

Eusebeia

The influence and vision of Jonathan Edwards¹

John S. Piper

No dead teacher outside the Bible has influenced me more than Jonathan Edwards. His fingerprints are on everything I write and preach. My debt is huge. It is theological and spiritual and deeply personal. So my aim here is to honor him in this year which marks the 300th anniversary of his birth (October 5, 1703).

I think he would be most honored if I helped you see his great God and savor him and thus so show him supremely beautiful and valuable. And I think he would want me to say that when he and I speak of the supreme beauty and value of God, we mean all that God is for us in Christ. When I say God, I do not mean the Allah of Islam or the God of Christ-rejecting Israel (John 8:44). I mean the God you do not know and do not have if you do not have his Son, because he and his Son are One.

The greatest lesson I learned from Edwards was that God is shown to be most beautiful and valuable when his people delight in him above all else. So God is most glorified in you when you are most satisfied in him. Which means that you never have to choose between your greatest joy and his greatest glory. And it means that you should always pursue your greatest joy—for the glory of God.

FOOTNOTES

¹From John Piper "Sweet Sorrow: The Happy Root of Holy Living: Reflections on Seeing and Savoring God with Jonathan Edwards" (A talk given at The Jonathan Edwards Institute Annapolis, Maryland, July 2, 2003; http://www.desiringgod.org/library/topics/edwards/sweet_sorrow.html; accessed October 2, 2003). Used by permission.

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