

Must We Believe?

Jonathan Edwards and Conscious Faith in Christ

By Jeffrey C. Waddington

Introduction

PRELIMINARY REMARKS

It has always been a challenge to understand a historical figure like Jonathan Edwards. For instance, George Marsden, in explaining why he was offering another biography of Jonathan Edwards in 2003, noted that

Because he became such a monumental figure, it has often been difficult to find the person behind the monuments. Further, as a leading controversialist in a vigorous religious movement, Edwards invites strong reactions. He has many ardent admirers, many detractors, and many who attempt to rehabilitate him by making him over into their own images.¹

What is true of Edwards the person is equally true of his thought. Edwards was a complex person and thinker. Consider the various interpretations and assessments that have been offered over the years. Peter Thuesen has suggested that such divergent readings stem from Edwards' age and his own thought,

All his life, Edwards was torn between Puritan traditionalism, with its roots in the premodern heritage of Western Christian thought, and Enlightenment rationalism, with its critical assumptions that would eventually in modern skepticism. These opposing forces did not overcome him: to his dying day he remained an eclectic thinker who resisted unambiguous identification with either traditional or modern forms of thought.²

Whether Thuesen is correct or not, the complexity of Edwards' thought must be granted. However, it does seem to be the case that some interpretations of Jonathan Edwards fall beyond the pale of legitimate readings. One such reading is offered by Anri Morimoto who

has offered a creative reading of Jonathan Edwards' soteriology in his *Jonathan Edwards and the Catholic Vision of Salvation*.³ It needs to be readily granted up front that Edwards was a subtle and complex thinker and is therefore capable of being misinterpreted. In this essay I hope to interact sympathetically and critically with this work of Morimoto and will endeavor to show some of its inadequacies. Morimoto is an engaging writer, but he has offered a faulty interpretation of Edwards' vision of salvation by failing to understand him within his own Reformed tradition and context. Morimoto's ecumenism and inclusivism have led him to try and make Jonathan Edwards resemble a John Hick or Karl Rahner born out of time.⁴ Edwards comes across much

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1. George Marsden, *Jonathan Edwards: A Life* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003), 2.

2. Peter J. Thuesen, "Edwards' Intellectual Background," in *The Princeton Companion to Jonathan Edwards*, ed. Sang H. Lee (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005), 16–17.

3. Anri Morimoto, *Jonathan Edwards and the Catholic Vision of Salvation* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1995). Morimoto has helpfully summarized his argument in the article, "Salvation as Fulfillment of Being: The Soteriology of Jonathan Edwards and Its Implications for Missions," *The Princeton Seminary Bulletin* 20/1 (1999): 13–23.

4. And behind Karl Rahner would lurk the ghost of Karl Barth as well. For Barth, as for Rahner, unbelievers just have to be shown that God has already saved them in the work of Christ, especially in the incarnation.

more “enlightened” than he could have been given his biblical and Reformed commitments.

INITIAL CONCERNS & OUTLINE

My approach to this matter will be to interact with elements of Anri Morimoto’s influential work. First, I will look at the grid through which he looks at Edwards, his distinction between the so-called “Protestant” and “Catholic” concerns which center on the sovereign initiative of God in salvation and the ontological transformation of the believer respectively. Then I will look at Morimoto’s understanding of Edwards’ “dispositional

5. Morimoto did his doctoral work on Edwards under the supervision of Sang Hyun Lee at Princeton Theological Seminary. Lee’s interpretation of Edwards’ metaphysics in terms of his rejection of Aristotelian substance ontology in favor of a dispositional ontology provides the foundation on which Morimoto builds his edifice. See Sang H. Lee, *The Philosophical Theology of Jonathan Edwards* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1988. Revised ed. 2000). However, Morimoto’s views should not be attributed to Lee as if there were no differences between the two men. For instance, see Lee’s remarks in his editorial introduction to *The Works of Jonathan Edwards: Vol. 21/ Writings on the Trinity, Grace, and Faith* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003), 46–57.

6. Morimoto’s scheme is also problematic on the Protestant side in that it reduces the Reformation to this one issue: God’s sovereign initiative in salvation. Quite obviously, even with those who were concerned to affirm this fact, there were other equally significant and compelling matters. Morimoto fails to reckon with the fact that a jealous concern with God’s sovereignty in salvation is not a concern shared by all branches of Protestantism. Additionally, Morimoto seems to assume that sanctification *just is* ontological transformation. We will return to this topic below.

7. Morimoto seems to subsume all of salvation under the category of ontological transformation (i.e., sanctification). The very point of dispute in the Reformation was that Roman Catholicism had blended justification, which is a forensic matter, with sanctification, which is about transformation. However, this still leaves the nature of sanctification undefined. Traditionally, in Protestantism, sanctification is about *moral*, not ontological, transformation. The human person has been traditionally understood to be comprised of substance, habit, and act. It is the habit that is fallen in sin and that is renewed or transformed in regeneration and sanctification. And habits were understood to stand on the accidents side of the substance/accident divide. Adam was a human being before the fall and a human being after the fall. The difference was that before the fall Adam was holy and after the fall he was sinful. So making Edwards hold to a Thomistic soteriology, which does stress an ontological transformation (if I rightly understand Thomas Aquinas), loads the deck at the start of the discussion. If one is uncomfortable with this understanding of human nature, one can also follow the scheme articulated by Albert Wolters in his *Creation Regained* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2005) where he distinguishes between the *structures* and *direction* of creation. The Fall effected the direction but not the structures of creation.

8. See John Bombaro, “Beautiful Beings: The Function of the Reprobate in the Philosophical Theology of Jonathan Edwards” (PhD diss., University of London, 2002).

ontology,”⁵ and determine whether, assuming the accuracy of this reading of Edwards, Morimoto interprets that metaphysics properly. Finally, I will look at how Morimoto understands Edwards’ doctrine of justification—“God’s crowning his gifts”—as not so much about salvation from damnation but as the opportunity for an individual with a holy disposition to exercise that habit publically and so to *affectionally* enjoy membership in the ecclesial community.

