*, 53; Law and Ruppert, *Modes of Knowing*, 31-33; Martin, *Baroque*, 14; Minor, *Baroque and Rococo*, 26.

975. Compare Lyons, “Crisis of the Baroque,” *OHB*, 12. This can be seen in the promotion of meditation.

976. This dome was designed by Sir Christopher Wren, who has been described as an English baroque architect (see Minor, *Baroque and Rococo*, 102-104). This dome replaced the one destroyed by the London fire of 1666. Though not as florid or dramatic as Italian baroque church ceilings, Wren displays the more placid English form of baroque space and the earthly / heavenly illusion. This dome, as representative of English baroque architecture, should be seen in the broader context of affective mindset of the time. It is interesting to note that Thomas Watson (1620-1686) had been the rector of St. Stephen Walbrook (from 1642-1662). Christopher Wren was likely a parishioner there, as he lived at No. 15 Walbrook. In 1660 Watson preached a sermon on Matthew 5:8 calling his hearers to imagine the blessed sight of seeing Christ; see Thomas Watson, *The Beatitudes* (Edinburgh: Banner of Truth Trust, 1971), 196-203.

static but exhibited in movement and direction.<sup>977</sup> There was a sense of transience through contrast of light and shadow. Baroque movement can also be seen in layers of deeper meaning. The baroque embraced the multiplication of surfaces, contours, and folds. This has been summarized as a “relationship between things as they are and things as they seem.”<sup>978</sup> And so, the products displaying baroque movement were not just pedagogical tools nor promotional materials: they were moments of time to be experienced before they changed.<sup>979</sup> The baroque needed to be alive, vibrant; it sought to reach for something. While that meant visual or oral elements may have been exaggerated, the baroque sought to be vibrant enough to break through simple geometric (overly straight and rigid) perspectives.<sup>980</sup> Baroque movement distained “complacency, suavity, copiousness, emptiness, ease,” and preferred “the forms that express the energy and labor of minds seeking the truth.”<sup>981</sup> Even spirituality in the baroque was “about the motions of souls, not their states of rest.”<sup>982</sup>

The baroque mindset was also reflective of heightened affection (B5). This was often

---

977. See Chiappetta, “Baroque Imagination,” 10-11; Wölfflin, *Barok*, 58; Robert Harbison, *Reflections on Baroque* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 1.

978. Anthony Geraghty, “Nicholas Hawksmoor’s Drawing Technique of the 1690s and John Locke’s *Essay Concerning Human Understanding*,” in *Rethinking the Baroque*, ed. Helen Hills, 138-139. See also Davidson, *Universal Baroque*, 13. Interestingly, this parallels descriptions of experiential preaching in Beeke, *Reformed Preaching*, 25, 41.

979. Martin, *Baroque*, 15.

980. Nadir Lahiji, *Adventures with the Theory of the Baroque and French Philosophy* (New York: Bloomsbury, 2016), 18; Law and Ruppert, *Modes of Knowing*, 34-36.

981. Croll, “Baroque Style in Prose,” 341.

982. Croll, “Baroque Style in Prose,” 342.



improperly thought of as drama or emotionalism,<sup>983</sup> but such conclusions ignore the intellectualism of the originating time.<sup>984</sup> The concept of baroque affections was better understood as the feeling and expression of the embodied soul that dealt with the reality of the natural and fallen world.<sup>985</sup>

However, the baroque not only displayed affection, but it also aimed at eliciting affection.<sup>986</sup> The object was to be seen as affective, as was the subject.<sup>987</sup> The goal of the baroque was to “create passionate responses in its audience. Baroque art was in this regard a form of rhetoric whose persuasive aims sought to move the spirit by moving the passions.”<sup>988</sup> While there seems to be overlap, this was still distinct from *Affektenlehre*, or the doctrine of affections. This doctrine, more closely tied to the classical movement and based on Cartesian mathematics, theorized about the affections being produced by certain musical notes and key signatures.<sup>989</sup> In the baroque mindset, the movement towards the affective was a pursuit of virtue or

---

983. Kaup, “Antimonies of the Twenty-First-Century NeoBaroque,” *OHB*, 149.

984. Buker, “The Baroque,” 307.

985. See Eugenio d’Ors, *Lo barocco*, 1935; quoted in Davidson, *Universal Baroque*, 6; Heyl, “Meanings of Baroque,” 282. Law and Ruppert, *Modes of Knowing*, 28-29 point out that in the baroque, the mind-body dualisms don’t work: “being a body and knowing go together.”

986. See Chiappetta, “Baroque Imagination,” 9.

987. John Burkhalter, “Profound Harmony and Invention: Music of the Baroque,” Princeton Festival Lectures 2021; viewed June 21, 2022, at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pKrZ0kH9XU0>.

988. Cascardi, “Experience and Knowledge,” *OHB*, 457. The religious experience of the baroque is most popularly seen in the sculptures of Gianlorenzo Bernini (1598-1680). See also Alger, *Baroque Age*, 66; Chiappetta, “Baroque Imagination,” 9; Law and Ruppert, *Modes of Knowing*, 40; Martin, *Baroque*, 13; Viladesau, *Pathos*, 121.

989. See Sharri K. Hall, “The Doctrine of Affections: Where Art Meets Reason,” *Musical Offerings* 8, no. 2 (2017): 52. Minor, *Baroque and Rococo*, 17-19 ties this to rhetoric.

transformation.

The baroque mindset also highlighted glorification (B6). With the origin of the baroque having stemmed from the Counter-Reformation, it was used as a tool for the glorification of the Roman Catholic Church.<sup>990</sup> Artists such as Michelangelo (AD 1475-1564) were commissioned for great works. The grandeur of the baroque was also used for the glorification of kings and queens. As the baroque found expression in Protestant lands, it was a tool for “worthy” results:<sup>991</sup> not just for glorification of earthly rulers, but *soli deo gloria*: to the glory of God alone.

This brief description of these six characteristics does not mean that the baroque was, or is, understood uniformly; on the contrary, the term is considered skeptically by some.<sup>992</sup> Walter Benjamin (AD 1892-1940) saw the baroque as allegorical ruins that countered the progress of modernism.<sup>993</sup> Eugenio d’Ors (AD 1882-1954) saw the baroque as seeking the destruction of reason and eternity.<sup>994</sup> Elsewhere, it has been the springboard for “non-standard modes of knowing.”<sup>995</sup> Applying the concept to fashion, mathematics, and philosophy, Gilles Deleuze (AD 1925-1995) appropriated the baroque not as an essence, but as an operative trait of creating folds

---

990. Minor, *Baroque and Rococo*, 84.

991. Minor, *Baroque and Rococo*, 103.

992. Thomas DaCosta Kaufmann, “Discomfited by the Baroque: A Personal Journey,” in *Rethinking the Baroque*, ed. Helen Hills, 83-98.

993. Walter Benjamin, *Ursprung des deutschen Trauerspiels* (1928); referenced in Hills, “The Baroque,” 23. See also Zamora and Kaup, *Baroque New Worlds*, 55-74.

994. d’Ors, “Debate on the Baroque,” 84.

995. Law and Ruppert, *Modes of Knowing*, 22.

and layers of reality and meaning.<sup>996</sup>

*Baroque Mindset and Puritan Modification*

As stated earlier, the baroque has often been thought of as predominantly Roman.<sup>997</sup> In its popular religious expression, it seems most manifest in the Roman Catholic promotion of saints and the beatific vision.<sup>998</sup> In terms of imagination, the Catholic baroque tendency towards spiritual forms of exuberance, enthusiasm, and direct experience of the divine ran counter to the Protestant tendency towards simplicity. In its manifestations in Northern Europe, the baroque has been described as in direct opposition to Calvinism.<sup>999</sup> The baroque sculptural and architectural forms often pointed to the institutional powers of royal or ecclesiastical forces that the Puritans were avoiding. This seems to suggest a Puritan baroque mindset is ludicrous.

But while the Catholic and Protestant forms were different, the desire to express the features of the baroque concept for affective response were remarkably consistent.<sup>1000</sup> There was no European art or thought of the seventeenth or eighteenth century, and by extension that of the

---

996. Gilles Deleuze, *The Fold: Leibniz and the Baroque*, trans. Tom Conley (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1993), 3-40. See also Hills, "The Baroque," 26.

997. See Daniells, *Baroque*, 50-56. Campbell, *Religion of the Heart*, describes religion of the heart disparately as catholic religious movements of the baroque age in contrast to the affective piety in seventeenth-century British Calvinism.

998. Thomas Worcester, "Saints and Baroque Piety," *OHB*, 846 - 860. For how the beatific vision came to be seen in Protestant circles, even during the same period, see Boersma, *Seeing God*. Chapters 9-13 are particularly relevant as Boersma traces the beatific vision through Calvin, Donne, various Puritans, including Jonathan Edwards.

999. Frans-Willem Korsten, *A Dutch Republican Baroque: Theatricality, Dramatization, Moment and Event* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2017), 20; Argan, *Baroque Age*, 120.

1000. See Harbison, *Reflections on Baroque*, 38; James McEvoy, "The Catholic Eye, the Protestant Ear, and the Age of Baroque," *Neue Zeitschrift für Systematische Theologie und Religionsphilosophie* 26, no. 2-3 (January 1, 1984): 177-194.

colonies, that was able to stay free from the influence of the baroque.<sup>1001</sup> Throughout various disciplines of Catholics and Protestants and others, overlap between similar conceptual priorities can be discerned.<sup>1002</sup>

To use the baroque as an adjective is to again recognize it as a concept, and not just a local style or time period. At times, baroque has been modified by other adjectives: there was the Lutheran baroque music of Germany, the Protestant baroque art in the Netherlands,<sup>1003</sup> and Calvinist baroque poetry of Scotland.<sup>1004</sup> Other labels have been suggested, such as Jewish Baroque,<sup>1005</sup> Russian Baroque,<sup>1006</sup> Ottoman Baroque,<sup>1007</sup> among others.<sup>1008</sup> There is the recognition of French Baroque in the study of sermons.<sup>1009</sup> This reveals that while the

---

1001. See Harbison, *Reflections on Baroque*, vii.

1002. Kennedy, *Classical Rhetoric*, 215 even points to how baroque rhetoric has overlap with baroque music. See also George J. Buelow, "Music, Rhetoric, and the Concept of Affections: A Selective Bibliography," *Notes* 30, no. 2 (1973):250-259.

1003. Barber, *Road from Eden*, 275.

1004. Davidson, *Universal Baroque*, 30.

1005. Einat Davidi, "Penso de la Vega and the Question of Jewish Baroque," in *Religious Changes and Cultural Transformations in the Early Modern Western Sephardic Communities*, ed. Yosef Kaplan (Leiden: Brill, 2019): 469-484.

1006. See Marina Kiseleva, "Humans and Animals in Russian Baroque Homiletics," *Ikon* 2, (2009): 339-346.

1007. Caygill, "Ottoman Baroque," in *Rethinking the Baroque*, 65-79.

1008. See Harbison, *Reflections on Baroque*, 192-221 who includes the labels Turkish Baroque, Japanese Baroque, Gothic Baroque, Hellenistic Baroque under the category of Neo- and Pseudo-baroque.

1009. Peter Bayley, *French Pulpit Oratory, 1598-1650: A Study of Themes and Styles, with a Descriptive Catalogue of Printed Texts* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011); Anne Regent-Susini and Laurent Susini, "Is There a Baroque Style of Preaching in Early Modern France?" *OHB*, 641-663.

secularizing influences of Greco-Roman ideals were present within the Baroque, it was the religious enthusiasm of the times that fuelled the tensions and the dynamism of various baroque forms.<sup>1010</sup>

When used as an adjective, the term *Puritan* suffers a similar challenge as *baroque*: it can be considered a historical period as well as a mindset. The Puritan time period can be described as “the movement that sought further reformation of the Church of England in conformity with the Word of God” (lasting from about 1550 to 1689).<sup>1011</sup> The Puritan mindset can be described as a spirit or attitude of rejecting a disjunction between sacred and secular. As well, it promoted doing all to the glory of God. This was seen in affirmation of created physical order; the reality of the material, physical world as well as the invisible spiritual world; the value of the common; the importance of personal piety and heart religion, and a practical simplicity that valued the means of grace.<sup>1012</sup> In the words of John Gere (AD 1600-1649), to be Puritan was to honour

---

1010. Larry F. Norman, “The Baroque as Anti-Classicism: The French Case,” *OHB*, 627. See also Anthony David Wright, “Puritanism of the Right and Baroque Effect,” in *The Counter-Reformation: Catholic Europe and the Non-Christian World* (New York: St. Martin Press, 1982), 223-263.

1011. See Beeke and Jones, *Puritan Theology*, 1-5.

1012. See Leland Ryken, *Worldly Saints: The Puritans as They Really Were* (Grand Rapids: Academie Books, 1986), 205-221. This is also the recognition of more recent scholarship that diminishes the stereotypical assessments of Puritan life including, Abram Van Engen, “Afterword: The Puritan Imaginary and the Puritan’s World,” in *A History of American Puritan Literature*, ed. Kristina Bross and Abram Van Engen (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020), 342-352. Compare this to John Milbank, *Beyond Secular Order: The Representation of Being and the Representation of the People* (Oxford: John Wiley & Sons, 2013), 86 who recognizes a baroque attempt to restore a “synthesis of faith and grace under an overarching sense of the divine presence” that was philosophically incomplete, but more authentic and successful in some Puritan thinkers than it was in others.

God, serve God, and make the word of God the rule of worship.<sup>1013</sup> It is that Puritan mind that characterized the creative prose of Baxter's unpretentious urgency, Flavel's reflective genius, Owen's scholastic comprehensiveness, and Bunyan's colloquial characters.<sup>1014</sup> And so Sato, in describing his study of Puritan baroque literature, says it is "the product [of] the geographical, ethnic, and cultural diversity, as Puritan culture consisted of multiple layers. . . . It is important [to recognize] that the flourish of Puritanism coincided with the peak of the Baroque. . . . This will also lead to replace the univocal view of Puritanism with what might be termed a polyphonic view that more accurately reflects its origins and diversity."<sup>1015</sup>

Any layering of a Puritan understanding or modification of baroque priorities is not contradictory but clarifying. Applying one adjectival layer, or mental topography, over another similar one only highlights similarities and softens differences. The embrace of imagery (B1) also reflected the Puritan understanding of the important types of scripture, as well as an appreciation for the natural world. The baroque concept of light (B2) was not rejected but spiritualized. While Protestants minimized visual displays of divine and biblical scenes for worship, the focus of light on people and nature was not just decorative, but allegorical of

---

1013. John Geree, *Character of an Old English Puritane, or Non-Conformist* (London: W. Wilson for Christopher Meredith at the Crane in Pauls Churchyard, 1646); re-printed in Lawrence A. Sasek, *Images of English Puritanism: A Collection of Contemporary Sources 1589-1646* (London: Louisiana State University Press, 1989), 209.

1014. N.H. Keeble, *The Literary Culture of Nonconformity in Later Seventeenth-Century England* (Avon: Leicester University Press, 1987), 246.

1015. Sato, "Puritan Baroque," iv-v.

edifying truths.<sup>1016</sup> The Puritan use of space (B3) may seem to maintain a level of structural rigidity that is contrary to baroque space. However, it did move from external spaces and facades to a priority of the inner space of the individual heart, where hard distinctions between the earthly and heavenly faded away, and exterior activity remained important.<sup>1017</sup> The movement (B4) and drama in the Puritan world were also focused on the motion of souls. Both the Puritans and the baroque insisted that form mattered because it changed the essence of what was being said. Preaching was to bear fruit in the lives of real people.<sup>1018</sup>

The Puritan mindset also clarified baroque affections (B5) as spiritual affections directed towards God. These religious affections were not simply feelings or emotions, nor simply preferences of the mind, but a “coordinated interplay of mind, will and feeling.”<sup>1019</sup> In some respects, religious tendencies of the Catholic baroque were expressed similarly in Protestant circles.<sup>1020</sup> The difference could be noted in the expression and interiorization of those spiritual affections.<sup>1021</sup>

---

1016. Viladesau, *Pathos*, 179. Lyons, “Introduction,” *OHB*, 15 says the mindset of the Puritans was “arguably deeply Baroque in the application of allegory as a means of assimilating this new continent [North America].”

1017. For how this was apparent in Sibbes, see Dever, *Sibbes*, 158-160. See also J.I. Packer, *A Quest for Godliness: The Puritan Vision of the Christian Life* (Wheaton: Crossway, 1990), 13.

1018. Viladesau, *Pathos*, 174-175, 211. See also Packer, *A Quest*, 25.

1019. Gerald R. McDermott, *Seeing God: Jonathan Edwards and Spiritual Discernment* (Vancouver: Regent Publishing, 2000), 33; Packer, *A Quest*, 32.

1020. Campbell, *Religion of the Heart*, 42.

1021. Viladesau, *Pathos*, 176 comments on how this also complicated Reformation church music.

For instance, consider Francisco de Zurbarán (AD 1598-1664). A Spanish Catholic, he painted Christ on the cross, as well as six versions of *Agnus Dei*, all featuring the same image.



Figure 4. Francisco de Zurbarán, *Agnus Dei* (1640).<sup>1022</sup>

While most Puritans would have rejected a painting of Christ on the cross,<sup>1023</sup> they certainly talked about the Lamb of God, and not just as a biblical reference. They used a similar image as a symbol of Christ. Consider the bottom part of the frontispiece of the 1611 King James Version of the New Testament.

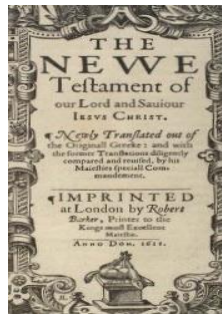


Figure 5. Frontispiece of the New Testament, *Authorized Version* (1611).<sup>1024</sup>

They also conveyed the same affective response to the Lamb of God with words. Edwards later

---

1022. Interestingly, this image is used on the cover of Thomas Goodwin, *The Heart of Christ* (Edinburgh: Banner of Truth Trust, 2015).

1023. That the English Protestants did use the lamb as a visual image at times can be found in Davis, *Seeing Faith*, 102-143.

1024. Authorized Version 1611; Image personally edited from the page retrieved from [www.archive.org](http://www.archive.org). The triumphant lamb is on the frontispiece of the whole 1606 Geneva Bible, as well as the 1611 Authorized Version Bible.



wrote in *Religious Affections*:

All the virtues of the Lamb of God, his humility, patience, meekness, submission, obedience, love and compassion, are exhibited to our view, in a manner the most tending to move our affections, of any that can be imagined....As though everything were purposely contrived in such a manner, as to have the greatest, possible tendency to reach our hearts in the most tender part, and move our affections most sensibly and strongly. How great cause have we therefore to be humbled to the dust, that we are no more affected!<sup>1025</sup>

And so, to modify the term baroque with the adjective Puritan is not to describe either term pejoratively. The Puritan baroque acknowledges an emerging religious identity of believers as active faithful rather than passive faithful.<sup>1026</sup> It recognizes the international and supra-confessional nature of the baroque and places it within a broader category of the protestant Baroque.<sup>1027</sup>

Therefore, to be Puritan is not to be boring; it is not a lack of glory. It is to be true to one's confessional and affection for God (B6).<sup>1028</sup> Even Perry Miller, generally not a friend of the Puritans, acknowledges that though Puritanism resisted enthusiasm and was highly intellectual and abstract, it did not stifle its own intensity, but lived with passion.<sup>1029</sup>

### *Puritan Baroque Imagination*

Considering such concepts as Puritan and baroque together requires one to determine

---

1025. Edwards, *Religious Affections*, *WJE*, 2:123-124.

1026. See Lyons, "Crisis of the Baroque," *OHB*, 12.

1027. See Davidson, *Universal Baroque*, xiii.

1028. Keeble, *Literary Culture*, 252-253; Packer, *A Quest*, 163-173 shows how this was apparent in Puritan preaching.

1029. Miller, *New England Mind*, 487. See also Avihu Zakai, "Theocracy in Massachusetts: The Puritan Universe of Sacred Imagination," *Studies of the Literary Imagination* 27, no. 1 (1994): 23-31.

which are the primary and secondary adjectives. The last section has displayed that both can be adjectival. After all, there is baroque architecture, baroque music, baroque poetry. There has been a suggestion of a poetic Baroque Christianity;<sup>1030</sup> more narrowly, there is Baroque Scholasticism.<sup>1031</sup> But can there be a baroque psychology, or more specifically, a Puritan baroque imagination? Can both adjectives be applied to a psychological phenomenon rarely addressed as such in its time?

When one recalls the definition of imagination as proposed, it does seem possible. Imagination was defined as “a heart-based structuring mental activity by which people perceive coherent and significant possibilities that are indispensable in understanding and generating objects and experiences.”<sup>1032</sup> This definition has a correlating idea in *argutezza* - the Italian theory of the “activity of the imagination and understanding that tends to show the greatest metaphorical ingenuity.”<sup>1033</sup>

Applying the adjective baroque to that definition of imagination highlights that this is not just a style of art or culture. It is a deeply religious mixture of influences that depends on, but deviates from, the past. And it is not just a style, but a mindset that perceives and wrestles with the tension between what is perceived and what is real, with the goal of producing honest

---

1030. Milbank, *Beyond Secular Order*, 17.

1031. See Viladesau, *Pathos*, ix.

1032. See 1.3 of this dissertation.

1033. Jean-Francois Groulier, “Argutezza” in Cassin et al., *Untranslatables*, 40-41. Interestingly *argutezza* is also seen as a faculty of mind related to understanding, that also includes the metaphors that can be found in sermons and emblems that are aimed at demonstrating a higher truth or bringing some to light. This is more than the German *begriff*, Italian *concettismo*, or English *concept* which seek to clarify. It is closer to *einbildungskraft* which is a unifying and synthesizing power, and closer to the Hebrew *tselem* and *demuth* and Greek *eidolon*. See Pascal David, “Bild” in Cassin et al., *Untranslatables*, 107-110.

affections.<sup>1034</sup> Indeed, the baroque itself requires “a special eye for the interplay of subject and object.”<sup>1035</sup> It is a spirit that can pervade church witness and worship.<sup>1036</sup>

Applying the adjective Puritan to the baroque imagination suggests further clarifications. It retains the biblical heart and the importance of the supernatural.<sup>1037</sup> It relies less on the visual to produce affections. However, the exuberance and enthusiasm are no less desired or approved. The Calvinism that forbids exuberance and enthusiasm towards saints and “dead images,” calls for ardor and direct experience of the divine through Jesus Christ and “living images.”<sup>1038</sup>

Therefore, a Puritan baroque imagination is possible. It is an imagination that understands that things happen with layers of possible meaning (B1). It is an imagination that perceives all truth as God’s truth and does not restrict itself to any one culture or era. It is an imagination that is educated, refined, and yet willingly held and bound to the authority of Scripture (B2). It is an imagination that understands the value of the internal human soul, as well as the rest of creation, even as it looks to heaven (B3). It is an imagination that allows for dramatic movement (B4) yet

---

1034. See Mieke Bal, “Baroque Matters,” in *Rethinking the Baroque*, ed. Helen Hills, 183-202; Geraghty, “Nicholas Hawksmoor’s Drawing,” in *Rethinking the Baroque*, ed. Helen Hills, 125-139. However, I would seek to draw boundaries that would exclude some of Bal’s examples that seek to detach themselves from the real world.

1035. Lahiji, *Theory of the Baroque*, 17.

1036. Gerald R. Cragg, “Christianity and Culture in the Baroque Age,” in *The Church and the Age of Reason 1648-1789* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1964), 256.

1037. See Milbank, *Beyond Secular Order*, 128-129.

1038. Dyrness, *Protestant Aesthetics*, 58-59. For a larger discussion of this point, see Covington and Reklis, *Protestant Aesthetics*, 3-5.

prioritizes the affections within significant moments.<sup>1039</sup> It is an imagination that seeks affective experience where God is glorified and enjoyed (B5, B6). It is, as has been said of baroque spirituality in general, an imagination “aimed at reaching the affects of the viewer and listener [and thinker] to produce a living relation with the God of redemption.”<sup>1040</sup>

*Puritan Baroque Imagination and Prose*

A baroque imagination has been tied to prose. Within the Catholic Jesuit tradition this includes Nicholas Caussin’s *De eloquentia sacra et humana libri XVI*, and Bohuslav Balbin’s *Verisimilia humanorium disciplinarum* (1666),<sup>1041</sup> as well as some French Catholic baroque sermons.<sup>1042</sup> While not Jesuit, Bernard Lamy described discourse as “the picture of our thoughts; the Tongue is the Pencil which draws that Picture; and Words are the Colours.”<sup>1043</sup> O. C. Edwards describes Catholic baroque preaching as touching the feelings more than communicating information.<sup>1044</sup> Bayley’s study shows seventeenth century Catholic and Protestant French sermons reaching for the affections through styles that embraced a range of analogy, anecdotes, illustrations, and logical argument.<sup>1045</sup>

---

1039. Korsten, *Dutch Republic Baroque*, 173 suggests this is why the Northern masters such as Caravaggio, Rubens, and Rembrandt painted numerous works depicting the moment Abraham was about to kill Isaac.

1040. Viladesau, *Pathos*, x.

1041. See Chiappetta, “Baroque Imagination,” 14-16; Kraus, *Rhetoric in European Culture*, 162-164.

1042. See Regent-Susini and Susini, “Baroque Style of Preaching,” *OHB*, 641-664.

1043. Lamy, *The Art of Speaking*, 182.

1044. See O.C. Edwards, Jr., “Varieties of Sermon: A Survey of Preaching in the Long Eighteenth Century,” in *Preaching, Sermon and Cultural Change in the Long Eighteenth Century*, ed. Joris van Eijnatten. Vol. 4 of *A New History of the Sermon*. (Leiden: Brill, 2009), 5.

1045. Bayley, *French Pulpit Oratory, 1598-1650*, 72-100.

A Puritan baroque imagination can also be further found in literary arts.<sup>1046</sup> Matthias Flacius Illyricus' *Clavis Scripturae Sacrae* (1562) is said to have suggested anti-Ciceronian rhetoric emerged out of orthodox Protestantism as a study of biblical concepts and language use.<sup>1047</sup> However, Flacius, was careful not to equate plain style with non-grand language. On the contrary, biblical language – though non-Ciceronian – is grand and sublime. This style was concerned with moving its hearer as well as teaching.<sup>1048</sup>

It has even been suggested that, rather than assuming literary arts were imitative of the larger art and music world, the baroque arts were stylistically imitative of oratory and rhetoric that were already trying to arouse affections.<sup>1049</sup> As oral arts, speeches and sermons were intended to produce psychological effects through experience, and by appealing to the senses as well as the mind.<sup>1050</sup> And so, in an appropriately complex definition, baroque discourse “encompassed retrospective and prospective, deductive and inductive modes of thought, modes that in formal and stylistic terms could be pointed, elliptical, perspicacious, obscure, ornate, syncretic, digressive, and/or encyclopedic, and that, thematically, saw cultural, political,

---

1046. If one accepts the historical parameters of 1600-1750 for the baroque era, that still includes the time of John Bunyan, Daniel Defoe, John Donne, John Milton, William Shakespeare, as well as the King James Bible.

1047. Shuger, “Anti-Ciceronianism,” 272.

1048. Shuger, “Anti-Ciceronianism,” 273 points out how the proximity suggested here between *docere* (teaching) and *movere* (affecting) is not new with Flacius, as this can be traced back to Augustine, and also appears in Philip Melanchthon.

1049. Burkhalter, “Profound Harmony.” Others suggest that baroque music was not necessarily imitative of oratory, but that there were significant connections. See also Kennedy, *Classical Rhetoric*, 215; Viladesau, *Pathos*, 88.

1050. Cascardi, “Experience and Knowledge,” *OHB*, 450. That this was happening in baroque Catholicism, see Minor, *Baroque and Rococo*, 79.

metaphysical, and other concerns dramatically compete with epistemological ones.”<sup>1051</sup>

The idea of a Puritan baroque imagination in sermon prose could also be confirmed by its parallels to the anti-Ciceronian rhetoric that some have seen as the impulse of the baroque.<sup>1052</sup> This was in part a reaction to the retrieval of Latin and classical oration by the Renaissance humanists.<sup>1053</sup> However, correlating the baroque with barest “plain speech” would be an egregious error: baroque prose was using clarity, appropriateness, and simplicity in a way that was highly imaginative and therefore highly rhetorical.<sup>1054</sup> While traditional Ciceronian rhetoric maintained the role of invention, arrangement, style, memory, and delivery through what could be obfuscating language and confusing order; the seventeenth century brought a desire for reform.<sup>1055</sup> Lamy in particular spoke of the difficulties of plain style since the greatness of things spoken of required metaphors and figures to express “sentiments of admiration, love, hatred, fear, or hope.”<sup>1056</sup>

---

1051. Christopher D. Johnson, “Baroque Discourse,” *OHB*, 559.

1052. See Croll, “Baroque Style of Prose,” 342. While Shuger, “Anti-Ciceronianism,” 270 sees several problems with Croll’s thesis, she still validates this point. John M. Wallace, “Foreword to Essay Five,” in *Style, Rhetoric, and Rhythm: Essays by Morris W. Croll*, ed. J. Max Patrick and Robert O. Evans (Princeton: Princeton University Press), 203 recognizes how Croll changed his understanding of this from the more philosophical Attic prose to the title baroque. See also Jiri Kraus, *Rhetoric in European Culture and Beyond*, First English edition (Prague: Karolinum, 2014), 163; Katherine Ibbett and Anna More, “The Baroque as a Literary Concept,” *OHB*, 543.

1053. See Kennedy, *Classical Rhetoric*, 239.

1054. See Sato, “Puritan Baroque,” vi; John M. Wallace, “Foreword to Essay Two,” in *Style, Rhetoric*, ed. J. Max Patrick and Robert O. Evans, 49.

1055. Wilbur Samuel Howell, *Logic and Rhetoric in England, 1500-1700* (New York: Princeton University Press, 1956), 318-319.

1056. Lamy, *The Art of Speaking*, 316.

As evidence of the concept of baroque prose, Croll identifies the choice of words, the choice of figures, the principle of balance or rhythm, and the form of the sentence as elements of prose technique, with the exploded form of a sentence (with or without conjunctions) as one evidence of a baroque prose.<sup>1057</sup> The purpose was to portray not a thought, but a mind thinking. Baroque prose demanded clarity and appropriateness, so that the message spoken was the message received, and achieved the affective response desired.<sup>1058</sup> This also helps explain why some of the Ramist Puritan preachers were required to defend their flowering speech against the attacks of “plainer” high churchmen.<sup>1059</sup>

And so, rather than pitting the Puritan plain style against Ciceronian rhetoric, it is helpful to realize that there may be a third style: a Puritan baroque imaginative prose that acts as “a bridge between the word and the world, connecting problems of style to the role of emotion and imagination in the mind’s journey toward God.”<sup>1060</sup> This is consistent with the baroque emphasis on evoking affective response, seen also in the “serene religious fervour of some of the preserved sermons.”<sup>1061</sup>

---

1057. Croll, “Baroque Style of Prose,” 342. One only must think of the multi-line titles given to some of the Puritan works to see evidence of this baroque tendency: for example, Thomas Goodwin, *The Heart of Christ in Heaven Towards Sinners on Earth. Or, A Treatise Demonstrating the gracious disposition and tender affection of Christ in his Humane Nature now in Glory, unto his Members under all sorts of Infirmities, either of Sin or Misery* (1645). In vol. 4 of *The Works of Thomas Goodwin*. Edinburgh: James Nichol, 1861.

1058. Croll, “Baroque Style of Prose,” 343. Others have added word order and word juxtaposition to these; see Wallace, “Foreword to Essay Five,” 205.

1059. Wallace, “Foreword to Essay Two,” 49.

1060. Shuger, *Sacred Rhetoric*, 8. See also Howell, *Logic and Rhetoric*, 318-341; Packer, *A Quest*, 285-286.

1061. Kraus, *Rhetoric in European Culture*, 158-159.

The value of such a Puritan baroque imagination in prose can also be confirmed by its experiential emphasis. The goal of a sermon is not more knowledge, but the interweaving of “metaphor, type, allegory, and symbol to create a vertical, intuitive movement from signifier to multiple levels of signification.”<sup>1062</sup> Such a grand-style expressed “passionate seriousness” about the most important things of life, through language that was not dense and copious, but light and clear.<sup>1063</sup> A Puritan baroque prose therefore retained its vital power and vividness through elements relying on dramatization and figures of thought, for the “things themselves are always more vivid and more powerful than words, for indeed these are only signs and shadows.”<sup>1064</sup> The imagination was necessary in order to make the spiritual visible.<sup>1065</sup>

The baroque was also seen in other Protestants often not thought of as baroque. Bartholomaeus Keckermann’s *Systema rhetoricae* (1614) is often understood as Ramistic, but his attention to the doctrine of affects (B5), as well as his call for preachers to carefully select words and use picturesque descriptions (B1), may suggest a tendency towards the baroque mindset.<sup>1066</sup> It was this desire for affect that allowed sermons full of “elaborate metaphors, extraordinary imagery, and stunning similes, but all of them would draw from the lives of the hearers in order to change those lives and draw them nearer to God. From the standpoint of the Puritan

---

1062. Shuger, “Anti-Ciceronianism,” 274. Note the parallels to baroque characteristics in this quote about anti-ciceronian prose.

1063. Shuger, *Sacred Rhetoric*, 6-7; Packer, *A Quest*, 286-287.

1064. Flacius, *Clavis*, 2.480; quoted in Shuger, “Anti-Ciceronianism,” 276. See also Shuger, *Sacred Rhetoric*, 75, 219. Consider the contrast between the righteous and wicked man in Psalm 1; or the “sea saw and fled” of Psalm 114.

1065. Flacius, *Clavis*, 2.483; quoted in Shuger, “Anti-Ciceronianism,” 277. See also Shuger, *Sacred Rhetoric*, 7-8.

1066. Kraus, *Rhetoric in European Culture*, 165-166.



imaginary, the way to read Puritan literature is to look for its intended effect – especially the effect on the heart, for the generation of proper emotions and experience.”<sup>1067</sup>

The supreme, affective identity of the Puritan mind was not expressed in architecture, or art, or music (though they certainly had unique architecture, art, and music), but rather through poetry and prose, including the sermon. In conclusion, there is an imaginative prose style that is both Puritan and baroque.<sup>1068</sup> While the styles and size of Puritan baroque prose might range as widely as Bach’s *St. Matthew’s Passion* and *Invention #1 in C*, its penchant for grandeur and intensity tends towards the same artistry.<sup>1069</sup> Might Jonathan Edwards be evidence of that?

#### 4.2 Edwards’ Imagination as Reflective of a Puritan Baroque Imagination

To identify Edwards as someone reflecting characteristics of a Puritan baroque imagination is not immediately obvious. A search of the term ‘baroque’ on the Jonathan Edwards Center Search WJE function yields no results. The baroque is often thought of as Italian and Spanish, and Edwards lived in colonial America. The baroque is often thought to have focused on architecture, art, and music, and Edwards did not contribute any of those disciplines. There is also debate on whether Edwards was an Enlightenment or Calvinistic thinker, an inventor or synthesizer, the last Puritan or the first modernist, a medievalist or postmodernist.<sup>1070</sup> Edwards’

---

1067. Van Engen, “Afterword,” 345. For how Puritans may have applied the prose of desire, see Lane, *Ravished by Beauty*, 134-158.

1068. Shuger, “Anti-Ciceronianism,” 279; Shuger, *Sacred Rhetoric*, 41, 173.

1069. See Shuger, *Sacred Rhetoric*, 173. Ursula Kirkendale, “The Source of Bach’s *Musical Offering*: The *Institutio Oratoria* of Quintilian,” *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 33 (1980): 88-141 suggests that Bach was aware of, and used, classical rhetorical strategies and their musical counterparts.

1070. See Jennifer L. Leader, *Knowing, Seeing, Being: Jonathan Edwards, Emily Dickinson, Marianne Moore, and the American Typological Tradition* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2016), 15-16.

life even falls outside the general period of Puritanism.<sup>1071</sup>

Nevertheless, Edwards could be understood as having a Puritan baroque imagination, for the same reasons diverse others have been understood as baroque. The Jesuit founder Loyola has been considered a “baroque mind” for his exercise of a will that confronts the world “in order to incorporate, rearrange, and conquer it for what Loyola called the ‘History of Salvation.’”<sup>1072</sup>

Without referring to Loyola, McClymond described the implicit apologetics found in Edwards “to appropriate and reinterpret various styles of thought or genres of writing so as to make them conform to his fundamental Christian convictions. He ‘baptized’ every eighteenth-century idea and intellectual tradition he could lay hands on.”<sup>1073</sup> His imagination was invigorated by living in an expanding and changing world,<sup>1074</sup> leading to his own imaging of a history of redemption.<sup>1075</sup>

While striving for religious affections, he was, like the baroque, not naïve or ignorant, but “copious in the commendation of virtue.”<sup>1076</sup> Like other baroque figures, Edwards was influenced by international sources, yet at the frontier; and as it were, at the intersection of

---

1071. Beeke and Jones, *Puritan Theology*, 4; Kristina Bross and Abram Van Engen, “Introduction,” in *A History of American Puritan Literature*, ed. Kristina Bross and Abram Van Engen (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020), 1-16. This is one reason I have used puritan as a secondary adjective and baroque as the primary adjective.

1072. Chiappetta, “Baroque Imagination,” 14-15.

1073. McClymond, *Encounters with God*, 101. This may be overstated, but the point needs to be taken.

1074. Chiappetta, “Baroque Imagination,” 10.

1075. See Jonathan Edwards, *A History of the Work of Redemption*, *WJE*, 9.

1076. Davidson, *Universal Baroque*, 18 is speaking here of the baroque, and not of Edwards.

Puritanism and the Stockbridge Indians.<sup>1077</sup>

Just as some others were regarded as baroque for their explosive prose, Edwards can be regarded for his. His language was explosive and vivid. What is commonly known today as *Freedom of the Will* was published in 1754 as *A Careful and Strict Enquiry into the Modern prevailing Notions of That Freedom of Will, Which is Supposed to be Essential to Moral Agency, Vertue and Vice, Reward and Punishment, Praise and Blame*.<sup>1078</sup> When first published in 1758, *Original Sin*, was titled *The Great Christian Doctrine of Original Sin defended; Evidences of it's Truth produced, and Arguments to the Contrary answered. Containing, in particular, a reply to the Objections and Arguings of Dr. John Taylor, in his Book, intituled, 'the Scripture-Doctrine of Original Sin proposed to free and candid examination, &c.*'<sup>1079</sup> The outlines of the chapters of that work continue similarly. Edwards' prose was also equally vivid. As just one example, in a sermon for the installation of Rev. Mr. Joseph Ashley on Nov. 11, 1747, Edwards used the text of Zechariah 4:12-14 to set before the congregation the task of the ministers, and the responsibility of receiving such a minister, concluding with these words:

Take heed that you don't hearken to those emissaries that are sent out and wander to and fro to propagate the forementioned corrupt notions. . . . They are poor deluded creatures, deceiving and being deceived, wandering stars, and I wish I could not say that I fear they are reserved for the blackness of darkness forever. Follow not their vain notions, but cleave to God's ordinances and imbibe the golden oil by those golden pipes from those officers that are God's anointed ones. It will be the way to be indeed a golden candlestick which, having your lamps fed with golden oil, shines bright with a heavenly light maintained by fire from heaven; and not instead of that, to have the light that is in you to be darkness, and to be inflamed with a false zeal enkindled by the fire of the bottomless pit.<sup>1080</sup>

---

1077. Davidson, *Universal Baroque*, 21.

1078. See Edwards, *Freedom of the Will*, *WJE*, 6:118.

1079. Edwards, *Original Sin*, *WJE*, 3:v.

1080. Jonathan Edwards, "Sons of Oil, Heavenly Light," *WJE*, 25:273-274.

So, as evidence of the characteristics of a Puritan baroque imagination in Edwards, the priorities of a Puritan baroque mindset need to be revisited. Edwards displays an intentional and amplifying use of imagery (B1). The Italians who focused on baroque influence in architecture and statuary insisted on the metaphorical capacity of imagination in art and thought.<sup>1081</sup> While connections between the Italians and Edwards cannot be proven, Edwards certainly saw the use for metaphorical and symbolical images. Edwards' "Images or Shadows of Divine Things," not only combed Scripture for types and allegories (like the Lutheran baroque music of J.S. Bach), but sought a corresponding appreciation for nature, which was also part of the baroque.<sup>1082</sup> Edwards illustrated this when he stated, "I am not ashamed to own that I believe the whole universe, heaven and earth, air and sea . . . [to] be full of images of divine things."<sup>1083</sup>

Emblematics, particularly in the New World, were a blooming interest. People saw them for potential medicinal and culinary applications, but also were interested in them for "intellectual (indeed spiritual) application as a crucial part of piecing together the progressive revelation of Creation."<sup>1084</sup> Edwards was at least aware of what others, known for their baroque

---

1081. Cassin, et al., *Untranslatables*, 479.

1082. See Edwards, "Images of Divine Things," *WJE*, 11:50-144; Edwards, "Types," *WJE*, 11: 146-155.

1083. Edwards, "Types," *WJE*, 11:152. See also Claghorn, "Personal Writings: Introduction," *WJE*, 16:749.

1084. Davidson, *Universal Baroque*, 99.

education of emblematics,<sup>1085</sup> promoted as symbolic language.<sup>1086</sup> Further, Edwards followed other Puritan poets who had access to emblem books, meditative methodologies, commentaries on the poetical books of Scripture, and confusing debates on what formed the acceptable use of images.<sup>1087</sup> This focus on emblematics and conceits made its way into sermons of the eighteenth century, and was often called “witty” or “metaphysical,” in that it displayed associations not usually connected.<sup>1088</sup>

This focus on emblems would seem to go against the description of the “plain style” often associated with Edwards.<sup>1089</sup> However, a harsh characterization and embrace of plain style ignores the historical allowance of typology through the Reformation, as it influenced Puritans such as William Ames, and even the publications of writings such as *The Figures or Types of the Old Testament, by which Christ and the Heavenly Things of the Gospel were Preached and Shadowed to the People of God of Old* (1673) by Samuel Mather (AD 1626-1671).<sup>1090</sup> Therefore,

---

1085. See Davidson, *Universal Baroque*, 168-169.

1086. Edwards likely had in his possession, according to *Catalogues of Books, WJEO*, 26:106, Francis Quarles, *Emblemes* (London, 1635), which was drawn from the Jesuit manual of Herman Hugo, *Pia Desideria* (1624). Hugo’s work is understood by Davidson, *Universal Baroque*, 169 as being representative of the Baroque.

1087. Michael Clark, “The Honeyed Knot of Puritan Aesthetics,” in *Puritan Poets and Poetics: Seventeenth-Century American Poetry in Theory and Practice*, ed. Peter White (London: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1985), 67-68. Clark would not seem to promote the spiritual use of language.

