

Jonathan Edwards on Property, Liberty, and the National Covenant

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This article examines the thinking of the eighteenth-century theologian Jonathan Edwards on property and liberty. It argues that for Edwards this entailed certain roles for government and that all of these considerations are best understood in what was called the national covenant tradition. It goes on to suggest the usefulness of this tradition for contemporary understandings.

Introduction

In July 1736, when Northampton, Massachusetts, was suffering the effects of drought, Jonathan Edwards informed the anxious farmers that rain had not come because “God is displeased,” for he had seen the “corruption in our hearts.” Repentance and reformation were therefore in order. Seven years later, when worms devoured the crops, Edwards again knew why: God was judging Northampton’s stinginess to its poor. “If a people would but run the venture of giving their temporal good things” to God through the poor, “it would be a *sure* way to ... [have] those Judgments Removed that would destroy them & to have a plenty of them bestowed.”¹

Most theologians today would think this claim to know how God was dealing with a whole society either presumptuous speculation or, more likely, simply wrongheaded theology. Why? It has been a presumption since the Enlightenment that revelation and tradition tell us how God deals with *individuals* but not with whole *peoples or societies or nations*.² But this presumption is in fact a recent innovation in the history of Christian thought. This is why Edwards’s claim to

understand the ways of God with a whole people surprised no one at the time, for this was standard fare in New England's Reformed orthodoxy. In a tradition stretching back to the Reformation and before, God was conceived as entering into covenant with a people or nation, and blessing or punishing that people in proportion to their fidelity to the terms of what they called the *national* covenant. As John Winthrop had told the New England founders in 1620, the Lord would "expect a strict performance of the articles contained in" his covenant with them. "If we shall neglect the observation of these articles . . . the Lord will surely break out in wrath against us, be revenged of such a perjured people, and make us know the price of the breach of such a covenant."³ This is the central idea of the national covenant, which is rooted in the observation that God not only dealt with all Israel as a people in Old Testament times, but that he has been dealing in similar ways with whole societies ever since—and in ways strikingly *different* from the ways he deals with individuals.

In this article, I will argue that Edwards's reflections on property and liberty can best be understood within the national covenant tradition and that they can provide unique perspective on markets and morality today. The eighteenth-century theologian wrestled with perennial questions about self-interest, the common good, markets, and freedom. His use of the national covenant might seem alien to today's political and economic debates, but its underlying vision was endorsed by leading twentieth-century thinkers. This article recommends its reconsideration.

The national covenant had no *salvific* value or reference to life *beyond* the grave but could help interpret what happened in *this* life. Hence Indian attacks in New England as well as crop failures and a diversity of other natural disasters—all of course matters of this world—were attributed to failure to keep the national covenant with God—a covenant *enacted* in this world and *administered* in this world. Nearly all seem to have believed that, in the words of a seventeenth-century Puritan leader, "in all Ages since their [the Jews'] national Rejection, God has had, in some Country or other, a peculiar people owning his revelation and their Covenant Engagement to him." Since New England was the latest peculiar people, its calamities were "Signs of his Displeasure." Evangelicals and liberals alike preached that God will "favor a righteous nation" and punish nations "for every act of unrighteousness."⁴ The eighteenth century brought little abatement of covenantal rhetoric.⁵

Edwards, like his predecessors, believed that most of Northampton's and New England's fortunes, both good and bad, could be explained by reference to God's covenant with those societies. Successes were unmerited blessings, results of God's mercy, perhaps even warnings to repent. (Blessings as rewards for good behavior were so rare as to hardly be worth mentioning.) Defeats and disasters

were visitations of God's anger, once again invitations to repent. Both good and bad fortune were directed by a sovereign God in order to motivate a people to keep the terms of the covenant. Consequently, no major event in a nation's history was without meaning. Subjects might chafe under what they considered to be the severity of God's discipline, but they were spared the despair that comes from the belief that history is meaningless.