I will conclude that Morimoto places Edwards within a foreign and much more contemporary context than he himself actually inhabited and that Morimoto’s schematic of “Protestant” and “Catholic” concerns is problematic. While certain Protestants are certainly concerned with affirming God’s initiative in the work of salvation, this can hardly be said to be the Protestantism’s only concern since the Puritan movement (for instance) could be understood as a movement about sanctification.⁶ And Augustinians within the Catholic tradition undoubtedly would like to affirm God’s initiative in salvation. Morimoto has confused Edwards’ Reformed concern for sanctification with a Thomistic soteriology of ontological transformation.⁷ Nor does Morimoto properly understand Edwards’ dispositional ontology in that he confuses ontological dispositions with dispositional properties.⁸ Finally, Morimoto misunderstands Jonathan Edwards on justification by *reading into* him, by means of wishful thinking it seems, the notion that all that is really necessary for salvation is possession of a holy disposition, whether or not it is exercised. The great leap occurs when Morimoto thinks all receive this holy disposition at or near birth and that the atonement achieved salvation for all. Justification then is seen as an added benefit that not all will enjoy since not everyone will have his or her holy disposition actualized or exercised in interaction with the means of grace. Additionally, Morimoto has neglected Edwards’ Bible-centeredness which would have prevented Morimoto from abstracting Edwards from his Protestant and Reformed theological context and placing him within either a tenuous Medieval Catholic or modern inclusivist context.

I. Morimoto’s Understanding of Jonathan Edwards & Protestant and Catholic Concerns

PROTESTANT CONCERN

As I have already indicated, Morimoto interprets Jonathan Edwards within what I take to be an *inclusive*

scheme that he divides into Protestant and Catholic concerns.⁹ Jonathan Edwards is understood to creatively integrate the thinking of both Peter Lombard and Thomas Aquinas on the nature of the Holy Spirit's operations on man in regeneration.¹⁰ Lombard is said to represent the Protestant concern and Thomas the Catholic. Concisely put, the Protestant concern for Morimoto is the stress on God's sovereign initiative, from first to last, in man's salvation. God not only initiates salvation, he sustains a man every step of the way. Morimoto illustrates the Protestant concern with reference to Peter Lombard who held that the new habit or disposition of the believer at work from the time of regeneration is the Holy Spirit. In the language of the time, the habit involved *uncreated* grace.

To say that the gift of the infusion in human beings (*donum*) is the Holy Spirit itself who is the giver (*donator*) necessarily implies taking a distinctive attitude toward a theological controversy of several centuries in Western Catholic theology. In the twelfth century, Peter Lombard claimed that charity is not created but is the Holy Spirit itself dwelling in the human mind. This indwelling Holy Spirit is called *gratia increata* (uncreated grace).¹¹

In Jonathan Edwards, the Protestant concern with God's sovereign initiative is indicated in his modified continuous creationism.¹² This doctrine, which pertains primarily to God's providence, quite obviously has implications for the doctrine of salvation. Edwards asked what the difference was between God's act of creation and his acts of providence wherein he upholds his creation in existence. Edwards thought there was little significant difference between God's first act, which we call creation and God's subsequent acts which we call providence.¹³ That is, creation is not self-sustaining and Edwards understood providence to be but God's bringing into existence *ex nihilo* every moment the creation he had made. This is a radical defense of God's sovereignty that, as I have already noted, has implications for salvation. If we are continuously recreated in our being, how much more so, then, is the work of salvation all of God?

But Sang Hyun Lee has modified Edwards' continuous creation belief with his notion of a dispositional ontology so that God does not recreate his creation anew willy-nilly but has himself established dispositional laws that predetermine that certain things will happen when these laws intersect or interact with one another. These laws, which exist between unreality and actualized reality, still possess reality of a sort.

Here is a dispositional conception of the world. The created world abides as a system of permanently fixed

general laws or tendencies that God has established and according to which he causes actual existences (actual ideas) in time and space. The world, therefore, exists abidingly in the mode of *virtuality* or *real possibility* that is a midpoint between pure potentiality and pure actuality. That there is a general law means that God has determined that he would cause an actual existence of such and such a nature at a certain time and at a certain point in space. The virtual being of the world, in other words, has a mode of reality because general laws, as has been shown, are ontologically real principles even apart from their manifestations in actual applications. And, as God causes the actual existences (actual ideas) according to these general laws, the world is constantly being moved from the mode of virtuality to full actuality.¹⁴

These dispositions could be understood along the lines of the natural laws in science except that they

9. Morimoto, *Vision*, 59–69 and 115–121. Morimoto understands Edwards as embodying this inclusive scheme in that he wedded the Lombardian Protestant concern and Thomistic Catholic concern.

10. The weight of Edwards' sympathies, as Morimoto sees it, were with Thomas. See Morimoto, *Vision*, 14.

11. Morimoto, *Vision*, 42.

12. Strictly speaking, Edwards tied two doctrines together which ought to be distinguished. First there is continuous creationism where God is said to create the universe anew every moment. Then there is occasionalism which affirms that God is the *only* agent in the universe. Sang Lee's dispositional ontology modifies Edwards' continuous creationism. For more on Edwards' occasionalism, see Oliver Crisp, "How 'Occasional' Was Edwards's Occasionalism?" in *Jonathan Edwards: Philosophical Theologian*, ed. Paul Helm and Oliver Crisp (Burlington: Ashgate, 2003), 61–77 and *Jonathan Edwards and the Metaphysics of Sin* (Burlington: Ashgate, 2005), 130–135.

13. See Jonathan Edwards, "Miscellanies" 525 in *The Works of Jonathan Edwards: Vol. 18/The "Miscellanies" 501–832*, ed. Ava Chamberlain (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000), 68–70. One way to distinguish between creation and providence is that creation is directly and solely the activity of God whereas God works in and through (concurrently) secondary causes in providence. Notice that providence still requires God's active involvement with his creation, but in a different mode. And this understanding of providence does not negate God's miraculous activity wherein he works outside of his normal providence.

