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Teaching Notes

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Treatise on Religious Affections, Part 2

Jonathan Edwards

Historical Context

- A. The Great Awakening (1742)
- B. Charles Chauncy and the “Old Lights”
- C. BUT Some Wild Supporters of the Awakening:
- D. Thus Edwards Battling on Two Fronts... Submitted the *Treatise on Religious Affections* in Three Parts in 1746

Part I. Concerning the Nature of The Affections, and Their Importance in Religion

Part II. Showing What Are No Certain Signs That Religious Affections Are Gracious (i.e Saving Grace from God), Or That They Are Not

Part III. Showing What Are the Distinguishing Signs of Truly Gracious and Holy Affections

I. Concerning the Nature of The Affections, and Their Importance in Religion

A. Section I: Introductory Remarks Concerning the Affections

1 Peter 1:8 Though you have not seen [Christ], you love him; and even though you do not see him now, you believe in him and are filled with an inexpressible and glorious joy

1. Edwards Central Treatise:

True Religion, in Great Part, Consists in Holy Affections

2. Definition of Affections of the Mind

Affections of the Mind = Sensible exercises of the inclination and will of the soul

- a. soul's two principal faculties (endowed by God)
 - i) perception (understanding) by which it discerns and judges all things
 - ii) inclination (will, heart) by which it is *inclined* or *disinclined* to every single thing

- b. exercises of the inclination comes in two sorts
 - i) approving OR ii) disapproving
- c. approval/disapproval comes in degrees
 - i) from perfect indifference ii) to greater degrees, positive or negative
- d. “affections” come when you “feel” what your will inclines to or disinclines against
- e. from this come all our emotions and actions

B. Section II: Proofs That True Religion, in Great Part, Consists in the Affections

Proof #1: Obvious Nature of Religion

Proof #2: Affections are the spring of actions

Proof #3: True religion takes hold in the soul no further than they *affect* them

Proof #4: Scripture places religion very much in the affections

Proof #5: Scripture presents LOVE as the summation of all true religion

Proof #6: The religion of eminent saints in the Bible consisted of affections

Proof #7: The Lord Jesus Christ displayed constant affections, of the deepest sort

Proof #9: Religious duties commanded by God focus much on affections

Proof #10: Sin of the heart = “hardness of heart”... proof that affection is the core of true religion

C. Part III: Some Inferences Deduced from this Doctrine

1. It is great error to say religion has nothing to do with affection
2. Since affections are so vital, then all religious duties should be done in such a way as to move the affections maximally
3. We have a great cause for SHAME that we are not more affected with Christ and with the things of God

Part II. Showing What Are No Certain Signs That Religious Affections Are Gracious (i.e Saving Grace from God), Or That They Are Not

- 1) Strong and high affections is no proof either way concerning someone’s conversion.
- 2) That someone’s affections have some strong effect on their body is no proof either way concerning their conversion.
- 3) That affections cause someone to become very fluent, fervent, and abundant in talking about Christ and spiritual things is no proof either way concerning their conversion.
- 4) That someone did not manufacture or stimulate those affections on their own is no proof either way concerning their conversion.

- 5) That those affections come with many texts of Scripture is no proof either way concerning their conversion.
- 6) That there is an appearance of love in them is no proof...
- 7) Having many different kinds of religious affections is no proof...
- 8) That comforts and joys in spiritual things follow great torment of soul in a certain order is no proof...
- 9) That these religious affections cause someone to spend much time in religion, and to be zealously engaged in the external duties of worship, is no proof...
- 10) That these affections lead people to praise and glorify God with their mouths is no proof...
- 11) That these affections make the people that have them exceedingly confident that what they experience is divine, and that they are in a good estate, is no proof...
- 12) That the outward manifestations of these affections, and the accounts people give of them, are very affecting and pleasing to the godly, is no proof.