1088. Edwards, Jr., “Varieties,” 7. For how this may be evident in Edwards, consider the recently released book of Rob Boss, *Thunder God, Wonder God: Exploring the Emblematic Vision of Jonathan Edwards* (undisclosed: JESociety Press, 2023).

1089. Contra Miller, *New England Mind*, 300-362; but see Tawil, “Transatlantic Plain Style,” 261. Kinnach, “Introduction,” *WJE*, 10:225 suggests Edwards’ integrative imagination and use of imagery reflects that of the finest metaphysical poets.

1090. Leader, *Knowing, Seeing, Being*, 7.

dismissing emblematics and typology as being against a plain Puritan style stems from an overly simplistic reading of the Puritans. Perkins himself differentiated between the analogical and plain and the cryptical and dark, giving a place for allegory and tropology immediately after stating that there is only a literal sense in Scripture.<sup>1091</sup> Despite a wide array of understandings, the use of allegorical or emblematic language characterizes the Puritans *and* the baroque, and evidences their common desire to read objects in relation to other objects.<sup>1092</sup>

However, Edwards guarded the tendency towards emblems with the Puritan understanding of the authority of Scripture. Edwards saw God using imaginative descriptions in Scripture because He knows that people are most affected by what they see with their eyes and have experienced.<sup>1093</sup> Even Scripture guards the interpretation of the visual by first “declaring to us those spiritual mysteries that are indeed signified or typified in the constitution of the natural world; and secondly, in actually making application of the signs and types in the book of nature as representations of those spiritual mysteries in many instances.”<sup>1094</sup> The typology of Edwards has been identified as valuing the Scriptural, physical and historical types while still

---

1091. Perkins, *Art of Prophecy*, 26. See also Mason I. Lowance, Jr., *The Language of Canaan: Metaphor and Symbol in New England from the Puritans to the Transcendentalists* (London: Harvard University Press, 1980), 28-30.

1092. Katherine Ibbett and Anna More, “The Baroque as a Literary Concept,” *OHB*, 539. See also Kenneth P. Minkema, “Cotton Mather, Jonathan Edwards, and the Relationship Between Historical and Spiritual Exegesis in Early Evangelicalism,” in Ryan P. Hoselton, Jan Stievermann, Douglas A. Sweeney, Michael A. G. Haykin, eds., *The Bible in Early Transatlantic Pietism and Evangelicalism* (University Park: PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2022), 194-197; Shuger, *Sacred Rhetoric*, 248; Van Engen, “Afterword,” 342-352; Westerhoff, “A World of Signs,” 633-634. That Edwards was aware of Quarles, see *WJE*, 11:xi, 22; 26:86, 106.

1093. Jonathan Edwards, “Nothing Upon Earth Can Represent the Glories of Heaven: a sermon on Revelation 21:18,” *WJE*, 14:140.

1094. Edwards, “Images of Divine Things,” *WJE*, 11:106.

foreshadowing the spiritual anti-types that speak to the glories of redemption in light of eternity.<sup>1095</sup> His use of imagery was again contemplative.

Further, Edwards evidenced a careful observation of light (B2).<sup>1096</sup> In some ways, Edwards' use of light was an embrace of biblical descriptions of light (which were seen as spiritual in nature). Indeed, in the conversion of Paul, Edwards taught that "the outward light that shone from heaven typified spiritual light. Paul's seeing Christ with the bodily eyes typifies a spiritual sight of Christ; this struck Paul down to the earth."<sup>1097</sup> But light is a type of the greater reality, and should not be assumed to actually be spiritual light.<sup>1098</sup> The greater reality of spiritual light is necessary: "Men not only can't exercise faith without some spiritual light, but they exercise faith only just in such proportion as they have spiritual light."<sup>1099</sup> People should, therefore, seek this light.

Edwards also recognized the power of the source of light for the present. Again, from Edwards' *Religious Affections*: "The great thing discovered by spiritual light, and understood by spiritual knowledge, is the glory of divine things."<sup>1100</sup> Or, as he described in a 1731 sermon:

---

1095. Leader, *Knowing, Seeing, Being*, 1-6.

1096. Keller, "Experiencing God in Words," 129 shows that Edwards' use of the word "light" grew over time, with significant increase in the Stockbridge sermons to the natives. On page 235, Keller states that "light" is the most repeated illustration for Edwards.

1097. Jonathan Edwards, "Miscellanies #645. Conviction. Humiliation," *WJE*, 18:176.

1098. Edwards, "False Light and True," *WJE*, 19:136.

1099. Edwards, *Religious Affections*, *WJE*, 2:176. See also Leon Chai, *Jonathan Edwards and the Limits of Enlightenment Philosophy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), 4.

1100. Edwards, *Religious Affections*, *WJE*, 2:271.

There is a world of new objects that is discovered, a spiritual world, a great variety of beautiful and glorious objects that were till now altogether hidden. And there is a light that shines from outward objects that before did not; the visible world has a light shining in it that before was not seen. There is a light [that] shines from God's works of creation and providence. The face of the earth, the fields and trees, they have a spiritual light shining from them that discovers the glory of the Creator. And the sun, moon, and stars shine with a new kind of light, even spiritual light. The sun shone bright with outward light before, but it shines brighter now with discoveries of the glory of its Creator. Though this spiritual light indeed is but dim here, and often interrupted, a true saint can see this light from the Word of God or the works of God at all times.<sup>1101</sup>

In another sermon, Edwards used John 5:35, “He was the burning and shining lamp,” to describe the excellencies of a minister of the gospel.<sup>1102</sup> Edwards approached the concept of light with unusual “energy and imagination,” using the ideas of burning and shining to correspond to the will and understanding of a minister.<sup>1103</sup>

Edwards’ ideas reflected a similar preoccupation to the baroque use of light in ceiling paintings which take the court of heaven as their subject.<sup>1104</sup> For the believing, Edwards wanted them to realize that “we must become beggars before we are kings: there are none now reigning with Christ in heaven and are crowned with glory and sit in the throne of Christ, but that while on earth came humble at the throne of grace as poor perishing beggars.”<sup>1105</sup> For those ignoring Christ, “He will then appear in his greatest glory. . . . He will then shine in a different sort of

---

1101. Jonathan Edwards, “Christians a Chosen Generation,” *WJE*, 17:323.

1102. Jonathan Edwards, “The True Excellency of a Minister of the Gospel,” *WJE*, 25:84-104.

1103. Kimmach, “The True Excellency of a Minister of the Gospel,” *WJE*, 25:82.

1104. McEvoy, “Protestant Ear,” 182.

1105. Jonathan Edwards, “Poverty of Spirit,” *WJE*, 10: 503. See also Edwards, *Religious Affections*, *WJE*, 2:328.



light than the sun. . . . The wicked will see Christ by that external light with which he shall then shine, though it will be no pleasing, but an infinitely terrible light unto them, so that their bodies and organs of sense will be fitted to be acted upon by a quite different medium from what they are [now].”<sup>1106</sup>

Edwards did not try to soften the contrasts he felt were necessary for proper understanding of the light. The stereotype stemming from Edwards’ most well-known sermon of 1741, “Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God,”<sup>1107</sup> was that he was a dark preacher. But this was not the flat or singular theme of this preacher. The drama of the “Angry God” sermon needs to be balanced with that of “A Divine and Supernatural Light” and others.<sup>1108</sup> Even within both representative sermons, there are folds of truth and layers that confound simplistic characterizations. The contrasts are allowed to stand as they are, even within one sermon:

Natural men may have lively impressions on their imaginations; and we can’t determine but that the devil, who transforms himself into an angel of light, may cause imaginations of an outward beauty, or visible glory, and of sounds and speeches, and other such things; but these are things of a vastly inferior nature to spiritual light.

3. This spiritual light is not the suggesting of any new truths, or propositions not contained in the Word of God. . . . This spiritual light . . . reveals no new doctrine, it suggests no new proposition to the mind, it teaches no new thing of God, or Christ, or another world, not taught in the Bible; but only gives a due apprehension of those things that are taught in the Word of God.<sup>1109</sup>

---

1106. Jonathan Edwards, “Miscellanies #833,” *WJE*, 20: 170.

1107. Jonathan Edwards, “Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God,” *WJE*, 22:400-435.

1108. Edwards, “A Divine and Supernatural Light,” *WJE*, 17:405-426; Jonathan Edwards, “Christ, the Light of the World,” *WJE*, 10:535-547; Edwards, “False Light and True,” *WJE*, 19:122-143; Jonathan Edwards, “The Pleasantness of Religion,” *WJE*, 14: 99-110. Kinnach, “Introduction,” *WJE*, 10:6 says that divine light was the common property of the Puritans. The hundreds of references to divine light in Edwards bears this out.

1109. Edwards, “A Divine and Supernatural Light,” *WJE*, 17:412.

Edwards evidenced an awareness of space and distinctions in space (B3). The imagination perceived in a space that was liberated from the empirical. There were real, possible objects just beyond the border of current observation. This continuum of space philosophically appears in the descriptions of space in Edwards' *Freedom of the Will* (1754). There Edwards talked about least perceivable space, no perceivable space or length, a space of deliberation and suspension, parts of infinite time and space, duration and space, and an extent of space beyond the limits of the creation.<sup>1110</sup> But Edwards' concerns with space also appeared in how he saw the work of the Holy Spirit. It was an outside source, the Spirit, that brought light to a sinner; then that sinner then had new internal thoughts.

Spiritual light always discovers something to the mind, . . . There never shines any spiritual light into the mind but that there is some knowledge got by it; some understanding is gained by it. Spiritual light reveals something. It either discovers something of the excellency of the things of religion: . . . Or it reveals something of the truth of the things. . . . Or [it] lets one into a better understanding of the nature and design of divine things, of [the] way of salvation, and other ways and works of God's wisdom.<sup>1111</sup>

The baroque emphasis on space can also be seen in the way Edwards described spiritual life as both an internal and an external activity. In this way Edwards maintained the Puritan direction of interiorization but took "a large step in the direction of making action a center of attention."<sup>1112</sup> Yet that apprehension saw external factors differently than internal: "the more he apprehends, the more the smallness of his grace and love appears strange and wonderful: and therefore is more ready to think that others are beyond him. . . . For he sees only the *outside* of

---

1110. Edwards, *Freedom of the Will*, *WJE*, 1:200-211, 385-386.

1111. Edwards, "True Light and False," *WJE*, 19:134.

1112. Ramsey, "Introduction," *WJE*, 2:42.

other Christians, but he sees his *own inside*.”<sup>1113</sup>

The interior/exterior distinction in the baroque use of space can also be seen in baroque portraits. Portraits were not the high-class commissions of Catholic baroque art; they were more egalitarian, and were used significantly by the Northern European and Colonial Protestant middle-class. Jonathan Edwards had portraits painted in 1747 and 1754. While these show a solemn disposition, the enthusiasm of the mind should not be minimized. After all, the interior was distinct from the exterior. Another baroque influence can be seen in the retention of a wig by Edwards.



Figure 6. Portraits: *President Edwards* (1758);<sup>1114</sup> *Johann Sebastian Bach* (1746).<sup>1115</sup>

In comparing the above portraits, it is clear that the baroque does away with refined elegance, and yet retains a degree of ornamentality around a generous form.<sup>1116</sup> Yet it is helpful to put

---

1113. Edwards, *Religious Affections*, *WJE*, 2:324; emphasis added. A similar thought appears in Edwards, *Life of David Brainerd*, *WJE*, 7:188.

1114. Henry Augustus Loop (1831-1895), *Jonathan Edwards (1703-1758), President (1758), 1860*. After Joseph Badger (1708-1765) original in the possession of Sarah Pierpont Edwards. Princeton University Art Museum.

1115. Elias Gottlob Haussmann (1695-1774), *Johann Sebastian Bach 1746*.

1116. Buker, “The Baroque,” 309-310; Wölfflin, *Barok*, 44.

these two masters side by side, since these portraits challenge the perception that Edwards was a dull and rigid preacher, while Bach was the composer of dramatic cantatas. Indeed, the inner genius of both men is not here exhibited in any external glorified style. Instead, these portraits both point to internal depths full of creative gifts able to reveal worlds where divine beauty could be experienced,<sup>1117</sup> where a counterpoint to themes of the Enlightenment could be advanced,<sup>1118</sup> and where subjective life and its affective responses could be rooted in the theological and rational structure of God's creation.<sup>1119</sup>

Edwards' work also evidenced a degree of movement (B4). This movement can be seen as a mind searching for layers of meaning, not just through a rationalistic methodical perspective, but through the expression of a moving soul that included understanding and desire. This was not the hyperbolic or overly extended descriptions, or irrational prose of other writers. And yet Edwards' inheritance of the plain style therefore does not preclude elements of contrast, drama, or movement in his work. In the catalogue of books, it is mentioned that Jonathan Edwards had a book of John Jennings (c. AD 1687-1723) on preaching, which also included a letter on the most useful way of preaching by the German pietist Augustus Hermanus Francke (AD 1663-1727).<sup>1120</sup> Jennings wrote that applications of sermons drawn "in the natural Language of the Sort of Men

---

1117. Marsden, *A Life*, 79.

1118. Hall, "Bach and Edwards," 69-70.

1119. Matthew Raley, "A Rational and Spiritual Worship: Comparing J. S. Bach and Jonathan Edwards," *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 62, no. 3 (2019): 583, 589.

1120. John Jennings, *Two Discourses: The First, of Preaching Christ; The Second, Of Particular and Experimental Preaching; With a Preface by the Revered Dr. Isaac Watts, the Fourth Edition. To which is added, a Letter concerning the most useful Way of Preaching: written in the German Language by the late Revered and Celebrated Dr. Augustus Hermannus Franck....* (Boston: J. Draper, for J. Edwards and H. Foster in Cornhil, 1711).

intended, and judiciously and artfully spoken to, are the closest, most weighty, and most useful.”<sup>1121</sup> While some English Puritans may have promoted a plainer plain style less influenced by others,<sup>1122</sup> Edwards’ international influences allowed for use of the Christian grand style, or the baroque mindset that would not conceal rhetorical art.<sup>1123</sup> After all, Edwards recognized that “the affections will suggest words and expressions and thoughts, and make eloquent.”<sup>1124</sup> Such a rhetorical style was displayed by the Holy Scriptures themselves.<sup>1125</sup>

Movement can be seen in Edwards’ work as he worked towards effective synthesis of various influences. This physically is evident in the increasing way Edwards had to select, arrange, appropriate, and ornament materials from an ever-growing base of knowledge.<sup>1126</sup> The novel patterns and unusual structures that appear in sermons are manifestations of a baroque ornamentality. In this sense, Edwards was a true baroque: recognizing the goal of love for God,

---

1121. Jennings, *Two Discourses*, 43.

1122. Wilkins’s *Ecclesiastes* was a rhetoric text that promoted the plain doctrine and use method of William Perkins. However, despite that preference, Wilkins still recommended the classic rhetoric texts and even lifted passages from Erasmus’ text also called *Ecclesiastes*. See Shuger, *Sacred Rhetoric*, 89.

1123. See Kenneth P. Minkema, “The Late Germanic Turn of Jonathan Edwards,” in *Edwards, Germany, and Transatlantic Contexts*, ed. Rhys Bezzant (Gottingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2022), 31-50; Shuger, *Sacred Rhetoric*, 244; Willem Van Vlastuin, “Jonathan Edwards and the Dutch Great Awakening,” in *Transatlantic Contexts*, ed. Rhys Bezzant, 69-84. George Whitefield also seems to reflect an international Christian grand style.

1124. Edwards, “The Mind,” *WJE*, 6:391. This would complicate the generalization made in Walter Ong, *Ramus: Method and the Decay of Dialogue: From the Art of Discourse to the Art of Reason* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1983), 283-284 where he suggests the baroque Anglican style was put aside by those New Englanders who wanted plain text and doctrine.

1125. Shuger, *Sacred Rhetoric*, 11.

1126. Johnson, “Baroque Discourse,” *OHB*, 561.

but not rigidly adhering to one method. He took the principles of Perkins to communicate effectively, to not draw attention to his own intellect, and yet to draw affective responses from people. Reflecting Archbishop James Ussher (AD 1581-1656), Edwards rejected any “frothy way of preaching” but appealed to “the capacities of a common Auditory” so that he would deliver “solid points of Divinity in a familiar stile to the capacity of the meanest.”<sup>1127</sup> He seemed to also have heard the instruction of Bernard Lamy, that “those who profess Divinity, and would instruct others, must as much as in them lies imitate their great Master Christ Jesus, who convinc’d the understanding, wrought upon the will, and inflam’d the heart of his Disciples whilst he taught them.”<sup>1128</sup>

The bulk of Edwards’ work (which happens to be his sermons), displays movement through a radical, passionate intensity. The movement of a sermon was towards action, not towards rest. As it has been said, “It is the literary preoccupation with capturing spiritual experiences in all their passionate intensity, representing *the spiritual* in concrete language implying an almost physical tangibility, that distinguishes Edwards’ homiletics.”<sup>1129</sup> In this way Edwards almost epitomizes the lofty subject matter and affectivity that characterizes the Christian grand style, or what could be seen as the prose of a Puritan baroque imagination.<sup>1130</sup>

---

1127. James Ussher; referenced in Keeble, *Literary Culture*, 241.

1128. Bernard Lamy, *The Art of Speaking* (1676), in *The Rhetorics of Thomas Hobbes and Bernard Lamy*, ed. John T. Harwood (Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press, 1986), 325. See also Kennedy, *Classical Rhetoric*, 263-264; Shumer, *Sacred Rhetoric*, 106-107. Kinnach, “Introduction,” *WJE*, 10:188 suggests Lamy anticipates some ideas of Edwards writings in “the Mind.”

1129. Kinnach, Minkema, and Sweeney, *Reader*, xix. Emphasis in original. See also Kinnach, “Introduction,” *WJE*, 10:227.

1130. See Shuger, *Sacred Rhetoric*, 30.

However, this movement is not uncontrolled diffusion. Edwards, like the baroque, encouraged a more unified experience in which style was integral to essence.<sup>1131</sup> That which is described intensely expresses “express aspects of the fundamentally qualitative nature of things, understanding that qualities are lodged equally in the ‘things themselves’ *and* in our experience of them.”<sup>1132</sup> The importance of this in preaching was clear to Edwards, who noted to himself: “It is proper for orators and preachers to move the passions – needful to show earnestness, etc. How this tends to convince the judgment, and many other ways is good and absolutely necessary.”<sup>1133</sup> That too is evidenced by Edwards’ sermons which “link reading the Bible with intellectual rumination and a practical, affectional response in the context of daily life; eternity enters the mind to impact upon the momentary act; the reality of God is translated through intense personal reflection into a system of committed practice. This is embodied in the very form of Edwards’ sermons and, like those of all great literary artists, Edwards’ statements are wholly harmonious with his genre, his form with his meaning.”<sup>1134</sup>

Edwards evidenced a Puritan baroque concern with affections (B5) that could also come through rhetoric. It was Erasmus (AD 1466-1536) who had reaffirmed the link between the Augustinian psychology of the will and the classical rhetoric. Images then came to have three functions: mnemonic (narrative for allegorical use), didactic (symbols for allegorical use), and

---

1131. Cascardi, “Experience and Knowledge,” *OHB*, 464. See also Ryken, *Worldly Saints*, 102.

1132. Cascardi, “Experience and Knowledge,” *OHB*, 466. Emphasis added. See also Wölfflin, *Barok*, 46.

1133. Edwards, “The Mind,” *WJE*, 6:388.

1134. Kimnach, Minkema, and Sweeney, *Reader*, xiv.

affective (spiritual experience for metaphoric use).<sup>1135</sup> Like Erasmus, William Perkins and William Ames displayed both scholastic and affective balance that was lost in other pietists.<sup>1136</sup>

These affections could be seen as negative affections. The concept of madness that some have attached to the baroque is not an Edwardsian concept. Yet, his other-centered focus (Christ-centered), and his insistence on original sin, fit within the anthropological concept of madness as described by others.<sup>1137</sup>

These affections could be seen as the experience of a moment. Like a painting of Caravaggio (AD 1571-1610) or Rembrandt, Edwards could capture the affections of a moment in suspense:<sup>1138</sup> “The motion of souls, not their states of rest, had become the themes of art.”<sup>1139</sup> Indeed, Edwards was clear that the liberty of the mind does not consist in indifferent suspension, and indifference is not essential or necessary to the liberty of the mind.<sup>1140</sup> A discerning understanding of personal exterior actions and interior awareness was an important aspect of *Religious Affections*. In this way, Edwards again reflected a more unified psychology.<sup>1141</sup> As Edwards said in *Religious Affections*, “Spiritual practice in man is the practice of a spirit and body jointly, or the practice of a spirit animating, commanding, and actuating a body to which it

---

1135. See Regent-Susini, “Baroque Style of Preaching,” *OHB*, 646.

1136. Campbell, *Religion of the Heart*, 47-48.

1137. Moriarty, “The Baroque and Philosophy,” *OHB*, 607 references Pascal, *Pensées*.

1138. Gregg Lambert, *The Return of the Baroque in Modern Culture* (New York: Continuum, 2004), 23.

1139. Croll, “Baroque Style,” 342.

1140. Edwards, *Freedom of the Will*, *WJE*, 1:212.

1141. See Shuger, “Anti-Ciceronianism,” 283.



is united, and over which it has power given it by the Creator.”<sup>1142</sup> Or, as he said about affections in preaching, “an appearance of affection and earnestness in the manner of delivery, if it be very great indeed, yet if it be agreeable to the nature of the subject, and ben’t beyond a proportion to its importance and worthiness of affection, and there be no appearance of its being feigned or forced, has so much the greater tendency to beget true ideas or apprehensions in the minds of the hearers, of the subject being spoken of, and so to enlighten the understanding.”<sup>1143</sup>

It is that concept of religious affections that may be the strongest tie between the Puritans and the baroque. The baroque epistemology deemed experience essential and sought to avoid separation between the subject and the object. Yet this was not a mere empiricism of things observed, but a subjective experience and response.<sup>1144</sup> And so, Edwards clarified and defended experiential religion against both cold formalism and delusional enthusiasm.<sup>1145</sup> As Edwards promoted in *Religious Affections*, “If it be so, that true religion lies much in the affections, hence we may infer, that such means are to be desired, as have much of a tendency to move the affections. Such books, and such a way of preaching the Word, . . . and singing praises, is much to be desired, as has a tendency deeply to affect the hearts of those who attend these means.”<sup>1146</sup> One of Edwards’ ideas to be developed later was the question of why it was proper for “orators

---

1142. Edwards, *Religious Affections*, WJE, 2:450. See also Eugene White, *Puritan Rhetoric: The Issue of Emotion in Religion* (EBSCO eBook: Southern Illinois University Press, 2009), 17.

1143. Edwards, “Some Thoughts Concerning the Revival,” *WJE*, 4:387.

1144. Cascardi, “Experience and Knowledge,” *OHB*, 458-459. See also Harbison, *Reflections on Baroque*, viii.

1145. Packer, *A Quest*, 312.

1146. Edwards, *Religious Affections*, WJE, 2:121.

and preachers to move the passions,” including the need for earnestness, convincing, and goodness.<sup>1147</sup> It seems Edwards did not do so to propound the baroque ideals, but did so because this was the biblical model.<sup>1148</sup> After all,

If the subject be in its own nature worthy of very great affection, then a speaking of it with very great affection is most agreeable to the nature of that subject, or is the truest representation of it,... I should think myself in the way of my duty to raise the affections of my hearers as high as possibly I can, provided that they are affected with nothing but truth, and with affections that are not disagreeable to the nature of what they are affected with.... Our people don't so much need to have their heads stored, as to have their hearts touched; and they stand in the greatest need of that sort of preaching that has the greatest tendency to do this.<sup>1149</sup>

Edwards also evidenced a cultivation of glorification (B6). However, this was not about personal glorification. He was not trying to magnify the cultural context he found himself in; the Northampton dismissal uncovers that. Edwards challenged existing paradigms and challenged people to recognize, identify, and apply what God revealed to the circumstances of their lives.<sup>1150</sup> For Edwards, “there are many reasons to think that what God has in view, in an increasing communication of himself throughout eternity, is an increasing knowledge of God, love to him, and joy in him. . . . All things tend to him.”<sup>1151</sup> It was this Protestant baroque emphasis on the glory of God that Edwards strove for.<sup>1152</sup> It is false religious practice that is primarily concerned

---

1147. Edwards, “Subjects to be Handled in the Treatise on the Mind,” *WJE*, 6:388.

1148. See Shuger, *Sacred Rhetoric*, 151.

1149. Edwards, “Some Thoughts Concerning the Revival,” *WJE*, 4:387-388. Emphasis added.

1150. Chiappetta, “Baroque Imagination,” 16 says something similar of Loyola.

1151. Edwards, “Concerning the End for Which God Created the World,” *WJE*, 8:443-444.

1152. This can be seen in the many references to “glory of God” in the Search WJE Online data, which recalls 564 instances. See also Minkema, “Dordtian Philosophie,” 244.

with its good experience and great discovery, or that only recognizes with external senses the glory of God.<sup>1153</sup> The true believer has “fervent zeal for the glory of God.”<sup>1154</sup>

That zeal has led to the promotion of God in all places and among all peoples; something that has been described as imperialistic or colonializing. The Baroque is integrally tied to such movement of ideas, as seen in baroque effect in Catholic missions in North America. But for Edwards, this was not about colonial power, as much as it was about the unification of rapidly-expanding knowledge, even as he approached new contexts such as the Stockbridge Indians.<sup>1155</sup>

The glory of God should be understood as the recognition of the divine, which humankind falls short of properly recognizing.<sup>1156</sup> After quoting 2 Cor. 4:6, “God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God, in the face of Jesus Christ,” Edwards explains:

In this glory, which is so vastly and inexpressibly distinguished from the glory of artificial things, and all other glory, does mainly consist the true notion of divinity: God is God, and distinguished from all other beings, and exalted above 'em, chiefly by his divine beauty, which is infinitely diverse from all other beauty. They therefore that see the stamp of this glory in divine things, they see divinity in them, they see God in them, and so see 'em to be divine; because they see that in them wherein the truest idea of divinity does consist.<sup>1157</sup>

---

1153. Edwards, *Religious Affections*, *WJE*, 2:214, 251

1154. Edwards, *Freedom of the Will*, *WJE*, 1:108. See also Edwards, *Religious Affections*, *WJE*, 2:240.

1155. See Reklis, “Imagination and Hermeneutics,” *OHJE*, 320-321.

1156. Edwards, *Original Sin*, *WJE*, 3:284. In this section Edwards is making observations on Romans 3:9-24.

1157. Edwards, *Religious Affections*, *WJE*, 2:297-298.

This glory can be received by the human faculty of perception and approving.<sup>1158</sup>

With the glory of God as the goal, excellency was the spiritual attribute to be experienced.<sup>1159</sup> Edwards saw this excellency as a priority which would be evidenced in being, harmony, proportion, relation, consent, agreement that was like the Trinity, and saving grace.<sup>1160</sup> As he described in *Religious Affections*,

A true saint, when in the enjoyment of true discoveries of the sweet glory of God and Christ, has his mind too much captivated and engaged by what he views without himself, to stand at that time to view himself, and his own attainments: it would be a diversion and loss which he could not bear, to take his eye off from the ravishing object of his contemplation, to survey his own experience, and to spend time in thinking with himself, what an high attainment this is, and what a good story I now have to tell others.<sup>1161</sup>

In some ways, Edwards seems like an ideal proponent of the Protestant grand style that Shuger describes; where “the primary purpose of Christian discourse is to arouse the love of God and other sacred emotions, using the traditional arsenal of the grand style: dramatization, hypotyposis, sensuous imagery, and the figures of thought. Conversely [those] . . . who shared a rather dubious view of passion, were less apt to favor the grand style.”<sup>1162</sup> This reflects the baroque mindset that both artist and audience should not be passive spectators, but those who are

---

1158. Jonathan Edwards, “Miscellanies #1142,” *WJE*, 20:517.

1159. Jonathan Edwards, “Miscellanies #1225. End of the Creation, Glory of God,” *WJE*, 23:157. In this entry, Edwards had indicated that this was appropriated in his *Dissertation Concerning the End for Which God Created the World*. See also Minkema, “Dordtian Philosophe,” 246.

1160. Edwards, *Religious Affections*, *WJE*, 2:264; Edwards, “The Mind,” *WJE*, 6:332.

1161. Edwards, *Religious Affections*, *WJE*, 2:252-253. Note how this quote also evidences the interior / exterior distinction through what the saint views outside of himself and within himself.

1162. Shuger, “Anti-Ciceronianism,” 283. Hypotyposis can be understood as a vivid description of a scene or event, as though it was occurring before one’s eyes.

responding affectively.<sup>1163</sup>

The possibility of a Puritan baroque imagination in homiletic prose reflects Edwards' understanding of both human psychology and preaching. The biblical influences on his thinking and writing and preaching extends to his anthropology, including seeing the image of God in people, as well as the value of the will, understanding and imagination. Edwards' view of the value of the souls of the Stockbridge natives reflects not just a new audience or opportunity syncretism, but also a wider vista for the glory of the gospel. He had a cross-cultural interest and appeal. This too is reflective of the "intense missionary impetus of the Baroque period."<sup>1164</sup>

It does raise the question again of whether Edwards evidences the baroque label or reflects a more modern view. Considering that the imagination is a personal thing, and thereby may seem to reflect the anthropocentrism of modernism, it may seem better to describe Edwards as having a modern imagination. But that neglects the transcendence that remained over Edwards' view of, and use of, imagination. He wrote, God "best knows our nature; He knows the nature and manner of His own operations. . . . How far nature may resemble grace, and how far nature may be mixed with grace, what affections may rise from imagination, and how far imagination may be mixed with spiritual illumination."<sup>1165</sup>

While Edwards' definition of imagination is foundational, his understanding and use of the idea is much more complex. His narrow definition may even seem to invalidate the suggestion that Edwards was a Puritan baroque. However, there is at least some preliminary

---

1163. See McClymond, *Encounters with God*, 7.

1164. Viladesau, *Pathos*, 9 points out Franciscan, Augustinian, and Jesuit missions in India, China, Canada, New York state, Peru, Mexico, Bolivia, Guatemala among others.

1165. Edwards, *Religious Affections*, *WJE*, 2:460.

evidence that supports the idea that Edwards was, at least unconsciously, by the time of Stockbridge ministry, reflecting characteristics of a Puritan baroque imagination. But was Edwards the only such unique person? Or were there others?

### 4.3 Further Support

One of the challenges related to the concept of Puritan baroque is the general understanding of Baroque as being centered on Catholic Italy. Edwards would have little, if any, influence from Catholic Italy. But influence from other Protestant European traditions would have been greater, and those other places had their own baroque influences and movements.<sup>1166</sup>

Other Puritan-era Protestants have been identified as baroque. The English poets John Donne (AD 1572-1631) and John Milton (AD 1608-1674) have both been referenced to as baroque.<sup>1167</sup> The English nonconformist and academic John Owen reflects baroque

---

1166. Mario Praz, "Baroque in England," *Modern Philology* 61, no. 3 (Feb. 1964): 169-179. Praz mentions as evidence Sir John VanBrugh (AD 1664-1726), an English architect with Flemish origin. I would like to claim relation but can only imagine. See also Campbell, *Religion of the Heart*, 42-44.

1167. Zamora and Kaup, *Baroque New Worlds*, 4-5. For John Donne, see Barber, *Road from Eden*, 310; Hugh Grady, *John Donne and Baroque Allegory: The Aesthetics of Fragmentation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017). For John Milton, see Nancy Armstrong and Leonard Tennenhouse, *The Imaginary Puritan: Literature, Intellectual Labor, and the Origins of Personal Life* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1994), 27-46; Daniells, *Baroque*, 60-64; Harbison, *Reflections on Baroque*, 5-7; René Wellek, "The Concept of the Baroque in Literary Scholarship," *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 5, no. 2 (1946): 77-109. Consider one idea from John Milton, *Paradise Lost* (New York: Baker and Scribner, 1851), 114 where he concludes the first two books in total darkness, and then breaks out with "Hail, holy Light, offspring of Heav'n first-born, Or of th' Eternal coeternal beam."

characteristics.<sup>1168</sup> John Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress* portrays baroque imagery, use of space, affections, and glorification.<sup>1169</sup> The Dutch poet and composer Constantijn Huygens (AD 1596-1687) has been described as baroque.<sup>1170</sup> Salomon de Caus (AD 1576-1626), an Huguenot engineer, designed Elector Frederick V's formal gardens in a style described as "Protestant Baroque."<sup>1171</sup>

In the colonies, there were also other Puritan-era Protestants who have been described as baroque. Cotton Mather (AD 1663-1728) has been mentioned as a colonial man with a baroque imagination.<sup>1172</sup> The colonial pastor John Fiske (AD 1601-1676), has been called a "Baroque poet [who] sought ways to extend the limits of his metaphor and to reconcile it with the apparently divergent world around it."<sup>1173</sup> Edward Taylor (AD 1642-1729) a New England poet

---

1168. See Carl Trueman, "John Owen and Modernity: Reflections on Historiography, Modernity, and the Self," in Willem Van Vlastuin and Kelly Kapic, eds., *John Owen Between Orthodoxy and Modernity* (Leiden: Brill, 2019), 35-54. Trueman seeks to place Owen on a thin line between ancient and modern, depending on the issue. The other essays in the above volume show the international and intricate theology. Owen was criticized by Anthony à Wood for a style that "doth strangely affect in ambiguous and uncouth words, canting, mystical and unintelligible phrases to obscure sometimes the plainest and most obvious truths"; quoted in Keeble, *Literary Culture*, 244.

1169. Parry, *Rhetoric*, 171; William York Tyndale, *John Bunyan, Mechanick Preacher* (New York: Russell & Russell, 1964), 107, 205. Compare Daniells, *Baroque*, 153, 157; Kaufmann, *Pilgrim's Progress*, 151-174; Thomas H. Luxon, *Literal Figures: Puritan Allegory and the Reformation Crisis in Representation* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995).

1170. Korsten, *Dutch Republican Baroque*, 169-171. While she does not use the term baroque, for an interesting and related discussion, see Snyder, *Eye of the Beholder*.

1171. Davidson, *Universal Baroque*, 38.

1172. Harold Jantz, "Baroque Free Verse in New England and Pennsylvania," in *Puritan Poets*, ed. Peter White, 258-273.

1173. James Bray, "John Fiske: Puritan Precursor of Edward Taylor," *Early American Literature* 9, no. 1 (Spring 1974): 29.

and preacher, was described as a “most important link between rhetorical practices in old and New England.”<sup>1174</sup> His use of metaphor, paradox, juxtaposition, dramatic affections, and description of divine activity on earth remain consistent with the baroque.<sup>1175</sup> His “scriptural foundation and prophetic language are fused in a moment of spiritual fulfillment that is personal, metaphysical, and perhaps mystical.”<sup>1176</sup>

While the above authors were different than Edwards, and unique in their own way, they all can be described as reflecting some of the priorities of the baroque. And while the suggestion of a Puritan baroque prose may garner the critique that such rhetoric would only obscure truth and disguise deceit, the alternatives do not promote truth any better. To adapt from George Kennedy, could one seriously claim that the music of Bach and the rhetoric of baroque music, is lacking in truth compared with that unrefined or uncontrolled self-expression that passes for musical style today?<sup>1177</sup>

---

1174. Lowance, Jr., *Language of Canaan*, 89. See also Lynn M. Haims, “Puritan Iconography: The Art of Edward Taylor’s *Gods Determinations*,” in *Puritan Poets*, ed. Peter White, 84-98.

1175. Karl Keller, *The Example of Edward Taylor* (Amherst: The University of Massachusetts Press, 1975), 164-165. See also Ursula Brumm, “Meditative Poetry in New England,” in *Puritan Poets*, ed. Peter White, 318-336; Sargent Bush, Jr., “Paradox, Puritanism, and Taylor’s ‘God’s Determinations,’” *Early American Literature* 4, no. 3 (Winter 1969/1970): 48-66; Lynn M. Haims, “Puritan Iconography: The Art of Edward Taylor’s *Gods Determinations*,” in *Puritan Poets*, ed. Peter White, 85; Austin Warren, “Edward Taylor’s Poetry: Colonial Baroque,” *The Kenyon Review* 3, no. 3 (Summer 1941): 355-371. See also Norman S. Grabo, “Introduction,” in Edward Taylor’s *Christographia*, ed. Norman S. Grabo (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1962), xix, where the *Christographia* is described as an emblem, a perfect example to live up to.

1176. Lowance, Jr., *Language of Canaan*, 90.

1177. Kennedy, *Classical Rhetoric*, 243.



#### 4.4 Conclusion

To see in Edwards characteristics of a Puritan baroque imagination may seem unusual. But the baroque itself has never tried to be usual: it allowed heightened elements to produce an affect; it reached beyond the regular; it drew attention to a problem and elicited a response.<sup>1178</sup> Living in the early modern period, trying to weigh Enlightenment ideals with his own biblical convictions, Edwards was left in a unique place: a parent, a preacher, a philosopher, a preacher, a pastor, and a president of a college. His concern for the souls of common people may have kept him from identifying as a Renaissance man, but he was able to embrace the interdisciplinarity of his own interests, the tradition he inherited, and a desire for the glory of God in a Puritan baroque fashion.<sup>1179</sup>

While some may wish both Puritan and baroque adjectives to be relegated to pages of European history, the nuance and ability of these labels to combine seemingly disparate ideas in non-European settings may be useful as it relates to a homiletical use of imagination.<sup>1180</sup> And Edwards' work provides an interesting opening to this possibility.

Edwards, like the Puritan baroque imagination, was interested in knowledge.<sup>1181</sup> While the emerging empiricism and rationalism threatened the end of the Baroque period, they

---

1178. Lyons, "Crisis of the Baroque," *OHB*, 17.

1179. That the baroque embraces interdisciplinarity, see Katherine Ibbett and Anna More, "The Baroque as a Literary Concept," *OHB*, 542.

1180. This has been done in other fields such as Mexican literary studies; see Zamora, "Eccentric Periodization," 690-697.

1181. Emmanuel Bury, "The Organization of Knowledge from Ramus to Diderot," *OHB*, 431.

presented Edwards with a challenge.<sup>1182</sup> How would he know and organize the essence of his subject in an affective manner?

Those challenges are closely connected to a homiletical use of imagination. The imagination has been previously defined as a “a heart-based structuring mental activity by which people perceive coherent and significant possibilities that are indispensable in understanding and generating objects and experiences.”<sup>1183</sup> The baroque concept depends on a similar “make–ability” – that is, a mental power that sees potential and emphasizes doing.<sup>1184</sup> This force, even as it drives intense contrasts and dramatic opposites, is a principle of unifying experience.<sup>1185</sup>

While the baroque has been characterized in terms of style, it goes beyond any superficial style to describe the essence of its object, whether that be art or music or homiletics.<sup>1186</sup> It acknowledges subjective experiences, and yet does not fall to subjectivism. The imagination is not given free reign, and not all explanations or inferences are valid.<sup>1187</sup> The Puritan boundaries of Scripture and the glory of God around the baroque concepts provides enough foundational stability. Unlike the Rococo and Neoclassicism, the Puritan baroque mindset is permitted to

---

1182. See Martin, *Baroque*, 12.

1183. See Chapter 1.3 of this dissertation.

1184. Korsten, *Dutch Republic Baroque*, 18.

1185. Cascardi, “Experience and Knowledge,” *OHB*, 454. See also Reklis, “Imagination and Hermeneutics,” *OHJE*, 320.

1186. Compare Anthony J. Cascardi, “Experience and Knowledge in the Baroque,” *OHB*.

1187. Moriarty, “The Baroque and Philosophy,” *OHB*, 604.

acknowledge and display the constraints, the imperfection, the collapse of the beautiful.<sup>1188</sup>

Further, if, as Regent-Susini and others suggest, the baroque was able to share models and references from various places and eras –and not be limited to a national (or denominational) singularity – then Edwards time in Stockbridge certainly fits within the category of baroque. It does not necessarily imply agreement with McClymond who sees in Edwards an openness to Catholic and Orthodox theology.<sup>1189</sup> Particularly as it relates to his sermons, Edwards did not follow the low view of preaching in Catholicism. He had a high view of preaching, and was an heir, not just of plain style preaching, but of the deeply religious humanism of Reformed Scholasticism.<sup>1190</sup> He may very well fit into a vivid and metaphoric style that interwove “questions of style with psychology, theology, and epistemology.”<sup>1191</sup> Edwards may be an illustration of Shuger’s assertion that, “questions of sacred discourse cannot be isolated from the structures of inner life nor from the theoretical nexus that conceptualizes the relation between these structures and the supernatural.”<sup>1192</sup> In this way the discrepancies between Edwards’ definition and usage of imagination are not insurmountable. He took what was commonly suggested around him, and used it for a greater, more affective and glorious purpose. After all,

---

1188. William Egginton, “The Philosopher’s Baroque: Benjamin, Lacan, Deleuze,” *OHB*, 490. Baroque is often confused with the Rococo, the latter differing through excessive shell- and scroll-work, meaningless decoration, and excessive and tasteless ornate display. The baroque was meant to astound with the marvelous, the rococo to amuse with the ingenious. See Minor, *Baroque and Rococo*, 14.

1189. See McClymond and McDermott, *Theology*, 718-728.

1190. Though she would differ with this conclusion, see Shuger, *Sacred Rhetoric*, 165; Regent-Susini, “Baroque Style of Preaching,” *OHB*, 656.

1191. Shuger, *Sacred Rhetoric*, 193.

1192. Shuger, *Sacred Rhetoric*, 194.

that is what Scripture acknowledges and displays throughout history. Edwards' use of imagination, as his use of early modern commentary, "points collectively to a *basso continuo* in the search of the meaning of the words and sense of Scripture."<sup>1193</sup>

In this area, Edwards, like any baroque artist, had such a firm grasp of his craft and his material that his imagination could use them as he desired in the moment.<sup>1194</sup> His allegiance to the tradition he inherited, including as it relates to the imagination, did not require slavish following, but moved him to search for creative and expressive forms that promoted the tradition.<sup>1195</sup>

Yet the objections to Edwards displaying affinity with a Puritan baroque mindset deserve some consideration. These generally focus on the problem of correlation, as well as baroque excess, and the implications of those two things for preaching.

Pointing out the correlation between Edwards and a Puritan baroque mindset does not imply a strict cause and effect relationship between the baroque and Edwards' sermons. It cannot be said that Edwards intentionally applied baroque characteristics to his preaching, because there is no record of his awareness of the term. Suggesting so would be impossible; it would be anachronism at its worst. The term baroque was only identified as applying to the stylistic characteristics a century later, long after the greatest demonstrators of baroque art were dead. However, like Rembrandt and Bach and others, Edwards did use certain characteristics in his preaching that were later identified as baroque. It is helpful to recognize that, in order to retrieve

---

1193. Adriaan C. Neele, "Early Modern Biblical Commentary and Jonathan Edwards," in *Jonathan Edwards and Scripture: Biblical Exegesis in British North America*, ed. David P. Barshinger and Douglas A. Sweeney (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018), 67.