14. Lee, *Philosophical Theology*, 63. Note these words in the quotation, "The virtual being of the world, in other words, has a mode of reality because general laws, as has been shown, are *ontologically real principles even apart from their manifestations in actual applications*," which Morimoto will develop in terms of soteriology later in this discussion. It should be noted that not all Edwards scholars are convinced of Lee's reading of Edwards' metaphysics. See the persuasively argued case of Stephen Holmes in "Does Jonathan Edwards Use a Dispositional Ontology? A Response to Sang Hyun Lee" in *Jonathan Edwards: Philosophical Theologian*, 99–114 and the recent article by Oliver Crisp, "Jonathan Edwards's Ontology: A Critique of Sang Lee's Dispositional Account of Edwardsian Metaphysics," *Religious Studies* 46 (2010): 1–20.

are not merely descriptive, but prescriptive. They not only suggest what will be likely, but what *must* happen by God's foreordination. Dispositional laws stand between God and his creation, but are themselves upheld by God.¹⁵ This modification in our understanding of Edwards' doctrine of continuous creation implies, for Morimoto, a modification of Peter Lombard's notion that the holy disposition in the human soul (i.e., regeneration) simply is the Holy Spirit acting within it.¹⁶

CATHOLIC CONCERN

Morimoto understands Edwards as modifying his

15. This *distinct* existence apart from God of these law-like dispositions is what modifies Edwards' doctrine of continuous creation and from what I can gather, accounts for the continuity of existence in creation.

16. God upholds the dispositional laws, but they have a *distinct* existence apart from God, and so, as we shall see, Edwards' understanding of regeneration is understood to involve both uncreated grace (i.e., the Holy Spirit) and created grace (the holy disposition or habit in the regenerated individual) and so Edwards embodies in his theology both Protestant and Catholic concerns.

17. I should note that there is a difference of opinion within Edwards scholarship concerning whether a holy disposition is the Holy Spirit himself or a habit created by the Holy Spirit. Michael McClenahan argues that a holy disposition is a created grace inasmuch as this formulation preserves the integrity of the human nature. See his *Jonathan Edwards's Doctrine of Justification in the Period Up to the First Great Awakening* (D. Phil. Oxford University, 2006), 281–299, esp. 282n760 and 294n796. Sang Lee is himself unsure whether a holy habit is of the nature of created or uncreated grace as Edwards' language, from his perspective, can be read both ways. See his remarks in the editorial introduction to *WJE* 21, 46–57. For a discussion of dispositions that explains their place in the post-Reformation era, see Richard A. Muller's *Post-Reformation Reformed Dogmatics*. 4 vols. (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2003), 1:354–359. For a representative discussion of the habits in more recent Reformed systematics, see Herman Bavinck's *Reformed Dogmatics/Vol. 4: Holy Spirit, Church, and New Creation*. ed. John Bolt, trans. John Vriend (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2008), 92–94.

18. Morimoto, *Vision*, 42.

19. Again, reference to the discussion of habits or dispositions in Calvin or the post-Reformation theologians like Turretin and Van Mastricht would have been useful.

20. It should be noted that what Morimoto refers to here as the Lombardian motif of regeneration/sanctification as uncreated grace is affirmed in an earlier age by St. Augustine. See J. Patout Burns' illuminating entry on grace in *Augustine Through the Ages: An Encyclopedia*, ed. Allan D. Fitzgerald (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999), 391–392. Augustine articulates his view in his *Genesis ad Litteram in On Genesis: A Refutation of the Manichees; Unfinished Literal Commentary on Genesis; The Literal Meaning of Genesis in The Works of Saint Augustine: A Translation for the 21st Century*, trans. and ed. Edmund Hill (Hyde Park: New City Press, 2002), 1.5.10; 2.8.16–19; and 8.25.47 and in *De Trinitate in On the Trinity: The Works of Saint Augustine: A Translation for the 21st Century*, trans. Edmund Hill, ed. John E. Rotelle (Brooklyn: New City Press, 1991), 5.11.12–5.16.17; 12.14.25–12.15.25; and 15.17.31–15.19.37.

commitment to the Lombardian motif of uncreated grace in regeneration due to his dispositional ontology. Edwards added Thomas Aquinas to Peter Lombard and so embraced both created and uncreated grace.¹⁷ Thomas exemplifies the Catholic concern with salvation as ontological transformation. And Edwards' legitimate concern for what in Protestant circles is understood to involve sanctification is interpreted in Thomistic categories. It is not enough that God maintain sovereign initiative in salvation, salvation must now also involve the creation of a holy disposition or habit that is distinct from the Holy Spirit. There must be an intermediate habit between the individual and the Holy Spirit and this is what Thomas referred to as "created grace" to distinguish it from uncreated grace that is the Holy Spirit himself. Thomas posited the existence of such an entity as the holy habit (created grace) in order to preserve the freedom and integrity of the human individual. If all that grace involved was the Holy Spirit, it could be said that the human individual had nothing to do with regeneration.¹⁸ Jonathan Edwards' integration of Lombardian and Thomistic motifs allows him, according to Morimoto, to embrace something like the doctrines of created and uncreated grace so that he embodies within his own theology both the Protestant concern for maintaining the truth of God's sovereign initiative in salvation and the Catholic concern with the ontological transformation of the believer. Edwards, then, is both Lombardian and Thomistic.

ASSESSMENT

As interesting as Morimoto's discussion of a Protestant and Catholic concern is, I find that it is too problematic to be acceptable on its own terms. The division is too artificial and reductionistic. First, is it not artificial to paint the discussion of Edwards in terms of a Medieval distinction without reference to any intervening theological developments, say stemming from the Reformation and the post-Reformation Reformed Scholastic eras?¹⁹ I am not suggesting that the Medieval discussions are irrelevant to Edwards, for he was familiar with many concerns discussed at length by Medieval theologians. Nor am I suggesting that there is no chain of influence from the Medieval doctors through the Reformers and Reformed Scholastics to the Puritans to Edwards.²⁰ But Morimoto fails to show the connections. Had Morimoto examined the pertinent primary and secondary literature he would have discovered that the Reformed Scholastics were concerned with preserving *both* God's sovereign initiative in salvation and the

integrity of human nature.²¹ I am also suggesting at the same time that the Protestant and Catholic concerns are delineated in such a way as to allow Morimoto to make progress with his own inclusive or universalist agenda rather than dealing with the materials in their own context. The Protestant concern he articulates, does not, in my opinion, fairly reflect the full genius of orthodox Reformed theology. Not being adept at Roman Catholic theology, I am not in a position to access the other at length, although my suspicion is that Morimoto reflects a more Catholic emphasis.²² In other words, Morimoto has abstracted Edwards from his own Protestant and Reformed context and dropped him into an earlier discussion, and he elides over essential differences between similar discussions within Catholic and Protestant circles. At the very least, Morimoto ought to have demonstrated a connection between Edwards on the one hand and Peter Lombard and Thomas Aquinas on the other hand on this question rather than jumping back and forth from Edwards to the Middle Ages. Rather, he builds on suggestive language, formal similarities, and allusions as he endeavors to fill in lacunae. Between Lombard and Thomas on the one hand, and Edwards on the other, lies the Protestant Reformation and the rise of Protestant Scholasticism, not to mention the Puritan movement. Morimoto appears to do his best to minimize these differences. And before this article is through we shall see why.