Simplified List

- 1) Strong, high religious affections is no proof...
- 2) Effects on your body is no proof...
- 3) Fluent, fervent, and abundant talk about Christ is no proof...
- 4) That you believe these affections came from outside you is no proof...
- 5) Having many texts of Scripture is no proof...
- 6) Having an appearance of love is no proof...
- 7) Having many different kinds of religious affections is no proof...
- 8) That torment of soul gave way to joy is no proof...
- 9) Lots of religious service and external worship is no proof...
- 10) Praising and glorifying God with your mouth is no proof...
- 11) Strong confidence and assurance based on these affections is no proof...

12) Having a compelling testimony that godly people love is no proof...

1) Strong and high affections is no proof either way concerning someone's conversion.

A. It is no proof that you are NOT converted if you have STRONG RELIGIOUS AFFECTIONS (against Chauncy and the "Old Lights")

1. Who's going to say that we should not have a very strong LOVE for Christ?
2. Or that we should not have a very great HATRED of evil?
3. Or that we should not have a very strong YEARNING for holiness?
4. The main text speaks of very strong affections

1 Peter 1:8 Though you have not seen [Christ], you love him; and even though you do not see him now, you believe in him and are filled with an inexpressible and glorious joy

5. There is much evidence in Scripture about very high affections as part of the healthy Christian life

Luke 6:23 "Rejoice in that day and leap for joy, because great is your reward in heaven. For that is how their fathers treated the prophets.

6. Psalms are filled with passionate expressions

Psalms 119:97 Oh, how I love your law! I meditate on it all day long.

NASB Psalm 119:53 Burning indignation has seized me because of the wicked, who forsake Your law.

Psalm 119:136 Streams of tears flow from my eyes, for your law is not obeyed.

7. Paul and John the Baptist express great affections in Christ

John 3:29 The bride belongs to the bridegroom. The friend who attends the bridegroom waits and listens for him, and is full of joy when he hears the bridegroom's voice. That joy is mine, and it is now complete.

Philippians 1:8 For God is my witness, how I long for you all with the affection of Christ Jesus.

2 Timothy 1:4 *Recalling your tears, I long to see you, so that I may be filled with joy.*

8. The church rejoiced greatly in Christ's resurrection and ascension

Luke 24:52 *Then they worshiped him and returned to Jerusalem with great joy.*

9. Saints and angels in heaven are characterized by intense displays of affection

Edwards: "The saints and angels in heaven, that have religion in its highest perfection, are exceedingly affected with what they behold and contemplate of God's perfections and works. They are all as a pure flame of fire in their love, and in the greatness and strength of their joy and gratitude..."

Revelation 19:1-7 *After this I heard what sounded like the roar of a great multitude in heaven shouting: "Hallelujah! Salvation and glory and power belong to our God, 2 for true and just are his judgments. He has condemned the great prostitute who corrupted the earth by her adulteries. He has avenged on her the blood of his servants." 3 And again they shouted: "Hallelujah! The smoke from her goes up for ever and ever." 4 The twenty-four elders and the four living creatures fell down and worshiped God, who was seated on the throne. And they cried: "Amen, Hallelujah!" 5 Then a voice came from the throne, saying: "Praise our God, all you his servants, you who fear him, both small and great!" 6 Then I heard what sounded like a great multitude, like the roar of rushing waters and like loud peals of thunder, shouting: "Hallelujah! For our Lord God Almighty reigns. 7 Let us rejoice and be glad and give him glory! For the wedding of the Lamb has come, and his bride has made herself ready.*

Summary: Therefore it is clearly concluded that great and high displays of affections are no proof that you are NOT converted.

BUT, "on the other hand..." "It is no evidence that religious affections are of a spiritual and gracious nature, because they are very great."

