

RESOLUTIONS I & 2:

The Glory of God

Original

1. Resolved, that I will do whatsoever I think to be most to God's glory, and my own good, profit and pleasure, in the whole of my duration, without any consideration of the time, whether now, or never so many myriads of ages hence. Resolved to do whatever I think to be my duty and most for the good and advantage of mankind in general. Resolved to do this, whatever difficulties I meet with, how many and how great soever.

2. Resolved, to be continually endeavoring to find out some new invention and contrivance to promote the aforementioned things.

Modernized

1. Resolved, that I will do whatever I think will bring God the most glory which is to my own good, profit, and pleasure for as long as I live. I will do these things no matter how long it takes me to do them. Resolved, that I will do whatever I think I must do that will provide the most good for mankind in general. Resolved, to do this no matter the difficulties or the severity of those difficulties.

2. Resolved, to continually try hard to find new ways to promote the things mentioned in Resolution 1.

THE FIRST TEN OF Edwards' Resolutions were written in one sitting, and this is a fitting first resolution to write in a list of seventy. I have grouped the first two together (and you will see various groupings throughout this book), because Edwards intended for them to be grouped together. The focal point is Resolution 1. The crux of his first resolution is the glory of God, and this really can be seen as an umbrella of sorts, over all the other resolutions. Although it isn't a restatement of the preamble of the last chapter, it is preamble-like in that it casts the overall vision for the resolutions. Plainly, we exist to glorify God. When we internalize

that, it sheds us of all of our silly self-importance. This resolution pairs well with the first question of the Westminster Shorter Catechism:

QUEST. What is the chief end of man?

ANS. Man's chief end is to glorify God, and to enjoy him forever.

That is our purpose, no matter who we are or what we do.

There are at least two noteworthy things for us in this resolution. First, notice how Edwards connects his own good, profit, and pleasure to the glory of God. This should be striking to us. There is superior pleasure, superior good, and superior profit to be found in the glorifying of God according to Edwards. Remember Edwards is young at the writing of these resolutions. So, is 19-year-old Edwards correct? Is pleasure, good, and profit something to be found in the Triune God? What does that even mean exactly?

The psalmist says, "Delight yourself also in the Lord, And He shall give you the desires of your heart" (Psalm 37:4). *Delight*. That is an interesting word. The idea behind it is the pampering or refreshing one's self or the taking of pleasure in something or someone. We may be onto something here that is so foreign to our church culture, because we have allowed godless hedonists to hijack words like pleasure, delight, happiness, and profit. The psalmist is telling us to refresh ourselves or take pleasure or pamper ourselves *in the Lord*. He is saying that to be in the Lord is *enjoyable*. Why don't we speak in this way anymore? Interestingly, the command to delight yourself in the Lord is followed by a promise: "And he shall give you the desires of your heart." What does a heart want that is delighted by the Lord? What does a heart want that finds pleasure, happiness, and profit in the Lord? That kind of heart wants more of what it possesses—it wants *the Lord*. The Holy Spirit-inspired psalmist says God will give himself to you.

Sadly, the experience and command of the psalmist can feel so foreign to us, because we have nurtured our sinfully bent wills in such a way that our pleasure seeking chases after our fleeting lusts and, instead of redirecting our desire for pleasure and focusing it on our pursuit of the Lord, we lump pleasure in with lusts and try to repent of them both. In reality, our repentance should include

a redirection of our pleasure. No longer do we pursue pleasure in the lusts of our flesh, but we commit ourselves to a *superior* pleasure—a better pleasure—a pleasure in the Triune God. Therefore, delight yourself in the Lord because that is glorifying to God. And glorifying him is the reason we exist. As you do this, you will find that God's glory and your good are inseparably intertwined:

And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to *His* purpose. For whom He foreknew, He also predestined *to be* conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover whom He predestined, these He also called; whom He called, these He also justified; and whom He justified, these He also glorified (Romans 8:28–30).

Truly, *all* things work together for good—for those who love God—who *belong* to God. He is using all things to conform us more into the image of his Son and the crescendo of that forming will be our glorification. Therefore, young Edwards was right. The glory of God and our good, profit, and pleasure are intertwined. Edwards was so impacted by that glorious reality that from a very young age, he resolved to be mindful of the pursuit. And he doesn't read, especially in his later years, to be rushed in this God-glorifying journey. He didn't care about expediency in this resolution—the aim was faithfulness in the pursuit of serious joy.

The second thing that is significant is that this resolution has three *micro* resolutions. The first, we have touched on, but we see that the other two are driven by the first. The second micro resolution Edwards wrote is that he resolved to do the most good for mankind. The third micro resolution is a commitment to perseverance despite obstacles. Edwards was not one that would easily give up. Even in his darkest moments, he sought to make spiritual progress. While I can't be certain that this is what Edwards had in mind, the entirety of the resolution and it having three micro resolutions certainly seems to indicate a mindfulness of what Calvin called the two tables of the law, which is a summary of the Ten Commandments (Exodus 20). The first table consists of the first four commandments (which could be summarized by Edwards'

resolution on the glory of God) and the last six commandments focus on our relationships with people (which could be summarized by Edwards' resolution to do the most good to mankind).

A warm and faithful heart that delights in the glory of the Lord will manifest itself in how you treat others. You will do what is most spiritually good for them. Therefore, this resolution is one focused on loving God and loving others—the first and second greatest commandment (Matthew 22:36–40).

These resolutions are a great start to our journey through the seventy. May we learn from Edwards and pursue superior pleasure in God that in turn makes us maximally beneficial to those God providentially puts in our path.