The national covenant put all thinking about property and liberty in a framework that many moderns—who think that if there is a God he must deal with individuals only and not whole societies—find it nearly impossible to understand. In Edwards's thinking, which was common for the mid-eighteenth century, property and liberty both have everything to do with God. Even if *my* property and *my* liberties are threatened by rapacious men or governments, those men and governments might well have been instigated by the wrath of God against my society.

But if national covenant was the celestial framework apart from which property and liberty could not be conceived by Edwards and most New Englanders of his era, there were also more prosaic understandings of government that the Puritan and Reformed traditions before him had developed. Naturally, these too shaped his conceptions of property and liberty. For Edwards there were seven purposes of government. In words echoing his Reformed tradition, he preached that magistrates were to “act as the fathers of the commonwealth with that care and concern for the public good that the father of a family has for the family, watchful against public dangers, [and] forward to improve their power to promote the public benefit.”⁶ Their first three functions were to secure property and protect citizens' rights, and—toward that end—maintain order. In words reminiscent of Hobbes, Edwards said that without the strong arm of government, citizens would tear one another apart and life would become “miserable and intolerable.”⁷

Edwards defended private property just as his Puritan predecessors had. William Perkins preached that “the fruition and possession of goods and riches . . . are the good blessing of God being well used.”⁸ According to Richard Sibbes, “[W]orldly things are good in themselves and given to sweeten our passage to Heaven.”⁹ Another Puritan, William Ames, whom the Puritans quoted more often than Luther or Calvin, wrote that “ownership, and differences in the amount of possessions, are ordinances of God and approved by him, Proverbs 22:2 and 2 Thessalonians 3:12.”¹⁰ He added that all things were held in common “at the beginning of the world and also after the flood,” but things soon changed. Private property is founded “not only on human but also on natural and divine right.” There is justice “in the lawful keeping of the things we have.”¹¹ So when the Massachusetts merchant John Hull discovered that his foreman had stolen

his horses, he remarked, "I would have you know that they are, by God's good providence, mine."¹²

Edwards extended Puritan convictions about property rights to market economics, but not in complete *laissez-faire* fashion. As Mark Valeri has shown, Edwards stressed the pursuit of virtue within the market, contending that merchants should not always raise their prices to get the highest possible profit margin. But they should be able to make a healthy profit by pricing their wares "according to current taste and fashion." To deny them this right would lead to a kind of socialism, which is inimical to human nature. In his words, it "would in Effect make all things common," which is "not agreeable to the design of the world," that is, to nature.¹³

Related to these first two functions—(1) protecting property and (2) keeping order—government was also (3) to ensure justice. For Edwards, this was the proportional return of moral deserts. Evildoers would have evil returned to them in proportion to their evil deeds. Similarly, justice would prevail when persons who love receive the proper returns of love.¹⁴

But there was another kind of justice related to economic freedom. Edwards believed that the spread of "knowledge and trade" would help advance prosperity and "social union on a universal scale." Yet there must be limits: He castigated avaricious businessmen and "self-legislating" businessmen. Nevertheless, he did see a link between an emerging worldwide market and greater possibilities for sociability and flourishing.¹⁵ Hence the market, if Christian virtue were to leaven its spread, could help produce a kind of economic justice and social network.

A fourth responsibility of government for Edwards was national defense. Military force was justified when the "rights and privileges" of a people were threatened, or when the "preservation of the community or public society requires it." If "injurious and bloody enemies" molest and endanger a society, it is the duty of government to defend that society by the use of force.¹⁶ Not surprisingly, most New Light leaders—those who favored the kind of revivalism that Edwards preached—and his New Divinity protégés and their congregations, joined the Patriot ranks during the run-up to and course of the Revolution.¹⁷