B. It is no proof that you ARE converted if you have STRONG RELIGIOUS AFFECTIONS

There are many examples in Scripture of people with strong religious affections who are not certainly converted

1. The Galatians

Galatians 4:15-16 *What has happened to all your joy? I can testify that, if you could have done so, you would have torn out your eyes and given them to me. Have I now become your enemy by telling you the truth?*

Galatians 4:11 *I fear for you, that somehow I have wasted my efforts on you.*

2. The Israelites after the Red Sea

Exodus 15:1-2, 20-21 Then Moses and the Israelites sang this song to the LORD: "I will sing to the LORD, for he is highly exalted. The horse and its rider he has hurled into the sea. 2 The LORD is my strength and my song; he has become my salvation. He is my God, and I will praise him, my father's God, and I will exalt him. Then Miriam the prophetess, Aaron's sister, took a tambourine in her hand, and all the women followed her, with tambourines and dancing. 21 Miriam sang to them: "Sing to the LORD, for he is highly exalted. The horse and its rider he has hurled into the sea."

BUT *Exodus 15:22-24 Then Moses led Israel from the Red Sea and they went into the Desert of Shur. For three days they traveled in the desert without finding water. 23 When they came to Marah, they could not drink its water because it was bitter. (That is why the place is called Marah.) 24 So the people grumbled against Moses, saying, "What are we to drink?"*

3. The crowds of Jerusalem after Lazarus had been raised

John 12:17-19 Now the crowd that was with him when he called Lazarus from the tomb and raised him from the dead continued to spread the word. 18 Many people, because they had heard that he had given this miraculous sign, went out to meet him. 19 So the Pharisees said to one another, "See, this is getting us nowhere. Look how the whole world has gone after him!"

BUT *John 12:37 Even after Jesus had done all these miraculous signs in their presence, they still would not believe in him.*

Edwards: "So great multitudes who were affected with the raising of Lazarus from the dead were elevated to a high degree, and made a mighty ado when Jesus presently after entered into Jerusalem..."

John 12:13 They took palm branches and went out to meet him, shouting, "Hosanna!" "Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!" "Blessed is the King of Israel!"

"And how quickly was this ado at an end! All of this nature is quelled and dead, when this Jesus stands bound with a mock robe and a crown of thorns, to be derided, spit upon, scourged, condemned, and executed. Indeed, there was a great and loud outcry concerning Him among the multitude then as well as before; but of a very different kind: it is not then, 'Hosanna, hosanna,' but 'Crucify, crucify!'"

Edwards's conclusion: "It is the concurring voice of all orthodox divines, that there may be religious affections, which are raised to a very high degree, and yet there be nothing of true religion."

2) That someone's affections have some strong effect on their body is no proof either way concerning their conversion.

A. All affections have in some degree some effect on the body

Edwards: "It is questionable whether an embodied soul ever so much as thinks one thought or has any exercise at all, but there is some corresponding motion ... of the fluids of the body."

B. Therefore, it is no proof that you are NOT converted if your affections have some strong effect on your body... and the greater the affections, the greater the effect on the body

Edwards: "I know of no reason why a being affected with a view of God's glory should not cause the body to faint..."

Daniel 10:8 So I was left alone, gazing at this great vision; I had no strength left, my face turned deathly pale and I was helpless.

Revelation 1:17 When I saw him, I fell at his feet as though dead.

Hebrews 12:21 The sight was so terrifying that Moses said, "I am trembling with fear."

C. HOWEVER, it is no proof either that you ARE converted if your religious affections result in great effects on your body

Edwards: "Great effects on the body certainly are no sure evidences that affections are spiritual; for we see that such effects often times arise from great affections about temporal things, and when religion is no way concerned in them. And if great affections about secular things, that are purely natural, may have these effects... [so also affections about religious things can] have the like effect."

3) That affections cause someone to become very fluent, fervent, and abundant in talking about Christ and spiritual things is no proof either way concerning their conversion.

A. Many people tend to be taken in by this one

1. They say "So and so never used to talk about spiritual things, now he talks a lot and with great fervency about spiritual things."
2. To them this is close to absolute proof that God has converted someone

B. Talking much about religion is no proof that you are NOT converted

Matthew 12:34 ...out of the overflow of the heart the mouth speaks.

Colossians 4:6 Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone.