1194. This thought is adapted from Chiappetta, "Baroque Imagination," 11.

1195. Salladin, *Edwards and Deification*, 3.

benefit from Edwards' homiletical use of imagination.

The baroque is challenged for its excesses, some of which seem anti-spiritual. However, the excesses are not included merely for a display of excess; they are there for the experience, which comes through the senses. They are excessive to produce an effect. And while those effects could manipulate a whole variety of experiences, the dynamism that drives the excess also drives the intense contrasts of light and darkness, as well as glorification, and thereby remains a unifying principle of the baroque. They are not random excesses: the "baroque figures of force express aspects of the fundamentally qualitative nature of things, understanding that qualities are lodged equally in the 'things themselves' and in our experience of them."<sup>1196</sup> The works produced "incorporate experience within the work itself."<sup>1197</sup>

As it relates to homiletics, any excesses are not merely ornamental, but opportunity for a sermonic display of gravity and sensual dramatization, impressive rhetoric and cumulative experiences.<sup>1198</sup> This may seem foreign within Edwards, until one considers his well-known image of a spider over a fire, which has labelled Edwards as excessively Puritanical for generations. Further, the use of antithesis, paradox, and dialogical devices can be seen as the rhetorical equivalent of the architectural and musical flourishes so common in the baroque, and might also be found in Edwards' work.<sup>1199</sup>

However, this raises another concern. Would this not mean that a Puritan baroque imagination would result in homiletics describable as 'witty'? Wit (*ingenio*) is the ability of a

---

1196. Cascardi, "Experience and Knowledge," *OHB*, 454.

1197. Cascardi, "Experience and Knowledge," *OHB*, 458.

1198. Regent-Susini, "Baroque Style of Preaching," *OHB*, 646.

1199. Regent-Susini, "Baroque Style of Preaching," *OHB*, 646.

preacher to produce such verbal pictures through the understanding, and “the deployment of wit is necessary not just in order to speak well or to argue persuasively; it is essential in order to understand the world, to express one’s knowledge of it, and to act properly in it.”<sup>1200</sup> But again, the baroque understanding of wit reflects the powers of the mind to understand, to express, and to act properly.<sup>1201</sup> It establishes correlation and correspondence between various things and changes one’s understanding of the world, the word, and the weather.

The Puritan baroque denies any strict scheme where the grand style is opposed to the plain style, and vice versa; it hints at a “baroque plain style” that has been influenced by Hellenistic and Hebraic influences.<sup>1202</sup> There is a place for preaching that unites the metaphorical and methodic, and is both passionate and rational.<sup>1203</sup> There is a homiletical model where imagination is not just to decorate regular prose,<sup>1204</sup> but is central to the arrangement of the content for affective purpose. Jonathan Edwards appears to fit within this place.<sup>1205</sup>

So, Edwards, like the baroque, does not break with the past but “recycles and re-creates the past. Rather than reject the alien culture, the baroque appropriates and transforms it. . . . The

---

1200. Cascardi, “Experience and Knowledge,” *OHB*, 466.

1201. Cascardi, “Experience and Knowledge,” *OHB*, 466-467; Edwards, Jr., “Varieties,” 7; Regent-Susini, “Baroque Style of Preaching,” *OHB*, 644.

1202. See Shuger, *Sacred Rhetoric*, 41, 76, 173.

1203. See Regent-Susini, “Baroque Style of Preaching,” *OHB*, 654-655.

1204. This is the critique of Patricia Roberts-Miller, *Voices in the Wilderness: Public Discourse and the Paradox of Puritan Rhetoric* (Tuscaloosa, AL: The University of Alabama Press, 1999), 84-87.

1205. See Anderson, “Introduction,” *WJE*, 11:22.

baroque contests the norm, not by discarding it but by bending and deforming it.”<sup>1206</sup> How can biblical fidelity, historic influences, and imagination come together? How can they be evident in sermons? Does the refined and rigid structure of a sermon fall away? Are these things evident in the construction of Edwards’ Stockbridge sermons?

While not necessarily the key to studying Edwards, understanding a Puritan baroque imagination may be a beneficial way to retrieve a homiletical role for imagination. And so, this study returns to the original question: “In what ways can a homiletical use of imagination be strengthened by a retrieval of Jonathan Edwards’ understanding of imagination as evidenced in the Puritan baroque characteristics of the Stockbridge Indian sermons (1751-1758)?”

---

1206. Kaup, “Antimonies of the Twenty-First-Century NeoBaroque,” *OHB*, 152. This may again suggest a parallel to Hutton, “History of Mentalities,” 239 where he summarizes the work of Lucien Febvre and Marc Bloch as a theory which “emphasizes man’s ongoing effort to establish an equilibrium between his need to give new forms of meaning to his experience and his desire to cling to the existing forms in which conventional wisdom lies.” However, Febvre and Bloch, and the *Annales* school of thought, would promote separation from the past and theological underpinnings. The baroque does not discard the past, nor overemphasize geography or personal emotion as the *Annales* school does.





## Chapter 5 – Jonathan Edwards and a Homiletical Use of Imagination

The previous chapters have demonstrated that a valuable understanding of imagination can be seen in the thought and work of Jonathan Edwards, particularly when it is realized that Edwards displayed characteristics of a Puritan baroque imagination. This chapter will introduce select sermons that Edwards preached to the Stockbridge Indians, and then examine those sermons for the Puritan baroque characteristics described in the previous chapter, before drawing any conclusions related to a homiletical use of imagination in the Stockbridge Indian sermons.

### 5.1 Edwards' Stockbridge Sermons

Jonathan Edwards' time in Stockbridge was significant. He arrived in the frontier town of western Massachusetts in 1750 after being dismissed from his charge in Northampton. However, it was not a time of commiseration. He found it agreeable to serve a community where the gospel had "been little understood or attended to."<sup>1207</sup> Edwards used this time to write some of his greatest treatises and continued to preach and pastor. He actively defended local Indian rights, overseeing the Indian school, while preaching to a mission congregation of Mohicans and a congregation of English settlers. This resulted in what "may well have been his most rewarding ministry."<sup>1208</sup> While acknowledging that these years also included times of illness and fear for Edwards and his family, Marsden concludes that "the Edwards who emerged at Stockbridge . . . was truly an extraordinary figure."<sup>1209</sup>

Edwards' time preaching in Stockbridge was also significant. Some academic work has

---

1207. Edwards, "Letter #130. To the Reverend Thomas Gillespie," *WJE*, 16:386-387. See also McDermott, *Confronts the Gods*, 199-201; Wheeler, "Edwards as Missionary," 199.

1208. Wheeler, *To Live Upon Hope*, 207. See also Wheeler, "Edwards as Missionary," 204.

1209. Marsden, *A Life*, 389.

been done reviewing Edwards' Stockbridge sermons. Kimmach sees in the Stockbridge sermons not only a plateau of skill, but a disintegration of homiletical care.<sup>1210</sup> He detects a degree of "revision, recasting, cannibalism," that allowed Edwards to mine sources whenever time or energy escaped him.<sup>1211</sup> Less negatively, in his overview of Edwards' preaching, John Carrick generally sees the Stockbridge sermons as simplified.<sup>1212</sup>

This chapter seeks to build on the significant recent work that has acknowledged Edwards' purposeful sermon activity in Stockbridge. Specifically, Roy Paul, Rachel Wheeler and Michael Keller have described Edwards' Stockbridge Indian sermons as unique, creative, and rhetorically important.<sup>1213</sup>

Paul has introduced several of Edwards' previously unpublished sermons to the Stockbridge Indians, and concludes that in Stockbridge, Edwards "continued to prepare and deliver poignant and powerful sermons."<sup>1214</sup> Paul asserts that in the sermons to the English, Edwards "stressed their obligations to God and referred more to the severity of punishment at judgment. To the Mohicans, his sermons were of a gentler style and were more often directed at the mercy and love of God. He did not fail to speak plainly to the Indians about the suffering for those who rejected Christ, but it was of a lesser emphasis and repeated less often."<sup>1215</sup>

---

1210. Kimmach, "Introduction," *WJE*, 10:167.

1211. Kimmach, "Introduction," *WJE*, 10:163. See also Hannah, "Homiletical Skill," 102.

1212. Carrick, *Edwards*, 34-37, 204, 210.

1213. Paul, *Stockbridge*; Wheeler, "Living Upon Hope"; Wheeler, *To Live Upon Hope*; Keller, "Experiencing God in Words."

1214. Paul, *Stockbridge*, 153. The previously unpublished manuscripts Paul introduces are #1001; #1133; #1134.

1215. Paul, *Stockbridge*, 171. See also Marsden, *A Life*, 393.

Rachel Wheeler has gleaned some unique aspects from the Stockbridge sermons. In one article, Wheeler states that the Stockbridge sermons “seem to promise few rewards.”<sup>1216</sup> And yet, she also recognizes Edwards’ “rhetoric, style, and application of doctrine were transformed to suit what he perceived to be the needs of his congregation.”<sup>1217</sup> So Wheeler points out some relatively positive sermons to the Indians, concluding that Edwards believed preaching to the Stockbridge Indians called “for new methods of preaching and pastoring. The imagery of the [Psalm 1] sermon seems designed to resonate with the presumed sensibilities of his audience and with the rich, metaphorical cast of Indian rhetorical styles.”<sup>1218</sup> But the Stockbridge sermons were not only unique in style, but also in content, as in them Edwards’ emphasized the equality of people, and the encouraging aspects of Calvinistic doctrine for the Indians.<sup>1219</sup>

Michael Keller has used quantitative data analysis “to show that Edwards focused on his use of imagery to make scripture experiential to his audience.”<sup>1220</sup> As it relates to the Stockbridge sermons, Keller shows how Edwards’ rhetoric did not depend on his “stature or skills as an orator, but from the ideas and images in the sermons.”<sup>1221</sup> Westra had already suggested Edwards

---

1216. Rachel Wheeler, “Lessons from Stockbridge: Jonathan Edwards and the Stockbridge Indians,” in *Jonathan Edwards at 300*, ed. Stout, Minkema, and Maskell, 132.

1217. Wheeler, *To Live Upon Hope*, 214. See also Wheeler, “Lessons from Stockbridge,” 132-133.

1218. Wheeler, *To Live Upon Hope*, 185.

1219. Wheeler, *To Live Upon Hope*, 215-217.

1220. Keller, “Experiencing God in Words,” ii.

1221. Keller, “Experiencing God in Words,” 90.

had a rhetoric of superlatives.<sup>1222</sup> But Keller shows how that during this Stockbridge preaching to the Indians, “overall pleasantness, activation, and concreteness of imagery are at their highest, as are the percentages of nice, pleasant, nasty, unpleasant, and highest imagery words.”<sup>1223</sup> And so Keller suggests that the sermons to the Stockbridge Indians were not afterthoughts, but rather “the time of his greatest innovation and deviation from the norm in his preaching.”<sup>1224</sup> In this Keller demonstrates the Stockbridge years as the era of Edwards’ most extreme language, both positively and negatively, which gives credence to the suggestion of this dissertation that Edwards’ Stockbridge years reflect a baroque imagination.

In other words, the Stockbridge sermons were irregular. While Roy, Wheeler and Keller prove that the Stockbridge sermons were unique in terms of content and vocabulary, this study will seek to answer the question of how the Stockbridge sermons might evidence a homiletical use of imagination that is reflective of a Puritan baroque mindset. At the outset, it should be acknowledged Edwards’ was not an unbridled imagination. While he sees little new in the Stockbridge sermons, Kinnach is correct when he sees in Edwards an attempt to build a vocabulary that “would bridge the apparent gap between the eternal world of spiritual reality and the Lockean world of sensational experience in which men lived.”<sup>1225</sup> This continued into the Stockbridge sermons.

---

1222. Helen Westra, “Divinity’s Design: Edwards and the History of the Work of Revival,” in *Edwards in our Time: Jonathan Edwards and the Shaping of American Religion*, ed. Sang Hyun Lee and Allen Guelzo (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999), 144.

1223. Keller, “Experiencing God in Words,” 115.

1224. Keller, “Experiencing God in Words,” 135. On page 215 Keller notes that when preaching to the Stockbridge Indians, “Edwards used the emotional and imaginative preaching that mark Whitefield’s entire career.”

1225. Kinnach, “Introduction,” *WJE*, 10:227.

The assumptions undergirding this chapter stem from the previous two chapters: Edwards exhibited imagination in his work, and that imagination had certain characteristics. The issue of whether such an understanding of imagination, and the inference of a unique mindset such as a Puritan baroque imagination, has not been demonstrated in the Stockbridge sermons. This chapter therefore embraces the inferences of the previous chapters to develop a framework to guide the qualitative document analysis.

Within qualitative data analysis, there are no standardized methods to developing frameworks.<sup>1226</sup> The primary recommended methods include deductive, inductive, abductive, and reductive reasoning, which are often interconnected. This chapter depends on the recognition of the six characteristics identified as a Puritan baroque imagination in the previous chapter, and then through analysis seeking evidence in the sermons to reject or support the idea that there are such characteristics in the Stockbridge sermons. Such a method has been referred to in the literature as deductive qualitative analysis.<sup>1227</sup>

Deductive qualitative analysis is a legitimate means of research.<sup>1228</sup> It is particularly advantageous in this study because not all concepts of a Puritan baroque imagination are easily codified for quantitative analysis. While specific terms such as light or space could be retrieved, their unique roles in a homiletical use of imagination remain contextual. Deductive qualitative analysis will also strengthen the direction of this study, as well as any concepts expressed in the

---

1226. Johnny Saldaña, “Coding and Analysis Strategies” in *The Oxford Handbook of Qualitative Research*, ed. Patricia Leavy (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014): 588; Trent and Cho, “Interpretation Strategies,” 640.

1227. Jane F. Gilgun, “Writing Up Qualitative Research,” in *The Oxford Handbook of Qualitative Research*, ed. Patricia Leavy (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014): 667.

1228. Trent and Cho, “Interpretation Strategies,” 652.

conclusion, resulting in something more than just suggesting probabilities (through inductive reasoning) or plausible suggestions (through abductive reasoning) that need constant comparison.<sup>1229</sup> The goal with such a deductive qualitative analysis is to avoid the common criticisms of qualitative research which suggests that the research is merely an “impressionistic (re)description.”<sup>1230</sup> It also minimizes the personal interpretative aspects. The conclusions of this chapter will therefore strengthen or weaken the conclusions of the previous chapter about whether Edwards could be described as having a Puritan baroque imagination.

This chapter uses a variety of Edwards’ Stockbridge Indian sermons for analysis. The twenty-one sermons chosen for study are those Edwards prepared for and preached to the Stockbridge Indians between 1751 and 1758.<sup>1231</sup> These sermons span from Genesis through Hebrews. Eleven of the sermons are from the Old Testament; ten from the New Testament. While originally unintentional, this may rebalance homiletical implications based on Marsden’s comment that Edwards predominantly preached from the New Testament, in part because of the

---

1229. Saldaña, “Strategies,” 588; Trent and Cho, “Interpretation Strategies,” 647. In a sense, this chapter continues to reflect a grounded theory method, where the theoretical basis for the question to be studied stems from personal conclusions of previous chapters. This was previously discussed in the introduction of this study; see again Antony Bryant, “The Grounded Theory Method,” in *The Oxford Handbook of Qualitative Research*, ed. Patricia Leahy (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014): 116-136. On the other hand, this chapter, should not be seen as reflecting a purely inductive grounded theory method, as this chapter does seek to lay out a framework *prior to* sermon analysis. This is done intentionally, for this retrieval study to validate preliminary conclusions of previous chapters and draw more reasonable conclusions to the research question without being limited to data points. In other words, the deductive qualitative analysis allows for a study of “what” is there, but also grappling with the potential “so what” that is essential for a retrieval study.

1230. Bryant, “Grounded Theory,” 120.

1231. The choices made presume the authority and accuracy of “Appendix: Dated Sermons, January 1743 – February 1758, Undated Sermons, and Sermon Fragments,” in *WJE*, 25:717-760, where comment is made as to which sermons were preached to the Stockbridge Indians. These sermons may have been preached to the Mahican or Mohawk congregations first.

vivid parables there.<sup>1232</sup> Some of the sermons are more full manuscripts, while others do reflect the outlined sermons Edwards' Stockbridge years are known for.

The research in this chapter may be limited by the quality of the manuscripts of the selected Stockbridge sermon manuscripts. Not all of Edwards' Stockbridge sermons are known. Of the ones which are known to have been preached, only some evidence remains, and those manuscripts are often incomplete. At times the sentences are incomplete, and letters or words must be filled in to make them comprehensible. However, the extemporaneous and improvisation necessary to preach such sermons is itself, baroque. Further, the Stockbridge Indian sermons remain a reasonable choice for study, as they represent Edwards' most senior homiletic. They were also written during the same time as some of Edwards' most significant treatises. They also are sermons to an audience that did not have the same cultural background and norms, and presumably that required Edwards to use his imagination.

The research of this chapter may also be limited by the number of sermon manuscripts considered. However, as in qualitative research, a balance between sample size and depth of study must be maintained.<sup>1233</sup> Thirteen of the sermons were preached in 1751 or 1752, the remainder of the sermons preached in the last six years. The reason for that imbalance in this study is due in part to available records of Edwards' manuscripts.<sup>1234</sup>

Intentionally excluded were sermons of 1751-1758 that were preached to the English

---

1232. See Marsden, *A Life*, 393.

1233. Gilgun, "Qualitative Research," 668.

1234. There may be historical reasons for the imbalance in potential resources, including difficulties in Edwards' life at the time, including a time of illness and the reality of soldiers in Stockbridge and Edwards' own home. The consideration of such things falls outside the homiletical purview of this study. For historical context see Marsden, *Life*, 375 - 430.

congregation in Stockbridge, as well as sermons only preached elsewhere during that time frame. Also excluded were sermons written during the Northampton years, and later re-preached to the Stockbridge Indians. That being said, thirteen of the sermons were based on passages Edwards had previously preached on. The sermons therefore used for this study are listed below. Of the twenty-one sermons studied, only eleven of the sermons have been previously published. The select sermons studied are therefore as follows:<sup>1235</sup>

	JE #	Published	Date	Scripture	Shortened Title
1	974	<i>WJE</i> , 25:577-581	Jan. 1751	Matthew 13:47-50	Heaven's Dragnet
2	976	<i>WJE</i> , 25:570-574	Jan. 1751	Acts 11:12-13	Things that Belong
3	979	<i>WJE</i> , 25:593-599	Jan. 1751	Hebrews 9:27	Death and Judgment
4	993	Appendix A	June 1751	Luke 13:7	God's Orchard
5	998	Appendix B	Aug. 1751	Genesis 1:27	In the Image of God
6	999	<i>WJE</i> , 25:602-604	Aug. 1751	Psalms 1:3	Like a River to a Tree
7	1000	<i>WJEO</i> 69	Aug. 1751	Acts 16:9	Come Over
8	1001	Paul, <i>Stockbridge</i> , 143-148	Aug. 1751	2 Cor. 4:18	A World Not Seen
9	1006	Appendix C	Oct. 1751	Job 7:7	Mortality of Mankind
10	1025	Appendix D	Jan. 1752	2 Cor. 3:18	A Converted Man is Enlightened
11	1045	Appendix E	July 1752	Deut. 32:39	One God
12	1050	Appendix F	Aug. 1752	Matthew 5:4	They that Mourn
13	1059	Appendix G	Dec. 1752	Psalms 14:1	There is a God
14	1064	<i>WJE</i> , 25:643-645	Jan. 1753	Job 9:4	God is Infinitely Strong
15	1072	<i>WJE</i> , 25:648-652	Apr. 1753	Job 5:17	God's Use of Affliction
16	1113	Appendix H	Mar. 1754	Psalms 119:60-61	Thinking of Their Ways
17	1116	<i>WJE</i> , 25:678-679	Apr. 1754	Luke 11:21-22	Warring With the Devil

---

1235. Some of the sermons are published. To minimize footnote space, as well as maintain consistency and alleviate any possible hierarchy of sermonic value, I am referencing the sermons by their manuscript number in the text of the chapter. I am indebted to Adriaan Neele for supplying the unpublished transcriptions. I have taken the liberty to lightly edit (capitalization, punctuation, filling in abbreviations) the manuscripts to make them more readable in the Appendices.



18	1118	Appendix I	May 1754	Job 20:12-13	Though Wickedness be Sweet
19	1144	<i>WJE</i> , 25:682-684	Jul. 1755	1 Samuel 17:45-47	In the Name of the Lord of Hosts
20	1175	Appendix J	Oct. 1756	Psalm 27:4	Love the House of God
21	1177	<i>WJE</i> , 25:713-714	Jan. 1758	Hebrews 13:7-8	Remember their Ministers

To develop a full response to the question “In what ways can a homiletical use of imagination be strengthened by a retrieval of Jonathan Edwards’ understanding of imagination as evidenced in the Puritan baroque characteristics of the Stockbridge Indian sermons (1751-1758)?” a reminder of the six characteristics used to describe a Puritan baroque imagination is necessary.

The six characteristics of a Puritan baroque imagination are imagery, light, space, movement, affections, and glorification. Imagery includes an intentional and amplifying use of types and images, with layers of meaning, used in prose through symbolic language. Light includes an embrace of a spiritualizing of light and sight language, with the source of light being a supernatural gift of faith that assists in seeing and anticipating divine things. Space includes a recognition of prioritized components to focus attention; as well as varieties of the external and internal distinction, while maintaining the unity of spiritual experience. Movement includes a use of plain language that is not constrained by any forced paradigm but embraces appropriate elements of contrast and drama for the purpose of the message. Affection goes beyond emotions to include an affective response that is in proportion and harmony with the subject being addressed. Glorification includes not the exaltation of the preacher, or the priority of the listener, but the emphasis of the excellency of the Divine Being.

Any evidence collected of these six characteristics of a Puritan baroque imagination will form the basis for any conclusions of homiletical imagination in Edwards’ Stockbridge sermons. The goal of this chapter is not a quantitative measuring of definable statistics, nor the

development of a grid that can capture the shape of every sermon, nor the evaluation of the theological or hermeneutical content of the sermons. Nor should it be taken to suggest that Edwards was consciously inserting every characteristic into his sermons. This is a study of select Edwards' Stockbridge sermons for a mindset, a possible pattern of a Puritan baroque homiletical imagination.<sup>1236</sup>

## 5.2 Imagery

It is already well recognized that Edwards used images throughout his preaching, and that they may have increased during the years at Stockbridge.<sup>1237</sup> This use of imagery has been understood in various ways. Turnbull sees Edwards trying to redeem his dull and monotonous sermons with word pictures.<sup>1238</sup> Erdt sees Edwards using imagery for dramatic purposes.<sup>1239</sup> Kolodny suggests the imagery was used as a “a way to force the listener to go through” emotional responses.<sup>1240</sup> Kinnach considers it a fusing of biblical and personal images that displays a “truly integrative imagination.”<sup>1241</sup> Leader sees it as the way Edwards provided a “phenomenological knowledge of the things of God.”<sup>1242</sup>

---

1236. Through this method, this study does what it reflects on: a display of Puritan baroque imagination. It also recognizes what Heitink, *Practical Theology*, 232 states as the limitations of quantitative methods: the need to restrict to quantifiable data and report only statistics is not suitable if one wants to get to deeper levels or recognize various possibilities.

1237. See Smith, *Jonathan Edwards*, 139; Carrick, *Edwards*, 191-212.

1238. Turnbull, *Jonathan Edwards*, 108.

1239. Erdt, *Sense of the Heart*, 64.

1240. Kolodny, “Imagery,” 181.

1241. Kinnach, “Introduction,” *WJE*, 10: 225-227.

1242. Jennifer L. Leader, “‘In Love with the Image’: Transitive Being and Typological Desire in Jonathan Edwards,” *Early American Literature* 40, no. 2 (2006): 155.

But how much can word-based images convey? Leader suggests Edwards used imagery to drive home the affective center of his sermon.<sup>1243</sup> It is true that Edwards believed word-based imagery could convey ideas and associations.<sup>1244</sup> As Edwards explained in his Northampton farewell address: “I have used my utmost endeavors to win you: I have sought out acceptable words, that if possible I might prevail upon you to forsake sin, and turn to God, and accept of Christ as your Saviour and Lord. I have spent my strength very much in these things.”<sup>1245</sup> So rather than confirming the assertion of strong imagery in Edwards’ sermons, this section seeks to determine if and how Edwards used imagery to drive home the affective center of his sermon, as would be done in baroque fashion. This will be approached by looking at Edwards’ use of the obvious imagery in the Scriptural texts, the manner in which those images were used, and how they were used towards affective response to the sermon.

#### *The Obvious Imagery of Scriptural Texts*

The selection of Stockbridge sermons that were analyzed do reveal an embrace of the most obvious images of the Scriptural texts. Many of the sermons embraced the textual imagery. It could even be said that Edwards often seemed to select texts for their imagery. This can be seen in the sermons that consider the dragnet (#974), the judgment (#979), an orchard (#993), a river (#999), another man calling for help (#1000), the wind (#1006), the might of God (#1064), a war (#1116), and ministers (#1177).

---

1243. Leader, “In Love with the Image,” 169 quotes a 1741 communion sermon based on Psalm 72:6, “Like Rain Upon Mown Grass.”

1244. See Kimmach, Minkema, and Sweeney, *Reader*, xxxi.

1245. 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,” *WJE*, 25:480.

Not every sermon is based on a Scriptural text that provided obviously usable imagery. However, when Edwards took a text that included imagery, he used it. Even when that imagery seemed abstract, as in the sermon on 2 Cor. 4:18, “While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen,” Edwards used the act of “seeing” as the imagery (#1001). Or, as in the sermon on Psalm 119:60-61, “I thought on my ways,” Edwards embraced the textual language of thinking and reflecting on life (#1113). One of the more abstract uses of imagery seems to have been in his final sermon, on Hebrews 13:7-8, “Remember them.” There Edwards used the abstract image of a memory to focus their attention (#1177).

There are exceptions to the use of textual imagery. One of those exceptions seems to be an early sermon Edwards preached to the Stockbridge natives. In this sermon Edwards described the things that belong to true religion (#976). The text he chose, Acts 11:12-13, is about the calling and reception of the one who brought Cornelius the gospel. Edwards did little with the imagery of that text, choosing instead to build the sermon on what was an application of the text. In a sermon on Psalm 14:1, “The fool has said in his heart, there is no God,” Edwards did not use the image of a fool. Instead, he positively presented a series of visual images that point to God: the sun, the moon, the stars; water, rain, fields, seeds; bodies, senses, veins, and hearts (#1059).

#### *The Manner in which Imagery was Used*

The imagery was used in a variety of manners. Edwards used images for colourful explanation. The sermon on judgment explained the possible reactions at the time of judgment (#979). The sermon on the singularity of God embraced the sovereign role God has in making dead or alive (#1045). The sermon based on Matthew 5:4 explained mourning (#1050).

Some of Edwards’ sermons modified the imagery of the text. However, these modifications did not neglect the language of Scripture. They often simplified it and made it

more memorable. For example, the sermon on Luke 11:21 modifies the words of the text, “When a strong man armed keepeth his palace,” so that the sermon structure focuses on the devil as an enemy (#1116). Another modified image seems to be a sermon Edwards preached from Job 20:12-14 (#1118), where the text begins, “Though wickedness be sweet in his mouth.” Edwards made this about wickedness, with the implicit application to alcohol, yet made no reference to the unfair context of Zophar’s accusations of hypocrisy.

Other times, Edwards took the obvious image and expanded it. For example, in the sermon on the parable of dragnet (#974), Edwards took the Christ-given image: “The kingdom of heaven is like a net.” But then he expanded that to include elements of the fisherman whose net it is, and the fish that would be caught in the net, and the king who would sort the fish. The structure of the doctrine and application both centred on the net, fisherman, fish, and the kingdom. Edwards also expanded the obvious imagery when preaching on Psalm 1:3, “He shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water.” There he expanded the image of rivers of water as a symbol of the river of life, that is Christ. And then considering Christ as a river, Edwards explained how that river runs freely, brings plenty, is constant, never exhausted, and is full of refreshment (#999).

In line with Puritan practice, Edwards sought the most acceptable words. For Edwards, that meant using textual imagery, metaphors, and emblems (a symbol suggesting another object or idea). And so there are times Edwards used images, not just as teaching tools, but as emblems. While it is not clear that the Stockbridge Indians would have understood the background of emblems, Edwards used the Scriptural emblems of worms, fires, and ovens to represent effects of judgment (#979). The orchard became a place where God’s grace was showered (#993). He used water as an emblem of that which is life-giving (#999). He used the emblem of disease to

explain man's inability to heal himself (#1000). He used clouds and wind when preaching on the brevity of life (#1006). He used briars as emblem of affliction (#1072).

Even when there seemed to be a variety of emblems, or images, or similes within one message, they were not random collections used to dramatize an otherwise boring message. They often continued to serve the purpose of the primary image. Consider again, the fish, the fisherman, the king – all united by the net (#974). In another sermon, the worms, the heart of an infant, and the hot ovens are unified by the overwhelming nature of judgment (#979). Maybe less obviously consistent, in the sermon about going to war in the name of the Lord, the Lord is described as a king, a captain, and a father – but the images are all unified around the Lord. The enemy is described in biblical, national, and religious terms – but remains an enemy (#1144).

#### *Imagery Towards Affective Response*

The images Edwards used were to unify the message and keep the message memorable. They are not just random illustrations. They augmented his purpose. For example, in the sermon on affliction Edwards used the imagery of Jonah and the mariners – not haphazardly, but to demonstrate how God corrects through affliction (#1072).

Edwards treated images in a way that would be sensed rather than just taught as a doctrine. The net is let out, judgment is felt, the river refreshes, the affliction was surprising. In his last sermon to the Stockbridge Indians Edwards called the people to remember the words, the prayers, and the examples, because forgetting would be to forget God. Further, God will remember and call them to account (#1177). In such ways, Edwards sensibly reinforced the teaching of Scripture, but also drove home the affective center of his message.

Edwards used the images of the sermons to drive home the affective center of his sermons. In “Heaven's Dragnet,” he used the inevitability and inescapability of the net to push

towards the burden of the sermon: “Take heed to yourselves that you ben’t at last found some of the bad fish that be cast away. See to it that your hearts are right with God” (#974). In “Death and Judgment,” Edwards used the perfect judgment of God, and the holiness of heaven, to introduce his ministry: “Now, therefore, had you not better hearken to counsel and go to heaven, that world of light and joy? Now I, as a minister of Jesus Christ, invite you to come to Christ to be saved from hell” (#979). Edwards used the imagery of wind from Job 7:7, “Remember that my life is wind,” to discuss the brevity of life, but also to set up this appeal: “Consider what an eternity is” (#1006).

In the sermon titled, “God’s Orchard,” Edwards used the imagery of trees in an orchard to build the case that individuals in the community of grace receive so much. And yet that description was aimed at increasing the sharpness of his text, Luke 13:7, “Cut it down. Why cumbereth it the ground?” Edwards used that whole sermon to drive at his affective purpose: “What husbandman would year after year labor to raise up poison trees. If you will not — God will certainly cut you down and cast you into the fire” (#993). In a different orchard-like sermon, “Like a River to a Tree,” the imagery of the sermon drove home the question Edwards left his audience with: “Do you bring forth fruit?” (#999).

Even when the imagery used was more abstract, Edwards used it towards the affective weight of his sermon. In the sermon, “In the Image of God,” though the textual imagery of Genesis 1:27 is abstract, Edwards made it beautiful and desirable. He said there, “If you have the image of God in your heart, God will take delight in you. He will love to behold you.” This pushed hearers to the desired affective response: “If you are converted and have the image of God — the change that will be made in you will be very very (sic) happy for you” (#998). Similarly, in the sermon titled “A World Not Seen,” as Edwards drove a wedge between the

eternal implications of looking at things seen or unseen, it was for this final appeal: “Men that had Good opportunities once & would not improve ‘em are now in Hell. If They now Cry what a fool was I that I would now hearken to Counsel. Now hearken to me this day then you will Rejoyce here after” (#1001). Another similar example of this can be found in the sermon on 2 Cor. 3:18, “But we all with open face, beholding as in a glass” (#1025).

The use of Scriptural imagery to drive home the affective centre of his message could also overlap with more illustrative aspects of other images. In the sermon “In the Image of God,” Edwards described man as being, because of the image of God in him, over all the earth. This was turned into the illustration of being master of a house, in which God had put all the furnishings and provisions of trees, herbs, and animals. This added imagery developed the responsibility inherent in having been created in the image of God, which Edwards’ audience could only retrieve through regeneration (#998). In the sermon “God is Infinitely Strong,” Edwards described the might of God, making it almost tangible: “He can save you from the devil: he takes the poor soul out of the mouth of the devil as a strong man comes and takes a lamb out of the mouth of a bear” (#1064). Who would not want to be rescued?

This demonstrates again that Edwards did use imagery. But he did more than use it; he embraced the imagery of Scriptural texts, at times even expanding the images to drive home the affective centre of his sermon.

### **5.3 Light**

Edwards used light to reflect the Puritan desire for spiritual illumination. Like Richard Baxter, he wanted to use Scripture to “let in unresistible [sic] light into their consciences, and to keep it there, and drive all home! To screw the truth into their minds, and work Christ into their



affections.”<sup>1246</sup> This section looks at Edwards’ use of light in these select Stockbridge sermons to find evidence for whether and how he used the metaphor of light to drive the sermon into the affections of his hearers.

### *The Use of Light*

Edwards used light in several different ways. He embraced it as a metaphor, providing it with layers of meaning. Edwards used light as evidence of knowledge. Before Adam and Eve sinned, their minds were full of light (#1025). Since the fall, the beginnings of light came only when God gave enlightened minds and new hearts (#979).

Edwards also used light as evidence of opportunity. God answered Cornelius’ prayers to be “brought into the light; and while he was at prayer, God heard his prayer and sent an angel to tell him how he should come into greater light” (#976). There were those who lived this life, remained unregenerate, had many friends, and were blessed by the light of the sun every day, who will still run out of opportunities (#1006). Compared to others who did not have the gospel preached to them, the Stockbridge Indians lived in the light, and therefore they were to improve that opportunity (#979).

Edwards also highlighted the absence of light. The natural mind was full of darkness (#1025). People who remained ignorant of the gospel lived in darkness (#1000). Light separated between the good and the evil, and between those shining forth as the sun and the others appearing hateful and dreadful (#974). In that sense, unfruitful trees in God’s orchard just shaded the ground and hindered grass and other trees from growing (#993). That does not mean the absence of light always reflected total darkness: “How hateful is that to be one that should have

---

1246. Richard Baxter, *Reformed Pastor: Shewing the Nature of the pastoral work. . . .* (London: Robert White, 1657), 19.

on the glorious garment of holiness like the child of the great King of heaven and earth, [but] wallowing in filth and mire like the swine” (#998).

Edwards also used light as the effect of conversion by the Spirit of God. At conversion, “the eyes of the blind are opened and men are brought out of darkness in[to] glorious light” (#998). In a different sermon, Edwards said “Christ willingly gives his people... light and life in their souls (#999). That light means “their eyes [are] opened.” (#976). But it is not just their eyes; the whole soul of a person is “enlightened” (#1025).

Edwards therefore also used light as a metaphor for holiness. The loveliness and holiness of God is like the sun. Holiness in people is not substantially the same as the holiness of God, but “when you hold out a glass [mirror?] in the light of the sun, . . . the glass shines with some image of the same brightness” (#998). Since the light of Christ is ten thousand time better than the light of the sun, it will make people happy, and it will never go out (#1025).

Edwards presented heaven as a world of light. There the good will shine forth as the sun (#974). While transparency of all souls will occur at judgment, those who are Christians will go to heaven and “live in a world of light and happiness. . . . They shall be made like Christ and shall shine forth as the sun, and then their hearts will be full of love and full of joy, as the sun is full of light” (#979). In glory those souls will be perfectly clean and bright (#979). The glorious light will be perfect: “The light that we see here, [is] like the light — of break of day. But in heaven — [with the] sun risen, [we will] see it, look right on it, see [it] in full glory” (#1025).

### *The Sight of Light*

The language of sight was important to Edwards, including in his sermons. He wanted the Stockbridge Indians to know that Christ is “able to open our eyes and give us new hearts” (#1000). Such use of sight language was intentional, so that the things of religion would “seem

not like a dream or an idle story, but like real things” (#976). And yet, Edwards cautioned that it was not physical sight: “We don’t see Christ with bodily eyes as the disciplines did on earth. But he is held forth in the word, in the Scriptures, in the preaching of the word” (#1025).

Edwards used the understanding of spiritual sight as essential for true religion.<sup>1247</sup> He saw sight as seeing and appreciating the reality of things invisible: “to have the eye opened to see the excellency of those things which the Bible teaches about God and Jesus Christ, to taste the sweetness of ‘em, and have those things sink down into the heart” (#976). Sight therefore also applied to the Triune God. People must “see how lovely Christ is” (#976). While that might seem unusual, it was possible, since Christ gives light to those who “look to him” (#999).

Edwards also used sight as the ability of people to understand themselves. People need to “see what wicked hearts they have” (#979). People should use their sight to recognize the impact of sin. This could be of others: “see how sin brings misery to others” (#1118). It could be of themselves: “men must see what poor, miserable creatures they be.... [They] must see that they can never do anything to make satisfaction for their sins” (#976).

The use of sight language went beyond the present moment to seeing that which was future. Edwards taught that at the final judgment God will reveal hearts, so “all the world may see what they be” (#974). Some would see future glory: “they shall see God’s glory and beauty very clearly, which will fill ‘em with joy” (#979).

The language of sight was part of Edwards’ method of preaching. At times this was explicit: “Look in yourselves” (#1059). It was necessary: Edwards warned in the parable of the dragnet, that “it could not be seen what the fish were, whether good or bad” (#974). But it was always personal, since every person needed to “see to it that your hearts are right with God”

---

1247. Edwards, “Miscellanies #123,” *WJE*, 13:287.

(#974). Every person needed to know whether their minds “been enlightened” (#999). Edwards used Cornelius as a great example, since Acts revealed he had a mind to know more about Christ, and “prayed to God that he might be brought into the light” (#976). Yet, just because the Stockbridge Indians now heard the truth, that was not enough: it was still an entirely other thing “to see the excellency of those things which the Bible teaches” (#976). And so, Edwards appealed to the Indians: “Set God before your eyes and see him” (#1045).

### *Homiletical Progression Towards Light*

While Edwards used light as a metaphor that was epistemologically important, he used it in common, personal ways. This can be seen in these Stockbridge sermons through the intentional application of light as an aid towards application. Most pertinent to this chapter may be the examples in which Edwards used the imagery of light to advance the message of his text. In his sermon on Psalm 14:1, “The fool hath said in his heart there is no God,” Edwards stated his doctrine as, there certainly is a God. The reason people object is because they cannot see God; Edwards’ response was to show from nature, beginning with the great lights of sun, moon, and stars that people need to see the sunshine and the brightness and grace of God who made the light they cannot do without. This is the work of the God who cannot be denied: “all mankind see the good one” (#1059).

But the greater spiritual light was not just general light for the world. It needed to be personal light, and Edwards worked towards that in his sermons. Various scholars are correct to note that Edwards generally moved from third-person to second-person perspective.<sup>1248</sup> But this was not just a technique to make applications. Edwards was intentionally driving home the affective centre at the hearts of the people in front of him. This came across in nineteen of the

---

1248. See Kimmach, “Introduction,” *WJE*, 10:254; Carrick, *Edwards*, 332.

sermons (the two exceptions are addressed below): “Take heed to yourselves” (#974); “Therefore, you must every day, all of you, go alone and pray” (#976); “Receive instruction, forsake all your sins, and turn from sin to God” (#979); “Now you are like a piece of land that has been cleared and planted with apple trees” (#993); “Are you like Christ?” (#998); “Do you bring forth fruit?” (#999); “This has been your case” (#1000); “You must not look at things which are seen” (#1001); “Don’t set your heart” (#1006); “Consider whether you ben’t in darkness” (#1025); “Set God before your eyes and see him” (#1045).

Even in some of the most outlined sermons, Edwards’ pointed applications pushing towards spiritual sight: “Think of your sin” (#1050); “Thus you see...” (#1059); “He sees all you do... Here is encouragement to pray” (#1064); “Consider,. . .” (#1113); “Means of grace do you no good” (#1116); “See how sin brings others to misery” (#1118); “Get the love of God in your heart” (#1175); “Remember the things I have told you” (#1177).

The Stockbridge sermons provide exceptions to the generalization that Edwards turned to the second-person to make applications. There are two sermons in which Edwards seems careful to avoid the second person. In these, seeming to minimize the adversarial nature of the context, he pastorally chose to use the first-person plural when coming to application. For example, in a sermon about God’s use of affliction, rather than being so pointed as to say “you,” Edwards pastorally softened his words by saying, “[God] is able to destroy [us], if [we] despise [his chastisements]” (#1072).<sup>1249</sup> In the sermon addressing local participation in what would be called the Seven Year War, Edwards wanted his congregation to realize the call to spiritual readiness. While the French were clearly the enemy in the sermon, and only certain men would go out to

---

1249. It could be observed in this quote that the first-person plural is editorial filling in, which is true: however, the use of “us” is consistent with the context of the section, and therefore reflects Edwards’ choice.

fight, the entire congregation needed to ensure its dependence on God: “Trust in God and pray to God, [and] not to trust in ourselves... Be much in prayer to God that he would help us” (#1144).

In other words, while there is a strong use of light in the sermons, there is not a presumption of effective light within individuals. Edwards did not assume by the end of a sermon that people had seen the light. He presented the light but left them with a challenge to further realizations. For select examples, consider Edwards’ use of therefore (#974, #976), think (#1006, #1118), consider (#1000, #1006, #1144), and remember (#974, #1177). He progresses towards applicatory questions as seen in these examples: “how will you?” (#979); “how is it with many of you?” (#1116); “how can you expect?” (#1175); “do you...?” (#999).

#### **5.4 Space**

The observation of space includes recognizing the internal and external aspects of religious life on earth, as well as how close souls are to entering another world that is just beyond them. In highlighting the internal as well as the external, Edwards taught that God cares about soul and body, or the whole person. God sees everything about people (#1064). This is evident in positive ways, as people are called to “be instructed,” “to believe,” “to have new hearts,” “a humble spirit” (#976). Edwards also appealed to the unified person in his warnings: “Not only will the souls of men be punished; but their bodies, which shall be raised from the dead, shall be thrown into eternal fire” (#974). This use of space will be further seen in here in Edwards’ appeals to personally internal and personally external religion, as well as noting any communal (external) applications Edwards may make, and how any of these might be unified for affective spirituality. And yet, beyond the blurred lines of internal and external religion are the blurred boundaries of this life and the eternal.