The next two functions of government referred not to evils which magistrates are to prevent but to positive goods—(5) promoting a common morality and (6) a minimum level of material prosperity. The fifth function was to "make good laws against immorality," for a people that fails in morality would fail eventually in every other way. Rulers therefore were not to "countenance vice and wickedness" by failing to enact legislation against it or enforcing what had been legislated. Governments were also (6) to help the poor. Edwards believed the state (in his case, a town committee in Northampton) had a responsibility

to assist those who were destitute for reasons other than their own laziness or prodigality—but it also meant helping the children of the lazy and prodigal.¹⁸ Civil welfare is necessary because private charity (here Edwards had in mind the charity of churches) is unreliable: “In this corrupt world [private charity] is an uncertain thing; and therefore the wisdom of legislators did not think fit to leave those that are so reduced upon such a precarious foundation for a subsistence.” Because of the natural selfishness of all human beings, even the regenerate, it is therefore incumbent upon the Christian to support the state’s efforts to help the destitute.¹⁹

The seventh and final major item in Edwards’s job description for the magistrate was religious. The good ruler was expected to give friendly, but distanced, support to true religion. During a revival the magistrate should call a day of prayer or thanksgiving. But he should not try to do much more than that. In Edwards’s list of the magistrate’s qualifications in his “Strong Rods” sermon (1748) at his uncle John Stoddard’s funeral, piety was only a subordinate trait, not listed among the five chief qualifications; and in the context it is mentioned only for the purpose of administering “justice and judgment . . . to bear down vice and immorality.” In his private notebooks Edwards reminded himself that the civil authorities were to have “nothing to do with matters ecclesiastical, with those things that relate to conscience and eternal salvation or with any matters religious as *religious*.” He would not brook, in other words, any magistrate telling his parishioners what church to attend or telling the pastor what to preach. For it belongs to the people—“not the legislators”—to decide whether they are bound to obey ecclesiastical laws.²⁰

On this score Edwards was no innovator. Both evangelicals and liberals in Edwards’s era insisted that the magistrate support religion and morality, and none insisted, as had their seventeenth-century predecessors, that civil government enforce correct doctrine. Religious leaders in the early and mid-eighteenth-century only asked the magistrate to take care that “religion be upheld and that God is worshipped, and by suppressing all that tends to root out religion from among them.” They had come a long way from Calvin, who suggested the magistrate interfere even in ecclesiastical matters to prevent idolatry and blasphemy, and ensure the teaching of orthodox doctrine.²¹

Edwards considered some entanglement with religion by government to be inevitable; in those circumstances, the magistrate was bound to favor the interests of religion. This was obligatory for civil as well as religious reasons. “It is for the civil interest of a people not to be disturbed in their public assemblies for divine worship, that is, it is for their general peace, quiet and pleasure, etc. in this world.”²² Thus Edwards did not favor any strict separation of religion and

state. He would have considered such a position naïve and necessarily injurious to religion. In his mind, the religious and civil interests of a society were woven together in a seamless garment so that the attempted separation of one from the other would damage both. Not only was religion necessary for morality, which in turn was essential for a healthy society, but the dynamics of the national covenant required the state to promote true religion. For a society's neglect of religion would bring immorality and injustice—and therefore the wrath of God. Hence it was only prudent for civil government to ensure the free practice of true religion, for by the latter the civil prosperity of society was also promoted. This was the link between the national government and liberty, of which religious liberty was paramount. If government suppressed religious rights of worship and practice, it not only undermined social order by encouraging moral disorder, but it also risked incurring the wrath of God.

In his use of the national covenant, Edwards went even further than the Puritans. For example, even in times of spiritual prosperity, he sometimes used the covenant to invoke self-examination. Times of religious renewal, he warned, should not necessarily be interpreted as signs of divine favor. They might instead be signals of coming judgment and destruction. The “revival” that was the early church in the first century brought exciting renewal, but it was a forewarning of the judgment that was to come less than forty years later. God's goodness is meant to lead to repentance, so revival should cause citizens to search their hearts and fear for their future, both temporal and eternal.