Second, the division between Protestant and Catholic concerns is reductionistic in that the concerns could hardly be said to capture the only major concerns of either tradition. Is it true that Protestantism is only concerned with the issue of God's sovereign initiative in salvation? Certainly not. It may be, however, that Catholicism is primarily concerned with the ontological transformation of an individual. But is that Edwards' concern? I am afraid that Morimoto may be forcing an inadequate grid onto the material under consideration in his examination of Jonathan Edwards.²³ Does Edwards concern himself with God's sovereignty in salvation? Certainly, yes. Is he concerned with regeneration and sanctification? Yes. Does he embrace the Thomistic notion of ontological transformation? That is another question. Edwards affirmed the Protestant doctrine of justification, which is a forensic declaration of righteousness in the sight of God and he clearly distinguished that from sanctification which is about moral transformation. Moral transformation does not equal ontological transformation.²⁴ As I think about it, it seems Morimoto has adapted primarily Catholic categories with enough of an overlap with Protestantism to

allow him to later minimize or eliminate essential Protestant and Reformed (not to say, biblical) insights into the work of redemption. This may be a creative juxtaposition of texts, but it does not pass for sound theology.

II. Morimoto's Understanding of Jonathan Edwards' Dispositional Ontology

SANG LEE'S "NEW PERSPECTIVE" ON JONATHAN EDWARDS

Sang Lee of Princeton Theological Seminary has produced a groundbreaking study of Jonathan Edwards' ontological breakthrough in his *The Philosophical Theology of Jonathan Edwards* in which Lee details Edwards' reconception of Aristotelian substance metaphysics. Edwards is understood to provide a middle way or third path between the Scholastic acceptance of Aristotle's ontology and the empiricism of John Locke and David Hume.²⁵ Aristotle had developed the idea of habit or disposition in terms of his ontology of substance and accidents in which habits or dispositions existed on the accidental side of the substance/accidents divide. A substance was said to exist prior to any accidents that adhered to it. In terms of anthropology, man was understood to be comprised of substance, habits, and acts.²⁶

21. If one consults Muller, *PRRD* 1:354–359, it becomes clear that the Reformed Scholastics inherited their terms from the Medieval discussions, although they desired to protect the doctrine of justification, for instance, in their consideration of anthropology. There was little new here in terms of the Medieval discussion except that Protestant doctrinal distinctives were upheld. The Reformed Scholastics held to the Aristotelian metaphysic, which, with regard to human nature, was made up the substance of the human nature, overt acts, and in between these the habits or dispositions.

22. As the title of the book would suggest, and as he indicates in his summary article of the book, "Salvation as Fulfillment," 13–14.

23. For instance, Reformed and Lutheran Protestants are surely interested in the forensic nature of justification, but Morimoto reduces that concern to both insignificance and absurdity. While he recognizes that imputation is among the benefits of union with Christ, it gets lost in a discussion of the existence of goodness in an individual before regeneration. Morimoto suggests, then, that there is no real difference between Catholics and Protestants since the imputation of Christ's righteousness is a non-issue when you focus on regeneration or sanctification. That is, having dismissed the forensic issue, we can now come to recognize that justification is an appendage to ontological transformation. And if we see that, then Protestants and Catholics are not that far apart. Where have we seen this slight of hand before?

24. Again, see the helpful discussion in Bavinck, *RD*, 4:94.

25. Lee, *Philosophical Theology*, 17–46.

26. This is the anthropology of the post-Reformation Reformed Scholastics and Herman Bavinck.

Habits or dispositions, then, were understood to be real virtues (i.e., powers or skills) that enabled a person to perform acts or functions more adeptly. A habit could be learned, such as skill like sculpting. Empiricist philosophers, on the other hand, reduced habits to customary ways of doing things such that habits had no reality of their own.²⁷

Lee understands Edwards as moving away from the empirical reduction of habits to mere custom and drawing closer to Aristotle in his understanding of the reality of habits or dispositions. Edwards, though, makes no full retreat to Aristotelian substance ontology even though he accepts a realist view of dispositions. Edwards develops an active ontology of dispositions and their relations that is neither the substance ontology of Aristotle nor the “substance” ontology of someone like John Locke who still affirmed the unseen substance or “a supposed I know not what.”²⁸ Edwards’ dispositional ontology combines what for Aristotle were two distinct things, substance and habit. A disposition is *both* active and real. In Edwards’ teleological philosophical theology, a disposition is a law-like tendency toward a goal. “Therefore, habit is an active law that prescribes that if certain conditions are given, a certain type of action would certainly result.”²⁹ There is unreality, virtual reality, and actualized reality. Dispositions by their very nature tend toward actualization. Dispositions move from virtual to actualized reality when they interact with other dispositions. Various dispositions form a nexus, an intersection, and bring a thing into existence. A person, for instance, *just is* a nexus of dispositions, and both God and man share this dispositional reality.³⁰

It is the law-like tendency of dispositions to tend

toward their actualization that leads Lee to modify the scholarly consensus regarding Jonathan Edwards’ continuous creationism. God does not recreate his creation anew haphazardly as the traditional doctrine of continuous creation would suggest. Dispositions as a virtual reality maintain their own integrity even though they are not actualized. Since they tend toward their own actualization they determine what event or thing will result from the nexus or intersection of dispositions. In this way they differ from traditional laws of nature which are merely descriptive. Dispositions are prescriptive.³¹ God, of course, is not subordinate to these dispositions, since he continuously upholds them by his sovereign power. It is this fact that indicates that dispositional ontology modifies the traditional doctrine of continuous creation. Creation is indeed recreated each moment by God’s sovereign power, but the way he does it is by his own freely ordained means of dispositions that move from virtuality to actuality. The important thing to remember here is that a virtual disposition is no less real than an actualized disposition, although its mode is different from its actualized form.³²