*Personally Internal Religion*

In the Stockbridge Indian sermons reviewed, Edwards encouraged personal religion through developing the understanding of a whole person dependent on the grace of God. This whole person includes more than the external actions, but also the thoughts and hearts of individuals. This internal religion can be seen most wholistically in his sermon on the image of God. There, Edwards was explicit: “When tis said God created man in his own image it is not meant that we was like God in form of his count[enance], or shape of his body. God is a spirit.” Following that, Edwards described the reason and understanding and holiness, as created in man, lost in the fall, and possibly recreated in a person (#998).

That recreated image was necessary; external religion was not enough. Edwards warned, “Don’t rest in outward show but get a clean heart: a holy heart that hates all sin and loves Christ” (#974). Or, as elsewhere in the same sermon: “Unless you have a new heart, you never will be good” (#974). That heart meant much more than energy for additional activity: “It will signify nothing to do a great many things outwardly, if we don’t give God our hearts. . . . If men han’t such religion as this, it will never do being baptized, and coming to sacraments will never save ‘em” (#976).

Internal religion begins with thoughts of people. Edwards called for an honest realization of sinful internal thoughts many times, as it related to the sinful state.<sup>1250</sup> His doctrine of total depravity applied to the minds of the Stockbridge Indians since all men were naturally wicked (#979), their minds full of darkness (#1025) Therefore, knowledge of sin needs to be internalized as well. The people are to remember their sins (#979). They are to knowingly forsake sin

---

1250. Keller, “Experiencing God in Words,” 125 demonstrates how the use of the word “sin” also grew in the Stockbridge sermons to the natives.

(#1144). But the internal thoughts of sin are not just about heaping on condemnation; they were part of Edwards' appeal for careful thought: "Consider what must become of you if you thus continue under the power of the devil" (#1116).

The change necessary for true religion and freedom from sin was also personal and internal. In one of his earliest sermons to the Stockbridge natives, he told them "what true religion is, and what that religion is that you must have if ever you are saved" (#976). At conversion, the soul of man is enlightened (#1025). And this personal element is not individualistic, as "the soul [of the saint] is joined to Christ and they are made one.... Christ enters the heart and soul of a godly man and dwells there" (#999).

Because of this personal element, Edwards called people to personal self-awareness. He found most people stupid and senseless when it comes to the spiritual danger they are in (#1025). They need to reflect on their personal sins (#1050). They are to reflect on their personal confessions, and not think that ministers and churches know whose heart is good (#974). They are to be aware of whether they have really forsaken sin, or whether they are hindering real good from occurring (#998). They need to make sure they will not be found, at last, as some of the "bad fish" that will be cast away (#974). And so, "examine whether you are a true saint. Has your soul been ever like a tree planted by this river?" (#999).

And as they live, individuals should not waste any time: their earthly time is short (#974, #1001). No one knows when they will die and lose all opportunity for salvation (#1000). Death could come before the next spring (#979). And so, individuals are to respond to the gospel immediately without delay (#1000, #1113). Even as Edwards came to part with his Stockbridge mission friends, he looked beyond the short time of earth: "Whether we shall ever see each other in this world is uncertain: but remember we must meet again at the last day" (#1177).



And so, while individuals are given time and opportunity, they are dependent on the grace of God. Even after receiving spiritual sight, they need to pray for God's blessing (#1000). Without that blessing, they may think of themselves as green trees, "yet by and by you will wither. All your streams will fail you" (#999). Edwards was clear that the only way to consistent Christianity is through internal heart change. The reason some people reform their lives only for a time, or for limited things, and then not again is because their hearts were never changed (#974). But there are those whose hearts are "taken off from this world and planted in God and Christ and heaven: [they] no more trust in the world, but put their trust in God. [They do] not trust in themselves..., but trust only in Christ" (#999).

And so, while true religion was internal, it was not passive: Edwards appealed for internal religion that was still active. Sermons were for "serious consideration" (#974). Consideration was not perfunctory: "you must apply your self to the business of religion" (#1000). Numerous times Edwards told the Stockbridge Indians to "take heed" (#974, #1000). Personal, internal religion would mean "you must hate all sin as God hates it, and love God and Jesus Christ with all your heart; and you must live a holy, Christian life and be a follower of the Lord Jesus Christ" (#979). And so, the appeal to internal thoughts were also fed with questions: "Is Christ sweeter and better than the sweetest food, better than all the things of the world" (#999)?

### *Personal External Religion*

The Stockbridge sermons addressed a whole variety of visible external behaviors. This included sinful and hypocritical behavior, as well as positive and beneficial behaviors.

Edwards was so against the idea of passive piety, he asked for reasons people were so bold in neglecting religion. Passive religion was only mischief, serving the devil, which instead of good fruit, only resulted in briars and thorns, sour fruit, and poison fruit: "What husbandman

would year after year labour to raise up poison trees” (#993)? Like his earlier famous sermon, “Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God,” Edwards was stark with his warnings about judgment: “If you was thrown into a hot oven, you could not bear to lie there one quarter of an hour. . . . When you are in that dreadful fire and think that you never can get out, and look forward and think there is no end, how will that make your heart sink” (#979)!

Edwards also addressed sinful visible behaviors. Too many of the Stockbridge Indians were slaves to the devil’s devices (#1116). And so he demanded, “forsake all your drunkenness, and all your cheating and lying, and all your fighting and quarrelling” (#979). These visible sins ruin health, families and communities, and set bad examples to their children (#1116). Further, no drunkards, liars, or murderers would enter heaven (#979). And if the people just went on in wickedness, it would be as if the gospel was in vain (#1000).

Edwards also addressed hypocritical visible behaviors. Hypocrites were as unfruitful trees in God’s good orchard: good for nothing but to be thrown into the fire (#993). And while hypocrites may “deceive men with a good outside when your hearts are rotten,. . . you can’t deceive God” (#974). Such externally religious people are as shallow as the puddles after a rain that soon dry (#999).

To fight such hypocrisy, Edwards addressed visible daily behaviors. Every day, “all of you, go alone and pray to the great God” (#976). And yet, just being baptized and coming to sacraments would not save the people of Stockbridge (#976). After all, judgment will distinguish between those who “used to eat and drink together, and used to go hunting together” (#974).

Edwards also encouraged right, practical behaviors that could have great spiritual effect. The hearers were receivers of the Gospel (#974). Children were to learn English, not because of imperialistic desire, but so they would be able to read the Bible (#976). The natives were to

pursue spiritual happiness because it would be good for their own people (#1000). When people realize God has their life in his hands, they would be more comfortable when they die (#1006). And then the truly Christian life would be visible. Living a holy life would be recognizable as a follower of the Lord Jesus Christ (#979).

### *External Communal Religion*

Jonathan Edwards' Stockbridge sermons promoted piety in community by expanding the need for the gospel beyond individuals to all of humanity, by including himself in the sermon audience, and through addressing the responsibility of all the people in the community, and particularly families.

Edwards was clear about the universal need for the gospel. Those who have not had the gospel greatly need help (#1000). Even while they may have not heard the gospel explicitly, "all mankind" sees God and will be accountable (#1059). In this way, the Stockbridge Indians were not to think they had a unique disadvantage: "Before Christ came into the world, there was but one nation in the world - the nation of the Jews – that had the true religion. All other nations were heathen for about 1500 years" (#976). Subsequently, all good men love God (#1031).

Edwards also promoted communal piety by not placing himself above the need for the gospel. He used the first-person plural to include himself in those whom the preached word is addressed to: it came "when we were helpless" (#1000). Christ "made satisfaction for our sins" (#1000). The need for the gospel, and the application of the gospel, levels all people, so that rich and poor, wise and foolish all need the same (#979). And therefore the entire community, together, should consider what God was saying (#1144).

Edwards also promoted communal piety by consciously reaching out to families. He considered it part of his mission: "I am come to preach the true religion to you and to your

children... that you and all your children may be saved” (#976). Parents then, for the happiness of themselves and their children, ought to come hear the preaching (#1000). Parents have the responsibility for more than just their individual selves: “you should often talk to your children and give ‘em good counsel.... You should try that your children may learn English that they may read the Bible and there learn this religion” (#974). And yet, too often, Edwards found that it was the children who were ruling their parents (#1116). Edwards also appealed to families to think about their well-being: “[Drink] ruins your health: many die, [and] you do hurt one to another.... What an example is here set before your children!... Your families suffer [much] by it” (#1116).

Edwards explicitly spoke of the whole community at times. In preaching the need to ask and receive the good news, he told the Stockbridge Indians that “if the work of the ministry is blessed among you, you will not only be happy yourself but it will have a tendency to the Good of other Indians” (#1000). In another sermon he put it this way: “I would have you Indians consider how it is with you. Your whole nation was formerly under the power of that strong man armed, and now you are brought under the gospel” (#1116). And that is a privileged opportunity, because not all Indians had the gospel preached to them (#979).

Edwards also urged public piety by encouraging honest community living. True religion is “to hate all sin, all drunkenness, lying and cheating” (#974, #979). It is the Christian religion that makes “men good one to another” (#974). Edwards called out sins he saw others afraid to address, such as laziness, squandering, and fear of public response (#1116). This lack of honesty only brought about discomfort with each other and fear of one another (#1116).

Edwards also spoke of communal activities. The whole community needed to recognize sin that brought misery to others (#1118). The people needed to turn from all wicked ways, and to keep the Sabbath properly: “not to hunt nor to work not play a sabbath, but spend the time in

praying, going to meeting, and thinking and talking about the things of religion” (#976).

Positively, the whole community should “love good people that are the people of Christ: to love ‘em as brothers and sisters. . . . Love all men: endeavor to do good to all” (#976). And it was this communal group, “You that have made it your care to live agreeable to the gospel” that Edwards asked to remember all he taught when he left for Princeton (#1177).

### *Internal and External Harmonized*

The internal and the external, whether personal or communal, are harmonized in the soul and heart of a person. What comes out of a person was first inside them. At a broad level, the fact that all men are created in the image of God should lead to showing respect and honor to all people (#998). Of more concern for Edwards was the consistency, the harmony of the internal and external for those who confessed Christ.

Edwards called for harmonized religion, as it related to opportunities. God gave opportunity for internal and external religion: therefore, Edwards said, “Take heed to yourselves” (#974); “Remember what opportunity you had” (#979); “Love God and Jesus Christ with all your heart” (#979). The opportunities for internal reflection were also to extend to situations outside of the hearers themselves. They were to realize that they had “a better opportunity than many poor Indians” (#979). Too many who “had Good opportunities once & would not improve ‘em are now in hell” (#1001). Even as Edwards moved on from Stockbridge, the people were to “remember how it has been” (#1177).

And so, the harmonized religion, where the borders between the visible and the invisible blurred, and the external and internal distinctions faded, and the distance between God and humanity minimized, was displayed regularly. This can be simply seen in the sermon on the image of God, where Edwards’ concluding thought included “Are you like Christ? Act like him”

(#998). Or, in the sermon concerning things not seen: “Strictly keep the sabbath day & pray to God every day morning & night. And pray to God to give light in your minds. Know him. Trust in Christ. Love God above all. Love all men. Walk in all God’s ways. That you must be if you are the Children of God. The Children of God are holy persons” (#1001).

Such harmonized religion would result in true happiness. God gives happiness by making people new (#976). God gives happiness by giving victory (#1144). And then people “need not be afraid to die: death can do ‘em no harm” (#976). Indeed, consider how much personal and generational happiness in this world and the next occurs when God blessings the word as it sinks in their lives (#1000). They should be full of thankfulness (#1000). Those who are ready to die in Christ are happy (#1006).

Also in this way, Edwards’ displayed the concept of space that blurs the lines between life on earth and life in eternity. When people die they go into “another world” (#974, #979, #1006). And yet he did not allow more than two options: there was no such place as purgatory (#979). He warned people of a place of unending fires of hell that was so different than their blessings on earth (#979, #993). Therefore, Edwards’ appeal was to “forsake this world now [and] get an interest in Christ’s death” (#1006).

The space of heaven just beyond the people was described in language that was less distinct than a believer’s current experience. God’s people can draw near to him now as they worship at the house of God (#1175). The believer knows light shining into their souls whereby they see glory and their hearts are drawn from all the world and they are willing to give themselves to God already in this life (#1025). Those renewed in the image of God would be in heaven where all are like God (#998). The considerations of redemption in Christ, and the love of God, ought to motivate people to consider the beauty of heaven. This was a real place for

God's children, where, if they did bear good fruit, God would keep them and plant them as a tree in heaven (#993). This was a world of light and joy (#979). There they would experience "joy and happiness with saints and angels for all eternity" (#998). This is something not often seen:

They then [that] are happy will be happy forever. . . . Heaven is a world where there are no such changes as there are in this world. In this world all things are changeable. A man may be one day rich and another day poor. One day a king and another day a poor person. One day in health and another day sick. One day a conqueror in war and another day a poor captive. One day alive and strong and another day dead. Like the grass that in the morning is green and flourishing but before night is cut down withered. But the saints in heaven shall be above the reach of all such changes (#1001).

And so, heaven is the glorious place full of light that is ten thousand times better than the light of the sun (#1025). It is where glory shines into hearts, and "makes the soul shine with some resemblance of his glory" (#1025). In heaven, saints will "see the sun. Shine in. His brightness who made it and grace it in light" (#1059).

The purpose of sermons, whether for the glory of God, the piety of individuals, or the godliness of the community was to be affective. This affectivity was not mere emotion. It was grounded in Scripture and applied to the people in front of him. This affection was expressed by the heart as it responded to God, was self-aware, and sought for communal piety. The sermons apply to the internal thoughts as they relate to sin and gospel opportunities, but also for the affective response of the eternal space.

## **5.5 Movement**

Movement includes a plain use of language that is not restrained by any paradigm. It is a resistance to rest, and an embrace of elements of contrast and dramatic intentionality for the affective purpose.

*Inability to Rest*

Edwards did not structure his prose in a way that encouraged rest. He was clear that apart from restoring grace, humanity had lost the image of God, including holiness and happiness. Without the restoration of that image, there would be no love and delight in God (#998). The religion of a worldly man is like a shallow puddle that quickly dries up, while the religion of the truly good man is like a flowing, active river (#999). Too many people are stupid and senseless, not afraid of hell, and don't even care (#1025). They neglect knowledge, and grow wicked, and worship idols (#1045). The devil confuses their experience of rest with keeping them quiet and secure in their sins (#1116). Wickedness is what torments (#1118). Even, after life on earth, for those who did not believe, hell is going to a place where people are for thousands of years without one moment of rest (#1001). Therefore even Edwards' most faithful parishioners were to not rest in anything but godly sorrow (#1050).

Much of his encouragement to the Stockbridge Indians was much less about resting, than progressing towards happiness: See to it, don't rest (#974), endeavor (#976), go and pray (#976), forsake sin (#979), live a holy, Christian life (#979), bring forth fruit (#993), love and hate the things God loves and hates (#998), seek an interest in Jesus Christ (#999), pray constantly (#1000), don't look at the things which are (#1001), improve the time of life (#1006), worship with all the heart (#1045), go to Christ (#1064), take up resolutions and strive (#1113), turn the devil out (#1116), put away sin (#1144), and, be diligent in coming to the house of God (#1175).

But even in prose of progress, believers were to find their rest in places other than Edwards or his sermons or this life. God can give spiritual comforts of inward peace in this life (#1045). He can strengthen under chastisement and make us happy (#1072). But Edwards never promoted rest here. The comfort that comes after mourning is a view of God's glory which will



be everlasting (#1050). In a sermon on the unseen world, Edwards wrote, “Some of the best of men have been cruelly treated by wicked men and could have no relief in this world. . . . Doubtless therefore there is another world wherein will do justice & where Good men shall be happy” (#1001). As he said about those who belong to true religion, “Heaven is their country. . . . They are a-going a journey to heaven, and though they may have a great deal of trouble and labor by the way, and may be very weary, yet heaven is their resting place” (#976). Then, and only then will they never need meat or drink or sleep (#979). There only will the saints be above the reach of all change. There only will there be joyful singing with no more groaning or weeping (#1001).

### *Contrast and Juxtaposition*

There is a clear and strong use of contrast or antithesis and juxtaposition in Edwards’ sermons to the Stockbridge natives. This came from both textual and non-textual elements.

Edwards made use of elements in the text that were juxtaposed. For example, he maximized the use of the good and bad fish in the parable of the net (#974). As he related the Macedonian call for help, he placed the call for help alongside the help that was provided (#1000). He balanced the beatitude that those who mourn will be comforted (#1050). Even when dealing with sensitive topics such as affliction, he held that those who are knowingly afflicted by God should be happy (#1072).

The juxtapositions seen in Edwards were not just from the text. Edwards closed the sermon “God’s Orchard,” with an affective juxtaposition warning that if “you will not — God will certainly cut you down and cast you into the fire. . . . thrown into a worse fire than the trees of the wood. If you bring forth fruit you shall not be cut down. So God will keep you. And when you die shall be plan[t]ed in heaven. Trees in God’s garden there where is no drought no winter. Or trees planted by the rivers of water” (#993).

There are times in which the juxtaposition comes from his own doctrine of the text, and not necessarily the text. The most obvious would be the contrast of wicked and true religion in the sermon about Cornelius' reception of Peter in Acts (#976). Another comes from his sermon on Psalm 14:1, "The fool has said in his heart, there is no God." In this sermon Edwards presents all the ways in which God is visible as evidence that there is a God. Only in one conclusion does he hint at how stupid and foolish men are who say there is no God (#1059). They are like those described in another sermon who trust in themselves, while the faithful are the ones trusting in the name of God (#1144).

Edwards was also unafraid to assign non-textual antithetical elements beyond the Scriptural text. In the sermon on death, he augmented the textual elements with contrasts between the wicked and the righteous, hell and heaven (#979). When he promoted the benefits of Christ as "to the heart of a true saint like a river to the roots of a tree that is planted by it," Edwards was unafraid to ask whether his hearers were dry or fruitful trees (#999). In the sermon on things unseen, his primary discussion centred around heaven and hell (#1001). More practically, he asked his hearers whether, when they thought about their ways, their ways were the wrong ways, or God's commands (#1113). In preaching on life as wind, Edwards' third application was to "improve the time of life to prepare for death" (#1006). As he described the infinite strength of God, Edwards contrasted that strength applied to destruction and that strength applied to salvation (#1064). In a sermon focusing on the Devil as an enemy, those hearing needed to understand the superiority of Christ's power (#1116). The sweetness in mouths resulted in "more trouble than pleasure in this [world]" (#1118).

Edwards used antithesis to highlight applications of his doctrine. In a sermon about God, he said, "He can make men happy in this world. He gives temporal presents. Health. Eating

plenty. Presents for business and all the comforts of life. He gives spiritual comforts. Inward peace. Making more hearts rejoice, in God's favour. He can make men miserable in the world. Pain. Sickness. Poverty. Captivity. He delivers. He can make men eternally miserable in hell. Souls are in his hands. Devil in his hands and he restrains him" (#1045).

Edwards also used antithesis or juxtaposition to maximize an application, or as it were, to augment an idea. For example, after stating that is the Spirit of God who works the change in a person, so that they are brought out of darkness into the light, Edwards stated, "hereby a poor captive of Satan is delivered." But then he immediately goes on to embellish the idea: "Hereby a hateful child of the devil is made the beautiful lovely child of God. Hereby the heart that is naturally like a den of serpents[,] a house for devils to dwell [in] is turned into a temple of God[,] a house for the glorious King of heaven to live [in]. That which is filthy like a toad or serpent is made to shine bright with some of Christ's beauty and brightness. That which is like a heap of dung is made one of God's precious jewels" (#998).

Edwards also used juxtaposition of locations between this world and the world of heaven. He said,

That world is not like this, where men sometimes are sick and in pain; there they have no sickness or pain or sorrow. Here in this world, good men have enemies oftentimes that hurt 'em and afflict 'em, but there they shall be set on high, out of the reach of all their enemies [where] nothing can hurt 'em. Here they have a great deal of trouble and sorrow of mind, but there they shall no more sorrow, but all tears shall be wiped away from their eyes. Here they often labor and are weary; but there they shall be at rest, and then all sin shall be taken away and their souls shall be perfectly clean and bright, without any spot. Here oftentimes the devil tempts 'em and tries to draw 'em to sin, and is a great trouble; but no devil shall ever be suffered to come there. This world is an evil world, because there is so much quarrelling and contention, but there is no contention [in heaven] and all shall live together in perfect love and peace. Here the saints know but little of God, but there they shall know ten thousand times as much as now. They shall see God's glory and beauty very clearly, which will fill 'em with joy (#979).

There are times such embellishment would have been labelled as metaphysical preaching. While metaphysical preaching is often touted as the antithesis of Puritan plain preaching, the term metaphysical can also refer to sermons which associate ideas and words not usually connected.<sup>1251</sup> Metaphysical could also refer to the baroque naturalism that had significance for reality that was neither coldly scientific nor ostentatiously abstract.

In this way, Edwards does display a degree of metaphysical preaching. He associated ideas and words not usually connected. This is not saying the degree of metaphysical preaching is great. But there is a degree of it. The explanation of the kingdom of heaven being like a net includes a discussion of gospel preaching and Christ judging the righteous and the wicked (#974). Instead of a comparison between a blessed person and a wicked person, the sermon on Psalm 1 turns into a discussion of union with Christ (#999). Instead of focusing on how God used the Macedonian man to spread the gospel, Edwards turns to the local situation, insisting that some of them needed help, and some of them could help others (#1000). The conclusion to the reflection on God's mighty power revealed in the Old Testament is that those hearing that sermon are, hinting at the parable in Luke 15, lost or trapped lambs (#1064). His response to the fool who says there is no God is that God is good (#1059). The application from the passage of David and Goliath is about the French and the Papacy (#1144). These examples also reflect a degree of movement, but were not too much of a thinking leap for the Stockbridge natives. They reflect an earlier sermon, "The Excellency of Christ," where Edwards, "in the tradition of metaphysical exploitation of paradox and hyperbole. . . joins diverse qualities identified with emblematic figures."<sup>1252</sup>

---

1251. See Edwards, Jr., "Varieties," 7.

1252. Kimmach, Minkema, and Sweeney, *Reader*, xx.

### *Dramatic Intentionality*

The movement in Edwards' Stockbridge sermons also can be seen in his embrace of appropriate dramatic moments.

Edwards used internal thoughts to call for imagination of hypothetical scenarios. He raised dramatic questions such as "if you don't love God's house here, how can you expect to be admitted to his house above" (#1175)? He presented dramatic scenarios: "Consider what Christ has done for us. [He has] conquered the devil and the armies of hell" (#1144). He taught doctrine related to judgment, but then dramatically pictured what it will be: "Then all wicked men, and they that would not repent of their sins and come [to] Christ, will have their mouths stopped and will have nothing to say. Their own hearts will condemn 'em and will tell 'em of their wickedness. Their hearts will be full of dreadful fear [and] sorrow, so that no tongue can tell how dreadful it will be. But they can't run away and hide themselves from God, and if they cry to God to have mercy on 'em, he won't hear 'em" (#979).

The dramatic intentionality not only hinted at the fire of eternal punishment, but embraced and built on the image. Edwards asked,

How will you bear to lie in that fire forever and ever? If you was thrown into a hot oven, you could not bear to lie there one quarter of an hour, to be there alive and not die. How, then, [could you] bear [to lie in] a fire ten thousand hotter, forever and ever, and after you have been there ten thousand years [it is] but just a beginning? When you are in that dreadful fire and *think that you never can get out, and look forward and think there is no end*, how will that make your heart sink (#979, emphasis added)!

Whether the dramatic intentionality can be seen in Edwards' sermons as whole documents is less clear. However, this survey of Edwards' Stockbridge sermons suggests that Edwards was not as Ramistically structured as he may be expected to be when considered a Puritan. There is very little multi-level structure. Instead, the sermon structures seem to present

big ideas towards a specific, dramatic point. This is done in a variety of ways.

One manner of dramatic intentionality is movement away from the Puritan tripartite form of the sermon. Only two of the sermons (#1072, 1144) are multi-point, multi-level structures where the 1 a.b.c, 2 a.b.c etc. is explicitly stated. Most are more narrative in form. One sermon (#974) is clearly a circular structure where Edwards revisited elements of the kingdom, the fishermen, and the fish. There are four sermons (#979, 993, 1064, 1175) that seem to be like a funnel [ > ]: they begin broad and end with a narrow point. Another two sermons (#1059, 1113) are one explained point with a concluding therefore.

Some of the sermons display folds of overlapping thought. In this structure, Edwards seemed to take an idea or pattern and fold it over on itself. One example of this is the sermon on Genesis 1:27. After he stated his text, and what it did not mean, Edwards made two points of doctrine. He then took those two points and revisited them over and over through seven points of application. Another, possibly clearer, example of this is the sermon on Psalm 1. After stating his text and two correlating Scripture references (which can be taken as the material of the sermon folds), Edwards states his doctrine as “Christ is to the heart of a true saint like a river to the roots of a tree that is planted by it.” He then works through layers of this idea: Christ is like a river that runs easily and freely, that is in great plenty, that flows constantly, that is never exhausted, and that refreshes. The rich depth of Christ as a river has been folded over and over, leaving one desiring that river. Edwards’ two main applications seek to extract a personal response from every hearer: 1) examine yourself, whether you have been planted by this river; and 2) without this river, you will wither, and all your other streams will fail you (#999). Even without subpoints, or without any points under the proposition (as in #976), there is a layering of information through the verbal clue, “another thing is.”

Every Stockbridge sermon had at least some application. Edwards' use of application is often marked by the term "therefore" at the end of a sermon. Even the sermons that did not explicitly mention application, still transitioned to application. For example, the entire sermon on Psalm 119:60-61 (#1113) that was preached to the Stockbridge natives in March 1754 consisted of three observations. The first two observations are in the third person plural (they/them/their). The last observation is preceded with the note, "consider", and then abbreviated as "should make haste and not delay." It could be assumed that this turned into a second-person application as was common in the rest of the other sermons.

This highlights the dramatic intentionality, and a pattern of contrast, that Edwards exhibited throughout the surveyed Stockbridge Indian sermons.

## 5.6 Affection

The affective element of a sermon has historically been found at the conclusion of a sermon. According to van Mastricht, the soul of the sermon lies in application, which could consist of comfort, admonition, self-examination, and exhortation, and is directed to the circumstances and affections of the audience.<sup>1253</sup> Edwards' application continues to show baroque tendencies. Kinnach recognizes this when he recognizes in Edwards a more subtle use than many others: "the Application is a period of hypothetical experience for Edwards' auditory, a time of living imaginatively, through a 'willing suspension of disbelief,' a series of fictive experiences created and controlled by the preacher."<sup>1254</sup> Edwards was able to work with a "keen sense of timing, vivid imagery, and exploitation of the figural structures of incremental

---

1253. Neele, *Before Jonathan Edwards*, 95-96.

1254. Kinnach, "Introduction," *WJE*, 10:39.

repetition.”<sup>1255</sup> But the object of application should not be confused: “The improvement we shall make of this doctrine shall be to offer some consideration to make [it] *seem real to you*.”<sup>1256</sup>

In Edwards’ Stockbridge Indian sermons, the affective work was not just in the final applications. The affective response is best found in the affective descriptions throughout the sermon, and whether they are in harmony with the weight of the message. It is helpful to recall Edwards’ understanding of the affections as the “vigorous and sensible exercises of the inclination and will.”<sup>1257</sup>

### *Affective Images*

While the use of images has been touched on already, it is helpful to briefly realize here again that images were used for affective purposes. They were selected and used for response.

The Stockbridge Indian sermons display this. The sermon on the parable of the net focused on good fish and bad fish, which was not about the seafood, but about those who thought they were safe in the kingdom (#974). In warning of judgment, Edwards used the dramatized image of fire as hell (#979). In warning of God’s clearing his orchard of unfruitful trees, Edwards warned the Stockbridge Indians, “your case will be worse on than other Indians” (#998). In exalting Christ as the river of life, Edwards went back to the first Psalm, and asked if those hearing him were prospering like a tree planted by that river (#999). In promoting the might of God, Edwards asked if the people were ready to anger the mightiest person (#1064). In teaching the people that the Devil is like a strong man armed, Edwards described the arms as

---

1255. Kimmach, “Introduction,” *WJE*, 10:173.

1256. Jonathan Edwards, “Warnings of Future Punishment Don’t Seem Real to the Wicked,” *WJE*, 14:198-212. Emphasis added.

1257. Edwards, *Religious Affections*, *WJE*, 2:96.



lust, and pled with his hearers to consider whether they were slaves of the worst master possible (#1116). In the call to love the house of God, Edwards asked the searching question: If the people do not love God's house here, why would they love it in eternity (#1175)? Even as Edwards concluded his ministry with the call for the Stockbridge natives to remember their ministers, he flipped the image to warn them that God will remember what their minister has told them (#1177). These examples intentionally work towards an affective response.

### *Affective Language*

The use of language has been studied as well by others. This section considers how Edwards used, not just dramatic language, but language towards an affective response. It is the use of language that can stir up the renewed inclination and will. Edwards applied such stirring language through the Stockbridge sermons.

Affective language was used to describe the condescension of a sovereign God. This appeared in adjectives: "God is an infinitely wise and understanding being" (#998). It appeared in descriptions of God's activity where he "gives clothing and firewood and means to keep us from being froze to death. Makes the sun shine. Rain. Earth yields all increase" (#1045). Indeed, the God Edwards pointed to knew everything: "There is not so much [as] a fly or worm or gnat [that is unknown to God]. [He] knows every tree, every leaf, every spire of grass; every drop of rain or dew; every single dust [mote] in the whole world. God sees in darkness [and] under ground. [A] thousand miles under ground [is] not hid [from his view]" (#1064).

Affective language was used to warn of hell and Satan. Satan was an enemy to God, but also a strong enemy to men: "always carrying on a war" (#1116). Edwards did not want to be seen as dramatic troubler: "I don't tell you these things to trouble and afflict you but I tell you them to warn you that so you mayn't come to this Place of Torment" (#1001). It would be filled

with bad company such as drunkards and liars and malicious person (#1001). The torment would be magnified by God's power: "The fire shall be exceeding great and dreadful, for it will [be] the fire that God will enkindle by his great power, and in the fierceness of his great wrath. . . . and therefore doubtless vastly more terrible than any fire ever seen in this world" (#974). And so, the effects of a wicked life, though it be thought sweet for a moment, will be dreadful: "How much greater the bitterness will be than the sweetness. If you go and stand by hell and hear their lamentations. How much longer [you have] the sweetness [here] does you little good. It may be [that it] gives you more trouble than pleasure in this earth. Consider how much more comfort you may have by being godly" (#1118).

Edwards desired a wise response from his hearers. And yet part of that vigorous, wise response would be the humble recognition of stupid and sinful humanity. Sins were many, great, and aggravated (#1050). The effects of sin were devastating: "You are kept a poor, miserable people; what you get you lay out, a great deal of it, for rum. Your families suffer" (#1116). But it was not sin of others, but their own sins that were to be most affective: "[they must see] what wicked creatures they [are], must see what wicked hearts they have, and [that they] are all over wicked. [They must see that they] deserve that God should hate 'em and should take 'em and cast 'em into hell and show 'em no mercy. To be good Christians, men must see what poor, miserable creatures they be, and can't help themselves" (#976). The characters that are displayed in their "drinking and the pleasures of this earth are like the beasts. And in their pride and malice and revenge and quarrelling they are like the devil" (#998). And while they might clean themselves up and perform well, people still "do foolishly, because they trust in that that is very weak. Man [is] but a worm. The wisdom of men goes but a little way. It becomes us to be sensible of our ignorance. Men's strength often proves insufficient [to their needs]: their wisdom,

[their] biggest armies, [and] their forts [often fail them]. . . . What is man's life? It shows pride [to depend upon ourselves]. God abhors the proud" (#1144). Consequently, part of the affective response desired was the acknowledgement: "How stupid and foolish are men" (#1059).

Therefore, even the perspective of personal change was to encourage affective response. Consider how Edwards described the role of affliction in change: "[When men really] mourn for sin, that sin shall become their greatest affliction, [and they are] turned from it. When men are turned from their vain pursuits, seeking happiness where it is not to be found; [when men are] turned from the world — trusting in it, love to its riches, honors, pleasures — [their] hearts are turned from [sin, and] their pride humbled. [They are] broken for sin [and are] poor in spirit" (#1072). This is what humanity needs. When the Spirit of God works with his mighty power, "Tis a very great change inside of the heart of a man (#998). And when a person knows that great change, and "are converted and have the image of God — the change that will be made in you will be very very [sic] happy for you. Safe. Love peace. Have great joy. Need not be afraid of dying." (#998). That is why everyone who heard of such personal change, "should make haste and not delay. How many men delay" (#1113).

The positive excellencies of Christ were also described for affective response. That affective response might begin with recognizing a powerful Christ who has "conquered the devil [and the] armies of hell" (#1144). It could continue with the recognition that "Christ is loving and kind and merciful. So. Christ was humble, meek, and of a quiet patient spirit. So. Inclines 'em to act as Christ acted, to live in the world as he lived" (#1025). Those who believe then embrace "the great benefit we have by Jesus Christ who came to deliver men from their sin and to restore the image of God in them. . . . Christ has come and wrought salvation and deliverance for men that [they] might be again restored to life and made holy and happy" (#998). And so

Edwards encouraged meditation on spiritual realities: “Christ refreshes and satisfies [the heart], and makes it rejoice. . . . If you are a saint, then Christ is sweet and refreshing to you” (#999).

The excellencies of “seeing such an excellent saviour, encourages” (#1025). This ought to spur the audience on, to “go to him for the good things you want. Comfort under afflictions.

Deliverance for spiritual life. Deliverance from Hell. Eternal happiness” (#1045).

The religious affections culminated in love towards God. That sentiment is also found in the affective language of the Stockbridge Indian sermons. Edwards called those at the mission to “love God and Christ better than father or mother, wife and children, brothers or sisters; yea, better than all the world” (#976). God “does things so well that they can’t be done better. Nothing can be thought of better to give light and make things grow than the sun; nothing better to water the earth than the rain. Nothing [is] better to see with than the eyes, nothing [better to hear with] than the ears” (#1064). It is true that “God is so great that we can’t know but little of him. They that know most [know almost nothing of God]” (#1064). And yet the Spirit’s work causes saints “to love him above all things. To love to be thinking of him and striving in every thing to please Him” (#1025). Therefore people need to realize that “If you have not the image – – you can’t love God and take delight in him. . . . But if you are converted and have the image — you will love God and Christ and the saints and angels in heaven and will be fit to be with them” (#998). And that brings joy: “How happy are they who have God on their side” (#1144)! It also brings responsibility: “Love everything [that] belongs to God. His word, his day, his people, his house” (#1175).

Therefore, both Edwards’ images and language are for affective purpose. He desired a response to his sermons. The response might require humiliating honesty if they were to respond to truths that “[they] don’t acknowledge the hand, [and] have an atheistical, stupid spirit. Or, if

they own the hand, [they] don't acknowledge God's perfections; hence [they] murmur and find fault, manifest a discontented spirit, [and] don't submit to God" (#1072). The response might require courageous faith displaying more happiness and "infinitely sweeter" comforts "than those who have only earthly comforts" (#1050).

There is something undramatic about these appeals for affective response: while verging on the superlative, they remain almost understated. For example, in the sermon preparing the people for war, Edwards stated that the enemies "come against us as Goliath did against David. [That is, they are] very proud" (#1144). But the truth remains that once confronted with the glories of God and his word, no one can be the same. On account of that appeal, Edwards' questions should not just be seen as diagnostic, but also as motivating: "Is Christ sweeter and better?" (#999); "Has your mind been enlightened?" (#999); "Do you bring forth fruit?" (#993).

## **5.7 Glorification**

The glorification that accompanied Edwards' sermons was God-centered. This can be seen in why God should be worshiped, and how people should live before God.

### *Glorification in Worship*

Edwards' sermons promoted the worship and awe of the Triune God by describing the great variety of activity Scripture reveals about God. The activity of the Triune God and His understanding of people should lead to their awe. This includes activities for all people, activities limited to the righteous or wicked, but also the heart of God towards people. Further, in these descriptions Edwards often described God in superlative language which also should promote affective worship.

Edwards' sermons promoted the worship of God with grand descriptions of what God does for all people. God is King over all (#1144), and He has all lives in his hands (#1006).

While God can do whatever He will (#1064), He provides all matter of things, including rain, frost, and corn (#1059). Further, God gives opportunity to hear the gospel and has provided the means for the salvation of “all nations” (#1000). He is willing “to save sinners no other way than by Christ” (#979). That does not mean God is stingy, as in Christ “He is able to bestow that salvation on sinners that he has purchased by his obedience and suffering” (#1000). Nor does it mean God is unjust, as at the end of time, God will hold all people to account (#979).

In the sermons Edwards also described what the Triune God does for the righteous. God is a father to the righteous, including the natives who believe (#1144). He takes care of them, and “will save his saints” (#974). When it comes to the next world, God will “make good men happy” (#979). God’s Son Jesus Christ is the Savior who “loved us and did us good” (#976). He showed this by coming into the world to teach (#976). Today sinners can know the sweetness and refreshment that comes from Christ (#999). Those who believe will be “made like Christ, and shall shine forth as the sun” (#979). God will give his Spirit to sanctify them (#1000). All in heaven are like God (#998).

Edwards was also clear about how God acts towards the wicked. If they ignore him to eternity, God will “throw ‘em away and as it were trample ‘em under foot” (#974). He will then “destroy the wicked” (#979; #1072). God will “make ‘em know how dreadful a thing it is to offend so great a God as he is” (#979). God cuts them down and casts them into the fire (#993). And though they may try, there will be no hiding from God (#1064).

And though unrepentant sinners may fall into the hands of an angry God, Edwards was clear that such is not the only way God sees people. On the contrary, God provides help for “poor lost sinners” (#1000). God sees people with “the great kindness,” as they have not yet died (#979). Those who believe are “precious to him, and as those that he dearly loves” (#974).

For Edwards, the affective purpose of his sermons did not negate the revealed truth about God. On the contrary, Edwards was clear that the Bible reveals God, and things of God. God wants people to see Him (#1059). And so, Edwards preached so people would see excellency of God, “to taste the sweetness of ‘em, and have those things sink down into the heart” (#976). Scriptures were revealed and taught so people would love God and Christ better (#1031). And yet the nice things about God do not allow for imagined niceness that goes beyond what is revealed: “He will forgive all your sins and will bestow heaven and all its good things upon you, if you will but hearken unto him” (#979). Those who mourn and are comforted will have a view of God’s glory (#1050). And therefore Edwards appealed, “endeavour to get the love of God in your heart” (#1175). God has revealed his word, and sent his servants, for the people’s good, and for his glory (#1177).

And so, Edwards presented God as revealed in Scripture, not for the terror of people, but for their worship and awe. God’s glory and beauty can be known very clearly (#979, #1050). People should see the things God has made and see him (#1031, #1059, #1064). God is “so great” (#1064). Things Christ gives are those that are “most excellent” (#999). Even affliction and chastisement are given for the peace of believers (#1072). And this affection should match the generosity of Christ who gives “great plenty and abundance of his love and grace.... The happiness that he gives [is] worth more than all the silver and gold in the world” (#999). This happiness applies to both soul and body throughout eternity (#1000).

### *Glorification in Life*

The caricature of Edwards is that he wanted people to be afraid. While there is evidence

of fear in the Stockbridge sermons, it is really a fear of God's anger.<sup>1258</sup> Edwards stated it as a fact: "You have made God very angry" (#979). The sins of the people are many, great, aggravating to God (#1050). "Will you make him [God] angry that can shake the world in pieces" (#1064)?

Edwards desired that people would love the good God they have not seen. They were to look around them and see the "Good One" (#1059). The Stockbridge natives were to love Christ, and the people of Christ, and the ways of God (#974).<sup>1259</sup> And they are to, without delay, turn to God (#979). They were to wonder if their mind had "been enlightened to see that there is enough in Christ" (#999)? It was also acknowledging God's perfections (#1064).

Further, they were to realize that God loved them. Edwards was clear, "Tis from the great kindness of God to you, that you han't died before now in your sins" (#979). God has provided means for the "bringing poor sinners to Christ" (#1000). God "is their Father, and will take care of 'em; and Christ loves 'em and their souls are married unto Jesus Christ, and Christ is the husband of their souls" (#976). When they know the love of God, "Christ is sweet and refreshing to you" (#999). And that should increase their desire to love Him: "If you have the image of God in your heart, God will take delight in you. He will love to behold you. God loves his own likeness and he will be willing to take near to himself to dwell with him" (#998).

They were to live knowing that God gave love, but also that he gives other things. God gives them "an opportunity by bringing you here to this place" (#979). God gives His spirit

---

1258. Keller, "Experiencing God in Words," 118-119 shows how and explains why Edwards used the word "anger" proportionately more in the Stockbridge natives' sermons than in any other sermons. Edwards also used the word "love" much more. See the paragraphs that follow.

1259. Keller, "Experiencing God in Words," 123 shows how Christ (in comparison to God) became a more frequently used word during the Stockbridge years.



(#1000). God “will enlighten your minds” (#976). He is “able to open our eyes” (#1000). God can “abundantly more than make up [for our sufferings]” (#1064).

And that glorification of God called for an affective response. Indeed, the Stockbridge Indians were to “love every thing [that] belongs to God: his word, his day, his people, his house” (#1175). Such an affective response demanded activity: the Stockbridge Indians were to get a heart that loves Christ (#974); to love God and Christ better than all the world (#976); indeed, they were to love God above all (#1001). They were to continue to pray for God’s blessing (#1000); remaining thankful for instruction in the knowledge of the one true God (#1045); and be careful to worship God in a way suitable to His nature (#1045). And so their affective response to God’s glory was, “Fear him; trust in him; be humble” (#1064). They were not to disregard the correction of God, and the purpose for which he sends them affliction (#1064).

Part of the living response to the reality of a transcendent God was to be prayer. Many of those prayers were for vibrant spiritual life: “Pray to God to take away your wicked hearts and give you new hearts” (#979); Pray for God’s blessing so you may hearken to the word (#1000); Pray to God to make you truly religious (#976, #1144); Pray “constantly to God for his blessing” (#1000). Some of those prayers were for blessing on the community: “You had need to pray for God’s blessing on the minister that he may have wisdom and grace and that God would assist him in his work” (#1000). They were to pray for help against the devil (#1113). They were to pray that God would help them against the French (#1144).

Edwards desired that people would be ready for the day when faith would become sight and they would see God. It is important to remember the end of the world is a theme not just of punishment, but of transparency and judgment (#974). There were few who were properly ready (#1006). And so, “go to Christ to save you[rself], for He is God” (#1064).

## 5.8 Conclusion

This survey of Edwards' Stockbridge sermons confirms Edwards did display degrees of six characteristics of a Puritan baroque imagination. While the Stockbridge context was different in its location, culture, and history, Edwards did not discard the Puritan homiletical tradition he received but transformed it. That transformation may have been irregular, but it was affective. In this Edwards did display a homiletical use of imagination.