1 Peter 4:11 If anyone speaks, he should do it as one speaking the very words of God.

Converted people will want to talk much about their conversion, and about the things of God

C. BUT Neither is much fluent, fervent, knowledgeable talk absolute proof that you ARE converted

Luke 1:65 The neighbors were all filled with awe, and throughout the hill country of Judea people were talking about all these things.

Luke 5:15 Yet the news about him spread all the more, so that crowds of people came to hear him and to be healed of their sicknesses.

John 7:12-13 Among the crowds there was widespread whispering about him. Some said, "He is a good man." Others replied, "No, he deceives the people." 13 But no one would say anything publicly about him for fear of the Jews.

John 7:46 "No one ever spoke the way this man does," the guards declared.

2 Peter 2:17-18 These men are springs without water and mists driven by a storm. Blackest darkness is reserved for them. 18 For they mouth empty, boastful words and, by appealing to the lustful desires of sinful human nature, they entice people who are just escaping from those who live in error.

4) That someone did not manufacture or stimulate those affections on their own is no proof either way concerning their conversion.

- A. It is no proof that you are NOT converted that the change occurred to you from a source outside yourself [Old Lights said Spirit only works through certain means of grace... if you didn't follow their prescribed manner, you weren't truly converted]

Edwards: How greatly has the doctrine of the inward experience, or sensible perceiving of the immediate power and operation of the Spirit of God, been reproached and ridiculed by many of late! They say, the manner of the Spirit of God is to co-operate in a silent, secret, and undiscernable way with the use of means, and our own endeavors

- B. God DOES convert some people in a very dramatic and spectacular way for His glory

God does want the saints to know when He has worked, so that He can get all the glory

- C. "On the other hand..." It is no certain proof that you believe your affections have come to you from outside yourself

Edwards cites the evidence of the Anabaptist extremists to show that excessive displays of spirit-induced movement isn't necessarily a good thing

1. We don't really understand the demonic world... and the influence of "other spirits"

1 John 4:1 Dear friends, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world.

2. We don't really understand ourselves... and whether those affections have really come from "outside us"
3. The Holy Spirit may make an impact on us short of true conversion

Hebrews 6:4-6 *It is impossible for those who have once been enlightened, who have tasted the heavenly gift, who have shared in the Holy Spirit, who have tasted the goodness of the word of God and the powers of the coming age, if they fall away, to be brought back to repentance*

5) That those affections come with many texts of Scripture is no proof either way concerning their conversion.

- A. Obviously it is no proof that you are NOT converted if you can cite many Scriptures and promises on which you are basing your faith!!
- B. “On the other hand...” It is no proof that you ARE converted that you can cite Scriptures, or that “such and such Scripture popped into my mind”
 - 1. Affections can rise from understanding a portion of the Bible, and the person is still unconverted

Matthew 13:20-21 *The one who received the seed that fell on rocky places is the man who hears the word and at once receives it with joy. But since he has no root, he lasts only a short time. When trouble or persecution comes because of the word, he quickly falls away.*

- 2. The devil himself quoted the Scripture to Christ... therefore he is not afraid to misuse the Bible for his own purposes
- 3. Man’s own foolishness can also twist the Scripture for his own purposes and his own emotional benefit

6) That there is an appearance of love in them is no proof...

- A. No one would claim that an appearance of love is proof you’re NOT a Christian!!
- B. “On the other hand...” It is no certain sign that you are truly converted that there is an appearance of love in your life
 - 1. Love is the most excellent thing in our religion... and the more excellent a thing, the more likely it is to be counterfeited
 - 2. There is evidence in Scripture of people having love of a kind, but still being unconverted

Matthew 24:12-13 *Because of the increase of wickedness, the love of most will grow cold, but he who stands firm to the end will be saved.*

KJV Ephesians 6:24 *Grace be with all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity.*

Galatians 4:15-16 *What has happened to all your joy? I can testify that, if you could have done so, you would have torn out your eyes and given them to me. Have I now become your enemy by telling you the truth?*

7) Having many different kinds of religious affections is no proof...