MORIMOTO’S USE OF LEE’S RECONCEPTUALIZATION OF EDWARDS’ ONTOLOGY

Morimoto did his PhD dissertation, on which his book is based, under the tutelage of Sang Lee and he sees himself as expanding his mentor’s work. Given the reality of virtual dispositions, Morimoto believes that a person can possess a disposition or habit even if that disposition never actualizes itself. As he interprets Edwards, Edwards believes that a person can possess a holy disposition, a disposition to believe in God, apart from its exercise.³³ And he thinks that Edwards thought that *that* was the only thing necessary for a given individual’s salvation.³⁴ Given that infants can possess a holy disposition and be saved and then die in infancy, it must be the possession of the disposition *alone* that determines whether one is a believer or not, not the act of putting one’s faith in Christ and making profession of one’s faith and uniting to a visible community of faith. These are not essential for faith, as the case of infants who die before they are able to exercise their disposition indicates.³⁵

Morimoto understands Edwards in a similar manner with regard to his treatment of the salvation of Old Testament saints.³⁶ Since there were real saints in the Old Testament, who couldn’t have explicit faith in Christ, since he hadn’t yet come, it must have been the possession of a holy disposition to believe that God accepted as

27. Lee, *Philosophical Theology*, 25ff.

28. John Locke, *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, ed. Alexander Fraser Campbell (Chicago: University of Chicago/Encyclopedia Britannica, 1992), 2.23.15.

29. Lee, *Philosophical Theology*, 35.

30. Lee, *Philosophical Theology*, notes that God’s being is re-conceived at 90ff and human nature is re-conceptualized at 170ff.

31. Lee, *Philosophical Theology*, 51ff.

32. Lee, *Philosophical Theology*, 42–46.

33. Morimoto understands Edwards to be asserting this in his “Miscellanies” 27b, found in *The Works of Jonathan Edwards/Vol. 13: “Miscellanies” a–500*, ed. Thomas A. Schafer (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1994), 213–214.

34. For a discussion of “Miscellanies” 27b within the historical context of Edwards’ own spiritual pilgrimage, see Brandon Withrow’s “Full of Wondrous and Glorious Things”: The Exegetical Method of Jonathan Edwards In His Anglo-American Context” (PhD diss. Westminster Theological Seminary, 2007).

35. Morimoto, *Vision*, 31.

36. Morimoto, *Vision*, 33.

the only necessary thing to their experiencing salvation. And Morimoto asks whether this could not be the case with all those outside the visible church as well. Since it is not the exercise of explicit faith in Christ that is the necessary thing to salvation, then just maybe there is a basis for a wider hope for the non-Christian world after all. The disposition to believe, the holy disposition, is real (i.e., present in an individual) whether it is actualized or not. Virtual dispositions possess their own integrity and so do not need to be exercised to be “real.” Morimoto is not so anachronistic to suggest that Edwards himself held to this “wider hope.” In other words, Morimoto is pointing to *suggestions* in Edwards’ theology that move beyond the New England pastor’s own soteriologically exclusive formulations.³⁷

ASSESSMENT

Whether Sang Lee has offered an accurate and fair reading of Jonathan Edwards’ ontology is beyond the purview of this chapter, but Morimoto’s use of the dispositional model has problems of its own.³⁸ A major omission of Morimoto is his failure to so much as note Edwards’ teleology. That is, Edwards’ dispositional ontology tends toward a goal.³⁹ Dispositions need to be exercised. God himself tends toward ever expansive communications of himself, *ad intra*, in a Trinitarian fashion, and *ad extra* in his creation of the world.⁴⁰ This can be seen in the pattern of emanation and re-manation. God communicates himself to his creation, and the creation responds with knowledge and love in return. Morimoto’s notion of an individual’s possession of a holy disposition and yet not exercising it is problematic on that point alone.

As John Bombaro has pointed out in his work on Edwards on this point, Edwards’ own consideration of an infant’s possession of a holy disposition did not lead him to embrace a wider hope for unbelievers. On the contrary, because of Edwards’ doctrine of teleology, he concluded that there must be only a few who are saved in infancy. Why is this? Does Edwards deny God’s ability to save an infant apart from demonstrable exercises of faith? Not at all. But since the point of possessing a holy disposition was to exercise it, through a demonstrable profession of explicit faith in Christ and by uniting to a community of faith, he thought infants by their very nature could not fulfill this essential purpose for dispositions. The purpose of faith was that it be publicly expressed and bring glory to God. Infants are, of course, unable to do this. Few infants, then, so Edwards thought, would be saved *as* infants.⁴¹

Additionally, Morimoto seems to have misunderstood a crucial distinction between ontological dispositions and dispositional properties.⁴² An ontological disposition, which Edwards held to be constitutive of an individual, must be actualized or exercised if it exists at all. It cannot remain in a perpetually virtual state. A dispositional property, on the other hand, can be said to exist in a virtual state, and be real, yet remain unexercised. Edwards speaks of the virtue of courage along these lines. It is possible for an individual to possess the dispositional property or characteristic of courage without ever having to exercise or actualize it. It may be that the circumstances just never happen to arise in which that particular virtue is called upon to be demonstrated. But that does not imply, for Edwards, that unactualized courage was no courage at all. In this instance, courage exists in a real, but virtual state.⁴³

The question that arises is whether Edwards considers a holy disposition, the disposition to believe, to be an ontological disposition or a dispositional property? Which is it? If a holy disposition is in fact a dispositional property, then it could be possessed, and yet never get exercised. An individual could possess this holy disposition and yet, due to circumstances, never exercise it. What, according to Morimoto, did Edwards believe would bring this holy habit to exercise? What would move it from a virtual to an actual state? Edwards, we are told, held that the means of grace would trigger the exercise of the disposition to believe. But this exercise need never occur. The only thing necessary is the possession of the disposition.⁴⁴

The problem with Morimoto’s discussion is that Edwards did not think of the holy disposition in terms of a dispositional property or characteristic that might or might not get exercised. As an ontological disposition, it had to exercise itself. That is why Edwards wrestled with infant salvation. An infant by its very nature couldn’t exercise its holy disposition by expressing explicit faith in Christ nor by joining the church. However, Morimoto is only partially correct when he understands that

37. One is tempted to say that Morimoto’s reading of Edwards here provides Morimoto with a soteriologically inclusive *trajectory*. The term “trajectory” is, of course, notoriously ambiguous.