Edwards' homiletical use of imagination reflects displays the perception of possibilities that reflect Puritan baroque characteristics. While his sermons may not have been as allegorical or ornamental as some others, his embrace of types and images with layers of meaning enlivened his sermons. His use of light was a spiritual one that stemmed from a supernatural source and changed life. His use of the element of space wrestled with the appropriate unity of internal and external religion. His use of juxtaposition and dramatic intentionality reflected an understanding of movement. His imagery and language were imaginatively used towards an affective purpose. This was not to exalt the preacher, or even the priority of the listener: it was for the glorification of the divine. While a Puritan grounded on the foundations of Scripture, Edwards still displayed affinity with a baroque mind whose "persuasive aims sought to move the spirit by moving the passions."<sup>1260</sup>

The use of imagery, light, space, movement, affection, and glorification in the Stockbridge Indian sermons surveyed suggests an intentional affective appeal. This seems to question Roy Paul's comment that Edwards' Stockbridge Indian sermons were "of a gentler style." They may have been less rigid, and less Ramistic; but they were full of, and designed to elicit, vigorous and sensible exercises of the inclination and the will. The sermons surveyed

---

1260. Cascardi, "Experience and Knowledge," *OHB*, 457.

suggest that what Wheeler saw as a new method for preaching and pastoring because of the sensibilities of the natives, might be attributed to a baroque rather than Indian influence, though still to the Indians advantage. The chapter does provide a potential explanation for what Michael Keller recognized quantitatively: the Stockbridge Indian sermons were an innovation and deviation. The reason Keller could find the highest percentages of both nice and nasty, pleasant and unpleasant words in the Stockbridge Indian sermons is because the baroque mindset that brought together imagery, light, spaces, movement, affection, and glorification encouraged this.

Edwards is potentially not the only, nor the best exemplar of a Puritan baroque imagination. But he is one. In this way, Edwards displayed what has been said of other baroque artists: they had “to build their own models, on the basis of their initial training or of their professional practice, which often led to forms of eclecticism that can be disturbing to historians of ideas seeking to formulate clear and unambiguous accounts of processes of change.”<sup>1261</sup> Edwards’ sermons remained in the plain style only if the plain style refers to clarity, brevity, and appropriateness. However, the sermons are not in an as-plain-as-possible style, for that would remove the voice of the heart, the zeal and the love within the speaker’s soul for his subject and those he is speaking to.<sup>1262</sup> This chapter does suggest that Shuger’s contention that doctrine-and-use plain style sermons do not belong to a baroque paradigm because they lack connection to rhetorical theory may be overstated.<sup>1263</sup> It also suggests that any dismissal of a Puritan baroque paradigm in Edwards because of what McClymond advocates as Edwards’ openness to Catholicism is false, because Edwards maintained a high view of preaching while modifying the

---

1261. Bury, “Organization of Knowledge,” *OHB*, 436.

1262. Shuger, *Sacred Rhetoric*, 228-229.

1263. Shuger, “Anti-Ciceronianism,” 279.

baroque tendencies with Puritan priorities. Both the Puritan and baroque traditions have connection to earlier rhetorical theory, and together they bring a balance that is neither rigid or fluid; hostile to, or infatuated with, contemporary issues.

Edwards' liberties in Stockbridge did result in shorter manuscripts, less structured sermons, and more focused ideas to preach. However, these things do not reflect a disinterest in preaching in Stockbridge as Kinnach suggests,<sup>1264</sup> but the ideals of a baroque mind. It is this clear, creative intentionality towards affective response that reveal the Stockbridge Indian sermons as reflective of a homiletical use of imagination where thoughts are structured towards significant possibilities.

And it is in this way that Edwards went beyond the Puritans. While the Puritans used images and similes to enliven their didactic sermons, they often included a whole range of images within one sermon; displaying a "disinclination to pursue and to develop any one image."<sup>1265</sup> This almost suggests a more metaphysical approach than the "fusion of form and content Edwards sought."<sup>1266</sup>

And so, as it relates to Edwards and homiletical imagination, Helen Westra's summary is well worth repeating: his sermons are "not only doctrinal and theological vehicles. They are literary works embodying telling patterns of exposition and application; powerfully managed images and examples; a wide range of style and expression; and pointed commentary on social, historical, and ecclesiastical issues."<sup>1267</sup> And it was for this goal: the glory of God.

---

1264. Kinnach, "Introduction," *WJE*, 10:167.

1265. Erdt, *Sense of the Heart*, 69.

1266. Erdt, *Sense of the Heart*, 69.

1267. Westra, *Task and Calling*, x.

## Chapter 6 – Retrieving Edwards

Perceiving the coherent and significant possibilities of Jonathan Edwards' use of imagination as evidenced in the Puritan baroque characteristics of the Stockbridge Indian sermons allows contemporary expository homileticians to strengthen their own use of imagination. Perceiving those possibilities provides a response to the challenges that modernism and postmodernism have presented homiletics. It also encourages a creative communication of the gospel, and thereby develops the normative and pragmatic contribution of this study for practical theology research.

The homiletical use of imagination in expository preaching faces challenges from both modern and postmodern tendencies. There is the modern tendency within expository preachers to focus on rationalistic paradigms for knowledge, enabling content-heavy preaching to continue while discouraging imaginative preaching. There is in others a modern tendency to adopt imagination in its interactions with other academic disciplines, which turns a homiletical use of imagination towards political, literary or other purposes. Then there is the postmodern tendency to deal with knowledge and understanding within narratives, resulting in “infinitely many possible versions of truth.”<sup>1268</sup> The postmodern tendency takes away the boundaries around imagination, and allows the imagination to go wherever the heart desires, without responsible consideration of the role of an expository preacher or much concern for appropriate content of God-glorifying messages.

There are at least six ways a retrieval of Jonathan Edwards' understanding of imagination as evidenced in the Puritan baroque characteristics of the Stockbridge Indian sermons can

---

1268. John Milbank, “Postmodern Critical Augustinianism: A Short *Summa* in Forty-two Responses to Unasked Questions,” in *The Postmodern God: A Theological Reader*, ed. Graham Ward (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1997), 265.

strengthen a homiletical use of imagination today.

The first way a homiletical use of imagination can be strengthened by a retrieval of Edwards' understanding of imagination is by recognizing the fundamental theological foundations behind imagination. Like the Puritans, Edwards tried to live and think about every area of life. This is not to say imagination was the theological issue Edwards found to be of utmost importance; he wrote on foundational doctrines such as religious affections, original sin, the will, and the nature of true virtue, which to greater or less degrees also crept into his homiletics. And yet, like other Puritans, Edwards did not ignore the imagination.

While Edwards repeated the culturally accepted definitions of imagination, he thought beyond those definitions. His understanding of imagination was shaped by theological conversations about anthropology, and Scriptural teaching on psychology, imagery, and preaching. Similarly, homiletics teachers and expository preachers today should acknowledge the reality of imagination in light of its biblical and theological foundations, and not merely as a response to requests for more creativity.

As in Edwards, the imagination depends on a developed Reformed anthropology that considers mind/brain and soul/body discussions, recognizing that creativity and imagination are part of what it is to be human. The imagination is mediating, liberating, and by grace, transforming. While Simonson held that Edwards' imagination was more about discovery than creativity, the grace that fuels the transforming imagination allows for creativity.<sup>1269</sup> Edwards' Stockbridge sermons reflect imaginative activity of one who perceived coherent and significant possibilities. As he preached to the Stockbridge Indians, he moved away from intellectualism, balancing the temporal and the eternal. He moved beyond the sensible, and yet rejected the

---

1269. See Simonson, "Edwards and the Imagination," 116.

fancy. And so, as they reflect Puritan baroque imaginative tendencies, the sermons never fall to subjective entertainment. The exposition of Scripture remained.

Therefore, even though the imagination has been misunderstood over the decades, it should not be abandoned. While the definition of imagination as heart-based structuring mental activity post-dates Edwards, such activity is evident in Edwards' homiletical work. In this, Jonathan Edwards confirms the possibility that biblical foundations, orthodox commitments, and imaginative work can flow together. The understanding of a mediating, liberating, and transforming imagination provides a model of imagination that can apply to the process of arranging sermon material. This foundational understanding needs to be retrieved today, as valuable within practical theology. Without this foundation, any discussion of imagination in preaching will seem to stem from influences outside of theology. In this way, both Lloyd-Jones and Keller should be heeded in their encouragement to find an example in Jonathan Edwards, even as it relates to imagination for homiletics.<sup>1270</sup>

The second way a homiletical use of imagination can be strengthened by a retrieval of Edwards' understanding of imagination is by recognizing the creative homiletical expression of God's revealed Word. Edwards was not satisfied by the transfer of his knowledge to the Stockbridge Indians. He remembered his audience. While some of the Stockbridge sermon manuscripts were short and outlined, their originality reveals a desire for creative expression of God's Word; at the same time, the creative expression remained founded on God's Word.

The sermons studied were creative expressions of an imaginative mind. They did not become outlets for expressions of his treatises. They remained sermons that did not fall into a predictable pattern, nor a consistent demonstration of any one homiletic formula or technique.

---

1270. See Lloyd-Jones, *Preaching and Preachers*, 176, 235; Keller, *Preaching*, 169-170.

Edwards' homiletical preparation was to arrive at an imaginative presentation of exegesis and message in a memorable manner. This imaginative creativity used the elements of imagery, light, space, movement, affectivity, and glorification. And yet, in this, Edwards' imaginative creativity was not merely embellishing details; was not for illustrative anecdotes; nor was merely extra-biblical narrative content. Imagination was not a tool for entertaining content and social change. Like everything else, imagination was used to heighten the affective response central to heart religion. In this sense, the current homiletic texts of Beeke, Carrick, and Chapell could strengthen their own goals by including more on the use of imagination.<sup>1271</sup>

Through his use of imagination, Edwards was faithful. The Stockbridge sermons remained Edwards' expression of God's revealed Word. He applied the Word imaginatively to his own audience yet remained bound by text of Scripture. His example reveals that using a homiletical use of imagination does not necessarily mean rejecting divine revelation and embracing the postmodern "land of 'social consciousness,' 'participatory knowing,' 'unlimited conversation,' 'colliding with the powers,' or 'welcoming the stranger.'"<sup>1272</sup>

The contemporary promotion of imagination by homileticians often results in either a lack of exposition or subjective experience. It is suggested that sermons need to be more experienced, move into new forms, and be more sensitive to the audience. If he could, Edwards would not necessarily disagree with those reasons, but he would disagree with the subjective experiences, the story forms, and using the audience as sources of sermon content. This overview of a select number of Edwards' Stockbridge sermons affirms that imaginative minds can still be faithful to

---

1271. See Beeke, *Reformed Preaching*; Carrick, *Imperative*; Chapell, *Christ-Centered Preaching*.

1272. Immink, "Homiletics," 105; referencing McClure, *Other-wise Preaching*, 132.



Scripture. Edwards remained true to his texts, while striving for affective events, new sermon structures, and sensitivity to the language and background of his audience. But his imagination was not anthropocentric. It remained focused on creative and clear exposition of God's Word.

A homiletical use of imagination does not require moving to emotive narratives. To be imaginative, Edwards could use juxtaposition, like Wilson would later encourage. He would use structures, but would not limit himself to a small number of rigid structures, or any equivalent of Wilson's four-pages paradigm. Edwards could deal with communal problems and social issues, even speaking prophetically, without diminishing the authority of Scripture, as Brueggemann seems to suggest at times. Edwards was a theologian with imagination, as Troeger pointed out. While Edwards' sermons reveal his use of language to reach hearts, his homiletical use of imagination did not displace God's revelation, but was used in the arrangement of sermonic material. While Edwards was more like Calvin Miller, using a degree of embellishment through images and application, he still retained applications that explicitly glorified God.<sup>1273</sup>

It should be said therefore that Edwards was creative and faithful to Scripture in the Stockbridge sermons. While Hughes Oliphant Old (AD 1933-2016) expressed hesitation to say too much about the Stockbridge sermons because only two were published at the time of his magisterial work, more can now be said.<sup>1274</sup> Edwards was imaginatively creative, while striving to be faithful. His harmony of imagery and themes and counter-themes needs to be retrieved. While potential difficulties and errors are possible, to avoid the spiritual darkness of both dry dogmatics and subjective experiences, a homiletical use of a transformed imagination is

---

1273. For specific references to works of these four authors, see chapter 2 of this dissertation.

1274. Old, *Reading and Preaching*, 5: 284.

necessary. This will strengthen homiletics as it restores meaning to areas contemporary homiletics is exiting: tradition, scripture, reason and experience.<sup>1275</sup>

The third way a homiletical use of imagination can be strengthened by a retrieval of Edwards' understanding of imagination is recognizing how the Puritan baroque characteristics of the Stockbridge sermons reject an antithesis between metaphysical and plain preaching. Oversimplified descriptions of both metaphysical and plain preaching are not helpful to proponents or opponents of either style. There needs to be a form of preaching that reaches for how "the Scriptures use the language of sense perception to communicate that spiritual realities produce true experiences of the soul, not just mental ideas."<sup>1276</sup> Most sermons are not examples for, or against, strict deductive, argumentative, propositional, and authoritarian speech. Suggesting so only contributes to the increasing dialecticism afflicting theology.

A homiletical use of imagination in rhetoric, as it is evidenced by the Puritan baroque characteristics of Edwards' sermons to the Stockbridge Indians, is much more complex. Like John Donne, another baroque figure, Edwards followed Augustine, understanding "[Preaching was therefore to] contribute to 'the glory of God, the analogy of faith, the exaltation of devotion, the extension of charity.'"<sup>1277</sup> Indeed, what was said of Donne, could be said of Edwards' Stockbridge sermons: "His use of Biblical metaphors as the imagery of his sermons derives from the conviction that Scriptural rather than human eloquence saves souls; indeed [his] own style varies to some extent according to the style of his text. This accords with the traditional effort to

---

1275. See Immink, "Homiletics," 89; McClure, *Other-wise Preaching*.

1276. See Beeke, *Reformed Preaching*, 38.

1277. Dennis Quinn, "Donne's Christian Eloquence," in *Seventeenth Century Prose: Modern Essays in Criticism*, ed. Stanley E. Fish (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1971), 362. See also Augustine, *On Christian Doctrine*, Book One.

imitate Scriptural eloquence.”<sup>1278</sup> In this sense, Reklis correctly sees imagination in Edwards’ use of typology.<sup>1279</sup>

Edwards’ sermons to the Stockbridge Indians are unique in that they do not fall neatly into either metaphysical or plain preaching. They are irregular pearls of considerable value. The sermons reflect imagery and language with layers of meaning. This complexity affirms the conclusion of Rachel Wheeler and Michael Keller that Edwards’ Stockbridge sermons were unique.<sup>1280</sup> This is true in comparison to earlier sermons as Wheeler demonstrated, as well as in terminology as Keller proved; but it is also true in their creative, audience-sensitive expression that remained faithful to God’s revealed Word. This study also supports Michael Keller’s suggestion that Edwards did not adhere to Ramistic structures of argument while others turned to alternative methods and modes of suasion.<sup>1281</sup> Edwards’ Stockbridge sermons were created as imaginative, vibrant messages of God’s Word.

The fourth way a homiletical use of imagination can be strengthened by a retrieval of Edwards’ understanding of imagination is by embracing the Puritan baroque tendency in the Stockbridge Indian sermons to drive towards affective response. Preaching should always be edifying, and imagination does not need to distract from that. A homiletical use of imagination can assist towards edification. It can do so by using deductive and inductive approaches, objective and subjective comments, didactic and narrative paragraphs, personal and communal

---

1278. Quinn, “Donne’s Christian Eloquence,” 372.

1279. See Reklis, “Imagination and Hermeneutics,” 309, 316-319.

1280. Wheeler, *To Live Upon Hope*; Keller, “Experiencing God in Words.”

1281. See Keller, “Experiencing God in Words,” 230; Kinnach, “Introduction,” *WJE*, 10:178-179.

applications towards an affective response.

Edwards' Stockbridge sermons display a homiletical use of imagination summoned for this concerted goal of an affective response to God's Word. They confirm what others have already said in general. Perry Miller understood Edwards as an artist who followed the Puritans in dramatizing the needs of the soul. Similarly, Marsden saw in Edwards a spiritual intensity and clarity of insight that allowed him to retrieve wonderful sights out of the Reformed and Puritan tradition. Joe Rigney recognized that the imagination, according to Edwards, is tied to religious affections.<sup>1282</sup> But this goal of affective response is a large part of these sermons as well.

Edwards' homiletical use of imagination for affective response reflects characteristics of a larger movement, that of the baroque. This work showed how Edwards imagination brought his own reflections on imagery, light, space, movement, and glorification towards an affective purpose. While Miller suggested that the pronounced imagery and philosophical and pragmatic concerns reflect an effort to employ Lockean philosophy, the evidence of these sermons reflects characteristics of a Puritan baroque mindset.<sup>1283</sup> The Lockean suggestion may provide an explanation for the emphasis on imagery; but it does not explain the religious imagination as it relates to images as well as light, movement, space, affection, and glorification.

And yet Edwards did not operate with such a homiletical use of imagination merely for the sake of art, or the impact on senses. It was his theological and biblical influences that shaped him. He used imagination, not just for imaginations' sake, but as an assistant towards seeing and communicating ultimate truth, and affective response. He did not just excite people with his

---

1282. See Marsden, "Foreword," *JEE*, vii; McClymond, *Encounters with God*, 4; Miller, *New England Mind*, 6; Rigney, "Imagination," *JEE*, 323.

1283. See Miller, *Edwards*, 328-330.

imagination to leave them stranded on an interesting topic, but used his imagination to encourage them towards a seeing and knowing the divine reality.<sup>1284</sup>

What a retrieval of Edwards encourages is the maintenance of truth and revelation while displaying a use of imagination, that leads to the increased affections of God's people. This has implications for preaching and the homiletical process. In an ironic way, going back to Edwards reveals that affective preaching is not about maintaining a tradition, or imitating models of others. Rather affective preaching stems from a mindset that can be international and adaptable to various cultural and contemporary situations.

Retrieving this affective purpose finds support in what Edward Murray defines as imagination. There can be intellectual effort in homiletics to seeing, thinking, and describing things that are designed to move people toward an end.<sup>1285</sup> Preachers need to remain careful that this is bound by Scripture and sanctified imagination for the glory of God, and not their own purposes.

The fifth way a homiletical use of imagination can be strengthened by a retrieval of Edwards' understanding of imagination is by recognizing within the Puritan baroque characteristics of the Stockbridge Indian sermons the activity of an integrative mind. Edwards displayed a Puritan baroque mind that acknowledged the natural world as well as the supernatural, empiricism and rationalism, Scholasticism and affective religion. Edwards' imagination demonstrates the perceptive, selective, integrative, creative, and communicative role that McIntyre would later call for.<sup>1286</sup> In this, Edwards' mindset suggests a solution to the

---

1284. See Kimmach, "Introduction," *WJE*, 10:170-171 about Ezekiel Hopkins.

1285. See Murray, "Imagination Theory and Phenomenological Thought," 180-193.

1286. McIntyre, *Faith, Theology, and Imagination*, 159-166.

challenges of a postmodern culture. The homiletical choice is no longer between pursuing postmodern subjectivism or returning to a reductive naturalism. Instead, seeing in Edwards a display of Puritan baroque characteristics opens a way of thinking that recognizes the problems of both modernism and postmodernism. Such a mind refuses to fall into the unbounded “Imagination Age” as the exclusive antecedent of the “Information Age.”<sup>1287</sup> It also refuses to remain comfortably in the “Information Age.” It relies on a degree of imagined sight that makes moderns uncomfortable, and maintains a foundational truth that leaves postmoderns distressed. And such a mind is, and should be, retrievable.

In other words, centuries ago Edwards already displayed a homiletical outworking of what Dermot Lane more recently suggested regarding a theological imagination: recognize the possible distortions, but allow reason and imagination to co-exist.<sup>1288</sup> Edwards’ intellectual pursuit of delight in God brought him face to face with perennial questions of visible/invisible; light/dark; seeking/resting, etc. But these contradictories did not sideline or stop his pursuit, or his preaching. Edwards had the integrative mind to realize that in the gospel of Jesus Christ these things come together, and they deserve expression. It was this integrative mind that allowed a promotion of spiritual sight and affective response. This integration was not a personal liberty; it was allowed because Scripture allowed it, and it promoted the glory of God.

Through looking at Puritan baroque imagination in Edwards’ prose, this study demonstrates how powerful such an integrative mind may be. Those preaching need to realize that the homiletic goal was and is the affective response of the audience: and there is liberty to flee from rigid structures that have been, and are, the same for decades and centuries. The

---

1287. See Reich, *Imagination Gap*, 14-18.

1288. Lane, “Imagination and Theology,” 119-145.

sermon should, and can, appeal imaginatively to the audience hearing the message; it is not to be a display of homiletical procedures developed for other audiences.

A homiletical use of imagination that reflects the Puritan baroque characteristics of Edwards' Stockbridge Indian sermons would be helpful. Edwards' imagination served as his greatest apologetic tool. Even as empiricism limited the potential of innate ideas, and suggested that God could not be experienced directly, Edwards' use of imagination suggested that innate ideas remained, and God could be experienced.<sup>1289</sup> Further, Edwards' *A Rational Account of the Main Doctrines of the Christian Religion Answered*, outlined a way in which "all the arts and sciences, the more they are perfected, the more they issue in divinity, and coincide with it, and appear to be as parts of it."<sup>1290</sup>

And so in a world where polarization occurs even between objective and subjective theology, between special and natural revelation, Edwards provides an example of one who did not abandon the task of rational apologetics nor promote mere subjective experience just to strengthen one of his principles. He looked back, and he looked out, and he looked within; promoting a unique middle ground between renaissance and modern thinking.<sup>1291</sup> When he encountered the paradoxes of light/dark, visible/invisible, movement/rest, etc. he did not reject them, but embraced them as helpful tools. That does not mean every imaginative thought is valid or useful; but every imaginative thought should be checked against truth, study, logic, and

---

1289. McClymond, *Encounters with God*, 81-85.

1290. Jonathan Edwards, "Outline of 'A Rational Account,'" *WJE*, 6:397. See also Jonathan Edwards, "A Divine and Supernatural Light: A sermon on Matthew 16:17," *WJE*, 17:409; McClymond, *Encounters with God*, 101-103; Anderson, Lowance, Watters, eds., "Introduction," *Typological Writings, WJE*, 11:17.

1291. See McClymond, *Encounters with God*, 106.

subjective honesty.

The concern could be raised that the baroque has been used by, or at least identified with, both modern and postmodern theorists. Those concerns have a degree of legitimacy as the neobaroque has been captured by some postmodern thinkers.<sup>1292</sup> The transformations by the neobaroque and its embrace of things diverse, virtuosic, frantic, unstable, and poly-dimensional have resisted grounding in universal truths and boundaries.<sup>1293</sup> And while these cautions are recognized, a shared concept does not equal similar agendas. Egginton notes that the baroque “promise of a truth just beyond” the veil of cultural forms may be resisted, but honest reflection realizes the mediation and interaction between the form and the reality. And so, any postmodern use or affinity with the baroque remains distinct because it lacks the confessional basis and boundaries of the Puritan baroque. This study maintains or retrieves that identity and seeks to use the concept of the baroque in sermons to point to the truths beyond the sermon.<sup>1294</sup>

In other words, as Edwards preached to the Stockbridge Indians, he reflected a Puritan baroque mindset that maintains the scriptural goal of bringing the good news of the gospel to sinners in need of redemption. In working that out, the communication of the good news goes beyond the experiences, just as it goes beyond rationalism. However, it does not do so by rejecting either. It balances what has been described as the dichotomy the subjective and objective presentation of the gospel, without falling into either trap. Edwards could have been a

---

1292. See William Egginton, “The Baroque as a Problem of Thought,” *PMLA* 124, no. 1 (January 2009): 143-149; Zamora and Kaup, *Baroque New Worlds*, 40-45.

1293. Lahiji, *Theory of the Baroque*, 31-32 points out how mutations have led contemporary culture to delight in sensory spectacle and propose synonymity between neobaroque and postmodern. See also Zamora and Kaup, *Baroque New Worlds*, 5-6.

1294. Egginton, “Baroque as a Problem of Thought,” 147.



model for Immink's alternative where "human volitional, cognitive, and emotive functions are definitely intertwined."<sup>1295</sup>

The sixth way a homiletical use of imagination can be strengthened by a retrieval of Edwards' understanding of imagination as evidenced in the Puritan baroque characteristics of the Stockbridge Indian sermons is by the development of a homiletical model that takes the mindset behind those characteristics seriously. Such a Puritan baroque homiletical model recognizes a heart-based structuring mental activity by which people perceive coherent and significant possibilities that are indispensable in understanding and responding to objects and experiences is important for both the preacher and the audience.<sup>1296</sup> Such a homiletical model does not minimize a homiletical use of imagination to a technique; as seen in Edwards, it relies on a habit or process of mind. In that sense, the character, discipline, training, and spirituality of the preacher is of vital importance. Any homiletical use of imagination in the process of sermon construction strives for a personal affective response to God. This is not the mere turn towards emotional power claimed to be the definitive feature of the grand style.<sup>1297</sup>

A Puritan baroque homiletical model therefore seeks to focus the process of arranging the content of a sermon. Preparing a message is not just about organizing or reorganizing sermon information. It should demand an artful arrangement of sermon information in such a way that the sermon progressively aims at the essence, the heart, of the message. This takes more time, reflection, and meditation than is often expected. Any influence of a Puritan baroque imagination

---

1295. See Immink, "Homiletics," 111.

1296. Again, this is adapted from Johnson, *Body in the Mind*, 168; though Johnson would likely not agree with the heart-based source. Berkhof, *Systematic Theology*, 233 describes the heart as "the central organ of the soul, out of which are the issues of life."

1297. See Shuger, *Sacred Rhetoric*, 193.

on homiletics is not to manipulate an experience, or create new knowledge, but to focus all elements toward the object of the sermon. To adapt an idea of W. G. T. Shedd (AD 1820-1894), the sermon is the development of a single idea, that is a germinal truth of Scripture that is pregnant with life.<sup>1298</sup> The goal, while dependent on the work of the Holy Spirit, is to pursue that truth and its experience, but never in an emotional, subjective way. The sermon itself, its structure, purpose, language, and applications should work out the experience of the truth of the text. It is not mere information, artificially arranged; it is truth in a form suited to the truth presented!<sup>1299</sup>

Consequently, the structure of a baroque sermon is simple yet variable. Following Edwards' Stockbridge Indian sermons, the model calls for flexible expression that moves away from a mechanical application of the Puritan doctrine-and-use plain style, or a strict interpretation of any structural grid. Irregular is not inferior. However, this should not be considered a call for preachers to move towards extravagant and confusing structures. Nor should the minimization of linear or multi-level structures be thought of as non-structured. The structure is deliberately obscure so that the emphasis becomes the portrayal of the object. The implication is that the sermon structure could be different for every message as long as it contributes to the affective weight of the sermon message.

The purpose of a baroque sermon is instructive yet affective. It is instructive through the indicatives and imperatives of preaching and teaching. But the sermon has an affective purpose. It is not just speaking at an audience, but to an audience, and appealing. In the effort to

---

1298. Shedd, *Literary Essays*, 111.

1299. See Shedd, *Literary Essays*, 126-127 for a fuller description of this.

subordinate the various parts to an overall effect, hearts ought not to be left untouched. To work towards this, as in baroque paintings, the dark needs to be dark, and the bright needs to be bright. The contrast needs to be apparent to all. In some sense, this is consistent with Chapell's fallen-condition-focus directing the Christ-centered-focus.<sup>1300</sup>

The rhetoric of a baroque sermon is clear yet vivid. The use of language should reflect the balance between the words of God and the imagery of Scripture, sincere and wise expressions of the preacher, and the rhetorical ears of the audience, but with the proper goal. The medium should match the message. As Francis Bacon (AD 1561-1626) said, "the duty and office of rhetoric is to apply reason to imagination for the better moving of the will."<sup>1301</sup> Or as explained more recently, "A 'plain style' need not be nor ought to be slovenly; one must consider the majesty of the subject. One should not, of course, use 'the pompous Oratory of the Schools, and luxuriant strains of Rhetoric, Academical terms and philosophical nicety of Diction,' for such language will only 'raise the Dust to blind Men's eyes' so that they cannot see 'the true light of the knowledge of the glory of God.'"<sup>1302</sup>

The applications of a baroque sermon are experiential yet transcendent. The preacher following this model recognizes the "incipient conflict between teaching and persuasion," but does not try to dichotomize the understanding and the affections.<sup>1303</sup> Further, the applications are

---

1300. See Bryan Chapell, *Christ-Centered Preaching*, 269-328.

1301. Francis Bacon, *The Advancement of Learning*, 2.18.2; quoted in Shuger, *Sacred Rhetoric*, 194. See also Kennedy, *Classical Rhetoric*, 257.

1302. Howard H. Martin, "Puritan Preachers on Preaching: Notes on American Colonial Rhetoric," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 50, no. 3 (October 1964): 285-292. Italics and capitalizations in the original. See also Francke, "Letter," in Jennings, *Two Discourses*, 74-75.

1303. White, *Puritan Rhetoric*, 17.

consistent with living that considers God and eternity. The eternal and transcendent remains important for individual and communal living, as interiorized and exteriorized. In this, since the applications too are tied to the text, they will not be repeated subjective experiences or common assertions about transcendent God. They will remain specific to the affective purpose of the entire sermon.

Such a Puritan baroque homiletical model seeks to present truth as well as possible to people. This includes those who are educated and uneducated, well-grounded in Reformed theology or new to Christianity. It promotes the catholicity of the church. It is not the imitation of a grander past, but the autonomous development of what is most effective and affective for the audience.

Such a Puritan baroque homiletical model remains consistent with other models that value expository and experiential preaching. While not in the way Perkins and others differentiated between Ramistically categorized cases, the baroque still worked on differentiating between possible affective responses to the subject. In some ways then, a baroque homiletical model modifies the preaching of the Dutch Second Reformation. The preaching of the *Nadere Reformatie* fell in the continental Baroque period, with similar motives of appealing to the affections, as well as dealing with spiritual things as they are and as they should be. But instead of making this about Dutch preaching or responding to subjective introspection, a baroque homiletical model encourages the universal appeal of an affective emphasis. This is not to denigrate the history or appreciation for a particular historical period, but to encourage the international and timeless concept of the baroque. In this sense, strengthening any expository homiletic through a use of imagination aims for God-glorifying experiential preaching, but while recognizing the value of a mediating, liberating, and transforming imagination within homiletics.

Further, a Puritan baroque homiletical model provides a response to the crisis of unimaginative preaching. It posits that countering modern or postmodern influence is not as simple as embracing or rejecting objective reason or experience, logic or phenomenological insight - but can occur through an ability to mediate the tension between the subject and the object imaginatively. There is a space where science and rational thinking can work beside and with the emblematic and creative mind of both the preacher and the audience.

One of Edwards' concerns, and the motivations behind this project, was the defense of authentic spirituality. How can the beauty and glory of the gospel be best communicated? A Puritan baroque homiletical model turns expository apologetics from argumentation towards experience, but not just any experience: it aims sermons towards an affective encounter with the living God. As Edwards shows so clearly, this is not without content. Such a homiletical model therefore keeps preachers dependent on the revealed Word of God, but striving, with the Spirit's help, to move hearts towards active and awestruck love of God. As one contemporary poet has put it, "It is by the divine art of imagination that we resist the forces at work in our own age: forces of materialism and reductivism that have cast the film of familiarity, 'the veil of the ordinary,' over God's world, a world that is, in fact, still radiant with his glory, a glory that the modern, western mindset of domination and materialism has veiled from us."<sup>1304</sup>

May things that have never been seen, be seen!

---

1304. Guite, *Lifting the Veil*, 108.



## Chapter 7 - Conclusion

While the imagination and its intersection with homiletics may seem underdeveloped, this study demonstrates a homiletical use of imagination can be strengthened by a retrieval of Jonathan Edwards' understanding of imagination, particularly as it is evidenced in Puritan baroque characteristics of select Stockbridge Indian sermons. D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones and Tim Keller are both appreciated for their commendations to preach imaginatively and study Edwards.

This retrieval of Edwards' use of imagination does strengthen the current homiletical scene. It expands the homiletical discussion of imagination, and its potential within expository preaching. But it does not do so through biblical example or other disciplines, but through the past example of one pastor as he preached to a new audience. This provides historical and theological strengthening to McIntyre's understanding that imagination is suited to communicate revelation, as it can explain use the language of this world to speak of an other-world in ways that are faithful and affective.

Edwards' use of imagination was complex and varied. While his cautions were, and are necessary, overall Edwards encourages the use of imagination in the promotion of spiritual sight and affective response. His example invigorates the best creative practices of expository preachers, as it does not demand imitation of technique, as much as imitation of an integrative mindset.

A retrieval of Edwards is most helpful when his homiletical use of imagination is not connected to particular words or techniques, but to the cohesive and significant concept of Puritan baroque imagination. This retrieval strengthens the academic discussion of baroque beyond Catholic art, or Protestant poetry, to Puritan sermons.

It would be impossible to suggest any intentionality in Edwards to be baroque. And yet

when looking back, Edwards' sermons used the baroque concepts of imagery, light, space, movement, and glorification in imaginative ways for affective purpose. When that affective drive is recognized, Edwards' understanding of imagination and the characteristics of the Stockbridge Indian sermons can strengthen any homiletical use of imagination.

The six ways a homiletical use of imagination may be strengthened by realizing the Puritan baroque characteristics of Edwards' Stockbridge Indian sermons not only answer the research question, but they become the original contribution to homiletical knowledge and practical theology from this dissertation. These were sermons that, through a heart-based structuring mental activity that demonstrated coherent and significant possibilities indispensable to understanding, recognized fundamental theological foundations; recognized creative homiletical expression of God's Word; rejected the rigid antithesis between metaphysical and plain preaching; drove towards affective response; and imitated an integrative mind rather than choosing one influence of pre-modern, or modern, or postmodern understanding. And for Edwards, this all occurred in the context of a community that had only recently been established as a mission post.

The Puritan baroque concept hinted at in those sermons becomes a fascinating platform for further thought. To that end, Davidson's concept of Edwards as baroque is not only helpful and deserving of more attention,<sup>1305</sup> but it is also particularly pertinent in the contemporary homiletics scene. It is a key descriptor of preaching that is both textual and imagistic; expositional and imaginative; rational and romantic; clear and vibrant. It provides a homiletical example of the middle way Dermot Lane appealed for in theology in general: a co-relationship

---

1305. See Davidson, *Puritan Mind*, viii.



between reason and imagination that is bounded by revelation.<sup>1306</sup> It seems to be a “reasonable alternative” in the ongoing tension between kerygmatic and subjective-experiential models of preaching that concerns Immink and other homiletics teachers.<sup>1307</sup>

Embracing Edwards as that reasonable alternative, or middle way, does benefit and strengthen expository homiletics in contemporary culture. It demonstrates a way that allows reason and imagination to work together that does not force preachers to modernist or postmodernist positions. In this sense, any concern that imagination should have no place in expository preaching is overstated. Imaginative content should not have revelatory authority; but Edwards shows that the imagination does not need that authority while maintaining a role in gospel communication. And there are practical and normative ways this works out. After all, the goal of preaching is presenting the word of God to a particular group of people as effectively and affectively as possible – and that takes reasonable and imaginative content.

#### *For Further Study*

This study increases the scholarly literature on the homiletical use of imagination. And yet it is limited evidence of the Puritan baroque imagination due to its self-imposed boundary of select Stockbridge sermons. Whether such a Puritan baroque imagination may be found in other works of Edwards remains to be seen. This study therefore promotes further study, developing the concept of Puritan baroque homiletical imagination along lines of practical, historical, and philosophical theology.

In continued practical theological concerns, this study could be compared to a homiletical

---

1306. See Lane, “Imagination and Theology,” 130-131.

1307. See Immink, “Homiletics,” 109.

extension of the theodramatic imagination encouraged by Kevin VanHoozer.<sup>1308</sup> Other studies could include looking for Puritan baroque emphases in other Edwards' sermons or writings, including other writings of the Stockbridge era. Further study could also include possible comparable Puritan baroque movements in English or Northern European homiletics. Interesting possibilities beyond Edwards include sermons of other Puritans such as John Flavel, Edward Reynolds, or even John Owen. Further study might also consider the relation between orality and a baroque homiletic.<sup>1309</sup> The homiletical model sketched above could be compared to other new expository models such as those of Michael Pasquerello or Abraham Kuruvilla, or Matthew Kim's discussion of cultural dialect (delivery, illustrations, applications, language, embrace, content, trust).<sup>1310</sup>

The Puritan baroque concept could be studied further in its historical context. English speaking preachers such Hugh Blair, John Bunyan, Matthew Henry, or Edward Taylor; German pietists such as August Hermann Franke; American Presbyterians such as Samuel Davies, or Dutch Second Reformation divines such as Gijsbertus Voetius or Herman Witsius, could be considered. The connection between preaching and art could be strengthened through comparison to the idea of the sublime found in Franciscus Junius (the younger).<sup>1311</sup> Further study could also include a more historical study, tracing lines of continuity and discontinuity between

---

1308. Consider for example VanHoozer, *Pictures*, 164-179.

1309. See Tu, "A Praxis of Oral Homiletics."

1310. See Matthew D. Kim, *Preaching with Cultural Intelligence: Understanding the People Who Hear our Sermons* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2016), 24-30. Immink, "Homiletics," 99 seems to suggest G. D. J. Dingemans, *Als hoorder onder de hoorders: Een hermeneutische homiletiek* (Kampen: Kok, 1991) has a similar argument.

1311. See Weststeijn, "Beholder's Share," 1.

continents and cultures.<sup>1312</sup> The Puritan baroque concept could also be studied in relation to sermons of Pierre Du Moulin, or other French Protestant preaching that varied from plain preaching.<sup>1313</sup>

Future study could also include evaluating the concept of Puritan baroque in a more philosophical strain, as distinguished from the practical theology strain of this dissertation. This could be consideration in light of other historic concepts such as habit. It could also be analysed in relation to modernistic rationalism or postmodern subjectivism, or alternatively to a counter-modern recovery of practical theology as described by Kathleen Cahalan.<sup>1314</sup> One interesting study might be a comparison to John Milbank's question whether one can "speak of a Baroque attempt to restore a high medieval synthesis of faith and grace under an overarching sense of the divine presence."<sup>1315</sup> Another option would be to compare this description of a baroque imagination to the notion of Ricoeurian intertextuality, hermeneutics, and a productive imagination.<sup>1316</sup>

---

1312. See Shuger, *Sacred Rhetoric*, for a place to start.

1313. See Bayley, *French Pulpit Oratory, 1598-1650*, 72-100.

1314. See Kathleen A. Cahalan, "Three Approaches to Practical Theology, Theological Education, and the Church's Ministry," *International Journal of Practical Theology* 9, no. 1 (2005): 64-94.

1315. Milbank, *Beyond Secular Order*, 86.

1316. See Christine Leroy, "Imagination and Hermeneutics: On Ricoeur's Notion of a Biblical Form of Imagination," *Louvain Studies* 40, no. 4 (January 2017): 368-395.



## Appendices

Appendix A – “God’s Orchard,” Sermon #993 on Luke 13:7 by Jonathan Edwards

Appendix B – “In the Image of God,” Sermon #998 on Genesis 1:27 by Jonathan Edwards

Appendix C – “Mortality of Mankind,” Sermon #1006 on Job 7:7 by Jonathan Edwards

Appendix D – “A Converted Man is Enlightened,” Sermon #1025 on 2 Cor. 3:18 by Jonathan Edwards

Appendix E – “One God,” Sermon #1045 on Deut. 32:39 by Jonathan Edwards

Appendix F – “They That Mourn,” Sermon #1050 on Matt. 5:4 by Jonathan Edwards

Appendix G – “There is a God,” Sermon #1059 on Ps. 14:1 by Jonathan Edwards

Appendix H – “Thinking of Their Ways,” Sermon #1113 on Ps. 119:59-60 by Jonathan Edwards

Appendix I – “Though Wickedness be Sweet,” Sermon #1118 on Job 20:12-13 by Jonathan Edwards

Appendix J – “Love the House of God,” Sermon #1175 on Ps. 27:4 by Jonathan Edwards

**Appendix A**  
**“God’s Orchard”**

**Sermon #993 – Luke 13:7**

Stockbridge Indians June [-] 1751.

Luke 13.7 — *Cut it down. Why Cumberth it the Ground.*

A people that live under the gospel are as it were God’s orchard

Men that come to the house of God and hear his word are like in his orchard

The warnings which they have from time to time are like the husbandmans taking care of his orchard. Laying dung at the roots of the trees that they may grow and be fruitful

When the husbandman plants a tree in his orchard and takes good care of it he expects fruit. So when God — [He] expects fruit

The fruit that God expects is the fruit of good heart and a holy life. That we should love him and forsake all sin. Love and serve him. When men love — tis like sweet pleasant fruit to God

If men that live under the gospel and have a great deal of pains taken continue in sin, they are like barren trees that bring forth no fruit. Men that – will not forsake their drunkenness – they like briars and thorns that don’t bring any pleasant fruit but instead of that are hurtful and do a great deal of mischief

If a man has such a tree in his orchard it cumber the ground

Such a barren tree takes up a great deal of room. Ground stands in the way of a better tree  
 It shades the ground and hinders the grass from growing  
 It shades the other trees that stand near  
 It so that they do not bear so much fruit  
 It is a mere burden because it causes the man to take a great deal of pains with it for nothing

Such trees are good for nothing but to make fire with  
 And therefore men used to cut down such trees out of their orchards and throw em into the fire

Throw em into the fire  
 So God will do with such as [ . . . ]

God is very merciful to some of the children of men more than to others  
 Sometimes He takes much pains, works a great while — many years

But when He sees — then he cuts em down casts into the fire of hell

Now therefore take heed that you bent some of those barren trees in the orchard that God will cut down and cast into the fire

You the Indians in Stockbridge are as it were God's orchard  
 You once were like the woods all grown over with wild trees and bushes  
 But now you are like a piece of land that has been cleared and planted with apple trees

God has made greatly to differ from other Indians as when a husbandman fences in his orchard  
 and so separated it from wild land

Since you have [been] planted in Gods orchard, God has taken care of you then you might bring  
 forth fruit. The husbandmans end in planting an orchard and serving in it and all that he does is  
 so that he may have fruit. If he gets no fruit all his labour is lost. He spends his strength in vain  
 and his hopes are all disappointed

So all that ever has done for you will be in vain if you don't forsake all your sin and become  
 good men. All the preaching of Rev. Sergeant and the great pains he took with you will be in  
 vain. All the pains to teach your children to read. All the money that has been laid out

And so you will cumber

Every day God makes his sun to shine upon you  
 Will do no good but hinder good that might otherwise be done

Rev. Sergeant was a knowing man and a bright man and might-have been a minister elsewhere  
 and done a great deal of good for ought we know

The money — might have been send out and in other places and a great deal of good might be  
 done with it

But if you won't forsake your sins, you will spend a great deal of money year after year for  
 nothing

As good take it all and throw it into the sea  
 You will discourage the Hearts of all ministers  
 Yea you will do a great deal of mischief  
 You will nothing but serve the devil  
 Instead of Good fruit you will bring forth briars and thorns. Sour fruit — poison fruit

What husbandman would year after year labour — to raise up poison trees  
 If you will not— God will certainly cut you down and cast you into the fire  
 Matt. 3. The ax is laid. And could . what fire that is

Your case will be worse on than other Indians. Thrown into a worse fire then the trees of the  
 wood

If you bring forth fruit you shall not be cut down. So God will keep you  
 And when you die shall be plan[t]ed in Heaven. Trees in Gods garden there where is no drought  
 no winter. Or trees planted by the rivers of water.  
 [End.]

