

Tips on reading Edwards

- Vocabulary: “viz” = namely; “sensible” = aware; “surety” = a third party who fulfills the obligation of another.
- Typology: typology is the interpretation of Old Testament events, persons, and ceremonies as signs which prefigured Christ's fulfillment and new covenant with the apostolic church. King David is a type of Christ.
- Similes: “Christ is like a river”; Metaphor: “Christ is an ever flowing fountain”
- Sermon structure: Starts with the passage and then a short exegesis of the passage. Then three sections:

Doctrine: A proposition derived from the text: a single statement, a “theological Axiom, either consisting in the express words of Scripture, or flowing from them by immediate consequence.”

Uses: Next, the doctrine needed to be “established,” or proven to be in harmony with the rest of the Bible, and its general implications explained. The preacher would refute any objections that could be raised and point out the practical “uses” of the doctrine for consolation or correction.

Applications: While the “uses” were generally discussed in the third person, the “applications” dropped directly into the second person and allowed the preacher to ask whether the congregation had taken the “doctrine” to heart.

- Look for the three categories of hearers (similar to process of conversion): Happy pagans who are unaware of the true God (not many of these), Head knowledge who need to be awakened, Converted Christians.
- Ramean Logic affords the writer the ability to parse every point considered in great matriculation and with preciseness. In doing so, not only is the truth given to the saints for their edification, but objections are answered to the satisfaction of the Bible. In Ramean logic, a choice of alternatives was presented: is this or the opposite true? An inner guide (right reason) recognized which of two alternatives was true. The Puritans relied on Ramean logic. Here is a sample of a composite syllogism or Puritan argument:

Was the world created or not?

If not, it has no purpose or meaning; this is ridiculous. Therefore, the world was created. But created by God or by itself? It cannot have created itself (so reason tells us).

Therefore, God created the world. When reading JE look for what appear to be rhetorical questions.