

# JONATHAN EDWARDS

Major source: George Marsden, *Jonathan Edwards: A Life* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 2004)

Summary by Cory Hartman

## EDWARDS CHRONOLOGY

- 1703** Born in East Windsor, Conn.
- 1716-20** Undergraduate at Yale
- 1720-22** M.A. student at Yale
- 1721** "a sense of the glory of the divine being"
- 1722** Pastor in New York City
- 1723** Pastor in Bolton, Conn.
- 1726** Begins ministry with Solomon Stoddard in Northampton, Mass.
- 1727** Marries Sarah Pierpont
- 1729** Edwards takes over as pastor in Northampton
- 1734-35** Revival breaks out; Edwards' account has international impact
- 1740-42** The Great Awakening, partnership with George Whitefield et al.
- 1748-50** Communion controversy; Edwards removed as pastor
- 1751** Becomes pastor and missionary to Indians in Stockbridge, Mass.
- 1758** Becomes president of College of New Jersey (Princeton); dies of smallpox inoculation

## MAJOR WORKS

("Yale vol." indicates the volume in the Yale edition of Edwards' complete works)

### PERTAINING TO REVIVAL

*A Faithful Narrative* (1737, Yale vol. 4)

*Distinguishing Marks of the Work of the Spirit of God* (1741, Yale vol. 4)

*Some Thoughts Concerning the Present Revival of Religion in New England* (1742, Yale vol. 4)

*Religious Affections* (1746, Yale vol. 2)

### CALVINIST POLEMICS

*Freedom of the Will* (1754, Yale vol. 1)

*The End for Which God Created the World and The Nature of True Virtue* (1755, Yale vol. 8)

*Original Sin* (1758, Yale vol. 3)

### OTHER WORKS

*A History of the Work of Redemption* (1739, Yale vol. 9)

*Life of David Brainerd* (1749, Yale vol. 7)



## A MAN IN THE MIDDLE

polarities, paradoxes, and paradigm shifts

### 17TH-CENTURY REFORMED PURITAN ORTHODOXY

Edwards' thought reconciled Reformed orthodoxy with the reenvisioning of the universe by Newton et al. but in a way that trenchantly critiqued Enlightenment belief in human ability and autonomy. Example: *Freedom of the Will*.

### 18TH-CENTURY ENGLISH ENLIGHTENMENT THOUGHT

### OLD TESTAMENT-STYLE NATIONAL COVENANT

Edwards believed that all New England (and Great Britain generally) were in covenant with God, and he interpreted current events accordingly. But he ultimately required that only the truly converted could partake of the Lord's Supper in Northampton, a "New Testament" leaning that severed that pastoral relationship.

### NEW TESTAMENT-STYLE CALLED-OUT CHURCH

### HIERARCHICAL ENGLISH/NEW ENGLAND SOCIETY

Edwards believed in hierarchy, order, and authority, in which clergy were *ex officio* principal members of the ruling caste. But he esteemed regeneration and total submission to God—not class, race, or sex—to be what truly distinguishes people.

### EGALITARIANISM OF GREAT AWAKENING