Hence judgment was a prominent theme in Edwards's sermons on public days. He repeatedly excoriated New England's impiety, social contention, the venality of corrupt politicians and their cynical use of religion, and sins of the flesh, such as excessive drinking and fornication. But these and all other sins were subsumed by the fundamental sin of ingratitude. That is, sins of impiety, contention, injustice, venality, and sensuality were simply various manifestations of an underlying ungratefulness to God for the unparalleled covenant mercies showered upon New England. Ultimately it was this attitude that caused God's anger. New England had been given the greatest of civil and religious privileges, yet its people had arrogantly abused them. They were guiltier than Sodom and Gomorrah, for if those towns had received the same blessings they certainly would have “awakened . . . and reformed.” Indeed, because of its unprecedented blessings, New England was guiltier than any other people in history. Those blessings made the colony more nearly parallel to Israel than any other people on earth, but this was cause for alarm, not congratulation. For Israel was a “whore” and a “witch,” and her children were “bastards”—but New England even more so. In 1747 Edwards told a Scottish correspondent that New England

was on the verge of committing “the unpardonable sin against the Holy Ghost.” Two years later he declared that New England was worse than Pharaoh, who responded in part to some of God’s judgments despite having fewer means of grace. Since New England’s means were greater, its guilt would be greater. And, as with Pharaoh, New England’s obstinacy would result in “utter destruction.”²³ This meant that God might even entirely forsake his covenant with her. In fact, considering the enormity of her sins, it was a wonder that New England had not been exterminated already.

For Edwards, then, private property and civil liberty were precious gifts of God. Edwards knew from his reading Ames at Yale that the magistracy was only an ordinance of man but the ministry was from God.²⁴ Thus for Edwards the prospect of government telling the church how to practice its faith was a sign of divine judgment. For a human institution to tell a divine institution how it would order its affairs was a frightening omen. The national covenant had been violated, and the nation could expect only wrath.

Can Edwards help us with today’s debates about the free market and the public order? About government’s encroaching threats to religious liberty? I think he can.

First, the market: Rusty Reno has recently charged that global capitalism lacks sufficient “consolidating dynamics.”²⁵ Market logic, in his view, dominates every sphere of life, reducing everything to a matter of free choice. The result is loss of common purpose and social solidarity. The radical liberty demanded by the free market undermines social cohesion and Christianity itself because even faith becomes a private choice that doesn’t need anyone else.

Edwards’s freedom is a liberty bounded by and toward God’s law. It is bound by divine law because, as we have seen, the Christian businessman is bound by charity, consideration of the common good. He is not to pursue profit at any price. On the other hand, Edwards also saw the potential of the market using self-interest to promote the public good. So there was a dialectical relationship between the market and economic freedom. The former should not be unduly restricted by government because the state seldom recognizes the creative power of the market to bring unforeseen benefits to society. But businessmen are also to work within the law of love.

Liberty works *toward* God’s law. That is, Edwards was in the Augustinian tradition in seeing freedom as the ability to do God’s will, not the liberty to do whatever one wants. His famous and powerful treatise *Freedom of the Will* (1754) argued that true freedom is the power of the affections to reach their goals.²⁶ The good man will have the power to reach his goal of moral and religious goodness, while the bad man has the power to fulfill his evil desires. In other words, we are limited by our affections—or as Augustine would put it, by our loves. We

are *bound* by our loves—love for God at the expense of self, or love for self at the expense of God. In both cases, we are *determined* by those loves, which moderns might call our deepest desires. But freedom, then, is simply the ability to fulfill those desires. The freedom of the good man is the power to do good, which is God’s will. In the larger scheme, he is not free to do bad consistently and over the long haul. The freedom of the bad man is the ability to pursue his evil desires. But he is not free to do good consistently and over the long haul—not apart from grace.