**Appendix B****“In the Image of God”****Sermon #998 – Genesis 1:27**

Stockbridge Indians. Aug. 1751. And Mohawks.

Gen. 1. 27 — *So God created man in his own Image, in the Image of God created He Him*

In this Chapter

When tis said God created man in his own image it is not meant that he was like God in form of his count[enance.] Or shape of his body.

God is a Spirit.

But what is intended by it is these two things that I am now going to mention

1. That God has given man reason and understanding

God is an infinitely wise & understanding Being

God made a great many other kinds of creatures besides man. Birds, beasts and fishes. — But to none of them ---- understanding

By this man is capable of knowing God. Which none of the other creatures is

Man is able to know what is right and what is wrong. And capable of knowing what the will of God [is]. And [what] his duty is

This is a very great difference between man and the beast

Because God had given to man alone understanding — therefore man was set over all the rest. All the rest of this lower earth was made for man — as it were an House. And the trees, herbs, and the beasts, birds and fishes, they were all as if it were the furniture and provision of the house

And therefore man was made the last of all the creatures. Man was the last thing that was created in the six days of the creation

God first built the house and then furnished it with the household goods. And with provision and then brought in men that was to be the inhabitants. And he was fitted to have possession of this house and to rule over it

By having made in the Likeness an Image of God having reason and understanding

2 . Another thing meant by mens being made in Gods Image is that He was made holy

When Adam & Eve were first made. They were not as mankind are now. With their Hearts full



of all manner of wickedness. But they were made holy. Good and upright and without any sin

And then they were made like God for God is an infinitely Holy Being. He perfectly hates all sin and love goodness and holiness. Gods Holiness is his Bounty & Glory. And God by making men holy put some of the image of his Beauty upon Him

The Holiness of God is like the brightness of the sun. And holiness in men is as when you hold out a glass in the light of the sun, whereby the Glass shines with some image of the same brightness

The devil has reason and understanding. He is very cunning  
But he has no holiness but is very wicked  
And therefore he is worse than if he had but little understanding

Therefore mind this that the image of God that man was made in consisted in two things, his reason and his holiness. But his holiness was the most excellent

#### Application

1 — What honour man was set in is at first — Son of God. By this we may see what a sorrowful alteration was made in man by the fall. When men fell then he lost the image of God in as much as he lost all his goodness and holiness.

In one Respect he had the Image of God after the Fall  
as he had his reason and understanding lost  
but he lost the holy image of God.

and so he lost that Image of God which was most excellent and wherein  
mens beauty and excellency chiefly consisted

Men having lost the image of God consisting in holiness  
lost that which his Life & his Glory and his happiness

And so he became a mean, low miserable Creatures  
When He had lost the Image of G. by sin . He became low and vile like the  
beasts

For though after the fall he had reason and understanding left . Yet that without Holiness does  
men no Good

And now since the Fall all mankind are born without the Image of Gods Holiness

And instead of the image of God men naturally have the image of the devil on their souls  
The Image of God consists in Holiness but the image of the devil consists in sin and wickedness

There are some souls of sin wherein men more have the Likeness of the Beasts and others

which are more the likeness of devils

men by being inclined drunkenness and in lasciviousness – place their happiness

And in eating and drinking and the pleasures of this earth are like the beasts

And in their pride and malice and revenge and quarrelling they are like the devil

We see how it is now in the earth

Hence — the great Benefit we have by Jesus Christ who came to deliver men from their sin and to restore the image of God in Them

Men as they are by nature having lost the image of God are dead in sin and could no more restore themselves to Holiness then a dead man could restore himself life

But Christ has come and wrought salvation and deliverance for men that He might be again Restored to Life and made holy and happy

And now some men through Christ are born again, have new hearts and [are] made new creatures and [have] the image of Gods holiness restored to em again

By this they are as it were raised from the dead again and made lovely and happy creatures

By this we may see the great evil of the sin of drunkenness because it makes men so mean and vile those God made in his own image

God made man in his image [and] set him over all. — At the Head — as more honourable and excellent.

God's image was like a glorious and excellent robe or garment fit for a King ruling over the Rest

But by drunkenness man loses all his honour and become vile like a beast  
By drunkenness man loses his reason and understanding in which man was made like God has no more Reason than a beast

Men when they are drunk do vile acting and behave therefore in a beastly manner like a King that wallows in the mire

And how contrary is that to that holiness which was that excellent image of God that man had at first and Christ came to restore to man

How hateful a thing is that to be one that should be the Child of God make Himself so much like a filthy beast

How hateful is that to be one that should have on the glorious garment of holiness like the child of the great King of Heaven and earth, wallowing in filth and mire like the swine .

5. — Why men ought to shew respect and honour one to another

The Scripture says honour all men. i.e. should treat all men with civility and respect

The Reason is because God made man in his own image and the image of God is a very honorable thing

All have the image of God in that respect that they have reason and understanding

And all that live under the Gospel are under means to obtain the image of God's holiness and therefore Christians especially should treat one another with love and respect

Therefore those are guilty of great sin that live in hatred one of another

6. This then is the greatness of the sin of murder. Because there-by men destroy the lives of such as are made in the image of God

Therefore the Scripture says Gen. 9. 6. He that sheds man's blood by man shall his blood be shed for in the image of God made he man

7. How great and Glorious a work of God the converting of the sinners is.

God made man at first in the image of God but by sin Gods work was spoiled & destroyed And you need therefore that God should make you over again that you may be made in the image of God again.

'Tis a very great change inside in the heart of a man. By the mighty power of the Spirit of God

Tis one of the greatest and most blessed marks of God that men were wrought

Hereby the eyes of the blind are opened and men are brought out of darkness in[to] glorious light

Hereby a poor captive of Satan is delivered

Hereby a hateful child of the devil is made the beautiful lovely child of God

Hereby the heart that is naturally like a den of serpents a House for devils to dwell is turned into a Temple of God, a house for the glorious King of heaven to live

That which is filthy like a toad or serpent is made to shine bright with some of Christ's beauty and  
brightness

That which is like a Heap of dung is made one of God's precious jewels

The heart is delivered from the power of worldly affections and desires. And is filled with the love of God and Christ

The mind is taken from earth and is set on heaven and heavenly things  
 Not one that is converted belongs to the devil and to Hell  
 but — no more to Hell but to Heaven

Heaven is the Country where all that are truly converted do belong where is their hope and where is their inheritance and portion

Exhortation

Take care that you may be converted and have the image of God restored to your soul by Jesus Christ

None shall ever go to heaven but such as are in Gods image that have hearts like God  
 All in Heaven are like God  
 No other shall see God

If — you have the image of God in your heart, God will take delight in you. He will love to behold you. God loves his own likeness and he will be willing to take you near to himself to dwell  
 with him  
 But if you have not his image but are in the likeness of the beasts and of the devil, He never can take delight in you

Never shall dwell with Him.

And if you have not the image — you can't love God and take delight in Him. And so you won't be fit to go to heaven. — Wont love to take no pleasure in being with God

But if you are converted and have the image — you will love God and Christ and the saints and angels in heaven and will be fit to be with them.

If you are converted and have the image of God — the change that will be made in you will be very very happy for you

Safe.

Love Peace.

Have Great Joy.

Need not be afraid of dying.

Way to have Peace when you came to die

Peace [on the] day of Judgment

Joy and happiness with saints and angels for all eternity

Examination

Love the things he loves and hate the things He hates

Are you like Christ?

Act like Him

[Rest of Column Blank]

[End.]

**Appendix C****“The Mortality of Mankind”****Sermon #1006 – Job 7:7**

Stockbridge Indians. October 1751.

*Job. 7. 7 — O Remember that my life is wind*

Mine. —

Subject. The mortality of mankind

1. All men must die

All

Make a great shew — clouds

This is certain impossib[ility] to avoid

2. Tis back a little while before all men must die

3. Life is very uncertain. Know not how soon. Eyes are upon me and I am not

4. Never reborn again. Live in this earth or enjoy any of this life

None can raise em again

No more Riches. They that have had much Friends. Light of the sun

No more means of Grace. No more Opportunity. Too late to Repent

5. God has our Lives in his Hands. Easily take em away. Eyes are upon me and I am not

Application

1. Think much of death and another world.

2. Don't set your heart on the enjoyments of this life.

3. Improve the time of life to prepare for death

Get some other good which yet may here after have life

Consider how the death of men differs from the death of beasts

Consider what an eternity is

No preparing afterwards  
No doing any thing at all

If you see your folly  
If you wish  
If you should be willing

How uncertain your opportunity  
How great your work  
How few are ready

More comfortable while you live  
How much more comfortable when you come to die

How happy they that are ready to die after death  
How mis[erable] they that die unprepared

What a great difference between the death of a good man and wicked man

Direction

Make Haste  
The first part of life the best

Be constant  
In your heart forsake this world now

Get an interest in Christ's death

[Rest of Column Blank.]

[End.]

**Appendix D****“A Converted Man is Enlightened”****Sermon #1025 – 2 Corinthians 3:18**

Stockbridge Indians January 1752

2. Cor. 3.18 — *But we all with open face beholding as in a glass*

Words represents the change — in conversion

These words shew

1. How the soul of a man is enlightend in the time of his conversion .

When a man is converted his mind is enlightened that he sees the glory of Christ

Mind is naturally full of darkness

Knows the Things of this world but he dont know God and Jesus Christ and spiritual things

Many men often hear of them. hear how glorious God and Christ are but dont see

Though they hear much of what Christ has done and suffered for poor sinners

The devil blinds men’s minds

The wickedness that is in their hearts blinds em

Before Adam and Eve sinned their minds [were] more full of light

But when [they] fell, then — darkness, became blind

Ever since all — blind.

But when a sinner is converted then his understanding is enlightened again

Commonly some time before conversion

The Conscience of men begin to be awakened, to see their — danger .

Most men are stupid and senseless, not much afraid of hell and don’t care

But before men are converted they cannot see what a dreadful condition they are in

Are brought into great concern of mind about their condition

More concerned about it than anything in the world

Sometimes they are in very great distress

Their minds are full of sorrow

They know not what to do

This brings em to strive for salvation

Then they begin to see what sinful creatures they be — deserve hell

Can’t help themselves



See their necessity of a saviour  
And then light shines into their souls. whereby. See glory.

Knew he was miserable before but now appears  
Now they understand that way of salvation  
Now see how wonderful and glorious that grace and mercy of God are  
Before when they see what miserable creatures they were more ready to think there was no help  
for them  
Ready to give up the case

But now see enough in Jesus Christ for such poor sinful miserable creatures

Before their all hope was ready to die — but seeing such an excellent saviour. encourages .  
Draws the heart to him to come to him for salvation  
Draws hearts away from all the world. Away from sin .  
Makes em willing to give up themselves to him

Causes them to love him above all things to love to be thinking of him and striving in everything  
to  
Please him. To honor him

III Changes into the same image makes his soul like Jesus Christ  
Men naturally are not like Christ. Are contrary

Christ is Holy — They wicked  
Christ is pure they filthy and abominable

But Changes the nature

But — a great degree kills men[‘s] wicked inclinations  
Makes em holy as Christ is .

Christ is loving and kind and merciful. So  
Christ was humble. Meek, and of a quiet patient spirit. So  
Inclines em to act as Christ acted; to live in the world as he lived

Christ is very glorious and when the light of his glory comes to shine into the Heart  
It makes the soul shine with some resemblance of his glory

Like a glass held out in the Light of the sun .  
So becomes a new creature

\*II. see it in a Glass. —the glass is the word of God  
We dont see Christ with bodily eyes as the disciples did on earth  
But he is Held forth in the word in the Scriptures  
In the preaching of the word.

+ IV. These things are done by the spirit of Christ  
 We cant  
 Ministers cant

Christ himself does by sending his Holy Spirit into the soul  
 That opens the eyes  
 Enlightens the mind  
 Enables to see the glory

Changes the heart that makes men new creatures  
 So men are born of the spirit  
 Application

I Examine

II. Exhortation

Must see  
 Consider whether you bent in darkness  
 Pray to God to enlighten

This is glorious light ten thousand times better than the light of the sun  
 This will make you happy  
 This Light never will go out  
 This will give Light in death  
 Hereafter you shall have glorious light  
 Not see through a glass any more

But face to face

The Light that we see here, like the light — of break of day .  
 But in Heaven --- sun Risen, see it, look right on it, see it in full glory

**Appendix E****“One God”****Sermon #1045 – Deuteronomy 32:39**

Stockbridge Indians July 1752

Deut. 32. 39 – *See now that I even I am He and there is no God with me. I kill. I make alive. I—*

Proposition I. There is but one God

There are many others that are worshipped as God — a great many  
Some nations worship the sun, moon and stars. Images. Beasts, serpents. The devil.

At first mankind worshipped but one God  
By degrees [they] grew wicked. [They] neglected knowledge

Provoked God to leave ‘em to the delusions of the devil  
By degrees [they] grew more foolish. See the sin

Only one nation that God separated  
So things continued till Christ came. Then Gospel Preached  
But still many nations Remain in darkness. Worship Idols.

But indeed there is but one God [who] saved persons  
Alone made the earth. Made all nations. Has all nations in his Hands  
Is in all Places  
Gave us all Things. Sun moon and stars

[Proposition] II. This God kills and makes alive as he pleases

He gives Life to all  
Lives of all are in his Hands. Preserves Life  
Enables us to breath. Has made the Air

[He] provides food and all the supports of life  
[He] gives clothing and firewood and [the] means to keep us from being froze to death  
[He] makes the sun to shine. Rain. Earth yields all increase

[He] appoints the time of mens death  
[He] has the power of all diseases. Orders all affairs of men

[He] makes alive again at the Resurrection. All shall rise

He gives spiritual life. Converts the soul.  
And in that he makes the dead soul alive

The souls of men as they are at first are all sinful and corrupt. [They] have no Good.  
Are dead. Blind. Can't do anything that is good

God makes the soul alive in conversion and he only can do it  
Tis this being saved only wherein dead souls may be made alive by Christ  
Tis he that gives his Spirit  
And he loves some men in a state of sin.  
Gives em up — for their sins and so kills

[Proposition] III. He makes men happy or miserable as he pleases

He can make men happy in this earth  
He gives Temporal Presents. Health. Eating plenty. Presents for Business, and all the comforts of  
life

He gives spiritual comforts. Inward peace. Making more hearts rejoice in God's favour

He can make men miserable in the earth. Pain. Sickness. Poverty. Captivity.

He delivers.

He can make men eternally miserable in hell  
Souls are in His Hands  
Devil in his hands, and he restrains him

He can cast men into hell at what moment he will  
He casts the souls of men into hell when they die  
Both body and soul at the end of the earth

He gives eternal life and happiness

[Proposition] IV. None can deliver out of his Hands  
Themselves. Ministers. Friends. Angels.

No other God to go to.

Can't deliver from temporal calamities  
when it is the pleasure of God that sinners should lie under them

None can deliver a soul when they come to die  
At the day of Judgment. In Hell

Application

1. Hence those should be thankful that are instructed in the knowledge of the one only true God

2. Then worship Him with all your Heart  
Worship Him in such a way as is suitable to his nature
3. When under afflictions, when [you] notice of the hand of God, consid[er] they are ordered of Him
4. When you have good things praise Him
5. Go to him for the good things you want. Comfort under afflictions. Deliverance. For spiritual life.  
Deliverance from Hell. Eternal Happiness
6. Set God before your eyes and see him  
What folly — neglect him and don't pray to him — that go on in sin against him
7. How happy good men are that have the favour of this God
8. Preaching to sinners. How miserable [—] what will you do [?]

**Appendix F****“They That Mourn”****Sermon #1050 – Matthew 5:4**

Stockbridge Indians August 1752

*Matt. 5:4 — Blessed are they that mourn*

I. What the mourning is here spoken  
Not the mourning of this earth but godly sorrow

Godly sorrow is of several kinds  
Sorrow for the sin of others, especially sorrow for ones own sins

There may be some kind of mercy for sin and yet not godly sorrow

There be two sorts of mourning  
for mourning from fear of hell and mourning from love to God

Sorrow for sin as sin. Mourning for all sin

II. Such mourning shall be comforted

What comfort they shall have  
View of Gods Glory  
Sins forgiven  
Christ is made known in his excellency  
See there is enough in him

Live a life of love to God  
Gods favour and love  
Hope of glory  
Deliverance from all trouble  
Eternal Joy

III. Happy.

More happy than those who have earthly comforts  
More sufficient  
On better Grounds  
With Eyes open

Infinitely sweeter  
Not mixed

Godly mens sorrow ends in comfort

Wicked mens comfort ends in sorrow

more durable  
sorrow short

Ends in everlasting comfort  
Wicked — Joy is short — sorrow has no end

Seek after such Godly sorrow  
Mastery of it  
Other wise will mourn forever in Hell.

Dont rest in anything but godly sorrow  
Amid carnal mirth  
Often think of your sin. How many. How great. How aggravated .

After pray to God with confession of your sins  
Way to have comfort under affliction  
More comfort in outward good things

Comfort when all earthly comforts fail  
Way to have comfort when others have sorrow

[End.]

**Appendix G****“There is a God”****Sermon #1059 – Psalm 14:1**

Stockbridge Indians December 1752

Ps. 14.1 — *The Fool hath said in his Heart there is no God*

Doctrine. There certainly is a God

Men are often ready to doubt of it.  
Main objection in this cant see Him.  
Dont love there should be a God

But tis very certain.

The sun moon and stars and other things we see are made  
[That] they come [means a] Being has made em

[They] could not come of themselves. Nothing could make it self

When we look up to heaven and see the sunshine in his brightness [-] who made it? And grace[s]  
it in light

[We] could not do without the light of the sun  
Some being that kn[e]w we needed this light made it

[We] could not do without the warmth [that] makes things to grow  
All would die

Tis evident that there is one that knows the need [who] made

He knows things could not grow. Could not live

Shine on all nation all need[s]

Who makes the sun to prevail  
Who set it agoing  
[Who] makes it rise and set  
Keeps it going. Never stops. Steady

So many thousand years  
Dont some times stand still.  
Dont sometimes run faster than others

Never gets out of the way. Always in the same place at the same time of year  
Every summer gets up high to the north just so f[a]r and then turns back upon



Every winter goes just so to the south

Sun is just bright enough

He gives just light enough as much as we want

Just so much warmth as we want

If more, should be brutal in summer

If l[ess] should be frozen [in] winter

Keeps the sun shining. Dont go out like a candle

Days and nights just long enough

If days were a whole week long

Who has ordered all those things

Moon makes her go round every month

Stars. Constant and important. Keep their places

All move along just standing in the same way

Dont get out of order. Dont run one upon another

Never go amiss.

Who sets those a going[?]

Keeps em Going

Keeps em shining all of them

Made the earth and sea

The earth is a proper thing for men and beasts to live upon

If all water [-]

If had like a Rock [-]

Suitable for Things to Grow upon

Made the water for use of men and beasts

Fresh water

If it was brooks of salt water as the sea, it could not [—]

If wine or Rum [—]

Must be a sea for the rivers to run into

Made the sea

Must be a sea for the sun to draw water out of into the clouds to make rain

Air for us to breathe

All things would die

Makes the clouds holds so much water

He keeps the clouds that they don't fall if [. . . ] if [. . . ]

if no clouds no rain

Who makes it Rain [?]

How necessary and useful

Just what we need. Not salt water. Not any other sort of liquid

Water came down in such a way as we want in drops

Makes the winds to carry the clouds

Keep the air sweet

Who makes the thunder and lightning?

Made the trees grass and herbs

Makes em Grow\_\_\_

Makes the leaves and flowers [and] fruit

If we look upon only one leaf or a flower

We may see the work of God

Makes em hear sound

If it had not been after the frost, fruits and herbs dried there would have been no more

Who has provided corn and other things which the earth brings forth for us to eat

Some of the things that grow cant stand alone, as the Grape vines

They are made so as to take hold of trees. Little threads to twist round

Who made so many sorts of creatures[?] Beasts. Birds. Fishes. Flies and worms and creeping thing

All have some food, something to live upon

All [have] ways to move along. Some wings. Some feet and legs

Fishes to swim

Gives life to all. [You] cant give life to a louse

There is male and female. A he one and [a] she one

Other wise, when they died they would be no more

Breeding.

[Some] sit on eggs

take care of their young

who made mankind made it above the rest

Rules over other Creatures

Made em bodies

Made us more beautiful than others. Stood up right

Given men reason, power of speech

Made our bodies  
 The Eyes to see. Ears to hear. Nostrils to breathe  
 Hands to work. Feet and legs to walk  
 Teeth to eat. Tongues to speak  
 Stomach and throat. Bowels to consume the food  
 Veins for the blood, all over the body  
 Bones and sinews. Joints in the Bones

If we should go somewhere and see a curious building —  
 Who made the soul of men more wonderful than our bodies  
 [Souls] that can think and understand and remember

for more wonderful than to make the body  
 How much is this above the power of men

Thus you see how certain it is that there is a God  
 Can turn our Eyes no more up to Heaven  
 Remain on Earth  
 Look in ourselves. On our Bodies our souls

Nothing is more certain  
 Nothing certain so many ways

All mankind see the Good one

1. If there be a God that made all things, then all things are his
2. Then all things are in Gods Hands
3. Doubtless all things were made for God
4. How stupid and foolish are men
5. Awakening to sinners
6. Comfort to them that is a good \_\_\_
7. Exh.

**Appendix H****“Thinking of Their Ways”****Sermon #1113 – Psalm 119:60-61**

Stockbridge Indians March 1754.

Ps. 119. 60, 61 [I.e. Ps. 119:59-60] — *I thought on my ways — I made Haste*

Observation I. Men ought to be much in thinking of their own ways.

Observation II . When by thinking of their ways find that they are in a wrong way

They should turn their feet into the way of Gods commandments

They should repent [and] confess.

Take up resolutions. Pray for better hearts. Forsake not only some sins but all sins .

Strive for sinners to come to do any thing that God would have

Pray to God to teach em. To help em against the devil

This way reproves such as still go on in their sins.

Consider .

[Observation] III. Should make haste and not delay

How many men delay.

**Appendix I**  
**“Though Wickedness be Sweet”**  
**Sermon #1118 – Job 20:12-13**  
 Stockbridge Indians May 1754

Job 20:12, 13, 14 — *Tho' wickedness be sweet in his mouth.* —

I. There are some men whose hearts stick so fast to their sins that they will not part with them

Sometimes many means are used with men to persuade em to forsake their wickedness .

God commands em

They have many good counsel[ors]

Told the danger

Great offers made

Told of the shortness of life

See [they] may die

See how sin brings others to misery

Have found a great deal of hurt by it themselves

Things of Gods sp[irit]

It may be they will forsake many sins but there is some particular sin

They will do a great deal for their salvation

II . However sweet mere wickedness is at present; at last tis as the poison of serpents within them

Dreadful to think of their past sins

Their past —

Thus many times it is when men come to die in Hell

Their wickedness will still be in their Hearts. Will be a torment to 'em

Feel the dreadful effects of it

Think what will be effects of it forever

Application

How much greater the bitterness will be than the sweet ness

If you go and stand by hell and hear their lamentations

How much longer[?]

The sweetness does you little good

It may be gives you more trouble than pleasure in this earth

Is it not better to drink of rivers of pleasure

Consider how much more comfort you may have by being Godly

Ways of Pleasantness

**Appendix J****“Love the House of God”****Sermon #1175 – Psalm 27:4**

Stockbridge Indians Oct. 1756

*Ps. 27.4 —One Thing have I desired of the Lord*

Doctrine. Tis our duty to Love the House of

That is...

I. As tis our duty to love God

Love every thing belongs to God. His word, His day, His People, His House

The Place appointed for Gods People to draw near to God— communion

Worship and serve God. Pray. Praise.

Should delight in these

Our main Business

Hear of God

Be Instructed about Him

Mean to know God // get acquaintance

Hear? God speaking to us

God is wont to manifest himself in his beauty

House of God is the house of Christ

Hear the glorious gospel of Christ

Hear of his death

II. As we love ourselves therefore

Means of our good

Cant do God any good

Pray for our good

Praise

Hear his word

Taught the way of our salvation

Food for our souls

Means of the greatest comfort

God bestows his blessing

Application

If you dont love Gods house here how can you expect to be admitted to his house above

If we love to keep away from God

Direction

Use your self to it

Be diligent in it

Keep from sin

Serve God in private

Endeavour to see your own mis[ery]

Endeavour to get the love of God in your heart





## Bibliography

- Achtemeier, Elizabeth. *Creative Preaching*. Nashville: Abingdon, 1980.
- Adam, Peter. *Speaking God's Word: A Practical Theology of Preaching*. Vancouver: Regent College Publishing, 2004.
- Adams, Jay. *The Homiletical Innovations of Andrew W. Blackwood*. Volume Three of *Studies in Preaching*. Nutley, NJ: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing, 1977.
- . *Preaching with Purpose: The Urgent Task of Homiletics*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1982.
- . "Sense Appeal and Storytelling." In *The Preacher and Preaching: Reviving the Art*, edited by Samuel T. Logan, Jr., 35-366. Phillipsburg, NJ: P & R Publishing, 1986.
- Åkerlund, Truls. "Preaching as Christian Leadership: The Story, The Sermon, and the Prophetic Imagination." *Journal of Religious Leadership* 13, no. 1 (Spring 2014): 79-97.
- Alexander, Archibald. *Thoughts on Religious Experience*. Carlisle, PA: Banner of Truth Trust, 1989.
- Allen, David L. "A Tale of Two Roads: Homiletics and Biblical Authority." *Journal of Evangelical Theological Society* 43, no. 3 (September 2000): 489-515.
- Allen, Michael, and Scott R. Swain. *Reformed Catholicity: The Promise of Retrieval for Theology and Biblical Interpretation*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2015.
- Allen, O. Wesley, Jr. "The Pillars of the New Homiletic." In *The Renewed Homiletic*, edited by O. Wesley Allen Jr., 1-18. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2010.
- Allen, Ronald. "New Directions in Homiletics." *Journal for Preachers* 16, no. 3 (Easter 1993), 20-26.
- Ambrose, Isaac. *Looking Unto Jesus: A View of the Everlasting Gospel; or, The Soul's Eyeing of Jesus*. Two volumes. Berwick: H. Richardson, 1819.
- Argan, Giulio Carlo. *The Baroque Age*. New York: Rizzoli, 1989.
- Armstrong, Nancy, and Leonard Tennenhouse. *The Imaginary Puritan: Literature, Intellectual Labor, and the Origins of Personal Life*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1994.
- Arthurs, Jeffrey. "How to Include Imagination in Sermon Prep." *Preaching: The Professional Journal for Ministry Leaders*, 37, no. 3 (Spring 2022): 12-15.

- Ashfield, Andres and Peter de Bolla. *The Sublime: A Reader in British Eighteenth-Century Aesthetic Theory*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996.
- Augustine. *On Christian Doctrine*. Translated by D. W. Robertson, Jr. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1997.
- Avis, Paul. "Apologetics and the Rebirth of the Imagination." *Ecclesiology*, 9 (2013): 303-310.
- . *God and the Creative Imagination: Metaphor, Symbol, and Myth in Religion and Theology*. New York: Routledge, 1999.
- Bailey, Justin Ariel. *Reimagining Apologetics: The Beauty of Faith in a Secular Age*. Downers Grove: IVP Academic, 2020.
- Bailey, Richard A. "Driven by Passion: Jonathan Edwards and the Art of Preaching." In *The Legacy of Jonathan Edwards: American Religion and the Evangelical Tradition*, edited by D.G. Hart, Sean Michael Lucas, and Stephen J. Nichols, 64-78. Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2003.
- Baillie, John. *Our Knowledge of God*. London: Oxford University Press, 1964.
- Barbeau, Jeffrey W. "A Theology of Imagination." In *God and Wonder: Theology, Imagination, and the Arts*, edited by Jeffrey W. Barbeau and Emily Hunter McGowin, 13-29. Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2022.
- Barber, John. *The Road from Eden: Studies in Christianity and Culture*. Washington, DC: Academica Press, 2009.
- Barrett, Peter. "On Creative Human Imagination at the Heart of Interfaith Engagement." *Journal of Theology for Southern Africa*, 159 (Nov. 2017): 39-52.
- . "The Emergence of Imagination and Altruism in Human Evolution: Key Elements in a New-Style Natural Theology." *Journal of Theology for Southern Africa*, 153 (Nov. 2015): 29-45.
- Barth, J. Robert. "Mortal Beauty: Ignatius Loyola, Samuel Taylor Coleridge, and the Role of Imagination in Religious Experience." *Christianity and Literature* 50, no. 1 (Autumn 2000): 69-78.
- Bartlett, David L. *Between the Bible and the Church: New Methods of Biblical Preaching*. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1999.
- Bartow, Charles. "Homiletical (Theological) Criticism." In *New Interpreter's Handbook of Preaching*, edited by Paul Scott Wilson, 154. Nashville: Abingdon, 2008.

- Bauchum, Voddie, Jr. *Expository Apologetics: Answering Objections with the Power of the Word*. Wheaton: Crossway, 2015.
- Baucum, Todd D. "Bishop Joseph Hall and Puritan Imagination: An Analysis of *The Art of Divine Meditation*." Th.M. thesis, Puritan Reformed Theological Seminary, 2019.
- Bauerschmidt, Frederick Christian. "Imagination and Theology in Thomas Aquinas." *Louvain Studies* 34, no. 2-3 (Summer-Fall 2009-2010): 169-184.
- Bausch, William J. *Storytelling: Imagination and Faith*. Mystic, CT: Twenty-Third Publications, 1984.
- Bavinck, Herman. *Foundation of Psychology*. Translated Jack Vanden Born. M.C.S. thesis, Calvin College, 1981.
- . *Reformed Dogmatics*. Translated by John Vriend. Edited by John Bolt. Four volumes. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2004.
- Baxter, Richard. "Dying Thoughts." In Volume Two of *Select Practical Writings of Richard Baxter: with a life of the author*, edited by Leonard Bacon, 149-350. New Haven: Durrie & Peck, 1831.
- . *Reformed Pastor: Shewing the Nature of the pastoral work...* London: Robert White, 1657.
- . *The Tender Heart*. Edinburgh: Banner of Truth Trust, 2011.
- Bayley, Peter. *French Pulpit Oratory, 1598-1650: A Study of Themes and Styles, with a Descriptive Catalogue of Printed Texts*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011.
- Bear, Bethany Joy. "Fantastical Faith: John Bunyan and the Sanctification of Fancy." *Studies in Philology* 109, no. 5 (Fall 2012): 671-701.
- Beecher, Henry Ward. *Yale Lectures on Preaching*. New York: J.B. Ford and Company, 1872.
- Beeke, Joel R. *Reformed Preaching: Proclaiming God's Word from the Heart of the Preacher to the Heart of His People*. Wheaton: Crossway, 2018.
- Beeke, Joel R. and Mark Jones. *A Puritan Theology: Doctrine for Life*. Grand Rapids: Reformation Heritage Books, 2012.
- Beeke, Joel R. and Paul M. Smalley. "Plain Preaching: Demonstrating the Spirit and His Power." *Puritan Reformed Journal* 11, no. 1 (2019): 107-124.
- Bernard, Richard. *Contemplative Pictures with Wholesome Precepts*. London: n.p., 1610.
- Berkhof, Louis. *Systematic Theology*. New Combined Edition. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1996.

- Boersma, Hans, ed. *Imagination and Interpretation: Christian Perspectives*. Vancouver, BC: Regent College Publishing, 2005.
- . *Seeing God: The Beatific Vision in Christian Tradition*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2018.
- . “Spiritual Imagination: Recapitulation as an Interpretive Principle.” In *Imagination and Interpretation: Christian Perspectives*, edited by Hans Boersma, 13-36. Vancouver, BC: Regent College Publishing, 2005.
- Borden, Paul. “Expository Preaching.” In *Handbook of Contemporary Preaching*, edited by Michael Dudit, 63-76. Nashville: B & H Academic, 1992.
- Boss, Rob. *Thunder God, Wonder God: Exploring the Emblematic Vision of Jonathan Edwards*. Undisclosed location: JESociety Press, 2023.
- Boston, Thomas. *The Whole Works of the Late Reverend Thomas Boston, of Ettrick*. Edited by Samuel M’Millan. Twelve Volumes. Aberdeen: George and Robert King, 1848.
- Bouwsma, William J. *John Calvin: A Sixteenth Century Portrait*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995.
- Bowker, John. *The Religious Imagination and the Sense of God*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1978.
- . *Why Religions Matter*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015.
- Brann, Eva T.H. *The World of the Imagination: Sum and Substance*. 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Edition. London: Rowman & Littlefield, 2017.
- Bray, James. “John Fiske: Puritan Precursor of Edward Taylor.” *Early American Literature* 9, no. 1 (Spring 1974): 27-38.
- Bregman, Lucy. “Religious Imagination: Polytheistic Psychology Confronts Calvin.” *Soundings: An Interdisciplinary Journal* 63, no. 1 (Spring 1980): 36-60.
- Breyfogle, Todd. “Memory and Imagination in Augustine’s Confessions.” *New Blackfriars* 75, no. 881 (April 1994): 210-223.
- Broadus, J.A. *On the Preparation and Delivery of Sermons*. Grand Rapids: Associated Publishers and Authors Inc., 1971.
- Brook, Timothy. *Vermeer’s Hat: The Seventeenth Century and the Dawn of the Global World*. New York: Bloomsbury Press, 2008.
- Bruce, Kate. *Igniting the Heart: Preaching and Imagination*. London: SCM Press, 2015.

- Bruce, Kathrine Sarah. "The Vital Importance of the Imagination in the Contemporary Preaching Event." PhD dissertation, Durham University, 2013.
- Brueggemann, Walter. "Back to Basics." *Journal for Preachers* 41, no. 1 (Advent 2017): 11-20.
- . "Biblical Authority: A Personal Reflection." *Christian Century* (Jan 3-10, 2001): 14-20.
- . *Finally Comes the Poet: Daring Speech for Proclamation*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1989.
- . "Preaching a Sub-version." *Theology Today* 55, no. 2 (July 1998): 195-212.
- . "Preaching as Reimagination." *Theology Today* 52, no. 3 (October 1995): 313-329.
- . *Preaching from the Old Testament*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2019.
- . *Reality, Grief, Hope: Three Urgent Prophetic Tasks*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2014.
- . *Texts Under Negotiation: The Bible and Postmodern Imagination*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1993.
- . *The Practice of Prophetic Imagination: Preaching an Emancipated Word*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2012.
- . "The Preaching of the Prophets: Holy Intrusions of Truth and Hope." In *God's Word and Our Words: Preaching from the Prophets to the Present and Beyond*, edited by W. Hulitt Gloer and Shawn E. Boyd, 1-15. Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2019.
- . *The Prophetic Imagination*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1978.
- Brumm, Ursula. "Meditative Poetry in New England." In *Puritan Poets and Poetics: Seventeenth-Century American Poetry in Theory and Practice*, edited by Peter White, 318-336. University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1985.
- Bryant, David J. *Faith and the Play of Imagination: On the Role of Imagination in Religion*. Studies in American Biblical Hermeneutics 5. Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1989.
- Buci-Glucksmann, Christine. *The Madness of Vision: On Baroque Aesthetics*. Translated by Dorothy Z. Baker. Series in Continental Thought. Athens, OH: Ohio University Press, 2013.
- Buelow, George J. "Music, Rhetoric, and the Concept of Affections: A Selective Bibliography." *Notes* 30, no. 2 (1973): 250-259.

Buker, Alden. "The Baroque S-T-O-R-M: A Study in the Limits of the Culture-Epoch Theory." *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 22, no. 3 (Spring 1964): 303-313.

Bunyan, John. *The Pilgrim's Progress, from this World to that Which is to Come. Delivered under the Similitude of a Dream*. London: Oxford University Press, 1903.

Burkhalter, John. "Profound Harmony and Invention: Music of the Baroque." Lecture at Princeton Festival Lectures 2021. Viewed June 21, 2022, at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pKrZ0kH9XU0>.

Bush, Jr., Sargent. "Paradox, Puritanism, and Taylor's 'God's Determinations.'" *Early American Literature* 4, no. 3 (Winter 1969/1970): 48-66.

Buschart, W. David and Kent D. Eilers. *Theology as Retrieval: Receiving the Past, Renewing the Church*. Downer's Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2015.

Buttrick, David G. *Homiletic: Moves and Structures*. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1987.

—. "Speaking between Times: Homiletics in a Postmodern World." In *Theology and the Interhuman: Essays in Honor of Edward Farley*, edited by Edward Farley and Robert R. Williams, 147-159. Valley Forge, PA: Trinity Press International, 1995.

Cady, Edwin H. "The Artistry of Jonathan Edwards." *New England Quarterly* 22 (March 1949): 61-72.

Calvin, John. *Commentaries on the First Book of Moses Called Genesis*. Translated John King. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2009.

—. *Commentary on the Epistle of Paul the Apostle to the Romans*. Edited by John Owen. Bellingham, WA: Logos Bible Software.

—. *Institutes of the Christian Religion*. Two Volumes. The Library of Christian Classics. Translated Ford Lewis Battles. Edited by John T. McNeill. London: Westminster John Knox Press, 1960.

Campbell, Charles L., and Johan H. Cilliers. *Preaching Fools: The Gospel as Rhetoric of Folly*. Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2012.

Campbell, Ted A. *The Religion of the Heart: A Study of European Religious Life in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries*. Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 1991.

Carrick, John. *The Imperative of Preaching: a Theology of Sacred Rhetoric*. Edinburgh: Banner of Truth, 2002.

—. *The Preaching of Jonathan Edwards*. Edinburgh: Banner of Truth, 2008.

- Carter, Krista M. "Rhetoric and Religion: Rediscovering Homiletics as a Site of Inventional Activity," MA thesis, Xavier University, 2013.
- Cassin, Barbara, Emily Apter, Jacques Lezra, and Michael Wood, eds. *Dictionary of Untranslatables: A Philosophical Lexicon*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2014.
- Chai, Leon. *Jonathan Edwards and the Limits of Enlightenment Philosophy*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998.
- Chapell, Bryan. *Christ-Centered Preaching: Redeeming the Expository Sermon*. Second Edition. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2005.
- . "Preaching His Story: Narrative Paths, Problems, and Promise." *Journal of the Evangelical Homiletics Society* 6, no. 1 (March 2006): 23-43.
- Charnock, Stephen. *The Complete Works of Stephen Charnock*. Five volumes. London: James Nisbet, 1864-1866.
- Cherry, Conrad. *Nature and Religious Imagination: From Edwards to Bushnell*. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1980.
- . *The Theology of Jonathan Edwards: A Reappraisal*. 1966 reprint. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1990.
- Chesterton, Gilbert Keith. *The Defendant*. London: R. Brimley Johnson, 1902.
- . *The Everlasting Man*. People's Library Edition. London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1928.
- Chiappetta, Carmen M. "The Baroque Imagination of Alejo Carpentier, Derek Walcott, and Seamus Heaney: Folding the Periphery into a Center." PhD Dissertation, University of Miami, 2012.
- Clader, Linda. *Voicing the Vision: Imagination and Prophetic Preaching*. Harrisburg, PA: Morehouse Publishers, 2004.
- Clark, David K. "Narrative Theology and Apologetics." *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 36, no. 4 (December 1993): 499-515.
- Clark, Michael. "The Honeyed Knot of Puritan Aesthetics." In *Puritan Poets and Poetics: Seventeenth-Century American Poetry in Theory and Practice*, edited by Peter White, 67-83. University Park, PA: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1985.
- Clark, Stephen R. L. "Folly to the Greeks: Good Reasons to Give Up Reason." *European Journal for Philosophy of Religion* 4, no. 1 (Spring 2012): 87-107.

- Cocking, J.M. *Imagination: A Study in the History of Ideas*. New York: Routledge, 1991.
- Coffey, John. *Politics, Religion and the British Revolutions: The Mind of Samuel Rutherford*. Cambridge Studies in Early Modern British History. Edited by Anthony Fletcher et al. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997.
- Colacurcio, Michael J. "The Example of Edwards: Idealist Imagination and the Metaphysics of Sovereignty." In *Puritan Influences in American Literature*, edited by Emory Elliot, 55-106. Illinois Studies in Language and Literature. Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1979.
- Coleridge, Samuel T. *Biographia Literaria*. Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2005.
- Compere, Robert L., III. "Revisions of John A. Broadus' Classic Work, *A Treatise on the Preparation and Delivery of Sermons* Miss the Mark: Materials Provided at the Time (Invention), Borrowing of Sermon Material, Argument and Imagination." *The Journal of the Evangelical Homiletics Society* 19, no. 1 (March 2019): 67-74.
- Conrad, Richard. "Moments and Themes in the History of Apologetics." In *Imaginative Apologetics: Theology, Philosophy, and the Catholic Tradition*, edited by Andrew Davison, 126-141. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2012.
- Copan, Paul. "Jonathan Edwards' Philosophical Influences: Lockean or Malebranchean?" *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 44 (March 2001): 107-124.
- Copleston, Frederick. *A History of Philosophy, Volume 2: Mediaeval Philosophy, Part I: Augustine to Bonaventure*. New York: Image Books, 1962.
- Covington, Sarah and Kathryn Reklis, eds. *Protestant Aesthetics and the Arts*. Routledge Studies in Theology, Imagination, and the Arts. New York: Routledge, 2020.
- Cox, James W. *Preaching: A Comprehensive Approach to the Design and Delivery of Sermons*. Eugene: Wipf & Stock, 1993.
- Craddock, Fred. *As One Without Authority*. Revised and with New Sermons. St. Louis, MO: Chalice Press, 2001.
- . *Preaching*. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1985.
- . "The Gospel of God." In *Preaching as a Theological Task: World, Gospel, Scripture in Honor of David Buttrick*, edited by Thomas G. Long and Edward Farley, 73-81. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 1996.
- Cragg, Gerald R. *The Church and the Age of Reason 1648-1789*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1964.
- Crisp, Oliver. *Retrieving Doctrine: Essays in Reformed Theology*. Wheaton: IVP Academic, 2011.