- A. It is possible to have a great variety of religious affections altogether, and still be unconverted

Counterfeited affections:

1. Sorrow for sin

Exodus 9:27 Then Pharaoh summoned Moses and Aaron. "This time I have sinned," he said to them. "The LORD is in the right, and I and my people are in the wrong.

1 Samuel 15:24 Then Saul said to Samuel, "I have sinned. I violated the LORD's command and your instructions. I was afraid of the people and so I gave in to them.

1 Kings 21:27 When Ahab heard these words, he tore his clothes, put on sackcloth and fasted. He lay in sackcloth and went around meekly.

2. Fear of God

2 Kings 17:31-33 the Avvites made Nibhaz and Tartak, and the Sepharvites burned their children in the fire as sacrifices to Adrammelech and Anammelech, the gods of Sepharvaim. They also feared the LORD and appointed from among themselves priests of the high places, who acted for them in the houses of the high places. They feared the LORD and served their own gods according to the custom of the nations from among whom they had been carried away into exile.

3. Reverence and submission

KJV Psalm 66:3 Say unto God, How terrible art thou in thy works! through the greatness of thy power shall thine enemies submit themselves unto thee.

4. Praise of God

Psalm 106:12-13 Then they believed his promises and sang his praise. But they soon forgot what he had done and did not wait for his counsel.

2 Kings 5:15 Then Naaman and all his attendants went back to the man of God. He stood before him and said, "Now I know that there is no God in all the world except in Israel. Please accept now a gift from your servant."

[Also Nebuchadnezzar]

5. Spiritual joy

John 5:35 "He was the lamp that was burning and was shining and you were willing to rejoice for a while in his light.

Matthew 13:20 The one who received the seed that fell on rocky places is the man who hears the word and at once receives it with joy.

6. Religious zeal

2 Kings 10:16 Jehu said, "Come with me and see my zeal for the LORD." Then he had him ride along in his chariot.

Romans 10:2 For I can testify about them that they are zealous for God, but their zeal is not based on knowledge.

Galatians 1:14 I was advancing in Judaism beyond many Jews of my own age and was extremely zealous for the traditions of my fathers.

Philippians 3:6 as for zeal, persecuting the church

7. Desire for eternal life

Numbers 23:10 [Balaam] Who can count the dust of Jacob or number the fourth part of Israel? Let me die the death of the righteous, and may my end be like theirs!"

8) That comforts and joys in spiritual things follow great torment of soul in a certain order is no proof...

9) That these religious affections cause someone to spend much time in religion, and to be zealously engaged in the external duties of worship, is no proof...

10) That these affections lead people to praise and glorify God with their mouths is no proof...

A. Obviously no one would say that this cannot be a part of a healthy Christian life

B. BUT it is no certain proof that one is converted if they glorify God with their mouths

Mark 2:12 He got up, took his mat and walked out in full view of them all. This amazed everyone and they praised God, saying, "We have never seen anything like this!"

Matthew 9:8 When the crowd saw this, they were filled with awe; and they praised God, who had given such authority to men.

C. Note especially the behavior of Nebuchadnezzar before he was converted (if he ever was)

Daniel 2:47 The king said to Daniel, "Surely your God is the God of gods and the Lord of kings and a revealer of mysteries, for you were able to reveal this mystery."

Daniel 3:28-29 Then Nebuchadnezzar said, "Praise be to the God of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, who has sent his angel and rescued his servants! They trusted in him and defied the king's command and were willing to give up their lives rather than serve or worship any god except their own God. Therefore I decree that the people of any nation or language who say anything against the God of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego be cut into pieces and their houses be turned into piles of rubble, for no other god can save in this way."

In each case, Nebuchadnezzar, overwhelmed with the miracle-working power of God, praised the God of heaven... but soon rebelled openly and grievously, even desiring people to worship an idol he had set up or arrogantly boasting about his own glory.

11) That these affections make the people that have them exceedingly confident that what they experience is divine, and that they are in a good estate, is no proof...