38. I would refer the reader to the Holmes and Crisp articles previously referenced.

39. I owe this insight to John Bombaro, “Beautiful Beings,” n.p.

40. See Edwards in “Miscellanies” 104 in *WJE* 13, 272–274.

41. Bombaro, “Beautiful Beings,” n.p. See also Edwards, “Miscellanies” 816 in *WJE* 18, 526.

42. I owe this distinction to Bombaro, “Beautiful Beings.”

43. Edwards, “Miscellanies” 702, *WJE* 18, 283–309.

44. Morimoto, *Vision*, 14ff.

Edwards holds that the holy disposition is normally brought to demonstrable exercise in conjunction with the means of grace.⁴⁵ The problem for Morimoto is that

45. Morimoto, *Vision*, 62.

46. By this I mean to note that dispositions are still upheld by God's immediate power.

47. See Jonathan Edwards' discussion of practice in *The Works of Jonathan Edwards/Vol. 2: Religious Affections*, ed. John E. Smith (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1959), 383–461.

48. See my "Jonathan Edwards's 'Ambiguous and Somewhat Precarious' Doctrine of Justification?" in *WTJ* 66/2 (2004): 357–372; and in revised form in *Resurrection and Eschatology: Theology In Service to the Church—Essays in Honor of Richard B. Gaffin, Jr.*, ed. Lane G. Tipton and Jeffrey C. Waddington (Phillipsburg: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing, 2008), 478–498. In this essay I challenge this kind of reading, first put forth by Thomas A. Schafer in 1951. In that article, Schafer suggested that Edwards undermined his own expressed affirmation of the doctrine by (1) grounding the legal in the real, that is, grounding the imputation of Christ's positive righteousness (active obedience) in union with Christ; (2) placing sanctification before justification; and (3) practically affirming the medieval notion of formed faith. I answer Schafer by pointing out that Edwards' grounding of imputation in union with Christ places him safely within the confines of the Reformed tradition. As for putting sanctification before justification, that can be accounted for either by pointing out that for Edwards, sanctification was a broad term that covered the same territory as regeneration (which is another fluid term), which again, is standard for Reformed teaching following the Synod of Dordt, or which is more likely, Edwards can be understood as standing within the vein of John Calvin and his teaching about the *duplex gratia Dei* or two-fold grace (justification and sanctification) obtained in union with Christ. Justification and sanctification, according to this model, are concurrent or simultaneous. For evidence of Edwards' use of this model, see his sermon "None Are Saved by Their Own Righteousness" in *WJE* 14, 340–341. And regarding the third element, Edwards did not embrace formed faith since true faith was always accompanied by love. But that true faith, with regard to justification did not include love in the equation. True faith has its own integrity and is complete considered apart from love, even though love always accompanies true faith. I confirm this with reference to Francis Turretin's *Institutes of Elenctic Theology*, trans. George Musgrave Geiger, ed. James T. Dennison, 3 vols. (Phillipsburg: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing, 1993–97). I concluded, therefore, that Edwards had not compromised his doctrine of justification, and so was not, as Schafer suggested, a quasi-Catholic. This brief discussion of both Edwards and Calvin has not gone without challenge. See Tom Wenger's "The New Perspective on Calvin: Responding to the Recent Calvin Interpretations," *JETS* 50/2 (June 2007): 311–328 and George Hunsinger's "Dispositional Soteriology: Jonathan Edwards on Justification," *WTJ* 66/1 (Spring 2004): 107–20 and the related article "An American Tragedy: Jonathan Edwards on Justification" *Modern Reformation* 13/4 (July/August 2004): 18–21; and Michael Horton's *Covenant and Salvation: Union with Christ* (Louisville: WJKP, 2007), 288–289. For a response defending the *duplex gratia Dei* model in Calvin, see Richard B. Gaffin, Jr., "Biblical Theology and the Westminster Standards," *WTJ* 65/2 (Fall 2003): 165–179, and in revised form in *The Practical Calvinist: An Introduction to the Presbyterian & Reformed Heritage: In Honor of Dr. D. Clair Davis* (Fearn, Ross-Shire: Christian Focus [Mentor], 2002), 425–44, and "Union with Christ: Some Biblical

Edwards saw this as a necessary nexus or intersection (although, properly speaking, not a *causal* nexus) of dispositions. The possession of a virtual disposition, while a real possession, must give way to the periodic exercise of that habit in practice, which included, although was not limited to, an explicit profession of faith in Christ and the joining of a church community.

Morimoto has misconstrued Edwards because he has failed to note Edwards' teleology and the essential distinction Edwards made between ontological dispositions, which were constitutive of an individual, and dispositional properties which could perpetually exist in virtual form. And he has misunderstood the occasional (non-causal) nature of the dispositional nexus.⁴⁶ The intersection, or nexus of Edwards' teleology and his understanding of holy dispositions meant that no one could possess them without their being publicly actualized. This point is, of course, borne out in Edwards' last sign of truly religious affections: practice.⁴⁷

III. Morimoto's Understanding of Jonathan Edwards on Justification

MORIMOTO'S MINIMIZATION OF THE FORENSIC ELEMENTS OF JUSTIFICATION

Like other scholars before him, Morimoto understands Jonathan Edwards to have practically undermined his own Protestant doctrine of justification, despite the fact that one of his best known discourses thoroughly dealt with the subject.⁴⁸ According to Morimoto, Edwards

and Theological Reflections" in *Always Reforming: Explorations in Systematic Theology*, ed. A. T. B. McGowan (Leicester, Intervarsity Press, 2006), 271–288, and *By Faith, Not By Sight: Paul and the Order of Salvation* (Waynesboro: Paternoster, 2006); Lane G. Tipton, "Union with Christ and Justification" in *Justified in Christ*, ed. K. Scott Oliphint (Fearn, Ross-Shire: Christian Focus [Mentor], 2007), 23–49; and Mark Garcia's *Life in Christ: Union with Christ and Twofold Grace in Calvin's Theology*. Studies in Christian History and Thought (Milton Keynes: Paternoster, 2008); "Imputation and the Christology of Union with Christ: Calvin, Osiander, and the Contemporary Quest for A Reformed Model," *WTJ* 68/2 (Fall 2006): 219–251; and "Christ and Spirit: The Meaning and Promise of A Reformed Idea," *Resurrection and Eschatology*, 424–442. For an exposition of Calvin and the *duplex gratia Dei* model that is not directly involved in this debate, see Cornelis Venema's *Accepted and Renewed in Christ* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 2007). For persuasive arguments to the effect that Edwards falls within Reformed orthodoxy in his understanding of justification, see McClenahan, "Justification in the Period," Withrow, "Full of Wondrous and Glorious Things" and most recently, Craig Biehl's *The Merit of Christ's Obedience to God's Rule of Righteousness in the Theology of Jonathan Edwards* (Jackson: Reformed Academic Press, 2009) and the literature cited there. See Edwards'