- Croll, Morris W. "The Baroque Style in Prose." In *Essays on the Language of Literature*, edited by Seymour Benjamin Chatman and Samuel R. Levin, 341-361. New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1967.
- Dabney, R.L. *Evangelical Eloquence: A Course of Lectures on Preaching*. Edinburgh: Banner of Truth Trust, 1999.
- Daniells, Roy. *Milton, Mannerism, and Baroque*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1963.
- Danielson, Dennis R. "God's Other Book." In *Imagination and Interpretation: Christian Perspectives*, edited by Hans Boersma, 37-56. Vancouver, BC: Regent College Publishing, 2005.
- Davidi, Einat. "Penso de la Vega and the Question of Jewish Baroque." In *Religious Changes and Cultural Transformations in the Early Modern Western Sephardic Communities*, edited by Yosek Kaplan, 469-484. Leiden: Brill, 2019.
- Davidson, Edward H. *Jonathan Edwards: The Narrative of a Puritan Mind*. Boston: Harvard University Press, 1968.
- Davidson, Peter. *The Universal Baroque*. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2007.
- Davies, Jim. *Imagination: The Science of Your Mind's Greatest Power*. New York: Pegasus Books, 2019.
- Davies, Michael. *Theology and Narrative in the Works of John Bunyan*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002.
- Davis, David J. *Seeing Faith, Printing Pictures: Religious Identity During the English Reformation*. Library of the Written Word. Leiden: Brill, 2013.
- Davis, Henry Grady. *Design for Preaching*. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1958.
- Davison, Andrew. "Christian Reason and Christian Community." In *Imaginative Apologetics: Theology, Philosophy, and the Catholic Tradition*, edited by Andrew Davison, 12-28. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2012.
- . "Introduction." In *Imaginative Apologetics: Theology, Philosophy, and the Catholic Tradition*, edited by Andrew Davison, xxv-xxviii. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2012.
- Dean, William. "The DeHellenization of the Religious Imagination." *Word & World* 5, no. 3 (1985): 269-278.
- De Hulster, Izaak J. "Imagination: A Hermeneutical Tool for the Study of the Hebrew Bible."

- Biblical Interpretation* 18, no. 2 (2010): 114-136.
- Delattre, Ronald A. *Beauty and Sensibility in the Thought of Jonathan Edwards: An Essay in Aesthetics and Theological Ethics*. The Jonathan Edwards Classic Studies Series. Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 1968.
- Deleuze, Gilles. *The Fold: Leibniz and the Baroque*. Foreword and translation by Tom Conley. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1993.
- Demaray, Donald E. "Imagination: The Genius of Creative Sermon Construction." In *Sharing Heaven's Music: The Heart of Christian Preaching*, edited by Barry L. Callen, 109-123. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1995.
- Dever, Mark E. *Richard Sibbes: Puritanism and Calvinism in Late Elizabethan and Early Stuart England*. Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 2000. r
- Dewey, John. *A Common Faith*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1934.
- Dive, Bernard. *John Henry Newman and the Imagination*. London: T & T Clark, 2018.
- Djuth, Marianne. "Veiled and Unveiled Beauty: The Role of the Imagination in Augustine's Esthetics." *Theological Studies* 68, no. 1 (Feb. 2007): 77-91.
- Donoghue, Denis. "The Analogical Imagination: After 'Christ and Apollo.'" *Religion & Literature* 32, no. 3 (Autumn 2000): 1-22.
- d'Ors, Eugenio. "Debate on the Baroque in Pontigny." Excerpt from *Lo Barocco*. Translated by Wendy B. Faris. In *Baroque New Worlds: Representation, Transculturation, Counterconquest*, edited by Lois Parkinson Zamora and Monika Kaup, 78-92. London: Duke University Press, 2010.
- Duduit, Michael, ed. *Handbook of Contemporary Preaching*. Nashville: B & H Academic, 1992.
- Dulles, Avery. *A History of Apologetics*. Theological Resources Series. New York: Corpus Publications, 1971.
- Dwight, Sereno E. "Memoir of Jonathan Edwards." In Volume One of *The Works of Jonathan Edwards*, edited by Edward Hickman, xi-ccvii. Two volumes. Edinburgh: Banner of Truth Trust, 1974.
- Dykstra, Craig. "A Way of Seeing: Imagination and the Pastoral Life." *Christian Century* 125, no. 7 (April 8, 2008): 26-31.
- . "Pastoral and Ecclesial Imagination." In *For Life Abundant*, edited by Dorothy C. Bass and Craig Dykstra, 41-61. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2008.

- Dyrness, William A. *Christian Apologetics in a World Community*. Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity Press, 1983.
- . *Reformation Theology and Visual Culture: The Protestant Imagination from Calvin to Edwards*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004.
- . *The Origins of Protestant Aesthetics in Early Modern Europe*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019.
- Dyrness, William A. and Keith Call, eds. *The Arts and the Christian Imagination: Essays on Art, Literature, and Aesthetics*. Brewster, MA: Paraclete Press, 2016.
- Dyrness, William and Christi Wells. "Aesthetics." In *The Oxford Handbook of Jonathan Edwards*, edited by Douglas A. Sweeney and Jan Stievermann, 296-308. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2021.
- Edwards, Jonathan. "A Faithful Narrative." In *The Great Awakening*, Vol. 4 of *The Works of Jonathan Edwards*, edited by C. C. Goen, 96-211. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1972.
- . *A History of the Work of Redemption*. Vol. 9 of *The Works of Jonathan Edwards*, edited by John F. Wilson. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989.
- . "An Humble Inquiry into the Rules of the Word of God, Concerning the Qualifications Requisite to a Complete Standing and Full Communion in the Visible Christian Church." In *Ecclesiastical Writings*, Vol. 12 of *The Works of Jonathan Edwards*, edited by David D. Hall, 167-349. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1994.
- . *Catalogue of Books*. Vol. 26 of *The Works of Jonathan Edwards Online*, edited by the Jonathan Edwards Centre at Yale University. n.p.
- . *Correspondence by, to, and about Edwards and His Family*. Vol. 32 of *The Works of Jonathan Edwards Online*, edited by the Jonathan Edwards Centre at Yale University. n.p.
- . *Freedom of the Will*. Vol. 1 of *The Works of Jonathan Edwards*, edited by Paul Ramsey. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1957.
- . *Letters and Personal Writings*. Vol. 16 of *The Works of Jonathan Edwards*, edited by George S. Claghorn. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998.
- . *Minor Controversial Writings*. Vol. 28 of *The Works of Jonathan Edwards Online*, edited by the Jonathan Edwards Centre at Yale University. n.p.
- . "Notes on Knowledge and Existence." In *Scientific and Philosophical Writings*, Vol. 6 of *The Works of Jonathan Edwards*, edited by Wallace E. Anderson, 398. New Haven: Yale

- University Press, 1980.
- . “Of Atoms.” In *Scientific and Philosophical Writings*, Vol. 6 of *The Works of Jonathan Edwards*, edited by Wallace E. Anderson, 208-218. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1980.
- . “Of Being.” In *Scientific and Philosophical Writings*, Vol. 6 of *The Works of Jonathan Edwards*, edited by Wallace E. Anderson, 202-207. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1980.
- . “Of Insects.” In *Scientific and Philosophical Writings*, Vol. 6 of *The Works of Jonathan Edwards*, edited by Wallace E. Anderson, 154-162. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1980.
- . “Of the Prejudices of Imagination.” In *Scientific and Philosophical Writings*, Vol. 6 of *The Works of Jonathan Edwards*, edited by Wallace E. Anderson, 196-201. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1980.
- . *Original Sin*. Vol. 3 of *The Works of Jonathan Edwards*, edited by Clyde A. Holbrook. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1970.
- . “Personal Narrative.” In *Letters and Personal Writings*, Vol. 16 of *The Works of Jonathan Edwards*, edited by George S. Claghorn, 790-804. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998.
- . *Religious Affections*. Vol. 2 of *The Works of Jonathan Edwards*, edited by John E. Smith. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1959.
- . “Resolutions.” In *Letters and Personal Writings*, Vol. 16 of *The Works of Jonathan Edwards*, edited by George S. Claghorn, 753-759. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998.
- . *Sermons and Discourses, 1720-1723*. Vol. 10 of *The Works of Jonathan Edwards*, edited by Wilson H. Kinnach. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992.
- . *Sermons and Discourses, 1723-1729*. Vol. 14 of *The Works of Jonathan Edwards*, edited by Kenneth P. Minkema. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1997.
- . *Sermons and Discourses, 1730-1733*. Vol. 17 of *The Works of Jonathan Edwards*, edited by Mark Valeri. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1999.
- . *Sermons and Discourses, 1734-1738*. Vol. 19 of *The Works of Jonathan Edwards*, edited by M. X. Lesser. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2001.
- . *Sermons and Discourses, 1739-1742*. Vol. 22 of *The Works of Jonathan Edwards*, edited by Harry S. Stout and Nathan O. Hatch. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003.

- . *Sermons and Discourses, 1743-1758*. Vol. 25 of *The Works of Jonathan Edwards*, edited by Wilson H. Kinnach. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2006.
- . *Sermons, Series II, 1733*. Vol. 48 of *The Works of Jonathan Edwards Online*, edited by the Jonathan Edwards Centre at Yale University. n.p.
- . *Sermons, Series II, 1751*. Vol. 69 of *The Works of Jonathan Edwards Online*, edited by the Jonathan Edwards Centre at Yale University, n.p.
- . “Some Thoughts Concerning the Revival.” In *The Great Awakening*, Vol. 4 of *The Works of Jonathan Edwards*, edited by C. C. Goen, 289-530. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1972.
- . “The Distinguishing Marks.” In *The Great Awakening*, Vol. 4 of *The Works of Jonathan Edwards*, edited by C. C. Goen, 212-287. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1972.
- . “The Future Punishment of the Wicked Unavoidable and Intolerable: A sermon on Ezekiel 22:14.” In *Jonathan Edwards: Representative Selections, with Introduction, Bibliography and Notes*, edited by Clarence H. Faust and Thomas H. Johnson, 144-154. American Century Series. New York: Hill and Wang, 1962.
- . *The Life of David Brainerd*. Vol. 7 of *The Works of Jonathan Edwards*, edited by Norman Pettit. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1984.
- . “The Mind.” In *Scientific and Philosophical Writings*, Vol. 6 of *The Works of Jonathan Edwards*, edited by Wallace E. Anderson, 332-393. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1980.
- . *The “Miscellanies,” a – 500*. Vol. 13 of *The Works of Jonathan Edwards*, edited by Thomas A. Schafer. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1994.
- . *The “Miscellanies,” 501-832*. Vol. 18 of *The Works of Jonathan Edwards*, edited by Ava Chamberlain. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000.
- . *The “Miscellanies,” 1153-1360*. Vol. 23 of *The Works of Jonathan Edwards*, edited by Douglas A. Sweeney. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2004.
- . “The Nature of True Virtue.” In *Ethical Writings*, Vol. 8 of *The Works of Jonathan Edwards*, edited by Paul Ramsey, 538-627. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989.
- . “Things to be Considered an[d] Written Fully About.” In *Scientific and Philosophical Writings*, Vol. 6 of *The Works of Jonathan Edwards*, edited by Wallace E. Anderson, 219-295. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1980.
- . *Typological Writings*. Vol. 11 of *The Works of Jonathan Edwards*, edited by Wallace E. Anderson, Mason Lowance, Jr., and David Watters. New Haven: Yale University Press,

1993.

—. *Writings on the Trinity, Grace, and Faith*. Vol. 21 of *The Works of Jonathan Edwards*, edited by Sang Hyun Lee. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2002.

Edwards, J. Kent. *Deep Preaching: Creating Sermons that Go Beyond the Superficial*. Nashville: B & H Academic, 2009.

—. *Effective First-Person Biblical Preaching*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2005.

Edwards, O.C., Jr. "Varieties of Sermon: A Survey of Preaching in the Long Eighteenth Century." In *Preaching, Sermon and Cultural Change in the Long Eighteenth Century*, edited by Joris van Eijnatten, 1-53. Vol. 4 of *A New History of the Sermon*. Leiden: Brill, 2009.

Egginton, William. "The Baroque as a Problem of Thought." *PMLA* 124, no. 1 (January 2009): 143-149.

—. *The Theatre of Truth: The Ideology of (Neo)Baroque Aesthetics*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2010.

Eilers, Kent and W. David Buschart. "'An Overtaking of Depth': Theology as Retrieval." *American Theological Inquiry* 8, no. 1 (2015):1-20.

Elwood, Douglas J. *The Philosophical Theology of Jonathan Edwards*. New York: Columbia Press, 1960.

Erdt, Terrence. *Jonathan Edwards: Art and the Sense of the Heart*. Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1980.

—. "The Calvinist Psychology of the Heart and the 'Sense' of Jonathan Edwards." *Early American Literature* 13, no. 2 (Fall 1978): 165-180.

Erhardt, Jim. "A Critical Analysis of the Tradition of Jonathan Edwards as a Manuscript Preacher." *Westminster Theological Journal* 60, (1998): 71-84.

Erskine, Ralph. *Faith No Fancy: Or, a Treatise of Mental Images*. Edinburgh: W. and T. Ruddimans, 1745.

Eslinger, Richard L. *A New Hearing: Living Options in Homiletic Method*. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1987.

—, ed. *Intersections: Post-critical Studies in Preaching*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1994.

—. *Narrative and Imagination: Preaching the Worlds that Shape Us*. Minneapolis: Fortress

- Press, 1995.
- . *The Web of Preaching: New Options in Homiletic Method*. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2002.
- Evans, Eifion. "The Puritan Use of Imagination." *Reformation & Revival* 10, no. 1 (Winter 2001): 47-84.
- Faust, Clarence H. and Thomas H. Johnson, eds. *Jonathan Edwards: Representative Selections, with Introduction, Bibliography and Notes*. American Century Series. New York: Hill and Wang, 1962.
- Fenner, William. *A Treatise of the Affections; or, The Souls Pulse; whereby a Christian may know whether he be living or dying: together with a lively description of their nature, signs, and symptomes: as also directing men to the right use and ordering of them*. London: Printed by A.M. for J. Rothwell, 1650.  
<http://name.umd.umich.edu/A41135.0001.001>
- Ferguson, Sinclair. *Mastering the Old Testament: Daniel*. Edited by Lloyd J. Ogilvie. Dallas: Word Publishing, 1988.
- . *Some Pastors and Teachers: Reflecting a Biblical Vision of What Every Minister is Called to Be*. Edinburgh: Banner of Truth Trust, 2017.
- Fickenscher, Carl C. "The Contribution of the Reformation to Preaching." *Concordia Theological Quarterly* 58, no. 4 (October 1994): 255-282.
- Fiering, Norman S. *Jonathan Edwards's Moral Thought and Its British Context*. The Jonathan Edwards Classic Studies Series. Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 1980.
- . "Will and Intellect in the New England Mind." *William and Mary Quarterly* 29, no. 4 (Oct. 1972): 515-558.
- Fisk, Philip. "Jonathan Edwards and Alexander Gottlieb Baumgarten: Aesthetic Theology and the Art of Beautiful Thinking." In *Edwards, Germany, and Transatlantic Contexts*, edited by Rhys Bezzant, 113-134. Gottingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2022.
- Flavel, John. *The Works of John Flavel*. Six Volumes. First published by W. Baynes and Son, 1820. Reprinted London: Banner of Truth Trust, 1968.
- Flower, Elizabeth and Murray G. Murphey. *A History of Philosophy in America*. Two volumes. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1977.
- Forbes, Cheryl. *Imagination: Embracing a Theology of Wonder*. Colorado Springs: Multnomah, 1986.

- Ford, James Thomas. "Preaching in the Reformed Tradition." In *Preachers and People in the Reformations and Early Modern Period*, edited by Larissa Taylor, 66-73. Boston: Brill, 2003.
- Fowl, Stephen E. "Kindling (and Sustaining) Biblical Imagination." *Word & World* 34, no. 3 (Summer 2014): 238-246.
- Furlong, E. J. *Imagination*. London: Routledge, 2002.
- Gaines, Steven Tramel. "Redefining Preaching: A Beginning." *Res Rhetorica* 3 (2017): 31-45.
- Garner, Stephen Chapin. *Getting Into Character: The Art of First-Person Narrative Preaching*. Grand Rapids: Brazos, 2008.
- Garretson, James M. *Princeton and Preaching: Archibald Alexander and the Christian Ministry*. Edinburgh: Banner of Truth Trust, 2005.
- Garrison, Webb B. *Creative Imagination in Preaching*. Nashville: Abingdon, 1960.
- Gasque, Laurel. "The Bible of the Poor: An Example of Medieval Interpretation and Its Relevance Today." In *Imagination and Interpretation: Christian Perspectives*, edited by Hans Boersma, 57-70. Vancouver, BC: Regent College Publishing, 2005.
- Gay, Peter. *A Loss of Mastery: Puritan Historians in Colonial America*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1966.
- Geraghty, Anthony. "Nicholas Hawksmoor's Drawing Technique of the 1690s and John Locke's *Essay Concerning Human Understanding*." In *Rethinking the Baroque*, edited by Helen Hills, 125-142. New York: Taylor & Francis, 2016.
- Geree, John. *Character of an Old English Puritane, or Non-Conformist*. 1646. Reprinted in *Images of English Puritanism: A Collection of Contemporary Sources 1589-1646*, edited by Lawrence A. Sasek. London: Louisiana State University Press, 1989.
- Gerhart, Mary. "Imagination and History in Ricœur's Interpretation Theory." *Philosophy Today* (Spring 1979): 51-68.
- Geschiere, Charles L. "'Taste and See that the Lord is Good: The Aesthetic-Affectional Preaching of Jonathan Edwards.'" Th.M. thesis, Calvin Theological Seminary, 2008.
- Gibson, Scott M. "Defining the New Homiletic." *Journal of the Evangelical Homiletics Society* 5, no. 2 (September 2005): 19-28.
- . "Evangelical Homiletics Society Legacy Preaching Textbook Survey." *The Journal of the Evangelical Homiletics Society* 19, no. 2 (September 2019): 5-25.



- . “Preaching in American Evangelicalism.” In *God’s Word and our Words: Preaching from the Prophets to the Present and Beyond*, edited by W. Hulitt Gloer and Shawn Boyd, 190-200. Eugene, OR: Pickwick Publications, 2019.
- Goodwin, Thomas. *The Heart of Christ Towards Sinners on Earth. Or, a Treatise Demonstrating the gracious disposition and tender affection of Christ in his Humane Nature now in glory, unto his Members under all sorts of Infirmities, either of Sin or Misery*. In Volume 4 of *The Works of Thomas Goodwin*. Edinburgh: James Nichol, 1861.
- Goudriaan, Aza. *Reformed Orthodoxy and Philosophy, 1625-1750: Gijsbertus Voetius, Petrus van Mastricht, and Anthonius Driessen*. Leiden: Brill, 2006.
- Gould, Paul M. *Cultural Apologetics: Renewing the Christian Voice, Conscience, and Imagination in a Disenchanted World*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2019.
- Grady, Hugh. *John Donne and Baroque Allegory: The Aesthetics of Fragmentation*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017.
- Greeley, Andrew. “Protestant and Catholic: Is the Analogical Imagination Extinct?” *American Sociological Review* 54, no. 4 (Aug. 1989): 485-502.
- . *The Catholic Imagination*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2000.
- Green, Garrett. *Imagining God: Theology and the Religious Imagination*. New York: Harper & Row, 1989.
- . *Imagining Theology: Encounters with God in Scripture, Interpretation, and Aesthetics*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2020.
- . “Myth, History, and Imagination: The Creation Narratives in Bible and Theology.” *Horizons in Biblical Theology* 12, no. 2 (1990): 19-38.
- . *Theology, Hermeneutics, and Imagination: the Crisis of Interpretation at the End of Modernity*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009.
- Greidanus, Sidney. *The Modern Preacher and the Ancient Text: Interpreting and Preaching Biblical Literature*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1988.
- Grenz, Stanley. *A Primer on Postmodernism*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1996.
- Grethlein, Christian. *An Introduction to Practical Theology: History, Theory, and the Communication of the Gospel in the Present*. Translated by Uwe Rasch. Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2016.
- Guiliano, Zachary and Cameron E. Partridge, eds. *Preaching and the Theological Imagination*. New York: Peter Lang, 2015.

- Guite, Malcolm. *Lifting the Veil: Imagination and the Kingdom of God*. Baltimore: Square Halo Books, 2021.
- Haims, Lynn M. "Puritan Iconography: The Art of Edward Taylor's *God's Determinations*." In *Puritan Poets and Poetics: Seventeenth-century American Poetry in Theory and Practice*, edited by Peter White, 84-98. University Press: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1990.
- Hall, David. *The Faithful Shepherd: A History of the New England Ministry in the Seventeenth Century*. New York: Norton, 1972.
- Hall, Richard A. Spurgeon. "Bach and Edwards on the Religious Affections." In *Johann Sebastian: A Tercentenary Celebration*, edited by Seymour L. Benstock, 69-82. Contributions to the Study of Music and Dance, number 19. London: Greenwood Press, 1992.
- Hall, Sharri K. "The Doctrine of Affections: Where Art Meets Reason." *Musical Offerings* 8, no. 2 (2017): 51-64.
- Hambrick-Stowe, Charles, ed. *Early New England Meditative Poetry*. New York: Paulist Press, 1988.
- . "Language of the Heart: The Bible in Jonathan Edwards' Personal Life and Spiritual Practice." In *Jonathan Edwards and Scripture: Biblical Exegesis in British North America*, edited by David P. Barshinger and Douglas A. Sweeney, 68-85. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018.
- . *Practice of Piety: Puritan Devotional Disciplines in Seventeenth-Century New England*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1985.
- Hannah, John D. "The Homiletical Skill of Jonathan Edwards." *Bibliotheca Sacra* 159, no. 633 (Jan-March 2002): 96-107.
- Harbison, Robert. *Reflections on Baroque*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000.
- Hart, Ray L. "Imagination and the Scale of Mental Acts." *Continuum* 3, no. 1 (Spring 1965): 3-21.
- . *Unfinished Man and the Imagination: Toward an Ontology and a Rhetoric of Revelation*. The Seabury Library of Contemporary Theology. New York: Seabury Press, 1968.
- Hart, Richard. "Creative Preaching: Walk with Imagination in the Footsteps of Jesus." *The Priest* 68, no. 9 (September 2012): 89-95.
- Hedley, Douglas. *Living Forms of the Imagination*. London: T & T Clark, 2008.

- . *The Iconic Imagination*. New York: Bloomsbury, 2016.
- Heitink, Gerben. *Practical Theology: History, Theory, Action Domains: Manual for Practical Theology*. Translated Reinder Bruinsma. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999.
- Helm, Paul. *Human Nature from Calvin to Edwards*. Grand Rapids: Reformation Heritage Books, 2018.
- . “John Locke and Jonathan Edwards: A Reconsideration.” *Journal of History of Philosophy* 7, no. 1 (1969): 51-61.
- Henry, Carl F. H. “Narrative Theology: An Evangelical Appraisal.” *Trinity Journal* 8 (1987): 3-19.
- Henry, Peter J. M. “Shared Imaginings: The Understanding and Role of Imagination in Contemporary Homiletics.” PhD dissertation, Princeton Theological Seminary, 2009.
- Heschel, Abraham Joshua. *God in Search of Man: a Philosophy of Judaism*. New York: World Publishing Company, 1955.
- Heyl, Bernard C. “Meanings of Baroque.” *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 19, no. 3 (Spring 1961): 275-287.
- Hills, Helen, ed. *Rethinking the Baroque*. New York: Taylor & Francis, 2016.
- Hilkert, Mary Catherine. *Naming Grace: Preaching and the Sacramental Imagination*. New York: Continuum, 1997.
- Hoekema, Anthony A. *Created in God’s Image*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1986.
- Hoeksema, Herman. *Homiletics*. Grandville, MI: Theological School of the Protestant Reformed Churches, 1993.
- Holyer, Robert. “C.S. Lewis on the Epistemic Significance of the Imagination.” *Soundings: An Interdisciplinary Journal* 74, no. 1-2 (Spring/Summer 1991): 215-241.
- Hoopes, James. “Jonathan Edwards’s Religious Psychology.” *The Journal of American History* 69, no. 4 (March 1983): 849-865.
- Hopkins, Samuel. *The Life and Character of the Late Reverend Mr. Jonathan Edwards*. Boston: S. Kneeland, 1765.
- Howell, Wilbur Samuel. *Logic and Rhetoric in England, 1500-1700*. New York: Princeton University Press, 1956.

- Hume, David. *A Treatise of Human Nature*. London: J. M. Dent & Sons, 1977.
- Hunt, Leigh. *Imagination and Fancy: Or, Selections from the English Poets*. Fourth Edition. London: Smith, Elder & Co., 1871.
- Hutton, Patrick H. "The History of Mentalities: The New Map of Cultural History." *History and Theory* 20, no. 3 (October 1981): 237-259.
- Imbelli, Robert P. *Rekindling the Christic Imagination: Theological Meditations for the New Evangelization*. Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2014.
- Immink, F. Gerrit. "Homiletics: The Current Debate." *International Journal of Practical Theology* 8, no. 1 (2004): 89-121.
- Jacobsen, David Schnasa, ed. *Homiletical Theology: Preaching as Doing Theology*. Volume 1 of The Promise of Homiletical Theology. Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2015.
- . "The Unfinished Task of Homiletical Theology: A Practical-Constructive Vision." In *Homiletical Theology: Preaching as Doing Theology*, edited by David Schnasa Jacobsen, 39-55. Volume 1 of The Promise of Homiletical Theology. Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2015.
- Jantz, Harold. "Baroque Free Verse in New England and Pennsylvania." In *Puritan Poets and Poetics*, edited by Peter White, 258-273. University Park, PA: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1985.
- Jeffrey, David Lyle. *Scripture and the English Poetic Imagination*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2019.
- Jennings, John. *Two Discourses: The First, of Preaching Christ; The Second, of Particular and Experimental Preaching: With a Preface by the Reverend Dr. Isaac Watts, the Fourth Edition. To which is added, a Letter concerning the most useful Way of Preaching: written in the German Language by the late Reverend and Celebrated Dr. Augustus Hermannus Franck*. Boston: J. Draper, for J. Edwards and H. Foster in Cornhil, 1711.
- Johnson, Luke Timothy. "Imagining the World Scripture Imagines." In *Theology and Scriptural Imagination*, edited by L. Gregory Jones and James J. Buckley, 3-18. Oxford: Blackwell, 1998.
- Johnson, Mark. *The Body in the Mind: The Bodily Basis of Meaning, Imagination, and Reason*. Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1987.
- Jonker, Peter. *Preaching in Pictures: Using Images for Sermons that Connect*. The Artistry of Preaching Series. Nashville: Abingdon, 2015.

- Kaiser, Walter C. "The Modern Aversion from Authorial Intentionality and from 'Making Points' in a Sermon." *The Journal of the Evangelical Homiletics Society* 13, no. 2 (September 2013): 4-11.
- Kant, Immanuel. *Critique of Pure Reason*. Translated F. Max Müller. London: Macmillan, 1881.
- Karnes, Michelle. *Imagination, Meditation, and Cognition in the Middle Ages*. Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2011.
- . "Marvels in the Medieval Imagination." *Speculum* 90, no. 2 (April 2015): 327-365.
- . "Nicholas Love and Medieval Meditations on Christ." *Speculum* 82, no. 2 (April 2007): 380-408.
- Kater, Maarten. "Puritan Preaching and Pathos: Some Uses from 'Puritan Rhetoric.'" *Studies in Puritanism and Piety* 1, no. 1 (2019): 43-56.
- Kaufman, Gordon D. *The Theological Imagination: Constructing the Concept of God*. Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1981.
- Kaufmann, Thomas DaCosta. "Discomfited by the Baroque: A Personal Journey." In *Rethinking the Baroque*, edited by Helen Hills, 83-98. New York: Routledge, 2011.
- Kaufmann, U. Milo. *The Pilgrim's Progress and Traditions in Puritan Meditation*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1966.
- Kearney, Richard. *Poetics Of Imagining: Modern to Post-Modern*. New York: Fordham University Press, 1998.
- . *The Wake of the Imagination*. New York: Routledge, 1988.
- Keeble, N.H. *The Literary Culture of Nonconformity in Later Seventeenth-Century England*. Avon: Leicester University Press, 1987.
- Keller, Karl. *The Example of Edward Taylor*. Amherst: The University of Massachusetts Press, 1975.
- Keller, Michael. "Experiencing God in Words: Rhetoric, Logic, Imaginative Language, and Emotion in Jonathan Edwards' Sermons, a computational analysis." PhD dissertation, Vrije Universiteit, 2018.
- Keller, Timothy. "A Model for Preaching (Part One)." *Journal of Biblical Counseling* XII, no. 3 (Spring 1994): 36-42.

- . “A Model for Preaching (Part Two: The Situational Aspect).” *Journal of Biblical Counseling* XIII, no. 1 (Fall 1994): 39-48.
- . *Preaching: Communicating Faith in an Age of Skepticism*. New York: Viking, 2015.
- . “Preaching to the Secular Mind.” *The Journal of Biblical Counseling* 14, no. 1 (Fall 1995): 54-62.
- Kennedy, George. *Classical Rhetoric and Its Christian and Secular Tradition from Ancient to Modern Times*. Second Edition. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1999.
- Ker, Ian. “G.K. Chesterton: Imagination and Wonder.” *Louvain Studies* 34, no. 2-3 (Summer-Fall 2009-2010): 209-226.
- Kilby, Clyde S. “The Decline and Fall of the Christian Imagination.” In *The Arts and the Christian Imagination: Essays on Art, Literature, and Aesthetics*, edited by William Dyrness and Keith Call, 229-237. Brewster, MA: Paraclete Press, 2016.
- Kim, Barnabas Youn Soo. “The Use of Imagination for Expository Hermeneutics and Homiletics.” PhD dissertation, Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2014.
- Kim, Hyunkwan. “Jonathan Edwards’s Reshaping of Lockean Terminology into a Calvinistic Aesthetic Epistemology in his Religious Affections.” *Puritan Reformed Journal* 6, no. 2 (2014): 103-122.
- Kim, Matthew D. *Preaching with Cultural Intelligence: Understanding the People who Hear our Sermons*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2017.
- Kinnach, Wilson H. “Introduction.” *Volume 10: Sermons and Discourses 1720-1723 of The Works of Jonathan Edwards*, edited by Wilson H. Kinnach, 1-258. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992.
- . “The Literary Techniques of Jonathan Edwards.” PhD dissertation, University of Pennsylvania, 1971.
- . “The Sermons: Concept and Execution.” In *The Princeton Companion to Jonathan Edwards*, edited by Sang Hyun Lee, 243-257. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005.
- Kinnach, Wilson H., Kenneth P. Minkema, and Douglas A. Sweeney, eds. *The Sermons of Jonathan Edwards: A Reader*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1999.
- Kind, Amy, ed. *The Routledge Handbook of Philosophy of Imagination*. London: Routledge, 2016.

- King, Jonathan. *The Beauty of the Lord: Theology as Aesthetics*. Studies in Historical and Systematic Theology. Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2018.
- Kirkendale, Ursula. "The Source of Bach's *Musical Offering*: The *Institutio Oratoria* of Quintilian." *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 33, (1980): 88-141.
- Kiseleva, Marina. "Humans and Animals in Russian Baroque Homiletics." *Ikon* 2, (2009): 339-346.
- Klein, Jürgen, Vera Damm, and Angelika Giebeler. "An Outline of a Theory of Imagination." *Zeitschrift für allgemeine Wissenschaftstheorie* 14, no. 1 (1983): 15-23.
- Kling, David W. "Jonathan Edwards, the Bible, and Conversion." In *Jonathan Edwards and Scripture: Biblical Exegesis in British North America*, edited by David P. Barshinger and Douglas A. Sweeney, 248-258. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018.
- Kolodny, Annette. "Imagery in the Sermons of Jonathan Edwards." *Early American Literature* 7, no. 2 (Fall 1972): 172-182.
- Korsten, Frans-Willem. *A Dutch Republic Baroque: Theatricality, Dramatization, Moment, and Event*. Studies in Early Modernity in the Netherlands. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2017.
- Kraus, Jiri. *Rhetoric in European Culture and Beyond*. First English Edition. Prague: Karolinum, 2014.
- Kuyper, Abraham. *Calvinism: Six Stone Foundation Lectures*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1943.
- Lahiji, Nadir. *Adventures with the Theory of the Baroque and French Philosophy*. New York: Bloomsbury, 2016.
- Lambert, Gregg. *The Return of the Baroque in Modern Culture*. New York: Continuum, 2004.
- Lamborn, Amy Bentley. "The Deep Structure of Imagination." *Union Seminary Quarterly Review* 65, no. 3-4 (2016): 66-82.
- Lamy, Bernard. *The Art of Speaking* (1676). In *The Rhetorics of Thomas Hobbes and Bernard Lamy*, edited by John T. Harwood, 165-377. Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press, 1986.
- Lane, Belden C. "Jonathan Edwards on Beauty, Desire, and the Sensory World." *Theological Studies* 65 (2004): 44-72.
- . *Ravished by Beauty: The Surprising Legacy of Reformed Spirituality*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011.

- Lane, Dermot A. "Imagination and Theology: The *Status Quaestionis*." *Louvain Studies* 34, no. 2-3 (Summer-Fall 2009-2010): 119-145.
- Lapine, Matthew A. *The Logic of the Body: Retrieving Theological Psychology*. Studies in Historical and Systematic Theology. Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2020.
- Larsen, David L. *The Anatomy of Preaching: Identifying the Issues in Preaching Today*. Grand Rapids: Kregel, 1989.
- La Shell, John K. *Imaginary Ideas of Christ: A Scottish-American Debate*. PhD dissertation, Westminster Theological Seminary, 1985.
- . "Imagination and Idol: a Puritan Tension." *Westminster Theological Journal* 49, no. 2 (1987): 305-334.
- Laurence, David. "Jonathan Edwards, John Locke, and the Canon of Experience." *Early American Literature* 15, no. 2 (1980): 107-123.
- Law, John and Evelyn Ruppert, eds. *Modes of Knowing: Resources from the Baroque*. Project MUSE: Mattering Press, 2016.
- Leader, Jennifer L. "'In love with the image': Transitive Being and Typological Desire in Jonathan Edwards." *Early American Literature* 40, no. 2 (2006): 153-181.
- . *Knowing, Seeing, Being: Jonathan Edwards, Emily Dickinson, Marianne Moore, and the American Typological Tradition*. Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2016.
- Lee, Sang Hyun. "Imagination and the Increasing Reality in Jonathan Edwards." In *Philosophy of Religion and Theology 1973: Papers for the section on philosophy of religion and theology*, edited by David Griffin, 31-48. Tallahassee: American Academy of Religion, 1973.
- . "Mental Activity and the Perception of Beauty in Jonathan Edwards." *Harvard Theological Review* 69, no. 3-4 (October 1976): 369-396.
- . *The Philosophical Theology of Jonathan Edwards*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000.
- , ed. *The Princeton Companion to Jonathan Edwards*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005.
- Lehner, Ulrich L., Richard A. Muller, and A. G. Roebner, eds. *The Oxford Handbook of Early Modern Theology 1600-1800*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016.
- Leigh, Edward. *A Treatise of Divinity Consisting of Three Bookes, etc.* London: E. Griffin for William Lee, 1646.



- Leroy, Christine. "Imagination and Hermeneutics: On Ricoeur's Notion of a Biblical Form of Imagination." *Louvain Studies* 40, no. 4 (January 2017): 368-395.
- Levine, Joseph M. *Between the Ancients and the Moderns: Baroque Culture in Restoration England*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1999.
- Lewis, Clive Staples. "Bluspels and Flalansferes: A Semantic Nightmare." In *Selected Literary Essays*, edited by Walter Hooper, 251-265. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1969.
- . "Image and Imagination." In *Image and Imagination: Essays and Reviews by C. S. Lewis*, edited by Walter Hooper, 34-53. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013.
- . *The Collected Letters of C.S. Lewis*. Two volumes. Edited by Walter Hooper. London: HarperCollins, 2004.
- Lewis, Ralph L. *Persuasive Preaching Today*. Ann Arbor, MI: Lithocrafters, 1977.
- Lischer, Richard. "Imagining a Sermon." *Word and World* 5, no. 3 (Summer 1985): 279-286.
- Lloyd-Jones, David Martyn. *Preaching and Preachers*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1971.
- Logan, Samuel T. Jr., "The Phenomenology of Preaching." In *The Preacher and Preaching: Reviving the Art*, edited by Samuel T. Logan, Jr., 129-160. Phillipsburg: P & R Publishing, 1986.
- Long, Thomas G. *The Witness of Preaching*. Minneapolis: 1517 Media, 2016.
- Loscalzo, Craig A. *Apologetic Preaching: Proclaiming Christ to a Postmodern World*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2000.
- . "Apologizing for God: Apologetic Preaching to a Postmodern World." *Review & Expositor*, 93 no. 3 (Summer 1996): 405-418.
- . "The Literature of Preaching." In *Handbook of Contemporary Preaching*, edited by Michael Dudit, 49-59. Nashville: B & H Academic, 1992.
- Lose, David. *Preaching at the Crossroads: How the World – and our Preaching – Is Changing*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2013.
- Lowance, Jr, Mason I. *The Language of Canaan: Metaphor and Symbol in New England from the Puritans to the Transcendentalists*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1980.
- Lowry, Eugene. *Doing Time in the Pulpit: The Relationship between Narrative and Preaching*. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1985.

- . *The Sermon: Dancing the Edge of Mystery*. Nashville: Abingdon, 1997.
- . “The Significance of the ‘New Homiletic.’” In *God’s Word and Our Words: Preaching from the Prophets to the Present and Beyond*, edited by W. Hulitt Gloer and Shawn Boyd, (Eugene, OR: Pickwick Publications, 2019): 200-207.
- Luther, Martin. *Luther’s Works*. Edited by Jaroslav Pelikan. St. Louis: Concordia, 1964.
- Luxon, Thomas H. *Literal Figures: Puritan Allegory and the Reformation Crisis in Representation*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995.
- Lynch, William F. *Christ and Apollo: The Dimensions of the Literary Imagination*. Belmont, NC: Wiseblood Books, 2021.
- Lyons, John D., ed. *The Oxford Handbook of the Baroque*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019.
- MacArthur, John, and Richard L. Mayhue and Robert L. Thomas, eds. *Preaching: How to Preach Biblically*. Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2005.
- MacDonald, George. “The Imagination: Its Function and Its Culture.” In *A Dish of Orts: Chiefly Papers on the Imagination, and on Shakespeare*. Project Gutenberg: 2005.
- Mackey, James P. *Religious Imagination*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1986.
- Mahoney, Edward. “Sense, Intellect, and Imagination in Albert, Thomas, and Siger.” In *The Cambridge History of Later Medieval Philosophy: From the Rediscovery of Aristotle to the Disintegration of Scholasticism, 1100-1600*, edited by Norman Kretzmann, Anthony Kenny, and Jan Pinborg, 602-622. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982.
- Malebranche, Nicholas. *Treatise Concerning the Search after Truth. The Whole Work Complete. To which is added The Author’s Treatise of Nature and Grace: Being a Consequence of the Principles contained in the Search*. Translated by T. Taylor. London: W. Bowyer, 1700.
- Manser, A.R. “Imagination.” In *The Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, edited by Paul Edwards, 136-139. London: Collier Macmillan Publishers, 1972.
- Manton, Thomas. *The Complete Works of Thomas Manton*. London: James Nisbet & Co., 1871.
- Marsden, George M. *Jonathan Edwards: A Life*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003.
- . “Jonathan Edwards in the Twenty-First Century.” In *Jonathan Edwards at 300: Essays on the Tercentenary of His Birth*, edited by Harry S. Stout, Kenneth P. Minkema, and Caleb J. D. Maskell, 152-164. New York: University Press of America, 2005.

- Martin, Albert N. *What's Wrong with Preaching Today?* Edinburgh: Banner of Truth Trust, 1992.
- Martin, Howard H. "Puritan Preachers on Preaching: Notes on American Colonial Rhetoric." *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 50, no. 3 (October 1964): 285-292.
- . "Ramus, Ames, Perkins and Colonial Rhetoric." *Western Speech* 23, no. 2 (Spring 1959): 74-82.
- Martin, John Rupert. *Baroque*. New York: Penguin Books, 1977.
- . "The Baroque from the Point of View of The Art Historian." *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 14, no. 2 (Dec. 1955): 164-171.
- Martin, Ryan J. *Understanding Affections in the Theology of Jonathan Edwards: 'The High Exercises of Divine Love.'* T & T Clark Studies in Systematic Theology. Oxford: T & T Clark, 2019.
- Martz, Louis L. *The Poetry of Meditation*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1954.
- Matherne, Samantha. "Kant's Theory of the Imagination." In *The Routledge Handbook of Philosophy of Imagination*, edited by Amy Kind, 55-68. London: Routledge, 2016.
- Matheson, Peter. *The Imaginative World of the Reformation*. Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 2000.
- Matthews, Richard. *Fantasy: The Liberation of Imagination*. New York: Routledge, 2011.
- McClure, John S. *Other-wise Preaching: A Postmodern Ethic for Homiletics*. St. Louis: Chalice Press, 2001.
- McClymond, Michael J. *Encounters with God: An Approach to the Theology of Jonathan Edwards*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998.
- McClymond, Michael J. and Gerald R. McDermott. *The Theology of Jonathan Edwards*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012.
- McComiskey, Thomas E. "898 יָצַר." In *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*, edited by R. Laird Harris, Gleason L. Archer Jr., and Bruce K. Waltke, 396. Chicago: Moody Press, 1999.
- McDermott, Gerald R. *Everyday Glory: The Revelation of God in All of Reality*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2018.