A. Confident assurance of salvation is NOT a mark of arrogance, presumption, and unbelief, no matter what the "Papists" say... a man can have a strong assurance AND be saved

Job 19:25-27 I know that my Redeemer lives, and that in the end he will stand upon the earth. And after my skin has been destroyed, yet in my flesh I will see God; I myself will see him with my own eyes-- I, and not another. How my heart yearns within me!

2 Timothy 4:7-8 I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Now there is in store for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day-- and not only to me, but also to all who have longed for his appearing.

Hebrews 6:17-18 Because God wanted to make the unchanging nature of his purpose very clear to the heirs of what was promised, he confirmed it with an oath. God did this so that, by two unchangeable things in which it is impossible for God to lie, we who have fled to take hold of the hope offered to us may be greatly encouraged.

B. "On the other hand...": It is no certain sign that affections are from saving grace if someone has exceedingly great confidence that their state is good

In other words, strong assurance must have a foundation other than itself... we can't say "I know I am saved because I have absolutely no doubts in the matter. My unwavering confidence is the foundation of my unwavering confidence."

Flavel: "O professor, look carefully to your foundation: 'Be not high minded, but fear.' You have, it may be, done and suffered many things in and for religion; you have excellent gifts and sweet comforts, a warm zeal for God, and high confidence of your integrity: all this may be right, for all that I (or you) may know, yet it may all be false. You have sometimes judged yourselves, and pronounced yourself upright; but remember, your final sentence is not yet pronounced by your Judge."

Stoddard: "Some hypocrites are a great deal more confident than many saints."

Edwards: "Such an overbearing high-handed, and violent sort of confidence as this, affecting to declare itself with a most glaring show in the sight of men, although it is seen in many, has not the countenance of a true Christian assurance: it savors more of the spirit of the Pharisees, who never doubted that they were saints, and the most eminent of saints, and were bold to go to God and come up near Him, and lift up their eyes to Him and thank Him for the great distinction He had made between them and other men..."

Luke 18:11-12 The Pharisee stood up and prayed about himself: 'God, I thank you that I am not like other men-- robbers, evildoers, adulterers-- or even like this tax collector. I fast twice a week and give a tenth of all I get.'"

John 9:40-41 Some Pharisees who were with him heard him say this and asked, "What? Are we blind too?" Jesus said, "If you were blind, you would not be guilty of sin; but now that you claim you can see, your guilt remains."

C. Natural State of Human Hearts: Overweening Pride

Edwards: "If we do but consider what the hearts of natural men are, what principles they are under the dominion of, what blindness and deceit, what self-flattery, self-exaltation, and self-confidence reign there, we need not wonder at all that their high opinion of themselves, and confidence of their happy circumstances, be as high as the mountains... fed and prompted by false joys and comforts, excited by some pleasing imaginations, and impressed by Satan transforming himself into an angel of light."

1. Hypocrite never questions his true state
2. Hypocrite has no knowledge of his own blindness and the deceitfulness of his own heart
3. The devil does not assault the hope of a hypocrite the way he does a true believer's
4. Hypocrites have not the true sight of the corruptions of their own hearts

12) That the outward manifestations of these affections, and the accounts people give of them, are very affecting and pleasing to the godly, is no proof.

A. True saints cannot perfectly discern who is godly and who is not

1. They know what true religion is
2. They are able to discern it in themselves, to make their own calling and election sure
3. BUT they cannot perfectly discern whether another person is truly born-again

1 Samuel 16:7 But the LORD said to Samuel, "Do not consider his appearance or his height, for I have rejected him. The LORD does not look at the things man looks at. Man looks at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart."

4. Christ alone knows what's truly in someone's heart by looking at him

Isaiah 11:3-4 [Christ] will not judge by what he sees with his eyes, or decide by what he hears with his ears; but with righteousness he will judge the needy, with justice he will give decisions for the poor of the earth.

John 2:25 He did not need man's testimony about man, for he knew what was in a man.