Edwards believed the state should support religion, or at least get out of the way of the churches, so they could fulfill their calling, which was to preach the gospel and administer the sacraments. This freedom of the churches was necessary to the health of society because only the gospel multiplies moral virtue in a way that counteracts the natural attrition of virtue in the absence of the gospel. In other words, gospel revivals are necessary to provide the quantum leap of virtue needed for resupply after normal times when church declension produces only natural—as opposed to supernatural—virtue.²⁷ And moral virtue is necessary for private families and society to prosper. Without that moral virtue even the best constitution would be of no avail in the long run. On this Edwards would have agreed with the Founders. Or more accurately, this is the part of Edwards’s legacy that was appropriated unwittingly by the Founders, even if the Founders also drew on classical sources for this theme. Edwards would have added that, when there are times in which the best efforts of the state’s best leaders come to no avail, and political and social ruin seem to be around the bend, it may be time for corporate repentance. For while leaders and people are looking at one another to cast blame, they should be looking up, asking where they have failed the divine covenant, and whether they are beginning to experience divine wrath.

Is Edwards’s appeal to the national covenant hopelessly anachronistic? Is it an antiquarian relic impossible for modern thinkers to fathom, much less relate in credible ways to politics and economics today? Not according to some prominent modern thinkers. H. Richard Niebuhr, for example, the Yale theologian of the mid-twentieth century, suggested that the rise of Marxism in the early twentieth century was divine judgment on the injustices and class interests of “Christian” communities. Niebuhr added that the dust storms that ravaged the American prairies in the 1930s were “signs of man’s sinful exploitation of the soil.”²⁸

Wolfhart Pannenberg was a leading Lutheran theologian of the twentieth century who also taught something like a national covenant. A native German who had been conscripted by the Hitler Youth in the closing days of World War II, Pannenberg wrote that the destruction of Germany during the war “may have

been” an act of divine judgment on the German nation for its persecution and attempted annihilation of the Jewish people.²⁹

Niebuhr and Pannenberg saw patterns in history—God dealing with whole peoples—akin to what another modern—Abraham Lincoln—saw. Lincoln is well-known for proclaiming that the American Civil War was God’s judgment on North and South alike:

And, insomuch as we know that, by His divine law, nations like individuals are subjected to punishments and chastisements in this world, may we not justly fear that the awful calamity of civil war, which now desolates the land, may be but a punishment, inflicted upon us, for our presumptuous sins, to the needful end of our national reformation as a whole People?³⁰

Lincoln believed, as did Niebuhr and Pannenberg, that pervasive social sickness is sometimes a sign of divine judgment, and that only divine restoration—which Edwards called a revival and awakening—would avail. Only this kind of spiritual renewal would produce the public virtue needed to cure the cancers destroying a society.

This is where national covenant intersects with current debates over liberty and property. Patrick Deneen has recently asked if the purpose of the government is merely the protection of freedom for life, liberty, and property, as he has characterized Madison’s and Jefferson’s ideals for the American republic.³¹ Or is it what Deneen has described as the classical view, in which the foremost aims of government are public-spiritedness and the common good rather than the protection of individual differences?

Edwards would have answered yes to both questions. Both sets of aims are proper, and neither is sufficient without the other. Madison and Jefferson are right to insist that the state should protect private property and liberty—religious, political, and economic. But without freedom for religion, which alone will inculcate moral virtue, political and economic freedom by themselves will eventually erode the social order. Therefore, the state should aim also at common moral and thus religious aims, for without religion there will be no lasting morality. To be moral means to focus on the common good and not just my own good. It also means common agreement on basic moral principles, which the Christian tradition (and Edwards) has called natural law. Without these basic agreements in the public square, or without public debate about these that would lead to a majority public consensus, the nuclear family will crumble. Since society is built on the family, society will then also start to dissolve. It will be under the wrath of God.

The only way out is religious revival, Edwards would say. And for that to come, the church must pray for it.³² This is the only way for a society to restore

its vision of property and liberty—by having its virtue renewed in spiritual awakening. This is why, he would suggest, any society whose conception and practice of property and liberty have been corrupted must reconsider the national covenant tradition.