buried his affirmation of the Protestant doctrine of justification with his emphasis on sanctification or the Thomistic notion of salvation as ontological transformation. In other words, Edwards' affirmation of justification died the death of a thousand qualifications.⁴⁹ The forensic or imputational nature of justification was not central for Edwards. And since his discourse on the subject did not explicitly target Roman Catholicism, but Arminianism, it may be the case that he had absolutely no intention to refute a Catholic understanding of the doctrine.⁵⁰ So between Edwards' obvious interest in sanctification on the one hand, and his not explicitly attacking Roman Catholicism on the other, Edwards comes across as quasi-Catholic.

Edwards, Morimoto tells us, understood justification as "God's crowning his own gifts."⁵¹ Justification is not about salvation from God's wrath (and its consequent damnation), since possession of a non-exercised holy disposition is all that is necessary for that. But if justification is not about how a sinful individual obtains a right standing before a holy God, as it has been traditionally understood in Protestant circles, what exactly is it about? Justification, according to Morimoto, is about the actualization of the affectional experience an individual who already possesses a holy disposition can have if he or she interacts with the right triggering mechanism. That triggering mechanism is, as we have already seen, the means of grace (the Word, sacraments, and prayer). The exercise of the disposition is not essential to its existence according to this reading of Edwards, although it is an added benefit. It might be said that the actualization in this instance concerns the holy disposition's well-being (*bene esse*) rather than its being (*esse*) as such. The chief benefit of the exercise of a holy disposition is involvement in a redeemed community.

Missions and evangelism are not hampered or hindered on this account since it ought to be the goal of Christians to bring others who possess this holy disposition into affectional enjoyment of it. The goal of missions is no longer the imperialistic overturning of traditional non-Christian religions, since even non-Christians possess the holy disposition, but the triggering of the affectional and communal fellowship that one can experience in the church. Who, one might ask, possesses this holy disposition and how did he get it? According to Morimoto, the atonement procured salvation for *everyone* so that *everyone* possesses a holy disposition.⁵² There is indeed a wider hope and a wider mercy on God's part. This holy habit or disposition to believe, which everyone possesses, is received at or near birth. Morimoto realizes that this understanding of the

matter is not explicit in Edwards, but he finds hints towards this way of thinking in Edwards' dispositional ontology as he understands it.

ASSESSMENT

There are several problems with Morimoto's discussion of Jonathan Edwards' doctrine of justification, which appear to stem from problems with the scheme of Protestant and Catholic concerns and his reading of dispositional ontology. Morimoto's treatment of Edwards' doctrine of justification is faulty in its minimization of the forensic nature of Edwards' doctrine. Quite frankly, Edwards grounds the imputation of Christ's positive righteousness to the believer in union with Christ, which is a characteristic Reformed way of understanding of it. It is true that Edwards never treats imputation in an isolated way since justification is a blessing distinct, yet inseparable from, sanctification. This, however, does not mean that Edwards failed to seriously deal with the forensic nature of imputation. Morimoto's tactic is to reduce the whole of the Reformation's concern for this to a theological absurdity. If Morimoto's assessment of the Reformation concern for the forensic nature of justification is correct, then the Reformation itself was much ado about nothing, a tempest in a teapot. Since Edwards shared the Reformed emphasis on the centrality of union with Christ (especially as formulated by Calvin) which brought with it the two-fold grace of justification and sanctification he has a full and proper concern for justification. Morimoto reflects the general tendency to treat union with Christ as essentially (ontologically) transformative (i.e., involving sanctification) in which a forensic element has to somehow find space or to which it gets tacked on as an

discourse on justification in *The Works of Jonathan Edwards/Vol. 19: Sermons and Discourses, 1734–1738*, ed. M. X. Lesser (New Haven: Yale University, 2001), 147–242. Morimoto does not agree with Schafer on every point, but he shares with Schafer the desire to abstract Edwards from his Protestant and Reformed context by placing him in a more contemporary ecumenical setting.

49. Morimoto, *Vision*, 78–130. Edwards could not possibly have been serious about the forensic nature of justification because, as Morimoto sees it, he was committed to the Thomistic view of salvation as ontological transformation. This would be a fruitful area for further research.

50. Morimoto, *Vision*, 74–78. This argument is historically naive. One of the concerns that Reformed divines had with Arminianism was that it was a major move backwards toward Roman Catholicism.

51. Morimoto, *Vision*, 71ff. This is an expression coined by St. Augustine.

52. Bombaro, "Beautiful Beings," n.p.

afterthought. This was never the position of Calvin, it was not the position of Edwards, nor is it the position of Reformed churches now.

Morimoto's assumption that since Edwards explicitly targeted Arminianism in his justification discourse and made no mention of Catholicism that he was therefore not in disagreement with Catholicism at this point is a facile and overly imaginative reading that owes more to wishful thinking than real understanding. Since Edwards was a Christian theologian and Catholicism does retain some elements of orthodoxy at points (e. g., Trinitarianism, Chalcedonian Christology), there will be formal similarities. As long as Catholicism retains any semblance of Christianity there will be likeness to Protestantism at points. Morimoto's scheme of Protestant and Catholic concerns is guilty at this point of operating on the unstated assumption that there must be no similarities between the two streams. Edwards, however, made his views about Roman Catholicism quite clear in such places as his sermon series on the history of the work of redemption and in his writings related to the book of Revelation.⁵³ There he explicitly states that the pope is the antichrist. And, as we have already seen, Morimoto misunderstands Edwards to agree with Thomas Aquinas on the idea of ontological transformation. Given Morimoto's error in understanding Edwards' dispositional ontology and his confusion of ontological dispositions with dispositional properties, I think it is safe to say that Edwards did not understand justification merely as God's "crowning his gifts" in the sense of merely actualizing a real but virtual holy disposition. As we have seen, for Edwards, a holy disposition was an ontological disposition and so tended toward actual exercise. In fact, it had to issue in true religious affections. And this exercise of religious affections is not merely a matter of public demonstration only, as in the case of the exercise of courage in a dangerous situation.