B. Sadly, many eminent professors of Christ have fallen away from Him

Edwards: "The best of men may be deceived when the appearances seem to them exceeding fair and bright, even so as entirely to gain their charity and conquer their hearts. It has been a common thing in the church of God for such bright professors, that are received as eminent saints among the saints, to fall away and come to nothing."

Shepherd: "Be not offended if you see great cedars fall, stars fall from heaven, great professors die and decay: do not think they be all such: do not think the elect shall fall."

C. Thus it is possible for the saints to approve you and God condemn you

Flavel: "The saints may approve you and God condemn you. Rev. 3:1, 'You have a reputation that you are living, and you are dead.'"

Summary:

[Hypocrites] may have religious affections of many kinds together; they may have a sort of affection towards God, that bears a great resemblance of dear love to him; and so a kind of love to the brethren, and great appearances of admiration of God's perfections and works, and sorrow for sin, and reverence, submission, self-abasement, gratitude, joy, religious longings, and zeal for religion and the good of souls. And these affections may come after great awakenings and convictions of conscience; and there may be great appearances of a work of humiliation: and counterfeit love and joy, and other affections may seem to follow these, and one another, just in the same order that is commonly observable in the holy affections of true converts. And these religious affections may be carried to a great height, and may cause abundance of tears, yea, may overcome the nature of those who are the subjects of them, and may make them affectionate, and fervent, and fluent, in speaking of the things of God, and dispose them to be abundant in it; and may be attended with many sweet texts of Scripture, and precious promises, brought with great impression on their minds; and may dispose them with their mouths to praise and glorify God, in a very ardent manner, and fervently to call upon others to praise him, crying out of their unworthiness, and extolling free grace. And may, moreover, dispose them to abound in the external duties of religion, such as prayer, hearing the word preached, singing, and religious conference; and these things attended with a great resemblance of a Christian assurance, in its greatest height, when the saints mount on eagles' wings, above all darkness and doubting. I think it has been made plain, that there

may be all these things, and yet there be nothing more than the common influences of the Spirit of God, joined with the delusions of Satan, and the wicked and deceitful heart.--To which I may add, that all these things may be attended with a sweet natural temper, and a good doctrinal knowledge of religion, and a long acquaintance with the saints' way of talking, and of expressing their affections and experiences, and a natural ability and subtlety in accommodating their expressions and manner of speaking to the dispositions and notions of the hearers, and a taking decency of expression and behavior, formed by a good education. How great therefore may the resemblance be, as to all outward expressions and appearances, between a hypocrite and a true saint! Doubtless it is the glorious prerogative of the omniscient God, as the great searcher of hearts, to be able well to separate between sheep and goats. And what an indecent self-exaltation and arrogance it is, in poor, fallible, dark mortals, to pretend that they can determine and know, who are really sincere and upright before God, and who are not!

Question to ask Edwards: Is there any evidence from Scripture of any one person who possessed ALL these qualities for a long period of time and yet was actually unregenerate?

Perhaps Edwards would answer: Test the Pharisees against this list

Part III. Showing What Are Distinguishing Signs Of Truly Gracious And Holy Affections.

- I. Truly gracious affections arise from divine influences and operations on the heart
- II. Their ground is the excellent nature of divine things, not self-interest
- III. They are founded on the loveliness of the moral excellency of divine things.
- IV. They arise from the mind's being enlightened to understand or apprehend divine things.
- V. They are attended with a conviction of the reality and certainty of divine things.
- VI. They are attended with evangelical humiliation.
- VII. They are attended with a change of nature.
- VIII. They are attended with the lamblike, dovelike spirit and temper of Jesus Christ
- IX. They are attended with a Christian tenderness of spirit.
- X. They have beautiful symmetry and proportion.
- XI. The higher they are raised, the more is a longing of soul after spiritual attainments increased.
- XII. They have their exercise and fruit in Christian practice

1. Christian practice and holy life is a sign of sincerity to others
2. Christian practice is the chief evidence to ourselves, much to be preferred to the method of the first convictions, enlightenings, comforts, or any immanent discoveries or exercises of grace whatsoever