Notes

1. Sermon on Deuteronomy 28:12 (July 1736); Sermon on Malachi 3:10–11, (July 1743), 2, Jonathan Edwards Sermons (manuscripts), Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University, New Haven, Connecticut. All sermons cited here are manuscript sermons from the Beinecke collection unless otherwise noted. Small portions of this article have been adapted from chapters 1 and 4 of McDermott, *One Holy and Happy Society: The Public Theology of Jonathan Edwards* (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1992).
2. Theologians, particularly since the 1960s, have tended to regard it as presumptuous and inevitably leading to idolatry of the nation. This way of thinking was heightened after the Vietnam War, which most intellectuals thought was a terrible mistake. They wondered where the idea came from that saw the United States as a “redeemer nation” whose mission it was to bring its political salvation (the American form of democracy) to the rest of the world. See, for example, Ernest Tuveson, *Redeemer Nation* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980).
3. John Winthrop, “A Model of Christian Charity,” in *The Puritans in America: A Narrative Anthology*, ed. Alan Heimert and Andrew Delbanco (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1985), 90–91. For other examples of use of the national covenant among the first generation, see Thomas Hooker, “The Danger of Desertion,” in *Thomas Hooker: Writings in England and Holland, 1626–1633*, ed. George H. Williams et al. (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1975), esp. 230–32; George William Hooke, “New Englands Teares for Old Englands Feares” (London: John Bothwell and Henry Overton, 1641), 15, 18–19; John Norton, “Sion the Outcast Healed of Her Wounds” (Cambridge, 1664), 3–5, 11–12; John Higginson, “The Cause of God” (Cambridge: Samuel Green, 1663), 8; Edward Johnson, *History of New England* [Johnson’s preferred title was *The Wonder-Working Providence of Sion’s Saviour in New England*] (New York, 1910; orig. ed. London, 1654), 60–121, 238.
4. See, for example, Solomon Stoddard, “An Appeal to the Learned” (Boston, 1709), 55; Thomas Prince, “The Salvation of God in 1746” (Boston, 1704), 8; idem, “The Natural and Moral Government” (Boston, 1749), 34; John Barnard, “The Throne Established by Righteousness” (Boston, 1734), in *The Wall and the Garden: Selected Massachusetts Election Sermons 1670–1775*, ed. A. W. Plumstead (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1978), 273, 275, 288; Joseph Sewall, “Repentance” (Boston, 1727); Nathanael Eels, “Religion Is the Life of God’s People” (Boston,

1743), 38–43. By “evangelicals” in this eighteenth-century context, I mean those such as Edwards who presumed a fallen human nature that needed regeneration. By “liberals” I mean those such as Charles Chauncy who imagined that the combination of divine benevolence and human goodness obviated the need for regeneration.

