

Diary - Tutor at Yale - 1724

by Jonathan Edwards

Jonathan Edwards reflects on his experiences and challenges as a Tutor at Yale, emphasizing the importance of mental clarity, prayer, and personal growth.

Scripture: Mark 16:12, Philippians 2:6-7, Colossians 1:15, Hebrews 1:3

Topics: "Christology", "Humility"

Description

The preacher delves into the concept of 'morphe,' emphasizing the nature and character of something, highlighting the essential form that never alters. Through examples like Jesus appearing in a different form after His resurrection, the preacher explains how 'morphe' signifies the unchanging essence of one's nature. The sermon explores how Jesus, existing in the form of God, demonstrated humility by taking on the form of a servant, without relinquishing His deity. By emptying Himself and becoming a bondservant, Jesus exemplified self-renunciation and the ultimate act of love for humanity.

Transcript

TUTOR AT YALE COLLEGE

Saturday night, June 6. This week has been a very remarkable week with me, with respect to despondencies, fears, perplexities, multitudes of cares, and distraction of mind: it being the week I came hither to New Haven, in order to entrance upon the office of Tutor of the College. I have now, abundant reason to be convinced, of the troublesomeness and vexation of the world, and that it never will be another kind of world.

Tuesday, July 7. When I am giving the relation of a thing, remember to abstain from altering either in the matter or manner of speaking, so much as that, if every one, afterwards, should alter as much, it would at last come to be properly false.

Tuesday, Sept. 2. By a sparingness in diet, and eating as much as may be, what is light and easy of digestion, I shall doubtless be able to think more clearly, and shall gain time; 1. By lengthening out my life; 2. Shall need less time for digestion, after meals; 3. Shall be able to study more closely, without injury to my health; 4. Shall need less time for sleep; 5. Shall more seldom be troubled with the headache.

Saturday night, Sept. 12. Crosses of the nature of that, which I met with this week, thrust me quite below all comforts in religion. They appear no more than vanity and stubble, especially when I meet with them so

unprepared for them. I shall not be fit to encounter them, except I have a far stronger, and more permanent faith, hope and love.

Wednesday, Sept. 30. It has been a prevailing thought with me, to which I have given place in practice, that it is best sometimes to eat or drink when it will do me no good, because the hurt, that it will do me, will not be equal to the trouble of denying myself. But I have determined to suffer that thought to prevail no longer. The hurries of commencement, and diversion of the vacancy, have been the occasion of my sinking so exceedingly, as in the three last weeks.

Monday, Oct. 5. I believe it is a good way, when prone to unprofitable thoughts, to deny myself and break off my thoughts, by keeping diligently to my study, that they may not have time to operate to work me to such a listless frame. I am apt to think it a good way, when I am indisposed to reading and study, to read of my own remarks, the fruit of my study in divinity, etc., to set me agoing again.

Friday, Nov. 6. Felt sensibly, somewhat of that trust and affiance, in Christ, and with delight committing of my soul to him, of which our divines used to speak, and about which, I have been somewhat in doubt.

Tuesday, Nov. 10. To mark all that I say in conversation, merely to beget in others, a good opinion of myself, and examine it.

Sabbath, Nov. 15. Determined, when I am indisposed to prayer, always to premeditate what to pray for; and that it is better that the prayer should be of almost any shortness, than that my mind should be almost continually off from what I say.

Sabbath, Nov. 22. Considering that bystanders always copy some faults, which we do not see ourselves, or of which, at least, we are not so fully sensible; and that there are many secret workings of corruption, which escape our sight, and of which, others only are sensible: Resolved, therefore, that I will, if I can by any convenient means, learn what faults others find in me, or what things they see in me, that appear any way blame-worthy, unlovely, or unbecoming.

Friday, Feb. 12, 1725. The very thing I now want, to give me a clearer and more immediate view of the perfections and glory of God, is as clear a knowledge of the manner of God's exerting himself with respect to spirits and mind, as I have of his operations concerning matter and bodies.

Tuesday, Feb. 16. A virtue, which I need in a higher degree, to give a beauty and luster to my behavior, is gentleness. If I had more of an air of gentleness, I should be much mended.

Friday, May 21. If ever I am inclined to turn to the opinion of any other sect: Resolved, Beside the most deliberate consideration, earnest prayer, etc., privately to desire all the help that can possibly be afforded me from some of the most judicious men in the country, together with the prayers of wise and holy men, however strongly persuaded I may seem to be, that I am in the right.

Saturday, May 22. When I reprove for faults, whereby I am in any way injured, to defer, till the thing is quite over and done with; for that is the way both to reprove aright, and without the least mixture of spirit or passion, and to have reproofs effectual, and not suspected.

Friday, May 28. It seems to me, that whether I am now converted or not, I am so settled in the state I am in, that I shall go on in it all my life. But, however settled I may be, yet I will continue to pray to God, not to suffer me to be deceived about it, nor to sleep in an unsafe condition; and ever and anon, will call all into

question and try myself, using for helps, some of our old divines, that God may have opportunities to answer my prayers, and the Spirit of God to show me my error, if I am in one.

Saturday night, June 6. I am sometimes in a frame so listless, that there is no other way of profitably improving time, but conversation, visiting, or recreation, or some bodily exercise. However it may be best in the first place, before resorting to either of these, to try the whole circle of my mental employments.

Nov. 16. When confined at Mr. Stiles', I think it would be of special advantage to me, with respect to my truer interest, as near as I can in my studies, to observe this rule. To let half a day's, or at most, a day's study in other things, be succeeded, by half a day's, or a day's study in Divinity.

One thing wherein I have erred, as I would be complete in all social duties, is in neglecting to write letters to friends. And I would be forewarned of the danger of neglecting to visit my friends and relations, when we are parted.

When one suppresses thoughts that tend to divert the run of the mind's operations from religion, whether they are melancholy, or anxious, or passionate, or any others; there is this good effect of it, that it keeps the mind in its freedom. Those thoughts are stopped in the beginning, that would have set the mind agoing in that stream.

There are a great many exercises that, for the present, seem not to help, but rather impede religious meditation and affections, the fruit of which is reaped afterwards, and is of far greater worth than what is lost; for thereby the mind is only for the present diverted; but what is attained is, upon occasion, of use for the whole lifetime.

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