53. See, *The Works of Jonathan Edwards/Vol. 7: A History of the Work of Redemption*, ed. Clyde Holbrook (New Haven: Yale University, 1989), and *The Works of Jonathan Edwards/Vol. 5: Apocalyptic Writings*, ed. Stephen J. Stein (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1977), respectively.

54. Van Til picked up this expression from G. C. Berkouwer. See Cornelius Van Til, *Christianity and Barthianism* (Philadelphia: P&R, 1962), 157–60; and Berkouwer, *Man: The Image of God*. Studies In Dogmatics series. trans. Dirk W. Jellema (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1962), 89–101.

55. Bombaro, "Beautiful Beings," n.p. and despite the suggestion of Gerald McDermott, *Jonathan Edwards Confronts the Gods* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), who has manfully argued for a "strange, new Edwards" open to the salvation of non-Christians.

56. Morimoto, *Vision*, 157–163 and "Salvation as Fulfillment," 19–23.

With regard to Morimoto's understanding that the atonement procured salvation for everyone, I suspect that he has mistaken the common operations of the Holy Spirit for his special or saving operations. That is, the Holy Spirit does indeed act *upon* unregenerate men to enable them to exercise their talents and gifts, but this is a common function. The Holy Spirit's acts *within* regenerate men involve his indwelling the believer and acting after the manner of a holy disposition, all the while remaining God and not getting absorbed into the personality or being of the individual believer.

For Morimoto, justification involves a transition of a holy disposition from virtual reality to actualized reality. Whether an individual expresses explicit faith in Jesus Christ and joins the church is irrelevant for salvation. There is, for Morimoto's Edwards, as Cornelius Van Til said of Karl Barth, no transition of the believer from wrath to grace in his personal history.⁵⁴ There is as well, a notable lack of discussion about election in Morimoto's work.

Jonathan Edwards, despite the best efforts of Anri Morimoto to suggest otherwise, is no Karl Barth, Karl Rahner, John Hick, or Clark Pinnock born out of time.⁵⁵ He retains all the ingredients of soteriological exclusivism. Where in Edwards do we find Morimoto's idea that everyone possesses a holy disposition but that it is only actualized in some and not in others? Where do we read that the atonement procured the saving operations of the Holy Spirit for all people? We find it nowhere.

Conclusion

Anri Morimoto has offered a very creative interpretation of Jonathan Edwards' soteriology. The book's title does clue us in to its contents. Morimoto has performed what I consider a typical postmodern hermeneutical move. By juxtaposing Edwards with Lombard and Thomas on the one hand, and with Rahnerian concerns on the other, Edwards is made out to affirm what he had no intention of affirming within his own lifetime. This is problematic scholarship. Abstract Edwards from his context and place him in another context with enough similarities to make the shift look plausible and it is amazing what can be produced. Morimoto's creative genius appears in filling in the interstitial spaces between the different texts. Morimoto himself is committed to an inclusive or universalistic soteriology and he wants to enlist the aid of Jonathan Edwards.⁵⁶

But to do this he must use a little theological slight of hand. He must devise a scheme in which he ostensibly

deals with Protestant and Catholic concerns, but when all is said and done, these concerns appear truncated and then forced upon Edwards rather than arising from his materials themselves. What we have, then, is a procrustean bed. We either stretch Edwards out of all recognizable shape or we saw off what doesn't fit with our perceived notion of what he should have believed. Was Edwards concerned with maintaining the truth of God's sovereign initiative in salvation? Certainly he was. Did he consider sanctification an integral part of Christian experience? Yes, there is no doubt about that. But did he conceive of either justification or sanctification in terms of ontological transformation? It is doubtful at best.

Does Morimoto properly understand the dispositional ontology he sees in Edwards? Assuming, for the sake of argument, Lee's formulation is correct, apparently not. His failure to note the difference between ontological dispositions and dispositional properties wreaks havoc with his idea that a person may possess a holy disposition his whole life yet never exercise it. Nor is Morimoto convincing when he affirms that the atonement procured a holy disposition for everyone so that all possess it whether they exercise it or not. Here, as I have already suggested, it appears as though he has confused the common operations of the Holy Spirit upon unregenerate men with his saving operations within regenerate men.

One final matter to note is Morimoto's failure to recognize Edwards' biblio-centricity or fixed focus on the Word of God, both living and written. A holy disposition always tends toward its own actualization or exercise and that exercise occurs through interaction with the Word of God.⁵⁷ The necessary nexus for the exercise of true religious affections (the actualization of the holy disposition) is the triggering mechanism of the means of grace. But he failed to note that the faith that always comes by the hearing of the Word is a *saving* faith. It is not mere window dressing. It is not a nice option that can be so easily dispensed with. The fact is that some believe, but many do not and this involves more than the mere failure of a virtual disposition to actualize itself. Where a holy disposition fails to be actualized in conjunction with the means of grace (the Word, sacraments, and prayer), there just is no holy disposition at all.

So is possession of a holy disposition all that is necessary for salvation? No and yes. No, if we mean by that what Morimoto wants to affirm, namely that everyone possesses a holy disposition and that some exercise it and others do not since the question of salvation is already settled for all. No, if we understand justification

to be just a matter of the affectional enjoyment of our holy disposition in a faith community in this life. However, we can answer yes if we understand possession of a holy disposition to be another way of talking about regeneration. Regeneration by the Holy Spirit infallibly joins a person to Christ and yields faith and all the other saving benefits of redemption. Do we have to believe on Jesus Christ in order to be saved? In a word, yes.⁵⁸ Was Edwards an inclusivist? No. Was he a quasi-Roman Catholic? No. In the eighteenth century Jonathan Edwards had the courage to be Protestant.⁵⁹ ■

57. The opening words of Edwards' "Miscellanies" 27b indicate this and yet Morimoto fails to note it. See *WJE* 13, 213–214.

58. I recognize that those elect who die in infancy or who are subject to mental incapacity will not necessarily publicly or explicitly express faith in Christ. But these are exceptions to the rule.

59. Here I am alluding to David Wells' recent work *The Courage to Be Protestant: Truth-Lovers, Marketers, and the Emergent in the Post-modern World* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2008).