- . *Jonathan Edwards Confronts the Gods: Christian Theology, Enlightenment Religion, and Non-Christian Faiths*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000.
- . *Seeing God: Jonathan Edwards and Spiritual Discernment*. Vancouver: Regent Publishing, 2000.
- McEvoy, James. "The Catholic Eye, the Protestant Ear, and the Age of Baroque." *Neue Zeitschrift für systematische Theologie und Religionsphilosophie* 26, no. 2 (1984): 177-194.
- McGrath, Alister E. *Mere Apologetics: How to Help Seekers and Skeptics Find Faith*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2012.
- McIntyre, John. *Faith, Theology, and Imagination*. Edinburgh: Handsel Press, 1987.
- . "New Help from Kant: Theology and Human Imagination." In *Religious Imagination*, edited by James P. Mackey, 102-122. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1986.
- McKim, Donald K. *Westminster Dictionary of Theological Terms*. Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1995.
- McLuhan, Marshall. "The Medium is the Message." In *Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man*, 7-22. London: MIT Press, 1964.
- Meserole, Harrison. *Seventeenth-Century American Poetry*. New York: W. W. Norton, 1968.
- Meyer, Jason C. *Preaching: A Biblical Theology*. Wheaton: Crossway, 2013.
- Michaelis, Wilhelm. "Ὁράω, Εἶδον, Βλέπω, Ὀπτάνομαι, Θεάομαι, Θεωρέω, Ἄορατος, Ὀρατός, Ὁρασις, Ὁραμα, Ὀπτασία, Αὐτόπτης, Ἐπόπτης, Ἐποπτεύω, Ὁφθαλμός." In *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, edited by Gerhard Kittel, Geoffrey W. Bromiley and Gerhard Friedrich, 317. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1964.
- Milbank, Alison. "Apologetics and the Imagination: Making Strange." In *Imaginative Apologetics: Theology, Philosophy, and the Catholic Tradition*, edited by Andrew Davison, 31-45. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2012.
- Milbank, John. *Beyond Secular Order: The Representation of Being and the Representation of the People*. Illuminations: Theory and Religion. Oxford: John Wiley & Sons, 2013.
- . "Foreword: An Apologia for Apologetics." In *Imaginative Apologetics: Theology, Philosophy, and the Catholic Tradition*, edited by Andrew Davison, xiii-xxiii. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2012.

- . “Postmodern Critical Augustinianism: A Short *Summa* in Forty-two Responses to Unasked Questions.” In *The Postmodern God: A Theological Reader*, edited by Graham Ward, 265-278. Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1997.
- . *Theology and Social Theory: Beyond Secular Reason*. Second Edition. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2006.
- Miller, Calvin. “Genesis 1:26.” *Review and Expositor* 87, no. 4 (1990): 599-603.
- . *Marketplace Preaching: How to Return the Sermon to Where it Belongs*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1995.
- . *Preaching: The Art of Narrative Exposition*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2006.
- . *Spirit, Word, and Story: A Philosophy of Preaching*. Dallas: Word Publishing, 1989.
- . *The Empowered Communicator: 7 keys to Unlocking an Audience*. Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1994.
- . *The Sermon Maker: Tales of a Transformed Preacher*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2002.
- . *The Singer Trilogy: The Mythic Retelling of the Story of the New Testament*. Wheaton: Intervarsity Press, 1992.
- . *The Table of Inwardness: Nurturing our Inner Life in Christ*. Wheaton: Intervarsity Press, 1984.
- Miller, Perry. *Jonathan Edwards*. Cleveland: World Publishing Co., 1959.
- . “Jonathan Edwards on the Sense of the Heart.” *Harvard Theological Review* 41, no. 2 (April 1948): 123-145.
- . *The New England Mind: the Seventeenth Century*. Boston: Beacon, 1961.
- Minkema, Kenneth P. “A ‘Dordtian Philosophe’: Jonathan Edwards, Calvin, and Reformed Orthodoxy.” *Church History and Religious Culture* 91, no. 1-2 (2011): 241-253.
- . “Cotton Mather, Jonathan Edwards, and the Relationship Between Historical and Spiritual Exegesis in Early Evangelicalism.” In *The Bible in Early Transatlantic Pietism and Evangelicalism*, edited by Ryan P. Hoselton, Jan Stievermann, Douglas A. Sweeney, Michael A. G. Haykin, 182-199. University Park, PA: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2022.
- . “Jonathan Edwards in the Twentieth Century.” *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 47, no. 4 (December 2004): 659-87.

- . “Jonathan Edwards’ Scriptural Practices.” In *Jonathan Edwards and Scripture: Biblical Exegesis in British North America*, edited by David P. Barshinger and Douglas A. Sweeney, 14-31. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018.
- . “The Late Germanic Turn of Jonathan Edwards.” In *Edwards, Germany, and Transatlantic Contexts*, edited by Rhys Bezzant, 31-50. Gottingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2022.
- Minor, Vernon Hyde. *Baroque and Rococo: Art and Culture*. New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1999.
- Mohler, R. Albert, Jr. *He is Not Silent: Preaching in a Postmodern World*. Chicago: Moody Press, 2008.
- Moody, Josh. *Jonathan Edwards and the Enlightenment: Knowing the Presence of God*. New York: University Press of America, 2005.
- Moore, Susan Hardman. “For the Mind’s Eye Only: Puritans, Images, and ‘the Golden Mines of Scripture.’” *Scottish Journal of Theology* 59, no. 3 (2006): 281-296.
- Morris, William Sparkes. *The Young Jonathan Edwards: A Reconstruction*. The Jonathan Edwards Classic Studies Series. Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2005.
- Morrissey, Mary. “Scripture, Style and Persuasion in Seventeenth-Century English Theories of Preaching.” *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 53, no. 4 (October 2002): 686-706.
- Müller, Klaus. “True Imaginings: Integrating Panentheism and a Personal View of God.” *European Journal for Philosophy of Religion* 11, no. 1 (2019): 65-72.
- Muller, Richard. “Not Scotist: understandings of being, univocity, and analogy in early-modern Reformed thought.” *Reformation & Renaissance Review* 14, no. 2 (2012): 127-150.
- . *Post-Reformation Reformed Dogmatics*. 4 volumes. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2010.
- . “Scholasticism, Reformation, Orthodoxy and the Persistence of Christian Aristotelianism.” *Trinity Journal* 19, no. 1 (Spring 1998): 81-96.
- Murphy, Francesca Aran. “In Defense of Imaginative Apologetics.” *Louvain Studies* 34, no. 2-3 (Summer-Fall 2009-2010): 146-168.
- Murray, Edward L. “Imagination Theory and Phenomenological Thought.” In *Imagination and Phenomenological Psychology*, edited by Edward L. Murray, 175-219. Pittsburgh: Duquesne University Press, 1987.
- Nash, Ronald H. *The Word of God and the Mind of Man*. Phillipsburg, NJ: P & R Publishing, 1992.

- Neele, Adriaan. *Before Jonathan Edwards*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018.
- . “Early Modern Biblical Commentary and Jonathan Edwards.” In *Jonathan Edwards and Scripture: Biblical Exegesis in British North America*, edited by David P. Barshinger and Douglas A. Sweeney, 51-67. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018.
- . “Exchanges in Scotland, the Netherlands, and America: The Reception of the *Theoretico-practica theologia* and *A History of the Work of Redemption*.” In *Jonathan Edwards and Scotland*, edited by Kelly Van Andel, Adriaan C. Neele, Kenneth P. Minkema, 21-33. Edinburgh: Dunedin, 2011.
- New, Geoff. *Imaginative Preaching: Praying the Scriptures so God Can Speak Through You*. Global Perspective Series. Carlisle, CA: Langham Global Library, 2015.
- Nichols, Stephen J. *An Absolute Sort of Certainty: The Holy Spirit and the Apologetics of Jonathan Edwards*. Phillipsburg, NJ: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing, 2003.
- . “Last of the Mohican Missionaries: Jonathan Edwards at Stockbridge.” In *The Legacy of Jonathan Edwards: American Religion and the Evangelical Tradition*, edited by D. G. Hart, Sean Michael Lucas, and Stephen J. Nichols, 47-63. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2003.
- Nichols, Stephen R. C. “Jonathan Edwards’ Principles of Interpreting Scripture.” In *Jonathan Edwards and Scripture: Biblical Exegesis in British North America*, edited by David P. Barshinger and Douglas A. Sweeney, 32-50. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018.
- Old, Hughes Oliphant. *The Reading and Preaching of the Scriptures in the Worship of the Christian Church*. 7 volume series. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998-2010.
- Oliphant, K. Scott. “Jonathan Edwards on Apologetics: Reason and the Noetic Effects of Sin.” In *The Legacy of Jonathan Edwards: American Religion and the Evangelical Tradition*, edited by D.G. Hart, Sean Michael Lucas, and Stephen J. Nichols, 131-146. Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2003.
- . “Jonathan Edwards: Reformed Apologist.” *Westminster Theological Journal* 57 (1995):165-186.
- Ong, Walter J. *Orality and Literacy: The Technologizing of the Word*. New York: Routledge, 1982.
- . *Ramus: Method, and the Decay of Dialogue, From the Art of Discourse to the Art of Reason*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1983.
- Ordway, Holly. *Apologetics and the Christian Imagination: an Integrated Approach to Defending the Faith*. Steubenville, OH: Emmaus Road, 2017.

- Ortlund, Dane. *A New Inner Relish: Christian Motivation in the Thought of Jonathan Edwards*. Ross-shire, UK: Christian Focus, 2008.
- Ortlund, Gavin. *Theological Retrieval for Evangelicals: Why We Need Our Past to Have a Future*. Wheaton: Crossway, 2019.
- Osmer, Richard. *Practical Theology: an Introduction*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2008.
- Otoni-Wilhelm, Dawn. "New Hermeneutic, New Homiletic, and New Directions: An U.S. – North American Perspective." *Homiletic* 35, no. 1 (2010): 17-31.
- Overstreet, R. Larry. *Persuasive Preaching: A Biblical and Practical Guide to the Effective Use of Persuasion*. Wooster, OH: Weaver Book Company, 2014.
- Owen, John. *The Grace and Duty of Being Spiritually Minded: Declared and Practically Improved*. New York: Whiting and Watson, 1813.
- Packer, James I. *A Quest for Godliness: The Puritan Vision of the Christian Life*. Wheaton: Crossway, 1990.
- Painter, Jeremy. "Made for Other Worlds: The Preacher and the Imagination." DMin dissertation. Regent University, 2020.
- Palmén, Ritva. *Richard of St. Victor's Theory of Imagination*. Volume 8 of Investigating Medieval Philosophy. Leiden: Brill, 2014.
- Park, Katherine, and Lorraine J. Daston, and Peter L. Galison. "Bacon, Galileo, and Descartes on Imagination and Analogy." *Isis* 75, no. 2 (June 1984): 287-326.
- Parker, Shane W. "The Eagle Wing of Imagination: Methods for Vivid Pastoral Writing in the Works of Thomas Brooks." *Puritan Reformed Journal* 13, no. 1 (January 2021): 36-47.
- Parry, David. "'A divine kinde of rhetoricke': Godly Preaching and the Rhetorical Tradition." A paper delivered to the Early Modern British and Irish History Seminar. May 2010. [www.academia.edu/1688175/\\_A\\_divine\\_kinde\\_of\\_rhetoricke\\_Godly\\_Preaching\\_and\\_the\\_Rhetorical\\_Tradition](http://www.academia.edu/1688175/_A_divine_kinde_of_rhetoricke_Godly_Preaching_and_the_Rhetorical_Tradition)
- . *The Rhetoric of Conversion in English Puritan Writings from Perkins to Milton*. London: Bloomsbury, 2022.
- Pasquarello III, Michael. *Sacred Rhetoric: Preaching as a Theological and Pastoral Practice of the Church*. Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2005.
- Patrick, J. Max and Robert O. Evans, eds. *Style, Rhetoric, and Rhythm: Essays by Morris W. Croll*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1966.



- Pattison, Thomas Hardwood. *The History of Christian Preaching*. Philadelphia: American Baptist Publishing Society, 1903.
- Paul, Roy M. *Jonathan Edwards and the Stockbridge Mohican Indians: His Mission and Sermons*. Foreword by Michael Haykin. Peterborough, Ontario: H & E Academic, 2020.
- Penner, Myron Bradley. *The End of Apologetics: Christian Witness in a Postmodern Context*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2013.
- Perkins, William. *A Reformed Catholicke: or, A declaration shewing how neere we may come to the present Church of Rom in sundrie points of religions: and wherein we must for ever depart from them: with An advertisement to all fauourers of the Romane religion, shewing that the said religion is against the catholike principles and grounds of the catechism*. London: Iohn Legat, 1598.
- . *A Treatise of Mans Imaginations shewing his natural euill thoughts: His want of good thoughts: The way to reforme them. Framed and preached by M. Wil. Perkins*. Cambridge: Iohn Legat, 1607.
- . *The Art of Prophesying*. Edinburgh: Banner of Truth, 1996.
- Persons-Parkes, Sam. "The Once and Future 'Pulpit': Hearing Gerhard Ebeling Again." *Homiletic* 37, no. 1 (2012): 26-36.
- Phillips, Timothy R., and Dennis L. Okholm, eds. *Christian Apologetics in the Postmodern World*. Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity Press, 1995.
- Pierson, Arthur T. *The Divine Art of Preaching: Lectures delivered at the "Pastor's college," connected with the Metropolitan tabernacle, London, England, from January to June, 1892*. n.p.: 2014.
- Piper, John. *Expository Exultation: Christian Preaching as Worship*. Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2018.
- Plancher, William. *The Domestication of Transcendence: How Modern Thinking about God Went Wrong*. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 1996.
- Plantinga, Alvin. *Knowledge and Christian Belief*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2005.
- Poe, Harry Lee. "The Book C. S. Lewis Never Wrote: On Imagination and the Knowledge of God." *Sewanee Theological Review* 57, no. 4 (Michaelmas, 2014): 465-479.
- Polanyi, Michael. *Personal Knowledge: Towards a Post-Critical Philosophy*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1962.

- . “The Creative Imagination.” In *The Idea of Creativity*, edited by K. Bardsley, D. Dutton, and M. Krausz, 147-163. Volume 28 of *Philosophy of History and Culture*. Leiden: Brill, 2009.
- Praz, Mario. “Baroque in England.” *Modern Philology* 61, no. 3 (Feb. 1964): 169-179.
- Quinn, Dennis. “Donne’s Christian Eloquence.” In *Seventeenth Century Prose: Modern Essays in Criticism*, edited by Stanley E. Fish, 353-374. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1971.
- Raboteau, Albert J. “Re-enchanting the World: Education, Wisdom, and Imagination.” *Cross Currents* 45, no. 3 (Fall 1995): 392-402.
- Radford, Shawn D. “The New Homiletic within Non-Christendom.” *The Journal of the Evangelical Homiletics Society* 5, no. 2 (Sept. 2005): 4-18.
- Raley, Matthew. “A Rational and Spiritual Worship: Comparing J. S. Bach and Jonathan Edwards.” *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 62, no. 3 (2019): 583-597.
- Randolph, David J. *The Renewal of Preaching in the Twenty-First Century: The Next Homiletic*. Second edition with commentary by Robert Stephen Reid. Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2009.
- Reich, Brian. *The Imagination Gap: Stop Thinking the Way You Should and Start Making Extraordinary Things Happen*. EBSCO eBook Collection: Emerald Publishing, 2017.
- Reid, Jasper. “The Trinitarian Metaphysics of Jonathan Edwards and Nicholas Malebranche.” *Heythrop Journal* 43, no. 2 (April 2002): 152-169.
- Reimer, Dalton Wayne. “Approaches to Preaching: An Analysis of Twentieth-Century Concepts and Theories of Preaching.” PhD dissertation, Northwestern University, 1971.
- Reimer, James. *The Dogmatic Imagination: The Dynamics of Christian Belief*. Waterloo, ON: Herald Press, 1989.
- Reyes III, Rafael. “Open Receptacles: Imagination in Continental and Process Thought, and the Opening of Religious Pluralism.” PhD dissertation, Claremont School of Theology, 2019.
- Reynolds, Edward. *A Treatise of the Passions and Faculties of the Soule of Man. With the severall Dignities and Corruptions thereunto belonging*. London: R.H. for Robert Bostock, 1650.
- Ricoeur, Paul. “The Bible and the Imagination.” In *The Bible as a Document of the University*, edited by Hans Dieter Betz, 49-75. Chico, CA: Scholar’s Press, 1981.

- Roberts-Miller, Patricia. *Voices in the Wilderness: Public Discourse and the Paradox of Puritan Rhetoric*. Tuscaloosa, AL: The University of Alabama Press, 1999.
- Robinson, Haddon W. *Biblical Preaching: The Development and Delivery of Expository Messages*. Third edition. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2014.
- Robinson, Haddon W. and Craig Brian Larson, eds. *The Art and Craft of Biblical Preaching*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2005.
- Rodd, Cyril S. *Preaching with Imagination*. Volume 7 of The Preacher's Library. Peterborough, UK: Foundry Press, 2001.
- Rutherford, Samuel. *Letters of Samuel Rutherford*. Revised and Edited by Thomas Smith. With a preface by Alexander Duff. Complete Edition. Edinburgh: Oliphant, Anderson & Ferrier, 1881.
- Ryken, Leland. *Worldly Saints: The Puritans as They Really Were*. Grand Rapids: Academic Books, 1986.
- Salladin, James R. *Jonathan Edwards and Deification: Reconciling Theosis and the Reformed Tradition*. New Explorations in Theology. Downer's Grove: IVP Academic, 2022.
- Sarisky, Darren. "Tradition II: Thinking with Historical Texts – Reflections on Theologies of Retrieval." In *Theologies of Retrieval: An Exploration and Appraisal*, edited by Darren Sarisky, 193-212. New York: T & T Clark, 2017.
- Sato, Mitsushige. "Puritan Baroque: The Transformation of Renaissance Intellectual Traditions in Anne Bradstreet, Edward Taylor, and Cotton Mather." PhD thesis, Keio University, 2000.
- Schama, Simon. *Rembrandt's Eyes*. New York: Penguin Books, 1999.
- Scheick, William J. *The Writings of Jonathan Edwards: Theme, Motif, and Style*. College Station, TX: Texas A & M University Press, 1975.
- Schleiermacher, Friedrich. *Schleiermacher's Soliloquies*. Translated Horace Leland Friess. Chicago: Open Court Publishing, 1926.
- Schmitter, Amy M. "Passions and Affections." In *The Oxford Handbook of British Philosophy in the Seventeenth Century*, edited by Peter R. Anstey, 442-471. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013.
- Schultz, Joseph P. "The Religious Psychology of Jonathan Edwards and the Hassidic Masters of Habad." *Journal of Ecumenical Studies* 10, no. 4 (Fall 1973): 716-727.

- Schultze, Quentin. "He-Man and the Masters of the Universe: Media, Postmodernity and Christianity." In *Imagination and Interpretation: Christian Perspectives*, edited by Hans Boersma, 155-178. Vancouver, BC: Regent College Publishing, 2005.
- Schuringa, H. David. "The Vitality of Reformed Preaching." *Calvin Theological Journal* 30, no. 1 (April 1995): 184-193.
- Scorgie, Glen A. "Hermeneutics and the Meditative Use of Scripture: The Case for a Baptized Imagination." *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 44, no. 2 (June 2001): 271-284.
- Searle, Alison. "The Biblical and Imaginative Interiority of Samuel Rutherford." *The Dalhousie Review* 85, no. 2 (2005): 307-320.
- . *'The Eyes of Your Heart': Literary and Theological Trajectories of Imagining Biblically*. Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2008.
- Sepper, Dennis L. "Descartes." In *The Routledge Handbook of Philosophy of Imagination*, edited by Amy Kind, 27-39. New York: Routledge, 2016.
- . "Foreword." In Eva Brann, *The World of the Imagination*, xv-xxxi. 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Edition. London: Rowman & Littlefield, 2017.
- . *Understanding Imagination: The Reason of Images*. Studies in History and Philosophy of Science 33. Dordrecht: Springer, 2013.
- Shedd, William Greenough Thayer. *Homiletics and Pastoral Theology*. Birmingham, AB: Solid Ground Christian Books, 2013.
- . *Literary Essays*. Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2000; 1878 reprint.
- Sheldrake, Philip. *Images of Holiness: Explorations in Contemporary Spirituality* (London: Darton, Longman, and Todd, 1987).
- Shuger, Debora K. "Morris Croll, Flacius Illyricus, and the Origin of Anti-Ciceronianism." *Rhetorica: A Journal of the History of Rhetoric* 3, no. 4 (Autumn 1985): 269-284.
- . *Sacred Rhetoric: The Christian Grand Style in the English Renaissance*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1988.
- Sibbes, Richard. *The Complete Works of Richard Sibbes*. Edited by Alexander B. Grossart. Edinburgh: James Nichol, 1862.
- Simonson, Harold P. "Jonathan Edwards and the Imagination." *Andover Quarterly* 16, no. 2 (Nov. 1975): 109-118.

- . *Jonathan Edwards: Theologian of the Heart*. Jonathan Edwards Classic Studies Series. Originally published 1982. Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2009.
- Skinner, Craig. "Creativity in Preaching." In *Handbook of Contemporary Preaching*, edited by Michael Dudit, 562-570. Nashville: B & H Academic, 1992.
- Smid, Deanna. *The Imagination in Early Modern English Literature*. Leiden: Brill, 2017.
- Smith, James K.A. *Imagining the Kingdom: How Worship Works*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2010.
- Smith, John E. *Jonathan Edwards: Puritan, Preacher, Philosopher*. Notre Dame, IN: Notre Dame University Press, 1992.
- . "Testing the Spirits: Jonathan Edwards and the Religious Affections." *Union Seminary Quarterly* 37 (Fall-Winter 1981-1982): 27-37.
- Smith, Steven W. *Recapturing the Voice of God: Shaping Sermons Like Scripture*. Nashville: B & H, 2015.
- Snyder, Laura J. *Eye of the Beholder: Johannes Vermeer, Antoni van Leeuwenhoek, and the Reinvention of Seeing*. New York: Norton, 2015.
- Sounders, Michael. "'Truthing it in Love': Henry Ward Beecher's Homiletic Theories of Truth, Beauty, Love, and the Christian Faith." *Rhetoric Society Quarterly* 41, no. 4 (2011): 316-339.
- Sprunger, Keith L. "Ames, Ramus, and the Method of Puritan Theology." *The Harvard Theological Review* 59, no. 2 (April 1966): 133-151.
- . "John Yates of Norfolk: The Radical Puritan Preacher as Ramist Philosopher." *Journal of the History of Ideas* 37, no. 4 (Oct.-Dec. 1976): 697-706.
- Spurgeon, Charles Haddon. "Everybody's Sermon." *New Park Street Pulpit*. London: Alabaster and Passmore, 1859, 4:329-336.
- . *Lectures to my Students*. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers Marketing, 2010.
- . *Smooth Stones Taken From Ancient Brooks*. Carlisle, PA: Banner of Truth Trust, 2011.
- Stafford, William S. "Imagination and Scripture: Seeing the Unseen." *Sewanee Theological Review* 50, no. 1 (Christmas 2006): 154-165.
- Stein, Robert Stephen. "Postmodernism and the Function of the New Homiletic in Post-Christendom Congregations." *Homiletic* 20 (Winter 1995): 1-13.

- Stein, Stephen J. "Jonathan Edwards and the Rainbow: Biblical Exegesis and Poetic Imagination." *New England Quarterly* 47, no. 3 (Sept. 1974): 440-456.
- Stevenson, Leslie. *Thirteen Theories of Human Nature*. Seventh Edition. New York: Oxford University Press, 2018.
- Stitzinger, James F. "The History of Expository Preaching." *The Master's Seminary Journal* 3, no. 1 (Spring 1992): 5-32.
- Stockitt, Robin. *Imagination and the Playfulness of God: The Theological Implications of Samuel Taylor Coleridge's Definition of the Human Imagination*. Distinguished Dissertations in Christian Theology. Eugene, OR: Pickwick, 2011.
- Stoever, William K. B. "Godly Mind: Puritan Reformed Orthodoxy and John Locke in Jonathan Edwards's Conception of Gracious Cognition and Conviction." *Jonathan Edwards Online Journal* 4, no. 3 (2014): 327-352.
- Stokes, Dustin. "Imagination and Creativity." In *The Routledge Handbook of Philosophy of Imagination*, edited by Amy Kind, 247-261. London: Routledge, 2016.
- Stott, John. *Between Two Worlds: The Challenge of Preaching Today*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1982.
- Stout, Harry S. *The New England Soul: Preaching and Religious Culture in Colonial New England*. 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Edition. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011.
- . "The Puritans and Edwards." In *The Princeton Companion to Jonathan Edwards*, edited by Sang Hyun Lee, 274-291. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005.
- Stout, Harry S., Kenneth P. Minkema, and Caleb J. D. Maskell, eds. *Jonathan Edwards at 300: Essays on the Tercentenary of His Birth*. New York: University Press of America, 2005.
- Stout, Harry S., Kenneth P. Minkema, and Adriaan C. Neele, eds. *The Jonathan Edwards Encyclopedia*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2017.
- Sullivan, Ezra. "The Church Fathers' Influence on Aquinas's Account of *Habitus*." In *Reading the Church Fathers with St. Thomas Aquinas: Historical and Systematical Perspectives*, edited by J. Vijgen and P. Roszak, 151-182. Turnhout: Brepols, 2021.
- Sweeney, Douglas A. and Jan Stievermann, eds. *Oxford Handbook of Jonathan Edwards*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2021.
- Sweet, Leonard. "The Future Shapes of Preaching." In *God's Word and Our Words: Preaching from the Prophets to the Present and Beyond*, edited by W. Hulitt Gloer and Shawn Boyd, 243-250. Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2017.

- Swinnock, George. *The Works of George Swinnock*. Edinburgh: James Nichol, 1868.
- Sytsma, David S. *Richard Baxter and the Mechanical Philosophers*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017.
- Tawil, Ezra. "Seduction, Sentiment, and the Transatlantic Plain Style." *Early American Literature* 51, no. 2 (2016): 255-295.
- Taylor, Barbara. *Mary Wollstonecraft and the Feminist Imagination*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003.
- Taylor, Charles. *A Secular Age*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2007.
- . *Modern Social Imaginaries*. London: Duke University Press, 2004.
- . *Sources of the Self: The Making of the Modern Identity*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989.
- Taylor, Edward. *Christographia*. Edited by Norman S. Grabo. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1962.
- Taylor, George H. "Ricoeur's Philosophy of Imagination." *Journal of French Philosophy* 16, no. 1 and 2 (Spring-Fall 2006): 93-104.
- Tisdale, Leonara Tubbs. *Prophetic Preaching: A Pastoral Approach*. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2010.
- Tisdale, Leonara Tubbs and Friedrich W. de Wet. "Contemporary Prophetic Preaching Theory in the United States of America and South Africa: a comparative study through the lens of shared Reformation roots." *HTS Teologiese Studies / Theological Studies* 70, no. 2 (2014): 1-8.
- Todd, Obbie Tyler. "What is a Person? Three Essential Criteria for Jonathan Edwards's Doctrine of Personhood." *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 61, no. 1 (2018): 121-135.
- Topping, Richard R. "Scripture Funded: Reforming Reformed Imagination." In *Calvin @ 500: Theology, History, and Practice*, edited by Richard R. Topping and John A. Vissers, 23-37. Eugene, OR: Pickwick Publications, 2011.
- Townsend, Harvey G., ed. *The Philosophy of Jonathan Edwards from His Private Notebook*. The Jonathan Edwards Classic Studies Series. Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2009.
- Tozer, Aiden Wilson. "The Value of a Sanctified Imagination." In *Developing a Christian Imagination: An Interpretive Anthology*, edited by Warren W. Wiersbe, 211-214. Wheaton: Victor Books, 1995.

- Tracy, David. *The Analogical Imagination: Christian Theology and the Culture of Pluralism*. New York: Crossroad, 1981.
- Tracy, Patricia J. *Jonathan Edwards, Pastor: Religion and Society in Eighteenth-Century Northampton*. New York: Hill and Wang, 1979.
- Troeger, Thomas H. "A Poetics of the Pulpit for Post-Modern Times." In *Intersections: Post-Critical Studies in Preaching*, edited by Richard L. Eslinger, 42-64. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1994.
- . "Imaginative Theology: the Shape of Post-Modern Homiletics." *Homiletic*, 13 no. 1 (1988): 28-32.
- . *Imagining a Sermon*. Abingdon Preacher's Library. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1990.
- . *Preaching While the Church is Under Construction: The Visionary Role of Preachers in a Fragmented World*. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1999.
- . *The End of Preaching*. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2018.
- Trueman, Carl. "John Owen and Modernity: Reflections on Historiography, Modernity, and the Self." In *John Owen Between Orthodoxy and Modernity*, edited by Willem Van Vlastuin and Kelly Kopic, 35-54. Leiden: Brill, 2019.
- Tu, Weiwen. "A Praxis of Oral Homiletics: Preaching from the Heart." Duquesne University, PhD dissertation, 2019. Retrieved from <https://dsc.duq.edu/etd/1775>
- Turretin, Francis. *Institutes of Elenctic Theology*. Translated by George Musgrave Giger. Edited by James T. Dennison. Three volumes. Phillipsburg, NJ: P & R Publishing, 1997.
- Turnbull, Ralph. *Jonathan Edwards The Preacher*. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1958.
- Tuveson, Ernest Lee. *The Imagination as a Means of Grace: Locke and the Aesthetics of Romanticism*. London: Cambridge University Press, 1960.
- Tyndale, William York. *John Bunyan, Mechanick Preacher*. New York: Russell & Russell, 1964.
- VanHoozer, Kevin J. "A Lamp in the Labyrinth: The Hermeneutics of 'Aesthetic' Theology." *Trinity Journal* 8 (Spring 1987): 25-56.
- . "In Bright Shadow: C.S. Lewis on the Imagination for Theology and Discipleship." In *The Romantic Rationalist: God, Life, and Imagination in the Work of C.S. Lewis*, edited by John Piper and David Mathis, 81-104. Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2014.



- . *Pictures at a Theological Exhibition: Scenes of the Church's Worship, Witness and Wisdom*. Downers Grove: IVP Academic, 2016.
- Van Engen, Abram. "Afterword: The Puritan Imaginary and the Puritan's World." In *A History of American Puritan Literature*, edited by Kristina Bross and Abram Van Engen, 342-352. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2021.
- Van Ekris, C. M. A. *Making See: A Grounded Theory on the Prophetic Dimension in Preaching*. Volume 10 of *Homiletische Perspektiven*. Edited by Theo Pleizier and Jörg Seip. Zurich: Lit, 2018.
- Van Leeuwen, Mary Stewart. *The Person in Psychology: A Contemporary Christian Appraisal*. Studies in a Christian World View. Edited by Carl F. H. Henry. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1985.
- Van Mastricht, Petrus. *A Treatise on Regeneration: Extracted from his System of Divinity, called Theologia theoretico-practica; and faithfully translated into English; with an Appendix, containing extracts from many celebrated Divines of the reformed Church, upon the same subject*. New Haven: Thomas and Samuel Green, 1770.
- Van Seters, Arthur. "The Problematic of Preaching in the Third Millennium." *Interpretation* 45, no. 3 (July 1991): 267-280.
- Van Vlastuin, Willem. "Jonathan Edwards and the Dutch Great Awakening." In *Edwards, Germany, and Transatlantic Contexts*, edited by Rhys Bezzant, 69-84. Gottingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2022.
- Van Vlastuin, Willem and Kelly M. Kapic, eds. *John Owen Between Orthodoxy and Modernity*. Leiden: Brill, 2019.
- Van Vliet, Jan. *The Rise of Reformed System: The Intellectual Heritage of William Ames*. Studies in Christian History and Thought. Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2013.
- Van't Land, Andrew R. "The Rhetorical Roots of Radical Orthodoxy: Augustinian Oratory and Ontology in Milbank's Theopo(e/li)tics." MA thesis. Institute for Christian Studies (2013).
- Veith, Gene Edward, Jr., and Matthew P. Ristuccia. *Imagination Redeemed: Glorifying God with a Neglected Part of Your Mind*. Wheaton: Crossway, 2015.
- Viladesau, Richard. *Theological Aesthetics: God in Imagination, Beauty, and Art*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999.
- . *Theology and the Arts: Encountering God through Music, Art, and Rhetoric*. New York: Paulist Press, 2000.

- . *The Pathos of the Cross: The Passion of Christ in Theology and the Arts – Baroque Era*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014.
- Viljoen, Anneke. “Theological Imagination as Hermeneutical Device: Exploring the Hermeneutical Contribution of an Imaginal Engagement With the Text.” *Hervormde Teologiese Studies* 73, no. 1 (2017): 1-7.
- Vinther, Ole. “Imagination and Narratives in Preaching: Homiletical Illustrations as an Alternative Mode of Experience, Knowledge, and Understanding.” *International Journal of Homiletics* 5, (2022): 117-138. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.21827/ijh.5.117-138>
- Waddington, Jeffrey C. “Jonathan Edwards: Pastor-Apologist.” In *Jonathan Edwards for the Church: The Ministry and the Means of Grace*, edited by William M. Schweitzer, 93-114. Welwyn Garden City, UK: EP Books, 2015.
- . *The Unified Operations of the Human Soul: Jonathan Edwards’s Theological Anthropology and Apologetic*. Eugene, OR: Resource Publications, 2015.
- Wainwright, Justin. “Imagination in Preaching: What John Broadus (Still) Can Teach Us.” *Preaching* 37, no. 2 (Winter 2022): 28-31.
- Wallace, James. *Imaginal Preaching: An Archetypal Perspective*. New York: Paulist Press, 1995.
- Walton, Brad. *Jonathan Edwards, ‘Religious Affections’ and the Puritan Analysis of True Piety, Spiritual Sensation and Heart Religion*. Studies in American Religion #74. Lewiston: Edwin Mellen Press, 2002.
- Ward, Michael. “How Lewis Lit the Way: Why the Path to Reasonable Faith Begins with Story and Imagination.” *Christianity Today* 57, no. 9 (November 2013): 36-41.
- Warfield, Benjamin B. “On Faith in Its Psychological Aspects.” In *Biblical and Theological Studies*, edited by Samuel G. Craig, 375-403. Philadelphia: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing, 1968.
- Warnock, Mary. *Imagination*. London: Faber and Faber, 1976.
- Warren, Austin. “Edward Taylor’s Poetry: Colonial Baroque.” *The Kenyon Review* 3, no. 3 (Summer 1941): 355-371.
- Watson, Gerard. “Imagination and Religion in Classical Thought.” In *Religious Imagination*, edited by James P. Mackey, 29-54. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1986.
- Webster, John. “Theologies of Retrieval.” In *The Oxford Handbook of Systematic Theology*, edited by John Webster, Kathryn Tanner and Iain Torrance, 583-599. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007.

- Wellek, René. "The Concept of the Baroque in Literary Scholarship." *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 5, no. 2 (1946): 77-109.
- Westerhoff, Jan C. "A World of Signs: Baroque Pansemioticism, the *Polyhistor* and the Early Modern *Wunderkammer*." *Journal of the History of Ideas* 62, no. 4 (October 2001): 633-650.
- Weststeijn, Thijs. "The Sublime and the 'Beholder's Share': Junius, Rubens, Rembrandt." *Journal of Historians of Netherlandish Art* 8, no. 2 (Summer 2016): 1-32.
- Westra, Helen. "Divinity's Design: Edwards and the History of the Work of Revival." In *Edwards in our Time: Jonathan Edwards and the Shaping of American Religion*, edited by Sang Hyun Lee and Allen Guelzo, 131-160. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999.
- . "Jonathan Edward's [sic] Sermons: Search for 'Acceptable Words.'" *ATLA Summary of Proceedings* 38, (1984): 102-116.
- . *The Minister's Task and Calling in the Sermons of Jonathan Edwards*. Volume 17 of *Studies in American Religion*. Lewiston, NY: Edwin Mellen Press, 1986.
- Wheeler, Rachel. "Edwards as Missionary." In *The Cambridge Companion to Jonathan Edwards*, edited by Stephen J. Stein, 196-216. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007.
- . "Lessons from Stockbridge: Jonathan Edwards and the Stockbridge Indians." In *Jonathan Edwards at 300: Essays on the Tercentenary of His Birth*, edited by Harry S. Stout, Kenneth P. Minkema, and Caleb J. D. Maskell, 131-140. Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 2005.
- . "Living Upon Hope: Mahicans and missionaries, 1730-1760." PhD dissertation, Yale University, 1999.
- . *To Live Upon Hope: Mohican and Missionaries in the Eighteenth Century Northeast*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2013.
- White, Eugene. *Puritan Rhetoric: The Issue of Emotion in Religion*. EBSCO eBook: Southern Illinois University Press, 2009.
- Whitesell, Faris Daniel. *The Art of Biblical Preaching*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1950.
- Wiersbe, Warren W. "Imagination: The Preacher's Neglected Ally." In *The Art and Craft of Biblical Preaching*, edited by Haddon Robinson and Craig Brian Larson, 562-567. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2005.

- . *Preaching and Teaching with Imagination: The Quest for Biblical Ministry*. Wheaton: Victor Books, 1994.
- Williams, Brian M. *C. S. Lewis: Pre-evangelism for a Post-Christian World – Why Narnia Might Be More Real than We Think*. Cambridge, OH: Christian Publishing House, 2021.
- Williams, Donald T. “Meaningful Truth: The Critical Role of Imagination in the Work of C. S. Lewis.” *Touchstone: A Journal of Mere Christianity* 31, no. 6 (Nov. / Dec. 2018): 34-37.
- Williams, Michael E. “Toward an Oral/Aural Homiletic.” *Homiletic* 11, no. 1 (June 1986): 1-4.
- Willison, John. *A Letter from Mr. John Willison Minister at Dundee, to Mr. James Fisher Minister at Glasgow*. Edinburgh: T. Lumisden and J. Robertson, 1743.
- Wilson, John F. “Critical Reception of *A History of the Work of Redemption*.” In Volume 9 of *The Works of Jonathan Edwards*, edited by John F. Wilson, 86-90. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989.
- Wilson, Paul Scott. “Beauty and Preaching.” *Touchstone* 36, no. 3 (October 2018): 22-29.
- . “Beyond Narrative: Imagination in the Sermon.” In *Listening to the Word: Studies in Honor of Fred B. Craddock*, edited by Gail R. O’Day and Thomas G. Long, 131-146. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1993.
- . *Imagination of the Heart: New Understandings in Preaching*. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1988.
- . “Is Homiletics Academic?” *Homiletic* 13, no. 1 (1998):1- 4.
- . “Postmodernity and Preaching.” *Touchstone* 32, no. 1 (February 2014): 12-20.
- . *Preaching and Homiletical Theory*. St. Louis, MO: Chalice Press, 2004.
- . *Preaching as Poetry: Beauty, Goodness, and Truth in Every Sermon*. The Artistry of Preaching Series. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2014.
- . “Reformed Preaching and the Conundrum of Calvin’s Example.” *Toronto Journal of Theology*, supplement 1 (2010): 65-80.
- . *The Four Pages of the Sermon: A Guide to Biblical Preaching*. Revised and Updated. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2018.
- Wölfflin, Heinrich. *Renaissance und Barok*. Translated by Kathrin Simon. *Renaissance and Baroque*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1968.

- Woo, B. Hoon. "The Understanding of Gijsbertus Voetius and Rene Descartes on the Relationship of Faith and Reason, and Theology and Philosophy." *Westminster Theological Journal* 75 (2013): 45-63.
- Wooddell, Joseph D. *The Beauty of the Faith: Using Aesthetics for Christian Apologetics*. Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2011.
- Wright, Anthony David. "Puritanism of the Right and Baroque Effect." In *The Counter-Reformation: Catholic Europe and the Non-Christian World*, 223-263. London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1982.
- Wright, Nathan. "The Eschatological Redemption of Human Speech: Towards a Biblical Theology of Christian Preaching." *The Journal of the Evangelical Homiletics Society* 21, no. 1 (March 2021): 66-85.
- Yeo, Ray S. *Renewing Spiritual Perception with Jonathan Edwards: Contemporary Philosophy and the Theological Psychology of Transforming Grace*. London: Routledge, 2016.
- York, Hershael W. "Communication Theory and Text-Driven Preaching." In *Text-Driven Preaching: God's Word at the Heart of Every Sermon*, edited by Daniel L. Akin, David L. Allen, and Ned L. Mathews, 221-242. Nashville: B & H Academic, 2010.
- Young, Robert D. *Religious Imagination: God's Gift to Prophets and Preachers*. Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1979.
- Yuille, J. Stephen. "'A Simple Method': William Perkins and the Shaping of the Protestant Pulpit." *Puritan Reformed Journal* 9, no. 1 (2017): 215-230.
- Zakai, Avihu. "Theocracy in Massachusetts: The Puritan Universe of Sacred Imagination." *Studies of the Literary Imagination* 27, no. 1 (1994): 23-31.
- Zamora, Lois Parkinson. "Eccentric Periodization: Comparative Perspectives on the Enlightenment and the Baroque." *PMLA* 128, no. 3 (2013): 690-697.
- Zamora, Lois Parkinson and Monika Kaup, eds. *Baroque New Worlds: Representation, Transculturation, Counterconquest*. London: Duke University Press, 2010.



## Summary

This retrieval study addresses how the current understanding of a homiletical use of imagination for expository preaching might be strengthened. The current need for strengthening becomes apparent when the various understandings of imagination and their implications for practical theology are realized. This is compounded as trends in homiletics seem to minimize the imagination or embrace it in modern or postmodern ways.

The original contribution of this study is recognizing that the homiletical use of imagination can be strengthened by retrieving the Puritan baroque characteristics of Jonathan Edwards imagination as evidenced in his sermons to the Stockbridge Indians of 1751-1758. Edwards drew on a rich background to display an imagination that synthesized thoughts and ideas, thought beyond the senses, and that, by the grace of God, transformed thought and practice. Through that creative thought, Edwards maintained Biblical exposition and appeal to the affections.

This study further develops and evaluates the idea of Puritan baroque characteristics, concluding that it is a helpful characterization of Edwards' Stockbridge Indian sermons. In these sermons Edwards imaginatively used imagery, light, space, movement, and glorification for the ultimate goal of directing the affections of his audience towards God. Such a use of imagination for affective purpose becomes a key for the strengthening of a homiletical use of imagination, particularly as it.

## Biography

David Van Brugge is serving as Pastor at Grace Free Reformed Church in Brantford, Ontario. He is married to Wendy, and they have been blessed with four children. A graduate of Redeemer University, Dordt University, and Puritan Reformed Theological Seminary, he has

previously served as a high school teacher and a pastor in Grand Rapids, Michigan.

### **Acknowledgements**

This project would have remained an abstract, unconnected dream without the support and encouragement of my two promoters: Maarten Kater and Willem Van Vlastuin. Prior to your guidance, no one has ever encouraged me to be more creative! Thank you.

The members and elders of Grace Free Reformed Church of Brantford have been remarkable supporters as well. I am grateful for your willingness to give me time to pursue this, and financially supporting me through it. A particular thanks to Ed Laman and Jeff Postma for being interested enough to read this project, and discussing it with me. Thanks to Jennifer DeBlicke and Jenna Van Brugge for your help in editing.

I am most profoundly grateful to all those who in some way encouraged me to further studies: my brother, Jonathan Edward Van Brugge; the librarian at PRTS, Laura Ladwig; various professors including James Grier and Stephen Myers; professors who I now count as friends including Joel Beeke, Michael Barrett, and Adriaan Neele; friends who turned professors including Mark Kelderman and Maarten Kuivenhoven. And in their own unique ways, my wife Wendy and children Justin and Hollee, Katie, Jacob, and Matthew supported me more than anyone else. I thank God upon every remembrance of you all.