5. Until somewhat recently, scholars had assumed that the national covenant disappeared with the rise of “secularism” at the end of the seventeenth century. Perry Miller, *The New England Mind: From Colony to Province* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press, 1953), 447–63; Timothy Breen, *The Character of a Good Ruler: A Study of Puritan Political Ideas in New England, 1630–1730* (New Haven, 1970), 150ff., 204ff. Sacvan Bercovitch and Harry S. Stout, however, have refuted this claim. See Bercovitch, *The American Jeremiad* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1978), 93–154; Stout, *The New England Soul: Preaching and Religious Culture in Colonial New England* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986), 166–79. Stout argues that scholars have focused exclusively on the sections of eighteenth-century election sermons that are addressed to royal audiences and have overlooked the “sacred portions” that use the national covenant. Stout, *New England Soul*, 140–41.
6. Edwards, *Charity and Its Fruits*, in *Works of Jonathan Edwards* [hereafter *WJE*] 8:261–62. On Reformed influence, see, for example, John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion* 4.20.5.
7. *WJE* 25:322.
8. Perkins, *Works*; cited by Leland Ryken, *Worldly Saints: The Puritans as They Really Were* (Grand Rapids: Academic Books, 1986), 58.
9. Richard Sibbes, *The Saints’ Cordials*; cited in Ryken, *Worldly Saints*, 59.
10. William Ames, *The Marrow of Theology*, trans. and ed. John D. Eusden (Boston: Pilgrim Press, 1968), 323.
11. Ames, *Marrow*, 321; Ames, *Conscience with the Power and Cases Thereof*; cited in Ryken, *Worldly Saints*, 59; Ames, *Marrow*, 323.
12. Ryken, *Worldly Saints*, 59.
13. Edwards, sermon on Ezekiel 22:12, 1746/47, Beinecke Library, Yale University; cited in Mark Valeri, “Jonathan Edwards, The Edwardians, and Free Trade,” in *Jonathan Edwards at Home and Abroad: Historical Memories, Cultural Movements, Global Horizons*, ed. David W. Kling and Douglas A. Sweeney (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 2003), 90.
14. *WJE* 25:321; *WJE* 8:569.
15. Valeri, “Jonathan Edwards,” 90–91.

16. *WJE* 25:133; sermon on Nehemiah 4:14, *Works of Jonathan Edwards Online* [hereafter *WJEO*] 64: <http://edwards.yale.edu/archive?path=aHR0cDovL2Vkd2FyZHMueWFsZS5lZHUvY2dpLWJpbi9uZXdwaGlsby9nZXRvYmplY3QucGw/Yy42Mjo0LndqZW8=>.
17. Mark Valeri, "The New Divinity and the American Revolution," *The William and Mary Quarterly* 46, no. 4 (October 1989): 741–69.
18. Tithingmen were assigned by town magistrates to oversee this assistance.
19. Sermon on Proverbs 14:34, *WJEO* 44; *WJE* 17:403. In various statutes, the Massachusetts Bay Colony had mandated care of the indigent to towns in order to supplement what was done by churches; see George Lee Haskins, *Law and Authority in Colonial Massachusetts* (Hamden, CT: Archon Books, 1960).
20. *WJE* 4:370–73; *WJE* 25:319; *WJE* 13:207, 206 (emphasis original).
21. John Barnard, "The Throne Established by Righteousness," in *The Wall and the Garden: Selected Massachusetts Election Sermons 1670–1775*, ed. A. W. Plumstead (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1978), 264–65; Calvin, *Institutes* 4.20.3; 4.12.16. See McDermott, *One Holy and Happy Society*, 135.
22. *WJE* 13:208.
23. *WJE* 14:225; sermon on Exodus 8:15, *WJEO* 67; *WJE* 14:225; sermon on Jeremiah 51:5, *WJEO* 63; *WJE* 12:473; *WJE* 16:220; sermon on Exodus 8:15, *WJEO* 67.
24. Ames, *The Marrow of Theology*, 311.
25. R. R. Reno, "The Spirit of Democratic Capitalism," *First Things*, October 2017, https://www.firstthings.com/article/2017/10/the-spirit-of-democratic-capitalism_
26. *WJE*, vol. 2.
27. See his *History of the Work of Redemption*, in *WJE*, vol. 9.
28. James Gustafson, "Introduction" to H. Richard Niebuhr, *The Responsible Self: An Essay in Christian Moral Philosophy* (New York: Harper, 1963), 34–35.
29. Wolfhart Pannenberg, *Human Nature, Election, and History* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1977), 79, 104.
30. "Proclamation of a National Fast, March 30, 1863," in *Voices from the Heart: Four Centuries of American Piety*, ed. Mark A. Noll and Roger Lundin (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1987), 172.
31. Patrick Deneen, "Corrupting the Youth? A Response to Reilly," *Public Discourse*, September 19, 2017, <http://www.thepublicdiscourse.com/2017/09/20087/>.
32. Edwards, *An Humble Attempt*, in *WJE* 5:307–436.